

Board of Selectmen Meeting  
Via MS Teams

June 2, 2020, 6:15pm  
Diana Szynal, Chair  
Approved September 8, 2020

Present: Selectmen Brian Moriarty, Edmund Jaworski, Diana Szynal, Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator, Lydia Szych, Town Clerk, Kerry Flaherty, Board of Health, Bob Flaherty, Fire Chief  
Finance Committee members Sean Barry, Darryl Williams, Betsy Rider, Diane Brzozowski, Kim Baker, Collector Sharon Strzegowski, Town Moderator Joe Lavallee

Ms. Szynal called the meeting to order @6:20pm.

Ms. Szynal announced Incorporation Day, Sunday, and thanked the 350<sup>th</sup> Committee for a nice event, in particular, Cher Nicholas and John Novak for filming it. She also thanked Fire and Police Departments for a Smith Academy seniors parade in town. Ms. Szynal read the public participation guidelines.

#### Public Forum-

Resident, Mike Cahill asked to have a Q&A session during public forum. Ms. Szynal said she would give consideration to this but meetings must be managed. The Town Hall renovations overage will be completely explained to townspeople.

#### Covid 19 Update-

Next week is supposed to be Phase 2 from MA state gov perspective. Kerry Flaherty described a letter to be sent out to town restaurants regarding outdoor service. Meetings still need to be virtual. Memorial Town Hall will be open 2 days/week to the public. Selectman Moriarty gave guidelines for Memorial Town Hall opening.

Ms. Michonski discussed with the Board, the COVID19 Coordinator position. This is a temporary appointment @ 20 hours/week. She listed the responsibilities of the position, and the funding. The position expires Dec 31 or at the governor's removal of the state of emergency. It was agreed the town should have a point person to serve as a COVID19 liaison to government agencies. Police Chief brought Kerry Flaherty's name forward as it doesn't make sense starting from scratch when Ms. Flaherty has been doing this work already. Ms. Michonski said the Board of Health was made special municipal employees several years ago.

Selectman Jaworski requested legal make sure of the special municipal employee status. Selectman Moriarty moved to temporarily appoint Kerry Flaherty to the position of COVID19 Coordinator for the town. Selectman Jaworski seconded. Selectman Szynal asked to make sure all necessary filings be done with the ethics commission asap. All voting in favor, the motion was approved.

Ms. Michonski, The Board and Finance Committee went through the budget page by page. On the Budget recap sheet a 2% COLA was added to department lines. Based on last week's discussion free cash and other available funds numbers have changed. Article 7 was discussed. It deals with the repurposing of funds, some of which could possibly be used for the Memorial Town Hall renovation project, and or costs for the Council on Aging renovation. Ms. Michonski noted prior year expenses had increased from the amount reported last week. The Accountant recommends taking these expenses from free cash. Balance issues must be resolved in order for the state to fully refund our free cash.

Ms. Strzegowski was asked to address the collections. She said last year was pretty accurate, and she is confident in the number for FY21. Planning Board is requesting more money for consultants regarding cannabis. Ms. Rider said there should be money for expertise. Mr. Williams suggested this might be addressed in the Fall. Mr. Barry said up to 5% of local revenues, or \$365,898.00 can be put into finance reserve from free cash. Ms. Rider wished to discuss the public works mechanic/motor pool cost listed as \$64,600.00, asking how it is determined when a vehicle is worth maintaining. A decision is made by more than one person, and includes a department head, the mechanic and DPW.

Budget requests included increases for transfer station because of higher recycling costs, library, well testing, hauling, and

Police Department for holsters and tasers. Regarding 2% COLAs Mr. Barry said this question comes up every year and it's hard to decide this when you're doing the budget. Veterans services and benefits was briefly discussed. We are obligated to pay this but according to Ms. Strzegowski we get 75% back.

Ms. Strzegowski reported items coming off town debt to be the Smith Academy roof and windows, and Memorial Town Hall roof, with Memorial Town Hall Renovation Phase II as new debt. Ms. Michonski detailed a deficit in the renovation construction at Memorial Town Hall, saying the town incurred costs beyond its control. Selectman Szynal said there are things you can't anticipate during a project. In response to a question from Mr. Williams regarding possible recourse with the architect, Ms. Michonski said it could be taken up with town counsel.

Selectman Jaworski outlined factors that contributed to cost overages including an elevator pit and pump, changes to the kitchen, and going out to bid after 8 years with costs having gone up and codes having changed. Ms. Szynal asked for a final deficit figure which was then reported to be \$384334 after applying the repurposed funds of \$61517. Because these are bills which have to be paid now to avoid ending this FY on a deficit Mr. Williams asked Ms. Strzegowski and Ms. Michonski to come up with a budgeting solution.

The Finance Committee and Board members discussed excess levy capacity, what amount to put into free cash and trying to anticipate local revenues. Mr. Williams noted that monies put in stabilization would need a 2/3 vote to take out. Mr. Barry said a 2/3 vote might be problematic in future. Selectman Moriarty noted uncertainty in the next few years, but we have to prepare as best we can. An article to fund stabilization can be done from the floor. Ms. Michonski said such an article can be without a sum of money and it could be decided not to take up that article if we're not going to put any money there. Selectman Szynal took up the articles. She said the Board needs to finalize and sign the warrant so it can be posted on time. The next meeting will be 6pm on the 8<sup>th</sup>.

A brief discussion of capital projects centered on which items might be taken up in the fall. Ms. Szynal addressed Annual Town Meeting saying everyone feels we need to meet at the pavilion. Selectman Moriarty would like to have it at Smith Academy but feels people would prefer to be outdoors. Mr. Lavallee said Police Chief Dekoschak and Fire Chief Flaherty will do handouts and ask folks to bring lawn chairs and bug spray.

Selectman Szynal said the Board would like to have the 10% quorum as an option if necessary. As per the Fire Chief masks and hand sanitizers will have to be available. Mr. Lavallee said we will have counters and can bring a megaphone. Picnic tables would have seating on just one side, and there will be an additional tent in the parking lot. Firefighter volunteers will help with people coming in, there will be 2 lines 6' apart marked out with cones. Attendees must use hand sanitizer when entering. Mr. Lavallee said if someone chooses not to wear a mask they will be asked to leave. The Fire and Police Chiefs, and Kerry Flaherty have done much behind the scenes planning work.

Ms. Michonski will post the Board for Monday night. Town meeting may be at 6 because of the lighting. The new time can be included in the warrant. Ms. Flaherty said she is planning for organic mosquito repellant to be done prior to or on the day of town meeting. Selectman Szynal said this is an excellent idea. Selectman Jaworski moved to have Annual Town Meeting at the pavilion. Selectman Moriarty seconded. All voting in favor the motion was approved.

Mr. Williams addressed additional Finance Committee business. A member is asked to be on the screening committee for the treasurer/collector position. Kim Baker volunteered. Joe Lavallee thanked emergency planning, Board of Health, Board of Selectmen and Finance for all the work they are doing.

Selectman Moriarty moved to adjourn. Selectman Jaworski seconded. The motion was approved and the meeting ended at 9:04pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ki J. Eno  
Executive Assistant