

Board of Selectmen  
Meeting Minutes  
April 6, 2021, 5:30 pm  
59 Main Street, Hatfield, MA  
Virtual GoToMeeting

Present: Chair Diana Szynal, Edmund Jaworski and Brian Moriarty.

Also in attendance: Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator; Lydia Szych, Town Clerk; Sharon Strzegowski, Treasurer/Collector; Robert Flaherty, Fire Chief; Eric Meals, Sewer Department Superintendent; Phillip Genovese, DPW Director; Claudia Sarti, COVID Coordinator; Bob Osley, Chair, Board of Health; John Pease; Eileen Dostal and K. Gow.

**CALL TO ORDER** Chairperson Szynal called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS** Chair Szynal acknowledged the passing of Buster Symanski noting that he was the electrical inspector for the Town of Hatfield for over 30 years. Chair Szynal noted that the Town is grateful for his service as he was a dedicated employee. She also noted that there is a long list of things Buster did for the Town and wanted to acknowledge him and his dedication on behalf of the Board. Chairman Jaworski noted that it's springtime and things are progressing regarding the vaccinations. He noted we are heading towards normal but remember to wash your hands, wear your masks and hang in there. Selectman Moriarty had nothing further to add.

**PUBLIC FORUM** None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** Selectman Moriarty made a motion to approve the Minutes of the regular session of February 16, 2021; executive session Minutes of February 22, 2021; and the regular session Minutes of February 22, 2021. Selectman Jaworski seconded, all in favor I, Minutes approved.

Selectman Moriarty made a motion to approve the Minutes of the regular session of March 3, 2021; executive session Minutes of March 3, 2021; regular session Minutes of March 4, 2021; regular session Minutes of March 9, 2021; executive session Minutes of March 9, 2021; regular session Minutes of March 15, 2021; executive session Minutes of March 15, 2021; regular session Minutes of March 16, 2021 and Minutes of March 23, 2021 session with the Finance Committee. Selectman Jaworski seconded, all in favor, I, Minutes approved.

**POSTED BUSINESS**

TOPIC 1: COVID Update: Claudia Sarti, COVID Coordinator updated the Board that COVID cases remain steady. In the past couple of weeks there are about five new cases a week not including a contact event at the Delaney House. The Board of Health had a few anonymous complaints about a business in town. Ms. Sarti made several attempts to contact these folks but

they never called back. The Board of Health had a complaint about another business in town that employees were not wearing masks and that was addressed by the Board of Health. They went over the COVID policy with that business. There has been a recent problem with a landscaping company in Hatfield that appears all the employees got COVID but they live out of town. Charlie Kaniecki, Health Agent, did follow up. They were shutting the business down for a period of time in order to do a disinfecting before they allowed people back in. Ms. Sarti didn't know the case count but said it could be maybe up to 12 people but none are Hatfield residents. Chair Szynal expressed concern about calling out specific businesses. Ms. Sarti said those complaints have been taken care of by the Board of Health. There has been a little activity with the school. There may have been one COVID positive case but it has not shown up in MAVEN system. Ms. Sarti has to wait for cases to show up in MAVEN to accurately account for them. These cases are steady at around 4 to 5 per week. These cases are popping up randomly and it could be students showing up from college. No one is certain where these people have picked it up. Selectman Moriarty asked why would you think that and if it is positive, why is it not in the system? Ms. Sarti's understanding is that the student is not feeling well and the student was going for testing today. There is a tremendous lag between when they go in for testing and when she gets the results. Ms. Sarti is waiting for the test results. Chair Szynal said we need to be careful putting something out there when there is no positive result. Ms. Sarti said the school nurse informed her just to give her a heads up. Selectman Moriarty said that unless we have a certain case, we don't want people overreacting. Selectman Jaworski asked if Ms. Sarti tried to contact a company about a complaint and there is no response, what can be done? Ms. Sarti told him this was not a business, it was an individual in the community who made the complaint and she has tried to contact that individual but the individual never called her back. Selectman Moriarty said to Selectman Jaworski's point, Ms. Sarti does contact tracing and MAVEN and if there is something that is going on out there the Board of Health investigates, not Ms. Sarti. Ms. Sarti is doing contract tracing and MAVEN and nothing further. Selectman Moriarty stated that is absolutely how it is supposed to work. Selectman Moriarty told Ms. Sarti that if that is not happening it needs to start immediately. Chair Szynal thanked Ms. Sarti for coming and giving the Board an update.

Chair Szynal asked that the Agenda be taken out of order.

TOPIC 13: Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades Project: Regarding the wastewater treatment plant upgrades project, Eric Meals, Sewer Department Superintendent updated the Board. Mr. Meals had a meeting about two weeks ago with Phillip Genovese, DPW Director, Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator and the engineer who is putting in for the grant. It was basically an informal meeting and Ms. Michonski thought it would be best to bring the matter before the Board. Ms. Michonski said the upgrade study is completed and is filing an application for an upgrade. Ms. Michonski said she is reviewing water/sewer enterprise fund. Chair Szynal asked if that grant requires any kind of match from the Town. Mr. Meals said yes, that grant does. The Town of Orange got the same grant and got around 3 million. Mr. Meals brought the sewer rate up in order to qualify for the grant. Ms. Michonski is putting this issue on this year's warrant but the grant money wouldn't appear until next year. Mr. Meals will submit the grant soon but he needs Ms. Michonski's signature and then we can find out more and put this issue back on a future agenda. Chair Szynal asked is there any projection on how much the grant might cover. Mr. Meals said about 35-40% of project, \$12,000,000.00 for the project.

Selectman Moriarty asked to keep the board in the loop about the generator. Selectman Moriarty said we need to make sure that Dave Crickett tells us or that he understand that we are getting the new generator and that's not going to be a problem with the grant. Selectman Moriarty said that we need to be sure it's all in sync and to be sure that are no "oops" down the road. After Town meeting, Dave Crickett wants to come in and go over parts of the master plan with the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Michonski addressed a letter to DCAM informing them that the Board declared an emergency and spelled out what the emergency was and the need to follow all requirements regarding prevailing wages and bid. M.G.L. Chapter 141 waives the bidding requirement and advertising. Ms. Michonski also said she let them know that three estimates were received. Mr. Meals gave an overview for people at home: two weeks ago there was a power outage and the generator didn't come back on. We are unable to get it repaired because it is so old you cannot get parts for the generator and the generator needs to be replaced as soon as possible because we are not sure how long it will run for. The Sewer Department needs the generator to have standby power at waste water so that water doesn't go somewhere it shouldn't. The current generator is 40 years old.

TOPIC 2: Resignations/appointments: Selectman Brian Moriarty made a motion to approve the resignation of Christine Yagodzinski from the Cultural Council, Selectman Jaworski seconded (with regret), all in favor I, motion approved.

Selectman Moriarty made a motion to approve the appointment of Lynn Lovell to the Cultural Council; Selectman Jaworski seconded, all in favor I, motion approved.

TOPIC 3: Historical Commission discussion of Historical Collection: To be rescheduled until the next Board meeting.

TOPIC 4: Zachary Langlois Legacy Craft Smokehouse BYOB letter: cancelled.

TOPIC 5: Agreement to License Property on Billings Way: Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator advised the Board that she solicited for proposals for use on Billings Way for agricultural use. One proposal was from Harrison Bardwell of Bardwell Farm. Ms. Michonski recommends the Board enter into agreement with Mr. Bardwell. Ms. Michonski informed the Board that this includes a request for him to use water from the spigot on the property used by the community garden people.

Chair Szynal asked Mr. Genovese if all agriculture spigots in town are metered. Mr. Genovese said anyone who has farm animals, the spigots are available for use. Mr. Genovese said last year there was one complaint from someone at the community garden that a hose was connected to the spigot at the community gardens. Mr. Genovese said he had a conversation with Town Administrator, Marlene Michonski saying that the spigot should be metered. Selectman Moriarty ask if that spigot was metered how would it impact the community garden people and Mr. Genovese said it would not. Chair Szynal asked do we still have sand pipes that farmers use that aren't metered? Chair Szynal further stated that Harrison would be metered and others won't. Why the difference? Selectman Moriarty pointed out the difference is that sand pipes are on the corners and if someone needs water they have to drive and bring buckets to get it. This spigot would be right there closer to the land that Harrison Bardwell uses to plant crops. Chair

Szynal said I want to be sure we are fair to Harrison. Why would some farmers have free water and Harrison have to pay? The water there is for the community gardeners. Mr. Genovese said that the community garden people are using it to fill buckets and Harrison Bardwell has hooked up a hose for use. Chair Szynal said we can approve and revisit that issue. Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator did advise Harrison Bardwell about the water issue and Harrison Bardwell said he would talk to the DPW Director. Selectman Moriarty said I think we are being fair and it's there and if he wants to use the water then he needs to pay for it. There is a difference between a spigot and a sand pipe. There is a spigot here where at other locations it's a sand pipe. Chair Szynal asked who is going to pay for it? Chair Szynal further went on to say the community garden uses the spigot which will be metered? Mr. Genovese said it will have a dual spigot, one for garden and one for Harrison. Chair Szynal still is not sure this is fair and we need to revisit it. Ms. Michonski consulted with DPW Director to install a spigot for the Bardwell Farm and use it at agricultural water rate. Ms. Michonski advised the Board that in paragraph #2 of the Agreement, the last sentence states, "Licensee shall have use of the Town's water supply available on the property and will be responsible for the cost of a meter including water usage at the agricultural rate." Chair Szynal asked Ms. Michonski if Harrison Bardwell was in agreement with this and Ms. Michonski said she did speak to Harrison Bardwell about this and that Mr. Bardwell was going to speak with the DPW Director about this. Selectman Jaworski made a motion to accept the Agreement with Harrison Bardwell, Selectman Moriarty seconded, all in favor I, motion approved.

TOPIC 6: FY21 Water and Sewer (Batch 2) billing commitment: Sharon Strzegowski, Treasurer/Collector presented the Board with the next set of water/sewer commitments. She noted that we are in line. The previous years totals were \$395,000.00; \$426,000.00 and this year was \$477,000.00. Selectman Moriarty made a motion to accept the FY21 water and sewer (batch 2) billing commitment in the amount of \$242,364.63 for water; \$233,274.66 for sewer; \$1,775.00 for fees totaling \$477,414.29. Selectman Jaworski seconded, all in favor I, motion approved.

TOPIC 7: White Rock Trail/Town Property on Mountain Road.: Town Administrator Marlene Michonski advised the Board that she received a telephone call from Mr. Aquadro who disagrees with the letter sent to him by the Board. The property owner disagrees that the property is town property. It was agreed that someone from the DPW, Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator and Mr. Gellotte should go out for a viewing. Selectman Moriarty raised the issue that if there are no clear stakes or markers where the property lines are this may become a bigger issue in that the Town may have to have the property up there surveyed and Selectman Moriarty doesn't want this becoming a bigger more expensive issue, unless there is concrete evidence showing boundary lines. Chair Szynal wants to keep it simple. A few meetings ago Rich Abbott mentioned the Environmental police stopped people who were hiking. Selectman Moriarty said there was something going on with that trail and said he thought someone from DPW or water went out there to see what is being done and if it's on town property and not to incur further costs. Mark Gellotte and Mr. Genovese need to check with him. Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator will research previous meeting minutes.

TOPIC 8: Town Hall Renovation Project Update: Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator, advised the Board that the condensate pipe at Town Hall has been repaired. Selectman Jaworski

said the pipe was a result of wearing out and the future of the boiler should be investigated because there have been a couple of breaks in the pipe. Eventually the steam system may have to be replaced. Selectman Jaworski said the project is pretty much complete. Selectman Moriarty wanted to thank everyone involved in this project.

TOPIC 9: CARES Spending Update: Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator said there is nothing to report at this time.

TOPIC 10: FY2022 Capital Planning: The Finance Committee still looking at this.

TOPIC 11: FY2022 Budget and Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles: Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator advised the Board that an Article is being placed on the warrant regarding Billings Way. Ms. Michonski asked the Board to recall last year's discussion of leasing the property for longer terms. The Cemetery Commission had concerns about the article so it was taken off. Ms. Michonski worked out an article with town counsel; however, when we voted to accept the land for municipal purposes and the property is no longer necessary for general municipal purposes and the Board of Selectmen need to vote on that issue. Chair Szynal asked does this allow us to lease for longer terms? Ms. Michonski said the article allows the Cemetery Commission to leave for 3 years, not the Selectboard. The Town owns the property but it is under the jurisdiction of the Cemetery Commission. Chair Szynal said this goes way, way back. It was done to acquire it for a long term, that would be available for recreational space. Chair Szynal said I love we are using it for farming. Selectman Moriarty asked what is the advantage/disadvantage? Selectman Moriarty asked what is gained or not gained by taking this property? Ms. Michonski said the Board of Selectmen would be responsible for licensing the property. You can do an RFP for up to three years with the option to renew. Selectmen Moriarty asked if we did this, the land would be in total control of the Cemetery Commission, is that correct? Mr. Genovese replied, the community garden sits on it. Ms. Michonski said we can table this to a later day, but the Board of Selectmen will need to vote on this eventually. The article on the Town meeting warrant would give Cemetery Commission total control of the land. Selectman Moriarty said he doesn't have a problem with the Cemetery Commission using the land. Chair Szynal let's put on next agenda. Chief Flaherty, it's under the auspices of the Town but donated specifically for Cemetery Commission purposes. We don't want anything permanent or to sell. Chief Flaherty said the Commission would like to keep it moving the same way it is, just would like to see longer agreements for five or ten years. Chair Szynal said doing a longer term agreement would benefit everyone but that we will revisit this at a later meeting.

TOPIC 12: Route 5 Water/Sewer Project: Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator advised the Board that there is nothing to report at this time. The item will continue on the Agenda until it is completed.

Attorney John McLaughlin addressed the Board of Selectman. "Madam Chairman, May I be heard on the Route 5 project?" Chair Szynal said sure. Attorney McLaughlin went on to say, "I am Attorney John McLaughlin and I represent Sue Berry who owns 34-36 West Street. If you recall in November at the special town meeting there was a vote on West Street that property is where the Waxwing Restaurant is. In November at the special town meeting there was a vote to put a raw sewage pumping station in front of the restaurant. In the front yard of the restaurant

since I was here last I didn't make much progress so I initiated a lawsuit claiming that the vote was illegal and that our engineer says that the raw sewage pumping station can go absolutely across the street in front of a residential property instead of in front of the restaurant what I've been in conversations with your lawyer and I don't want to discuss the lawsuit but what I do want to let you know is that we're contemplating filing a petition for you by more than ten voters to put an article on your regular town meeting warrant to rescind the vote from November. I discussed it with your lawyer and he is looking into it considering what that will be. I just want to let you know and that's a 15% vote and not 2/3rds and if we did succeed in getting the vote rescinded then you would be left without a pathway for your sewer so you might want to consider what to do and if you want to do an appraisal of the property across the street and consider an alternative warrant or a warrant to come into play should we succeed on our vote something along those lines. Chair Szynal said, "Yes and as you said, this is pending litigation, so." Attorney McLaughlin "well litigation could take a while but this vote is really coming up so I didn't want this to come by surprise and have you without any no pathway. We don't want to stop the project we just would like to put it across the street. That's all the time...alright, thank you very much."

TOPIC 14: Discuss Joining the Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District: Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator presented the Board a letter from Division of Local Services regarding mosquito spraying. In order to join, the cost is \$5,000.00 per year for monitoring the type of mosquitos in the Hatfield area. After some discussion, it was agreed that Hatfield would not be joining this program but it is important that the Board of Health show people how they can protect themselves. Beyond that any actual spraying or breeding areas is an ala carte as Selectman Moriarty mentioned and can run into additional funds depending on what is recommended. This is something beyond a Board of Health decision because it involves a moderate amount of money. Selectman Moriarty said we are all about controlling mosquitos and understands the reasoning for this but one of the problems I have is the \$5,000.00 membership and it only provides surveillance of mosquitos. Hatfield is next to a river and lots of woods. Paying \$5,000.00 up front and you don't know what the cost is for them to come out and do something. Chair Szynal said that if we had a case of a mosquito borne illness wouldn't we be notified anyways? Towns are part of the surveillance getting indirect information on these infection agents. Bob Osley, Chair of the Board of Health said he is seeing more EEE which was only an eastern Massachusetts disease. West Nile Virus is a mosquito borne disease. Chair Osley had concerns if they are spraying measurers recommended, how safe are the sprays. Chair Osley is a bit hesitant to throw support into that aspect of it. Chair Kaniecki was one of the people that set up the Pioneer Valley Surveillance Organization. Chair Szynal asked wouldn't we be notified if someone were infected? Chair Osley said yes but then the disease is here. We get a heads up from surrounding towns that locked into the surveillance. We assume if it's in Whately then we assume it's in Hatfield. Chair Szynal asked are there other agencies tracking this type of? Chair Osley said not really the state doesn't run any programs. Mr. Genovese stated that last year when doing Chestnut Street, there was a state vehicle and Mr. Genovese asked them what they were doing there. They said they were putting mosquito traps. Some programs are run by universities throughout the state. Chair Szynal and Selectman Moriarty asked if there is a benefit to this program? We take steps in protecting ourselves. Chair Szynal said I appreciate the information. Selectman Moriarty said

the cost is over \$5,000.00 and Chair Szynal said we are overrun by mosquitos now because we are surrounded by water. Selectman Jaworski said that for \$100.00 I will go outside and collect mosquitos! Chair Osley wanted to put something into the Council on Aging about protecting yourself but then COVID hit. Selectman Jaworski said I would rather put that \$5,000.00 into education for the town on how best to protect yourself. Selectman Jaworski agreed that the money is better spent using it in town.

Selectman Moriarty made a motion to adjourn; Selectman Jaworski seconded the motion, all in favor I. The meeting ended at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully,

Karen Brodeur  
Executive Assistant