

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
VIRTUAL MEETING  
MONDAY, JULY 27, 2020  
APPROVED**

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

**Also Virtually Present:** Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant; Melisa Doig, HR Director; Patricia Dufresne, Town Accountant; Jonathan Greeno, Principal Assistant Assessor; Michael Hartnett, Tax Collector/Treasurer; Michael Bouchard, Town Clerk; Bud Robertson; Steve Munroe; Tom Delaney, DPW Director; Vanessa Abraham, Library Director;

Ms. Manugian called the meeting to order at 7:50pm and reviewed the agenda.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Degen said that in the wake of hate crime with racist graffiti a few weeks ago and other racist issues in the Country, he felt that it was in the best interest of the Town to understand diversity. He said that he had refined the first draft charge he had brought forward to the Board a few weeks ago and wanted to present the Board that night with a revised draft charge for a Diversity Task Force. He reviewed the changes he made, as well as the membership of the committee to include an ex-officio diversity trainer. Ms. Pine asked if he had someone lined up to be the ex-officio trainer. Mr. Degen said that the trainer was the Dean of Diversity at Lawrence Academy. Ms. Pine said that an 11-person committee was large but having a diversity trainer would make it manageable. Ms. Manugian said she didn't think the committee needed to come up with methods and suggested striking that word and also thought a member of the LGBTQ+ community should be included. Ms. Manugian suggested combining the library members and town hall member to add the LGBTQ+ community member. Mr. Degen said that there were methods to identify diversity. Ms. Pine agreed that they should remove method to make it less confusing. Ms. Manugian asked for some clarification on some of the groups being represented and how they designate a representative. Mr. Giger suggested that members be proposed by the groups and not designated.

*Ms. Pine moved that they approve the charge for the Diversity Task Force as amended in tonight's discussion. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Giger-aye; Reilly-aye; Manugian-aye*

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

1. Mr. Haddad said that Steve Munroe was on the agenda and present. He said that they advertised for a Truck Driver/Laborer and that he had the pleasure to meet Mr. Munroe last week whose enthusiasm to be on the department was off the charts. He asked the Board to ratify his appointment.

*Mr. Giger moved that they ratify the appointment of Steve Munroe as a Highway employee. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion.*

Mr. Reilly asked where Mr. Munroe came from. Mr. Munroe said that he had run his own business for over 15 years and because of COVID can no longer continue that.

*Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Reilly-aye; Degen-aye; Giger-aye; Pine-aye*

Mr. Haddad said that Mr. Munroe would be starting on Monday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>.

2. Mr. Haddad said that there were 2 vacancies on the Personnel Board. He said that Leonard Adjetey expressed interest and was asking that he be appointed to the Board with a term to expire June 30, 2023. Mr. Robertson said that the role of the Personnel Board had changed some adding that Mr. Adjetey would be helpful with his overall business knowledge.

*Ms. Pine made a motion to appoint Leonard Adjetey to the Personnel Board with a term to expire June 30, 2023. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Reilly-aye; Manugian-aye; Giger-ay*

3. Mr. Haddad said that he did not have any updates relative to COVID. He said that they continue to work under the current protocols with nothing new to report. Ms. Pine asked if all Committees were still meeting on Zoom. Mr. Haddad said that they would add he would not be bringing back a recommendation to change that for the foreseeable future.

Mr. Degen said that people needed to wear a mask when going into a store, etc. adding some were not in compliance. Mr. Haddad said he understood the concerns and would reach out to the Board of Health.

4. Mr. Haddad said that the Governor made a ruling last week about traveling to Massachusetts if you weren't from the New England States, New York and New Jersey. Mr. Haddad said that the Governor mentioned today a recent uptick in COVID adding they might be looking to go back into Phase 2 in the near future. Ms. Pine said she would be interested to hear from Lawrence Academy and Groton School about whether they were bringing their students back. Ms. Manugian said that students had the option at Groton School to stay remote or come back under strict protocols. She said that meals were regimented, class sizes were already small and easy to distance desks, etc.
5. Mr. Haddad said that he had received a request from the Library Board of Trustees to hire back some staff. He said that now that the Library was open and servicing the public, he said that their current staff was getting burnt out and needed some additional help. Mr. Haddad said he thought it was time to allow them to fill a couple of the positions. Mr. Haddad said that the positions would be the shelvers, adult program coordinator, part time circulation library assistant.

*Ms. Pine moved to lift the hiring freeze for the positions as requested by the Library Director specifically the Adult Program Coordinator & Circulation Library Assistant (22 hours/week), the Part time Circulation Library Assistant (10 hours per week), the Part time Children's Library Assistant (10 hours/week) and shelvers. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion.*

Mr. Giger said that they should not lift the hiring freeze but instead make an exception.

*Ms. Pine said that they could make an exception to the hiring freeze to fill the requested positions and amended her motion as such. Ms. Manugian seconded the amendment. Roll Call: Giger-aye; Reilly-aye; Pine-aye; Manugian-aye (Degen not present for the vote).*

6. Mr. Haddad reviewed the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter revenue. He said that he had told the Board that their free cash was going to be about \$750K. He said that revenues had come in a bit higher than they thought, that department turnback was higher because of the spending freeze and because of that he was happy to announce that free cash was being estimated around \$1M. Mr. Robertson said that the spending freeze allowed them to save \$400K more than their normal spending and was glad they did so when they did. Mr. Haddad said that they were continuing the freeze to some extent and hoped to continue that.
7. Mr. Haddad said that they placed an article on the 2020 Spring Town Meeting Warrant to update the dog bylaw to bring it in compliance with State Law. Mr. Haddad said that they withdrew the article with the intent to bring it back to the Fall Town Meeting due to COVID. He said that the Board during the emergency declaration, instituted a temporary leash law on public property. He said that while some would argue they have a leash law; they had a control bylaw. He asked if the Board wanted to clean up the definitions at the Fall Town Meeting to remove any ambiguity. He suggested that they update the definition of restraint to include controlling a dog by fence or chain or leash not to exceed seven feet in length that is of suitable test for the size of a dog that is being restrained.

Mr. Degen said that to bring forward a leash law now was not the right time and thought they needed a study committee. He said he was not ready to go to a permanent leash law. Mr. Giger said he was not in support of a permanent leash law. He said that this was a right to farm community and had an unusual chain of events due to the pandemic. Mr. Delaney said that most of the problems they saw with dog bites were before COVID and not since

they instituted a temporary leash law. Mr. Delaney said that state properties had instituted leash laws and thought they should consider adopting the same rules to make things consistent. Ms. Pine said that it didn't surprise her that the number of bites were down since instituting a temporary leash law. She said she would like to see them be proactive in putting together a study committee adding it might be necessary to put in a permanent leash law.

Mr. Haddad said that they would leave the bylaw as written adding he would like to bring a recommendation to the Board for their next meeting of a working group. Ms. Manugian said she absolutely supported a leash law adding a number of well-intentioned dog owners was problematic. Mr. Reilly agreed also with a leash law. He said that people needed to be safe on public property from their dogs and owners.

8. Mr. Haddad said that Town Counsel had reviewed the IMA to which Mr. Haddad provided the Board with a copy of the latest draft of the IMA. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to approve the IMA as presented that evening. Ms. Pine asked a clarifying question on reimbursement of MSBA funds.

*Ms. Pine moved to approve the IMA as presented. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion.*

Mr. Degen asked if this needed to be done that night. He said that he had been thinking that day on whether they should open the regional agreement and thought that not including Dunstable was problematic. Ms. Manugian said that she wasn't sure they wanted to open that can of worms. Mr. Giger said that if they had until the spring, that they should give a change to the regional agreement a shot. He said that if it was one item, they had a chance to get it done. Ms. Manugian said that there was no way to open it and only address one thing. She said that any agreed upon changes had to go to the Department of Education and was no small undertaking. Mr. Haddad said that the way the Regional Agreement read right now, the School Committee could bond the project and bill the Town of Groton. Dunstable would have no role in paying that debt. He said that the only thing the IMA did was save the Town \$3M in interest payments because of the better bond rating. Mr. Giger said that this discussion was part of the IMA and saw no reason to rush into this that night. Mr. Degen said he wasn't questioning the savings but wanted to use this as leverage should 10 years from now Dunstable need to send their students to Groton adding they should then pay some of that debt. Mr. Haddad said that there was no appetite from the School Committee nor Dunstable to open up the Regional Agreement. He said that should student ratio's change, the Agreement would need to be opened at that point.

Ms. Manugian asked that Ms. Pine withdraw her motion so they could continue their conversation at their next meeting. Mr. Reilly said he thought they should take a vote on the motion. Mr. Haddad said that the School District would have to bond the project if Dunstable's population were to shift even 10 years from now adding they would not save the \$3M in interest due to the different bond rating.

9. Mr. Haddad reviewed the Board's schedule through September 8<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Giger asked that they receive each other's proposed goals. Ms. Pine agreed that she would like to see the same.

#### **ON-GOING ISSUES**

E: Ms. Pine asked for an update on Green Communities. Mr. Haddad said that they were currently working on their approved list of projects. Mr. Haddad said that they had not received any dates from the State on when the next round was opening.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Reilly said that former Police Chief Jay Rider passed away adding his wake was that night and would be remised if he didn't make that announcement.

Ms. Pine said that the Police Forum was held last week and invited people to view it on the Groton Channel. She said that it went very well and thanked the Police Department for taking part.

**MINUTES**

*Ms. Pine moved to accept the minutes of July 13, 2020 as presented. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Reilly-aye; Degen-aye; Manugian-aye (Mr. Giger was no present for the vote)*

Ms. Manugian adjourned the meeting at 9:36pm.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rebecca H. Pine, Clerk

respectfully submitted:  
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 8/10/2020