

Board of Selectmen Meeting

April 7, 2020, 5:30pm  
Approved: May 19, 2020

Via Zoom Webinar

Brian Moriarty, Chair

Present: Selectmen Brian Moriarty, Edmund Jaworski, Diana Szynal, Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator, Fire Chief Robert Flaherty, Lydia Szych, Town Clerk, Sharon Strzegowski, Asst. Town Treasurer/Collector

#### Announcements

A Hatfield egg hunt via Facebook is being held for 2 weeks in April. Those interested can display decorated eggs so families can drive around and see them. Also, planned is a display of lights called Light Unites Us, on Saturday April 18<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. Candles such as used at Luminarium or Christmas lights can be used. Patty and John Hentzs are credited with this effort.

Ms. Michonski noted that the town reports MEMA updates on the town website. Selectman Moriarty thanked Board members, Ms. Michonski, the Fire and Police Departments, the Board of Health, and Kerry Flaherty in particular. Town buildings and restaurants continue to be closed.

Selectman Szynal echoed Selectman Moriarty's commendation of Kerry Flaherty and also said she still sees kids out playing together and asked that parents have their children follow social distancing. It upsets residents to see this.

Chief Flaherty informed of other callers and Selectman Moriarty called for public comments. No comments were forthcoming so Selectman Moriarty continued with the meeting.

#### Approval of Minutes

Selectman Jaworski moved to approve meeting minutes of March 3, 2020 with one edit. Selectman Szynal seconded and the motion was approved.

Meeting minutes of March 16, 2020, October 9, 2019 and September 25, 2019 were approved on a motion by Selectman Szynal seconded by Selectman Jaworski. All voting in favor, the motion was approved.

Ms. Michonski said residents with questions about doing town business can contact her or the town clerk. Selectman Moriarty clarified that any questions about COVID19 should go to the Board of Health. Selectman Szynal thanked town employees for working under stressful conditions.

Ms. Szych discussed with the Board the possibility of postponing the town annual election. She explained that though Annual Town Meeting may be postponed until after

June 30, according to current information, she must have elections before then. Board of Selectmen, and Finance Committee are scheduled to meet with Melanson Heath on April 21, and could maybe discuss an Annual Town Meeting delay.

Selectman Moriarty said Massachusetts is not expected to peak with the virus for another month. A safe date should be selected, or regroup in May to see if we can do these in June.

Ms. Szych said she would like to move town election and set the date, as the state has opened early voting for municipal elections. She said early voting via ballot by mail would possibly involve hundreds of ballots, which need to be ordered for printing with up to 5 weeks lead time.

Selectman Szynal moved that pursuant to Sec 1, Chpt 45 of the Acts of 2020 and because of the Governor's declaration of a state of emergency to respond to COVID19 annual town elections scheduled for May 19<sup>th</sup> 2020 be postponed to a future date to be determined at the next or later selectmen's meeting. The motion was seconded by Selectman Jaworski. All voting in favor, the motion was approved. Selectman Jaworski said things are changing daily. Selectman Szynal asked Ms. Szych to bring a timeline of what voters can expect backtracked from the given date.

Selectman Szynal moved that the voting location for the Town of Hatfield be moved back to the town hall, 59 Main Street. Selectman Jaworski seconded. There being no further discussion all voted aye. The motion was approved.

Selectman Moriarty spoke with town moderator, Joe Lavallee regarding the election. Selectman Moriarty said depending on the town's circumstances it could be a town meeting could be held where only absolutely necessary things were addressed with the possibility of regrouping and wrap up whatever doesn't get done in the Fall. Selectman Szynal questioned whether people would feel comfortable coming to a meeting where a quorum of 75 is required even if restrictions are lifted for such a number.

Ms. Strzegowski explained a ruling from the governor regarding a 30 day extension for the payment of real estate taxes. Residents would be encouraged to pay if they can but the Collector would have the ability to say if someone is in a situation then they could have an extension. She said this information would have to be posted and towns can use social media to communicate with residents rather than send letters. Residents would not need to call to request this, everyone would have the extra 30 days automatically. Selectman Moriarty thanked Ms. Strzegowski for her explanation. Selectman Jaworski moved to grant the 30 day extension but we do encourage people to pay if they can. Selectman Szynal seconded. Selectman Moriarty said the motion was made and seconded to instruct the treasurer/collector's office to follow the state guidelines that came out from the governor's office which is basically that for those who need it, to extend the real estate tax due date from May 1<sup>st</sup>. to June 1<sup>st</sup>. All voting in favor, the motion was approved.

#### Water/Sewer Billing Commitment

Selectman Szynal moved to approve the water bill commitment in the amount of \$242,478.90. Selectman Jaworski seconded. All voting in favor, the motion was approved.

Selectman Jaworski moved to authorize the sewer bill commitment in the amount of \$184,242.24. Selectman Szynal seconded. All voting in favor, the motion was approved.

Fees were posted in water for \$250 for a connection.

Selectman Jaworski moved to accept the 2020 fees posted against the water batch 2M in the amount of \$250.00. Selectman Szynal seconded. The motion was approved.

Ms. Michonski said the total is \$426,971.14 in the billing cycle.

#### Historical Commission Appointments

Selectman Szynal asked if the resignation of Lynn Omasta had been received.

Selectman Szynal moved to appoint Catherine Olsen and Elizabeth Denny to the Historical Commission to fill vacancies left by the passing of Charles Kellogg and the resignation of Lynn Omasta and also to recognize Charles' many years of service to the town and Lynn's many years of service to the town and we thank her very much.

Selectman Jaworski seconded. All voting in favor, the motion was approved.

A proposed agricultural committee policy was presented to the Board of Selectmen by Bob Wagner. Ms. Michonski has forwarded this to town counsel but has not heard back from him. Selectman Szynal remarked that item 3 was unclear. Ms. Michonski agreed saying reference to a building lot defeats the purpose of an APR.

#### Designate Zoning Board of Appeals as special municipal employees pursuant to Chpt 68A , Sec 17C -

Ms. Michonski explained she had received a request from a ZBA member who would also like to do business with the town. He would have to file a disclosure with the town. The Board had done something like this in the past with the cemetery commission. Ms. Michonski had advised this person to check with the state ethics commission.

Selectman Moriarty and Selectman Szynal asked for more information. She would like to have information come from the state ethics commission and not pay town counsel to do this. Ms. Michonski said in packet was a document outlining the definition of special municipal employee. Selectman Szynal asked to table this until the Board has more information.

#### Billings Way lease agreement

Ms. Michonski recommended leasing the 2.5 acres to the one RFP respondent, Harrison Bardwell Pursuant to the RFP.

Selectman Szynal moved to grant a license to use the property to Harrison Bardwell as presented. Selectman Jaworski seconded. The motion was approved.

Selectman Szynal asked if in future this lease could be on a longer term. Ms. Michonski discussed with the Board the steps necessary to allow a longer lease period, saying pursuant to procurement policy, town authorization is needed for lease terms of longer than 3 years. Selectman Szynal said discussion of longer leases also needs to involve the Cemetery Commission.

Selectman Szynal thanked Harrison for farming this land.

FY19 update-

Ms. Michonski received an update from Melanson Heath last week. They are reviewing grants, revolving funds, and receivables. They've spent time analyzing data and continue to reconcile. The Board will meet with Melanson Heath on 4-21. Selectman Szynal said this will have to be done as a zoom meeting.

Continued old business-

FY21 budget/warrant articles, ballot questions

Ms. Michonski has prepared a ballot question related to the route 5 water/sewer project, to fund 1.6 mil by debt exclusion. Selectman Moriarty explained the project cost is 3.6 mil and town received over 50% via a 2 million dollar grant from MassWorks.

Selectman Szynal said it's good for townspeople to know that this will allow for business expansion so some costs will be recouped. It is money well spent. Ms. Michonski noted that Steibel Eltron is developing properties as a result of this. Selectman Moriarty said a number of residents were happy to have the option to hook on to the sewer system. Selectman Szynal said this would also allow residents to disconnect their septic systems which are in an aquifer recharge area and would expand fire protection there, too. Design and survey work is nearing completion.

Selectman Jaworski moved the Town of Hatfield be allowed to exempt from the provisions of Proposition 2 and 1 half, so called, the amounts to pay for the bond issued in order to fund the route 5 sewer and water infrastructure project. Selectman Szynal seconded. All voting in favor, the motion was approved. This is the ballot question and the article would have the amount.

Town Hall Renovation

Selectman Jaworski said a compromise was reached regarding a bill for over \$6500 that has been in discussion for the outside ramp. The town will now pay \$1509.31. Selectman Moriarty thanked Selectman Jaworski, Ms. Michonski, Mr. Genovese and Mr. Kyle Scott, inspector. Selectman Jaworski said it is a group effort. Selectman Szynal said Selectman Jaworski has done a great job representing the Board. She said she hopes for a nice grand opening.

Ms. Michonski reminded the Board that their last vote excluded this amount.

Selectman Szynal moved to approve the amount of \$1509.31. Selectman Jaworski seconded. All voting in favor, the motion was approved.

Ms. Michonski asked the Board's approval to allow ArchitecureEL to extend their services at a rate of \$100/day for 6 weeks, if necessary for additional costs associated with project administration, with a cap of \$6000. Selectman Jaworski urged making sure they document everything concerning the back ramp.

Selectman Jaworski moved to approve this. Selectman Szynal seconded. Selectman Moriarty said the Board relies on the work Ms. Michonski and Selectman Jaworski have been doing. All voting in favor, the motion was approved. Ms. Michonski said, hopefully it won't take the extra 6 weeks.

Selectman Jaworski thanked everybody for their efforts in this current situation. Selectman Jaworski moved to adjourn and Selectman Szynal seconded. The motion was approved. The meeting ended at 6:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ki J. Eno  
Executive Assistant