

Board of Selectmen Meeting:
Memorial Town Hall Conference Room
Chairman:

12-17-2019 @ 11:00am
Approved: 2-4-2020
Selectman Brian Moriarty

Present: Selectmen Brian Moriarty, Edmund Jaworski, Diana Szynal, and Town Administrator, Marlene Michonski,

Selectman Moriarty opened the meeting at 11:00am.

Announcements –

Selectman Moriarty said Housing & Economic Development Secretary, Mike Kennealy presented the town with a MassWorks grant award for \$2million dollars. Selectman Jaworski said Selectman Moriarty gave a nice presentation. Selectman Moriarty thanked others for their efforts as well. Selectman Szynal noted candles for the cake are \$25/each and available at town hall or at other events, basketball games. There are 350. Luminarium will be this Saturday night. The ceremony starts at 6 o'clock and will include lighting of the cake. Handbells are at 7:00. The weather is expected to be chilly but dry.

Ms. Michonski informed that the town received DOR notification and the tax rate of \$13.53 has been set. Selectman Moriarty thanked the finance team, Ms. Strzegowski, Tax Collector and Jenni Polverari, Assessor's Clerk. Last year it was \$13.89.

Selectman Moriarty read the Selectboard announcement regarding the Open Meeting Law.

Public Forum- Resident David Keir asked that there be an article at Annual Town Meeting regarding the work of the Town Government Committee. He said he hopes this won't be forgotten adding there should be consideration by the town.

Minutes

Selectman Jaworski moved to approve Board of Selectmen meeting minutes of 7-23, executive session of 7-23, 8-22, and 11-25. Ms. Szynal seconded. The motion was approved.

Annual License Renewals –

Ms. Szynal moved to approve annual town Liquor licenses, Class I, II & III licenses, Automatic Amusement Device and Entertainment licenses as presented. Selectman Jaworski seconded. All being in agreement, the motion was approved.

Finance Director Position-

A candidate had applied and had been interviewed but declined the position. This person would have been finance director/accountant. The position has been re-advertised. Two businesses, PVPC and Melanson-Heath have expressed interest. Selectman Moriarty, Ms. Strzegowski, Ms. Michonski and the Finance Committee have met with them and they will be asked to come back. The Town will continue the AP process with a person from Baystate who is going out on her own.

Selectman Moriarty reported that Baystate Accounting Services is going out of business in 2 weeks. Someone is in place to do the daily accounting services. Both of the businesses are being asked to come back as interviews have been at a high level. The Treasurer's office will do its own reconciliation. Justin Cole has been asked to provide the status of FY19, FY20 and his transition plan.

DPW Director Report-

Mr. Genovese said today we received a \$2 million grant for Route 5. Comprehensive Environmental is now surveying. Selectman Moriarty said this was a team effort. Housing & Economic Development Secretary, Mike Kennealy came from Boston, Representative Lindsey Sabodoso and Senator Jo Comerford were also here. Ms. Michonski asked Mr. Genovese if this would be for the next construction season. Mr. Genovese answered that the main focus is the final design. Comprehensive Environmental is to send a letter about elevations and gravity systems. This will impact the final cost. Selectman Moriarty clarified that the proposal is \$3.6 million overall, but we have over half the money now. This presents huge benefits as many are looking for the opportunity to hook up to water/sewer. The \$2 million will take care of about 55% of the cost. We need to do due diligence for the Town Clerk for Annual Town Meeting.

Mr. Genovese said businesses are also getting a benefit from this. Selectman Szynal agreed and said there are additional benefits such as better fire protection, and the disabling of septic systems near the aquifer.

Town Administrator Report

Ms. Michonski said that Jeff Boyle is now unable to serve on the Fire Chief Screening Committee. Selectman Szynal moved to accept his resignation. Selectman Jaworski seconded the motion with regret. The motion was approved.

Ms. Michonski suggests a person from the Finance Committee. Selectman Szynal suggested running this idea by the Finance Committee. Town Clerk, Lydia Szych said the charter for this group will have to be updated. Bylaws don't allow a member of the Finance Committee to serve on another Board.

Fire Chief Employment Posting – Ms. Michonski said she had some requests for clarification and consulted with retired chiefs from the Fire Chiefs Association. She would like to re-advertise if the Board agrees with the changes. Some changes were made to the minimum requirements and distance from town.

Selectman Szynal moved to accept the changes to the job posting for the Fire Chief as presented. Selectman Jaworski seconded. The motion was approved.

HR Policy Review –

Ms. Michonski said town counsel has reviewed and made some minor edits, inserting language regarding driving during the workday while intoxicated, and intoxicated while on town time. The Selectmen discussed this briefly with Ms. Michonski.

Selectman Szynal moved to accept section 23 of the HR policy as revised. Selectman Jaworski seconded. The motion was approved.

Town Hall Renovation Update – Selectman Moriarty thanked everybody today for making access safe for Secretary Kennealy and Channel 22. Ms. Michonski noted that contractors were asked

to cease operations during our presentation event. They are in the process of finishing up the elevator shaft. They have also poured concrete for the ramp.

Fire Chief has a plan for safety around Town Hall during the Luminarium. Town Clerk, Lydia Szych noted that the presidential primary is March 3rd, and there are 3 days of early voting. There is an issue with the door at the temporary ramp has an issue with the door. Voting may have to be in the safety complex room for early voting or the presidential primary. Ms. Michonski said it is pretty certain that the new ramp will not be completed in time for this. Selectman Moriarty said let's assume it won't be ready. So someone needs to coordinate this with the Fire Chief.

Selectman Jaworski said the schedule states the end of the month, December. Selectman Moriarty said if we can keep everybody out of here, sprinkler work might be done.

Selectman Moriarty moved that due to construction, the Town Clerk insert in the tax bills that voting will be at the Fire Department. Ms. Szynal seconded. The motion was approved.

Ms. Michonski said a Colonial Power Group letter has been mailed to all eligible residents. Questions may be directed to her office. Eversource will remain your power company but residents will be transferred over to a new supplier, at a lower rate. This is about who supplies the energy to Eversource. She said there was information in the newspaper and it is posted on the website. Information sessions will be held at town hall tomorrow at 1:00 and at 4:00. Selectman Moriarty gave an example of the phone company being broken up for long distance carriers. Bills will still come from Eversource.

Selectman Szynal moved to adjourn. Selectman Jaworski seconded. The motion was approved and the meeting ended at 12:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ki J. Eno
Executive Assistant