

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
VIRTUAL MEETING  
MONDAY, JANUARY 31, 2022  
APPROVED**

**SB Members Present:** Rebecca H. Pine, Chair; Alison S. Manugian, Vice Chair; Peter S. Cunningham, Clerk; John F. Reilly, Member

Members Absent: Joshua A. Degen, Member

**Also Present:** Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager; Melisa Doig, HR Director; Megan Foster, Principal Assistant Assessor, Patricia Dufresne, Town Accountant; Hannah Moller, Tax Collector/Treasurer

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Reilly asked if or when the parking areas to the rail trails or conservation areas were plowed out. Mr. Cunningham said that DCR does not plow or maintain trails in the winter time. He said that the lots do get plowed them from time to time but wasn't sure when that occurred.

Ms. Pine said that the first Bystander Training would be held next Tuesday, February 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm. She said that it was free and hoped that many people would take part in it.

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

1. Mr. Haddad said that the Town employees returned to work on January 31st and Town Hall returned to appointment only. He said that all employees were tested when they returned to Town Hall adding there were no positive cases. Mr. Haddad said that Groton's case count dropped by 100, which was good news. He said that in addition, the Center in West Groton had also opened and was offering limited services while complying with Social Distancing Guidelines. Mr. Haddad said that he would like to keep the Town Hall by appointment only until the end of February. He said that they could revisit this issue when the Board considered the issue of continuing remote meetings.

Mr. Cunningham said he wanted to see them monitor the statistics closely and see about ramping up the programing at the Center soon.

2. Mr. Haddad said that Environmental Partners had estimated that the cost to design and put out to bid the improvements to the Center Sewer District to support our MassWorks Grant Application was \$385,000. He respectfully requested that the Board authorize and approve the use of ARPA funds for this purpose. He said that the Board had previously authorized up to \$520,000 of ARPA Funds for Center Sewer District improvements adding that this expense was within that authorization.

Ms. Pine asked if the ARPA money was the funding they had 3 or so years to spend. Ms. Dufresne said that they had to obligate the money by 2024 and had until 2026 to spend it fully.

*Mr. Haddad asked the Board to authorize him to enter into the contract with Environmental Partners to move forward with this design. Mr. Cunningham made the motion. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Reilly-aye; Cunningham-aye; Pine-aye*

3. Mr. Haddad said that the Trails Committee had requested that he nominate for appointment Heidi Charlebois, Darlene Deschambeault and Sheila Devereaux to the Committee. He asked the Board to consider this as his nomination of these individuals for appointment and respectfully requested that the Board accept these nominations and appoint them to the Trails Committee.

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

**NASHUA RIVER WILD AND SCENIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL**

Ms. Stacey Chilcoat introduced herself and Diane Carson as both being present.

Ms. Chilcoat touched upon a couple of small grants they were exploring. She said that the Forest Legacy Program application was submitted and explained what the program was. She said that they were waiting to hear whether they received the grant. She said that they were also holding monthly conservation talks which had also been going well. She said that this year was going to mean a lot of projects for them adding she thought they had a pretty productive last year.

There was a brief discussion about a project along the Squannacook River in Shirley that abuts the river and Groton.

**TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT – CONT.**

- 4. Mr. Haddad said that he had a lot of good budget things to talk about until earlier today. He said that he reached out to the School Department to discuss the placeholder he placed in the budget for the District and unfortunately the number he had meant that their minimum contribution was going up 5.29%, mostly due to a reduction in state aid. He added that the set aside in the budget was still \$300k short based on the needs of the District. He said that the Finance Team was going to go through the budget on Wednesday morning and come back with a recommendation on cuts. Mr. Robertson said that they were looking at the 15<sup>th</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup> for the next Finance Committee meeting but would let everyone know. Ms. Pine agreed with Mr. Haddad in that the department heads did a great job presenting their budgets on Saturday.
- 5. Mr. Haddad said that there was a pretty light agenda on February 7<sup>th</sup>. He said that the Financial Polices were ready for the Board to review adding there were minor changes made. He said he was also going to bring forward the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter financial report. He said that he also wanted to schedule an executive session for next Monday also, to discuss the union agreements he had reached tentative agreements on. He reviewed the meeting agendas going forward. There was a brief discussion about the proposed 40B project off Cow Pond Brook Road as well as the MBTA zoning.

**ON-GOING ISSUES**

- A: Mr. Haddad said the Water Department had gone out to bid in their projects. He said that the drilling bid came in \$200k less and the sub bids for the treatment plant had come in at or right under the estimates developed last year. He said that estimators for the Flo Ro project would be looking at value estimating on February 10<sup>th</sup> with the Building Committee. Ms. Manugian said that value estimating would dictate what options they had.
- B. Mr. Haddad said that the Town was awarded \$99k for Green Communities funding. He said it was not everything they asked for but was grateful they received something.

**LIAISON REPORTS**

Ms. Pine said that the non-profit council had a great meeting last Friday.

**MINUTES**

*Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of January 24, 2022 as written. Ms. Manugian seconded the motion. Roll Call: Manugian-aye; Reilly-aye; Cunningham-aye; Pine-aye*

Ms. Manugian said that United Cultivation had scheduled their community outreach meeting scheduled for February 9<sup>th</sup> at the Groton Inn. Mr. Haddad said that New England Craft Cultivation had not scheduled their outreach meeting.

Ms. Dunbar said that the Town Clerk Special Act had moved favorably through the Municipal Committee and was headed to the House for action. She said that this was good news as it meant things were moving along quickly as they had hoped.

Ms. Pine adjourned the meeting at 7:48pm.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Peter S. Cunningham, Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_ respectfully submitted:  
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 2/14/2022