

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2020
APPROVED

SB Members Present: Alison S. Manugian, Chair; Joshua A. Degen, Vice Chair; John F. Reilly, Clerk; John R. Giger, Member; Rebecca H. Pine, Member

Also Present: Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Ms. Manugian called the meeting to order at 6:00pm and reviewed the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Haddad said he was going to ask the Board to authorize the Town Manager and one Select Board member to sign the warrants due to an upcoming holiday.

Ms. Pine said that she attended an event at the Nashua River Watershed. She said that it was very informative and had to do with the Forest Legacy Plan. She said it was in their interest to have this program expanded and thought the federal government would approve this expansion.

Ms. Pine said that she sent out the invitation for the Non-Profit Council Meeting to be held on January 31st at 9am at the Center.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said that voting in Precinct 1 was moved to Town Hall during the Senior Center Construction Project. He said that with the Center being open, the Board needed to notify the Town Clerk if it was their intention to return voting in Precinct 1 to the new Center. Mr. Haddad said that he and the Town Clerk had been talking about polling locations and some complaints they received from the voters. Mr. Haddad said that they were recommending that Precinct 1 vote at the Center in West Groton, Precinct 2 vote at the Country Club and Precinct 3 vote at Town Hall.

Ms. Pine said that they did not have perfect solutions but good ones. She asked if Mr. Bouchard could speak to parking conditions at Town Hall. Mr. Bouchard said that at Town Hall and the Country Club, his major concerns would be for the November election adding he was expecting 80% turnout. Mr. Haddad said that Town Hall employees would be asked to park behind Prescott School. Ms. Pine asked about access to the GELD parking lot and the old Bank of America. Mr. Haddad said that those were all possible options. Ms. Pine asked about detail officers at the entrance to the Country Club and Town Hall. Mr. Haddad said that there would be an additional cost for that but that it could be done. Mr. Bouchard said that he would also like to beef up the lighting in the lobby at Town Hall for better visibility.

Mr. Haddad said that the vote Mr. Bouchard would be looking for would be that Precinct 1 voting be done at the Center in West Groton, Precinct 2 voting would be done at the Country Club and Precinct 3 would be voting at the Town Hall. Mr. Bouchard said that he would like to keep this for the foreseeable future to keep the confusion down.

Mr. Giger moved to declare that Precinct 1 vote at the Center in West Groton, Precinct 2 vote at the Country Club and Precinct 3 vote at Town Hall Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

BLOOD FARM EARTH REMOVAL PERMIT APPLICATION

Mr. Degen moved to reopen the public hearing for the Blood Farm Earth Removal Permit application for Richard Blood. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad said that the Earth Removal Stormwater Committee had recommended unanimously to reissue the permit to Richard Blood with the standard conditions. Ms. Collette said that the earth removal at this point going on there was incidental.

Ms. Pine moved to close the public hearing for the earth removal permit for Blood Farm. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad asked the Board to renew the permit application through January 12, 2022. Mr. Giger moved. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT - CONT.

2. Mr. Haddad said that he worked with Select Board Member Pine on revising the Committee Vacancy Policy to address the issue of interviewing candidates should the Board decide not to accept the recommendation from a particular committee. He said that the Policy had been amended to require the Board to schedule the interviews at the next regularly scheduled meeting when all candidate(s) were available to be interviewed. He respectfully requested that the Board consider adopting the revised Policy

Ms. Manugian said that in scheduling interviews for the next regularly scheduled meeting, it could possibly delay things. Mr. Haddad said that that could be a problem. Mr. Degen said that it could address a recommendation made by a Committee but didn't think it addressed direct appointments of the Select Board. He said he would like to see language added that would address that. Mr. Degen suggested wording such as if the Select Board had a seat on the Committee or designated a representative, that they be interviewed by the Select Board first. Mr. Haddad said that he would make another edit and bring it back.

3. Mr. Haddad said that Building Commissioner Ed Cataldo had notified him of his intention to retire on September 8, 2020. He said that filling this vital position was a top priority adding he wanted to make sure they got the best possible candidate. Mr. Haddad said that he had been watching similar vacancies in other neighboring towns and found that finding a competent Building Commissioner was a difficult proposition. Mr. Haddad said that he would like to follow the same process he used when he appointed Patricia Dufresne as the Town Accountant. He said that he instituted an internal process and after an internal posting and interviews, they appointed Patricia Dufresne as the Accountant-In-Training who worked under Valerie Jenkins for two years. He said that when Valerie retired, Patricia stepped right in as the Town Accountant and the transition was seamless. Mr. Haddad said that he would like to post the position internally and consider appointing a current employee as the Building Commissioner-In-Training. Mr. Haddad said that in order to apply, the applicant would need to be certified as a Local Inspector. He said that they currently had two employees who would meet this requirement. He said that this person would work under Mr. Cataldo for six months adding he was hoping for a March 1st starting date and work towards being certified as a Building Commissioner during this period and take over as Building Commissioner when Mr. Cataldo retired in September. Mr. Haddad said that they had 2 qualified individuals who would be eligible to apply. He said he anticipated the cost of this training program would be \$40,000 (six-month salary). Mr. Haddad asked the Board to allow him to advertise internally and go to the Finance Committee for a line item/reserve fund transfer.

Ms. Manugian asked if both applied, would both be trained or only one picked. Mr. Haddad said that they would interview both but only choose one. Mr. Degen said that this was an important job adding they wanted someone detailed oriented. He said that to get someone who had the time to ramp up in a training program, only benefited the Town. He said that the duplicity bothered him but that there was an advantage to doing so. He said that this gave them a high level of promoting within. He said he would support this so long as they received funding from the Finance Committee. Ms. Pine said that the training would be great and that they had 2 potential applicants but thought they wouldn't lose anything by advertising externally. Mr. Haddad said that ordinarily he would agree with her but if they advertised, they wouldn't advertise as early because he wouldn't pay 2 Commissioners. He said that advertising for someone internally, they could train and advertise now. Mr. Reilly said that if they didn't use this process, he wanted to know what the cost was to advertise externally. Mr. Haddad said that it cost approximately \$3K to advertise externally and should they not find someone, there would be a cost to keep Mr. Cataldo on for a bit of time if he was willing to do that. Mr. Giger said that they had turned over Building Commissioners at a high rate. He said that they had gone through 4 Building Commissioners in the last 10 years. Mr. Degen said he agreed with Mr. Giger adding they had the largest building project going on in this Town which was something to consider. Mr. Giger said he supported this but asked that if they went this route, that the agreement have a clause that says they

would stay a certain amount of time and if not pay them some money. Mr. Degen said that they could not do that. Mr. Haddad said he didn't think they could either but could talk to Town Counsel. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to vote to authorize him to advertise internally and approach the Finance Committee for a reserve fund transfer. Mr. Degen said that he was all for advertising externally but that this was an important position adding that there was a lot going on in Town right now as far as building went right now.

Mr. Degen moved to authorize the Town Manager to advertise internally and for a cost not to exceed \$40K over 2 Fiscal Years. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

4. Mr. Haddad reviewed the schedule of the Select Board through the Spring Town Meeting. Ms. Pine suggested using the March 30th no meeting date as a workshop meeting. Ms. Pine had some questions about the items proposed.
5. Mr. Giger said that it was great that Mr. Eason was serving on the steering committee for the Community Preservation Coalition but thought there may be a potential conflict of interest.
6. Mr. Haddad said that it was time to call for the Spring Town Meeting and reviewed the timeline for Town Meeting with Town Meeting to be held on April 27, 2020. He asked for the Board to call for the Town Meeting on April 27, 2020 and have a second vote to open the warrant tomorrow, January 14th and close it on February 21st.

Mr. Degen moved to call for the Spring Town Meeting on April 27, 2020. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Degen moved to call for the opening of the Town Meeting warrant tomorrow, January 14th and close it on Friday, February 21st. Mr. Giger seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Ms. Pine asked if the sewer debt was to be cut from the Select Board minor capital, she asked where the money would come from. Mr. Haddad said that the sewer department would have to raise it. Ms. Pine said that she did not want to see them do that.
8. Mr. Haddad asked the Board if they would be willing to authorize him and one board member to sign the next warrant. The Board said they could make themselves available.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Pine said that she would be working with a member of the Park Commission to work on the Park & Common Naming Policy and would bring it back.

Ms. Pine asked for a list of the Department Head goals for this year.

ON-GOING ISSUES

B: Mr. Haddad said that he thought he had found a sprinkler company that was willing to bid on the Prescott School and would keep the Board updated.

D: Mr. Haddad said that the Earth Removal Stormwater Committee would be holding a public hearing on February 4th at 7pm at the Town hall to discuss the MS4 permit process and funding sources.

F: Mr. Haddad said that they reached the 15% on the Green Communities application and would be hearing from the state.

MINUTES

Ms. Pine moved to approve as amended. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0-1 with Mr. Degen abstaining.

Mr. Haddad asked the Board to enter into Executive Session and not return to Open Session Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(3) "To conduct strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the Chair so declares" – purpose - DEP Consent Order.

Ms. Pine made the motion at 7:08pm. Mr. Giger seconded. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Manugian-aye; Giger-aye; Degen-aye; Reilly-aye

Approved: _____
John Reilly, Clerk

_____ respectfully *submitted*:
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 1/27/2020