

Present: Selectmen Brian Moriarty, Edmund Jaworski, Diana Szynal, Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator, Kerry Flaherty, COVID Coordinator, Sharon Strzegowski, Town Treasurer

Selectman Szynal called the meeting to order @5:35pm.

#### Announcements-

Selectman Szynal wished everyone happy holidays and noted there would be no meetings until after the holidays. She thanked town employees, elected and appointed personnel for stepping up to work under unusual circumstances during the past year. She then read the public participation policy.

#### Public Forum-

Kathie Gow, Hatfield Historical Society spoke concerning the museum use of the town hall 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.

#### Minutes

Selectman Moriarty moved to approve minutes of 6-11-20 and 1-21-20. Selectman Jaworski seconded. The motion was approved.

#### 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee - Bobby Betsold

Mr. Betsold provided a Luminarium update. Information has been posted on the 350<sup>th</sup> website and Facebook. He reminded about the commemorative postmark and cancellation stamp which will be available Thurs., Fri and Sat. 1-3pm. There will be no in-person activities. A visit from Santa will take place in the afternoon according to a route which will be posted. There will be fireworks launched from the pavilion area at 6:15pm, which will be visible from many parts of town. All are asked to keep their headlights on when driving through town and continue to follow covid guidelines.

Fire Chief Flaherty and Police Chief Dekoschak were thanked for their work on this. Chief Flaherty said the pavilion area will be off limits to the public 10am Saturday as fireworks are being delivered to the site.

#### Historical Society - Use of Memorial Town Hall second floor -

Kathie Gow, Bob Osley, Jeff Boyle, John Pease

Ms. Gow expressed surprise that at the Board of Selectmen's 10-17 meeting they discussed using space previously dedicated for the museum. Selectman Jaworski summarized points from a 2013 feasibility study which included estimates for HVAC, offices, upstairs at a cost of \$194,000, part of the \$5 million dollar project disapproved at Annual Town Meeting. Necessary structural work on the balcony would cost \$230-260,000 and also 3-5% additional for humidity control. It is important that townspeople should know up front what the costs will be. Also, the report from 2013 indicated the use of natural gas which is no longer allowed. Responding to a question from Selectman Szynal, Ms. Gow said the historical society manages the collection for the town.

Ms. Gow was asked if it would it be wrong if the Council on Aging used the room for exercise and she responded – yes. She said the collection is being stored but can't be accessed, and that the town hall 3<sup>rd</sup> floor is a much safer solution than the farm museum.

The Selectboard discussed with Ms. Gow safe locations for the collection and past CPC funding of an elevator for the museum. The collection needs to land somewhere on a permanent basis. Selectman Jaworski said according to the Architectural Access Board, the elevator was needed to bring town hall up to code. By his estimation it would be @250k to make the second floor appropriate to store the collection and there would be additional cost to make it a nicely functioning museum.

The Board and Ms. Gow appeared to disagree about the safest place for the collection at present. They discussed returning to Annual Town Meeting to approve any project to go forward. Selectman Jaworski listed items that would be necessary, mop sink, updated study, fire suppression. Selectman Szynal summarized that professionals need to look at this.

Bob Wagner, Committee President, agreed with Selectman Jaworski saying the State would have required the elevator for ADA compliance. He also talked about CPC support for the museum going in on the town hall 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. Selectman Szynal noted that this gets back to making it a museum and not just a storage space. Ms. Gow corrected that it is a working collection, that has been in storage for 16 months. She noted that museums need as much storage as display space.

Selectman Moriarty suggested a smaller group meet about what makes sense today and going forward. There may need to be compromises for different stakeholders because needs have changed. Selectman Jaworski said the bottom line is what townspeople want, and right now there are no environmental controls upstairs.

Mr. Pease suggested utilizing other meeting spaces in town such as the community room at Hatfield Elementary School or Smith Academy Library. Selectman Szynal noted that right now those spaces are not available. Selectman Jaworski said this is another reason not to put the cart before the horse.

It was agreed that a Board of Selectmen meeting would be arranged, possibly in early January to include the Historical Commission, the Historical Society, Mr. Genovese, Community Preservation Committee. Ms. Gow complained about the access to the collection at the storage facility saying there is no room to move around there.

**Covid Update – Kerry Flaherty, Covid Coordinator**

Ms. Flaherty currently reported 2 cases in town. She informed there are approximately 30 students/day at Smith Academy, and approximately 40 per day with 10 staff at Hatfield Elementary School. Teachers are remote. Getting students back in the building is the goal.

Board of Health/COVID Coordinator will not allow basketball nor winter sports. Level 1, i.e. drills, and practice was discussed at the Board of Health meeting. For mental health reasons there is a need to get kids active, starting 1/11. A true basketball season is too much of a risk. Selectman Moriarty said sports, arts, and music are part of students' education. Ms. Flaherty said it would be limited to 12 kids. Selectman Szynal thanked Ms. Flaherty for the good update.

**Appointment –**

Selectman Moriarty moved to appoint Heather Cahill as the school representative to the CIPC for a 1-year term. Selectman Jaworski seconded. The motion was approved.

**Annual License Renewals –**

Selectman Moriarty moved to approve relicensing of businesses as presented. Selectman Jaworski seconded. Selectman Szynal thanked executive assistant, Ki Eno for doing this.

#### Virtual Outreach Permission-

Ms. Michonski explained the Board had already approved a host community agreement for River Valley Growers. Bernie Smiarowski submitted a draft letter requesting a virtual community outreach meeting in connection to his application with the Cannabis Control Commission. There being no questions on this item, Selectman Moriarty moved to approve the virtual outreach meeting request for River Valley Growers. Selectman Jaworski seconded. The motion was approved.

#### Financial Update-

Tax recap has been reviewed by DLS but the town needed to submit additional supporting documentation, and is now waiting for approval. Accountant is reconciled through November. Treasurer's Office is also reconciled through November. A predicted snow storm was mentioned and Selectman Moriarty commented that we have the best plowed streets in Western Mass.

Ms. Michonski addressed CARES Act expenses at the Board's request. Funding allocated was \$289,543. The school has returned some items. She mentioned some eligible expenses, school maintenance and a webcam, and that we are still incurring expenses. As of Friday, she expects to expend \$254,000 as a whole. Ms. Strzegowski said there is 1 more payroll in this month; she asked the Board to consider the funding of the Covid Coordinator position when the CARES line item is no longer available.

The Board briefly discussed with Ms. Strzegowski how to continue funding necessary Covid related expenses until a possible stimulus funding solution is available. Selectman Moriarty assured that the Finance Committee will be involved and that in the case of Covid related expenses that there is permission to deficit spend. Ms. Michonski will notify DOR.

Selectman Jaworski said Merry Christmas to all and moved to adjourn. Selectman Moriarty seconded and also said Merry Christmas. Selectman Szynal thanked John Novak for recording the meeting. All voting in favor the motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 7:11pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ki J. Eno  
Executive Assistant