

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JUNE 27, 2022
APPROVED**

SB Members Present: John F. Reilly, Chair; Rebecca H. Pine, Vice Chair; Matthew F. Pisani, Clerk; Alison S. Manugian, Member (via Zoom); Peter S. Cunningham, Member

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

Mr. Reilly called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and reviewed the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Haddad said he received a phone call about the great work that was done outside of the Prescott School. He said that former Select Board member Josh Degen volunteered his time to help plant the plants and wanted to make sure people were aware this was done as volunteer time and that he was not paid. He thanked Mr. Degen for the great job and for volunteering his time. Mr. Pisani said that the plantings came out gorgeous.

Ms. Pine said that she wanted to speak about the death of Ron Englade. She said that they served together on the school committee in the late 80s and that he had served two terms on the Board of Selectman after that. She said that he also worked as Bob Hargraves admin for many years while Mr. Hargraves served as State Representative. Mr. Cunningham said that they were a great family adding Groton was a big piece of their life. Mr. Reilly extended the Board's sympathy to the family on behalf of the Town of Groton.

Mr. Tom Orcutt said that the Northeast Region was in a serious drought and because of that, they had to curtail outside water consumption to one day on the weekends only. He was there because he wanted to get the word out adding they were trying to publicize it as best as possible.

Mr. Orcutt said that construction on the new Whitney Well was beginning tomorrow and construction on the new water facility was beginning next week. He said that they were going to be busy with a lot going on.

Mr. Haddad said that the Board directed them to test the wells at the various fields for PFAS. He said that Cutler Field came back with PFAS detected. He said that they were using a shallow well which might be the issue. He said that the Park Commission was going to meet and test for a deeper well and if results came back ok, they would install a deeper well. Ms. Manugian asked if they were to put in a deeper well and didn't detect PFAS, how would they be able to tell that they were not drawing the PFAS down. Mr. Orcutt explained how bedrock wells were sealed.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mr. Robert Pelletier said that he and his wife lived at 79 Pleasant Street and woke up last Thursday morning and noticed there was a communication tower that went up what seemed like overnight on the police station property which is their direct abutter. He said that towers can cause health problems but that the issue was the lack of transparency. He said that his wife spoke with Mr. Tada and Chief McCurdy who said it had been permitted. He asked some questions that he and his wife would like answered. He said he didn't expect any answers that evening but wanted to bring this to the Board's attention. Mr. Haddad said that with the Board's permission, he would draft responses to these questions and get back to Mr. and Mrs. Pelletier. Mr. Reilly asked if his backyard abutted the tower. Mr. Pelletier said his back yard abutted the back of the police station. Mr. Reilly said he understood the concern, but didn't see any way around this.

TOWN FOREST COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

Mr. John Sheedy, Mr. Steve Babin and Mr. Carter Branigan of the Town Forest Committee were present.

Mr. Babin said that the Town Forest didn't need a lot of management at this point adding when they were first formed, they met a couple of times a year. He said that with Covid, they weren't too excited to meet in person and hadn't really had a meeting in over a year and a half now adding there wasn't much to meet about. He said that when they received a request to use to Town Forest, they can approve those requests without a meeting. He said that they had received a phone call from a

movie production company looking to use Town Field for a movie which they spoke to them about. Mr. Babin said that they were working with the Trails committee to move a trail which had been there for a long time because it was on private property. Mr. Babin said that Westford Academy had requested a night hike which they had done in years past which they received permission to do. He said that they the Committee had some old paperwork that was given to him by Harlan Fitch's sister and had turned it over to the Historical Society and had been placed at the Library for display. He said that included meeting minutes that went back to the beginning of the Town Forest. He said that they were working on plans to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Town Forest. He said that they were also considering a harvest in Town Forest this year adding it had been over 10 years since it was last done.

Ms. Pine asked if there was a specific charge for the committee. Mr. Babin said it was to manage and care for the Town Forest. Ms. Pine asked if they planned to replace. Mr. Babin said that they had not done that in a long time. Ms. Pine asked if they had a budget. Mr. Babin said that they did not receive town funds. He said that when they harvest, those funds were deposited into a town fund. Ms. Dufresne said that they have a gift fund with about \$7k in it and once every 5 or 6 years they put an article on the Town Meeting warrant to move money from their gift fund to operating. Mr. Pisani asked if there was a timeframe on moving that cart path/trail. Mr. Babin said that they needed to schedule a meeting but hoped to do that this summer. Ms. Pine said they should have a vote on record that they allow one person to make a decision to use the Town Forest without it going to a committee vote. Mr. Cunningham said that whomever did the harvesting 10 years ago did a really good job and hoped it would be the same.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said that he had made the following appointments and respectfully requested that the Select Board consider ratifying them:

Hannah Pierpont - Council on Aging Departmental Assistant
Lisa Hick- Historic Districts Commission (term to expire on June 30, 2025)
Robert Hamilton - Per Diem Van Driver
Madison Leone - Country Club Lifeguard
Janet Tupua - Election Worker

Ms. Pine made the motion to ratify the Town Manager's appointments as requested. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Manugian-aye; Pisani-aye; Cunningham-aye; Reilly-aye

2. Mr. Haddad said that the Town hired Geological Field Services, Inc. to provide a Draft Initial Site Assessment of the former Nod Road Landfill. He said that the purpose of the Draft ISA was to determine if the Landfill was capped according to the standards at the time (1976) and identify any issues with the Cap and any further action necessary by the Town. Mr. Haddad said that the Draft ISA states that the "*surface of the Landfill is well vegetated and reportedly capped in 1976 with a final cover meeting the then required regulatory standards....no exposed waste was observed at the surface during the inspection.*" Mr. Haddad said that he viewed this as very positive news. He said that the report did say that "*there is evidence of leachate breakout all along the northern edge of the landfill and for a short distance in the northeastern corner of the landfill.*" He said that Leachate was defined as any contaminated liquid that was generated from water percolating through a solid waste disposal site, accumulating contaminants, and moving into subsurface areas. He said that the evidence of leachate was the accumulation of iron deposits on the surface. He said he did not take this to be a major problem from the report, however, he was not an expert in this area. He said that the report did provide a scope of work to perform a Final Site Assessment. He said he had asked for a quote for this work, as well as an opinion as to whether or not it is necessary or required. He said he did not have a quote yet and was going to recommend that the Board of Health be given time to review the report and provide their recommendation. Mr. Tada said that he expected to receive a quote for the site assessment shortly.

Ms. Manugian asked if there was a plan for when the landfill was closed originally. Mr. Tada said that the recent report was done based on a recent site walk and didn't perform boring testing or field work. He said that they found a proposed plan from the 1970's but not a final plan. Mr. Haddad said that the landfill was capped and closed under standards at that time. Ms. Pine said that it mostly sounded like there was nothing to be concerned about except in

the place where there was leaching and wondered what they do to address that problem without having to undertake a huge project. Mr. Cunningham said they needed to see the cost estimate for the next phase and go from there. He said that the consultants were mandatory reporters and did not see anything worth reporting. Ms. Manugian said that they could see the leachate without doing any testing. Mr. Cunningham asked if they could ask DEP for a report from 1976. Mr. Reilly said there was something in the report relative to that. Mr. Haddad said he took the report as a positive but would wait to hear from the Board of Health and the consultant.

Mr. Adam Burnett said he was on the Greenway Committee and had spent a lot of time walking on that property and testing of Nod Brook. He said that there was exposed garbage was obviously old near Nod Brook which was meandering more toward the landfill. He said that trees were growing on top of the landfill which the roots were breaking through the cap. He said that the specs were very vague and couldn't find evidence that any post site inspection as performed and a final sign off for the capping. He said that there should also have been a management plan which he could not find evidence of one.

Mr. Haddad suggested they wait from the Board of Health to weigh in and from the consultant to provide a quote.

3. Mr. Haddad provided the Board's meeting schedule for the upcoming couple of weeks. Mr. Haddad said that the Town Clerk search committee would be interviewing over the next couple of weeks and would be providing the Board with a list of finalists well in advance of the July 25th meeting where he had those interviews penciled in.

SELECT BOARD ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Mr. Haddad said that the Diversity Task Force had requested that the Board re-appoint Susan Hughes to the Task Force. He said he would respectfully request that the Board make this appointment

Ms. Pine made a motion to appoint Susan Hughes to the Diversity Task Force. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine-aye; Reilly-aye; Pisani-aye; Cunningham-aye; Manugian-aye

2. Mr. Haddad said that when the Board decided to rename Redskin Trail to Mountain Lakes Trail, they stated wanting to consider naming another Town property after the Nipmuc Tribe. He said that Select Board Member Pine had been working to identify a worthy property and has identified a potential parcel adjacent to Baddacook Pond for this purpose.

Ms. Pine talked about a property that was called at one time the Shattuck Property then owned by the Lewis Family, which sits along the western shore of Baddacook Pond and was one property they walked in consideration of renaming after the Nipmuc Tribe. She said there is no attachment to the name Shattuck and might be worth considering. She said that the Conservation Commission was in favor of renaming this property after the Nipmuc Tribe. She said if the Board was in favor of this, her and Bruce Easom would reach out to members of the Nipmuc Tribe and possibility hold a celebration and put up a plaque. Mr. Reilly said that one of the concerns about the property on the eastern shore of Baddacook, that the Boards had seen on their site walk, wasn't worthy enough because it wasn't used or accessed much. Mr. Reilly said that they received emails and concerns about naming it Nipmuc at all. He said he thought they should wait and hear from the Nipmuc members also. Mr. Cunningham said that he was glad this was brought forward and looked forward to hearing more information from the Nipmuc's. Mr. Haddad said he would pass public comments off to the Board also.

3. Mr. Haddad said that it was that time of the year for the Select Board to begin the Annual Review of the Town Manager. He explained that he had provided the Board with the Town Manager Evaluation Policy for their review. He said that the Chair needed to certify which members could participate in the Annual Review and direct the Town Manager to begin his self-evaluation.

Mr. Reilly commenced the review of the Town Manager evaluation and certified Members Cunningham, Pine, Manugian and himself to review the Town Manager and asked Mr. Haddad to provide his portion of the review within the next 15 days to the HR Director.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Cunningham said that the Nashua River Rail Trail was in need of significant improvements and had been working to get DCR to put this on their capital improvement plan. He said that they got an appropriation thanks to Senator Kennedy of \$650K but that DCR had not done much by means of advancing this. He said that he was part of a trail group that had been working to advance this effort quicker. He said that the trail was one of the features people came to appreciate and use quite often. He asked if the Select Board was in favor of working with other Towns who shared access to the Rail Trail to try to get DCR to come out and reconstruct the trail. Mr. Haddad said he and Mr. Cunningham could draft a letter and approach the neighboring towns. The Board was agreeable to this plan.

MINUTES

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting on June 13, 2022. Mr. Pisani seconded the motion. Roll Call: Pine, aye; Manugian-aye; Pisani-aye; Cunningham-aye; Reilly-aye

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22pm.

Approved: _____
Matthew F. Pisani, Clerk

_____ respectfully submitted: Dawn Dunbar,
Executive Assistant to the Town Manager

Date Approved: 7/11/2022