

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
VIRTUAL MEETING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 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; Tom Delaney, DPW Director; Bud Robertson;

Ms. Manugian called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and reviewed the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Haddad announced small business grants available through the MRPC through the end of the month.

Ms. Pine read a letter she received from neighbors of hers, the Woods, thanking the Town for opening the Groton Country Club Pool this summer.

Ms. Manugian said that because of the additional COVID testing that Lawrence Academy and Groton School would be doing for its students, Groton would see an increase in the number of testing on the state reports.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said he had no updates relative to COVID at the state and local level.
2. Mr. Haddad said that at the request of the Trails Committee, he was nominating Derek Cianci for appointment to the Trails Committee and respectfully requested that the Select Board ratify the appointment through June 30, 2021.

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

3. Mr. Haddad said that due to the designated meeting night of the Diversity Task Force, Barbara Rich could not serve as a member of the Committee and had resigned. Mr. Haddad said that he was recommending that the Select Board appoint Michelle Collette to the Task Force to represent the Council on Aging. He said that Ms. Collette had expressed interest to serve on the Committee but after the original deadline.

Ms. Pine made a motion to appoint Michelle Collette to the Diversity Task Force as representative to the senior population and Senior Center. Mr. Degen seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Manugian-aye; Giger-aye; Reilly-aye

4. Mr. Haddad said that the Board asked for a further breakdown of the revenues received at the Transfer Station. He said that revenue was broken down by categories such as the sale of bags, stickers, construction debris, etc. He said that there were no salary expenses listed adding that Mr. Delaney did not allocate his time there per say adding he had great staff that worked at the Transfer Station.

Mr. Giger asked for an explanation on fees collected adding the amounts were the same. Ms. Dufresne said that they were pulling in revenue from a lot of different places and explained what those fees collected meant. Ms. Pine asked why sticker sales went down in FY19. Mr. Delaney said he was not sure why adding there was no rhyme of reason. He said that other fees collected that same fiscal year also dropped but came back up again in FY20. Ms. Pine asked about sticker fees.

5. Mr. Haddad said that the Board requested that he reach out to the Library Trustees and request that they consider delaying the capital request to pave the parking lot until next Spring. He said that the Trustees had agreed to this delay and he had removed the request from the Capital Budget Article to be considered at the Fall Town Meeting.

6. Mr. Haddad said that the Capital Planning Advisory Committee met earlier and had a lot to do going into next fiscal year. He said that they also interviewed an applicant to fill a vacancy who he would be bringing this forward next week.
7. Mr. Haddad said that the warrant was in good shape going into the Fall Town Meeting. Mr. Haddad reviewed the warrant.

Mr. Haddad asked the Select Board to consider supporting article 2. The Board unanimously supported paying two prior year bills as explained.

Mr. Degen said he was changing his position on Article 5 to support the article along with article 7.

Mr. Degen explained an email he sent the Town Manager earlier that day relative to the MS4 permit budget. He said that with a vote of 3-2 in favor they voted to approve the addition of a fulltime position whose responsibilities would be dedicated to the stormwater permit requirements. He provided an alternative proposal which would be a part time position shared with the DPW (20 hours on stormwater duties and 20 hours on DPW duties) through June 30, 2021. He said he would also propose that they hire an additional DPW worker at 18 hours. He urged the Board to consider this adding he was not going to change his position on this. Mr. Robertson said that the Finance Committee voted to support this as is. He said that they should fund it fully to be successful. He said that if all 40 hours were not needed once they dove into this, then those other hours could be shifted to DPW duties. Mr. Giger said that he could support what Mr. Degen proposed from a personnel standpoint but did not think the numbers were plopped into this as had been stated by Mr. Degen. He said that the Earth Removal Stormwater Advisory Committee spent a tremendous amount of time on this and recommended the budget as was approved by the Select Board with a 3-2 vote. Mr. Giger said that they could fund it as was presented and slowly fill that position to full-time as they go. Mr. Delaney said that if they started to half fill this, they would run into problems. He said he was always willing to do more with less but that could not be the case this time. He said that he didn't have the extra help right now within his department to assist with this. Mr. Delaney said that if they were going to see a reduction once they got into this, it would be with the consultants. Mr. Delaney said that the savings to go to a 1/2-time employee would be only \$15/year per improved property. Ms. Pine said she was in favor of Mr. Degen's proposal and thought in this climate that a lot of people had lost their jobs and were suffering. She said that they owed it to the residents to be as rigorous as they could with taxpayer funds. Ms. Pine said she wasn't sure why Mr. Delaney wouldn't like this plan adding it gave him the help he needed within the DPW and filling his vacancy. Mr. Delaney said that they had been down one person since this time last year adding they were scrambling to get things done as it was. Ms. Manugian said that because she was an engineer by trade, she knew how large of an undertaking adding that just because they didn't understand the need, didn't mean the need wasn't there. She said it wasn't fair to the employees that they be expected to continue to do more and more with less. She said she could not support this mismatch approach. Mr. Degen said that they had trouble finding new hires and thought this proposal set him free. He said it was giving Mr. Delaney a fulltime employee who would go to a fulltime MS4 employee in 8 months. Ms. Manugian asked why a part-time position would be appealing. Mr. Degen said that because of the likelihood of COVID, it might be more appetizing. Mr. Robertson said that they should hire the right person now for 40 hours. Mr. Reilly asked if he saw this person going back and forth between positions. Mr. Delaney said that he didn't see it happening that much adding that the requirements of the program were demanding and were already behind on these mandates. Ms. Pine said that the high rate of unemployment would lead to multiple candidates. Ms. Pine said it was more realistic to ease in than to cut back.

Mr. Haddad said that if the Board didn't wish to change their positions, the article would stand. Mr. Reilly, Mr. Giger and Ms. Manugian were not in favor of changing their positions. Mr. Degen and Ms. Pine could not support this article.

Mr. Haddad said that the CPC had reversed their position on the Recreation facility feasibility study proposed at Cow Pond adding this would be removed from the warrant.

Mr. Degen changed his position on Article 22 to in favor.

Mr. Haddad asked the Select Board to issue the warrant and vote to accept it as presented.

Mr. Degen moved to accept the warrant as presented and send it to the printer for distribution. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Manugian-aye; Giger-aye; Reilly-aye

8. Mr. Haddad reviewed the Select Board schedule through the end of the year.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Haddad reviewed 2 deeds for the Board to discuss and approve. He said that one deed was for a nine-lot subdivision off Townsend Road and land that was being gifted to the Town and the other was the easement for Olivia Way. Ms. Pine commented on these restrictions and how they were restricted as such that affordable housing couldn't be placed there.

Ms. Manugian asked for a motion to approve the quitclaim deed for Reedy Meadow. Ms. Pine made the motion. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Manugian-aye; Giger-aye; Reilly-aye

Ms. Manugian asked for a motion to approve the deed conveying the roughly 25 acres more or less to the Conservation Commission. Ms. Pine made the motion. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Manugian-aye; Giger-aye; Reilly-aye

ON-GOING ISSUES

A: Mr. Haddad said that the water line cut in on Main Street would be done weather permitting, next Tuesday-Thursday, September 22-24th from 9am-4pm relative to the sprinkler system project at Prescott School. He said that this was going to cause traffic to back up on Main Street. He asked people to be patient with the work being done and to avoid traveling down Main Street if at all possible. Ms. Manugian asked Mr. Haddad to inform the schools about this because of issues it could cause with bussing kids to and from school.

G: Mr. Haddad said that the Highway Garage project was just about finished adding the final paving was the only thing left to do. He said that the final accounting should be done within the next couple of months.

LIAISON REPORTS

Ms. Pine said that the non-profit council was meeting on Friday morning at 9am via Zoom.

MINUTES

Mr. Degen made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of August 24, 2020 and August 31, 2020. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Degen-aye; Manugian-aye; Giger-aye; Reilly-aye

Ms. Manugian adjourned the meeting at 8:16pm.

Approved: _____
Rebecca H. Pine, Clerk

_____ respectfully submitted:
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 09/21/2020