

Board of Selectmen Meeting
Memorial Town Hall Conference Room & Teams

Oct. 20, 2020, 5:30pm
Diana Szyal, Chair
Approved: Nov. 17, 2020

Present: Selectmen Brian Moriarty, Edmund Jaworski, Diana Szyal, Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator, Kerry Flaherty, COVID Coordinator, Sharon Strzegowski, Treasurer/Collector, Phil Genovese, DPW Director, Lydia Szych, Town Clerk

Selectman Szyal called the meeting to order @5:30pm and read the public participation policy.

Announcements-

The first of the municipal vulnerability preparedness meetings and a kayaking trip legislative delegation were described. Selectman Jaworski went to PVPC where climate change, COVID19 and effects and an increased Hatfield unemployment rate were discussed. Selectman Moriarty thanked Selectman Szyal for representing Hatfield for the CT river tour. John Novak, Bobby Betsold and Anna Holhut were thanked for the 350th drive in concert.

Selectman Moriarty noted the school is hosting a Spooktacular for Halloween. Those interested were directed to the Hatfield PTA website.

Ms. Szych encouraged people to come to early voting because COVID restrictions will precipitate longer waits on election day. Early voting schedules are available at several locations. A new, larger drop box has been ordered. She mentioned there are many fail safes so people can't vote twice. gave us an extra tabulator received from the State can be purchased for \$150 after the election. Selectman Szyal thanked residents for taking advantage of different voting opportunities. Selectman Moriarty read the current Board and committee vacancies and encouraged those interested to fill out an application under volunteers on the website

COVID Coordinator-

Ms. Flaherty reported no new cases in Hatfield this week. One case from last week has come off quarantine. She discussed with the Board CARES money spending, communications with the school regarding these funds and the expansion of the COVID Coordinator job to a FT position. Ms. Michonski said the school has received the list of expenditures that are eligible. She said she and Chief Flaherty have the right to scrutinize the bills. Selectman Moriarty said we have no problem supporting the schools but this is not a blank checkbook and we have other departments.

Selectman Szyal asked for a financial meeting with the school to go through submitted CARES related expenditures. Selectman Moriarty asked the schools to tell us what they're not going to use so items can be returned to get money back. Selectman Jaworski said tell them to stop purchasing until we can have that meeting. Martin MacEvoy and Chief Flaherty should be there.

Selectman Moriarty asked Ms. Michonski to send email to department heads notifying of a time out on CARES requests. COVID Coordinator funding and duties were discussed. There is concern about businesses in town. Ms. Flaherty was thanked for all the work she does. Selectman Jaworski said it takes a village to raise a child, but takes a COVID team to protect a Town.

Ms. Flaherty informed where people can get tested: HCC, Hadley Medexpress, all the hospitals, and UMass affiliates. People can also search online for tests. People are encouraged to get flu shots. Geri Rodgers and the Council on Aging were thanked for the flu clinic for which 55 people turned out. The s morning school child symptom report was discussed with Ms. Flaherty saying there is no excuse because it is well advertised. Yet 60% are not doing it.

Minutes-

Selectman Moriarty moved to approve the minutes of 7-9-20. Selectman Jaworski seconded. The motion was approved.

Appointments-

Election workers Susan Moreman, Hannah Collins Wolfe and Renee Greenfield were appointed on a motion by Selectman Jaworski seconded by Selectman Moriarty.

Water/Sewer Abatements-

Mr. Genovese presented 3 abatement requests. The Board discussed the necessary documentation for requests.

Selectman Moriarty moved to approve the abatement request for 480 Main Street. Selectman Jaworski seconded.

Selectman Moriarty moved to deny the abatement request for 44 Plain Road as it isn't pool related. Selectman Jaworski seconded, but asked to make sure they are aware of the criteria. Mr. Genovese explained the procedure if a resident feels the meter is wrong. The Town will test it, but if it is working correctly the resident must pay \$150 plus their bill.

Selectman Moriarty suggested taking no action on the Primrose Path request because more information is necessary.

Financial Update-

Ms. Michonski reported that auditors worked last week on FY20 audit and asked for additional information for FY21. She can report out at the next meeting. Ms. Strzegowski noted that 6 months were Baystate's. End of year is still in progress. The tax classification hearing is 11-17 with the Assessors.

Town Hall Conference/Meeting Space-

Ms. Michonski opened a conversation regarding the need for adequate meeting space. She said various boards and committees have meetings on the same night and seek this conference room. Also, this room is not quite suitable for screens, and some Planning Board meetings have been too big for this room. Proper space for HCTV is also something to be considered.

Selectman Jaworski commented that the upstairs area is not set up for a museum as it does not have an HVAC system capable of humidity control nor a display area. This is a town hall and we need meeting space. Mr. Genovese explained that the Board voted the space to the museum as part of the 1st \$5 million dollar renovation plan, which failed at town meeting. In that plan there was going to be a complete second floor. John Novak, HCTV manager described his need for studio and storage space. Board members expressed an interest in seeing the space upstairs.

Special Town Meeting-

Ms. Michonski mentioned the new vehicle/equipment lease which is a 5-year lease and so needs a town meeting vote though the money is already in the line item. Mr. Genovese named vehicles that are expected to be purchased as a transportation van, dump truck for DPW, mower for fields/town properties, and mini excavator for the Water Department. An article for this was sent to town counsel. The warrant will be approved at a future meeting.

The Board then discussed the State provision to reduce the quorum required for town meeting because of COVID and the necessary notice publication. The number could be as low as 8 but a

notice must be published at least 7 days before Nov. 21st. Ms. Szych, town clerk explained that the purpose of the notice is that they will vote on the quorum the night of town meeting.

Selectman Moriarty moved the Board of Selectmen publish a notice at least 7 days before the Nov. 21st 2020 Special Town Meeting to consider taking steps to reduce the quorum during the COVID19 crisis with the approval of the moderator that the quorum can be reduced to a number as low as 10% of what it otherwise would be, and therefore, pursuant to the Town of Hatfield bylaws specify as a quorum of 75 could be as low as 8. Selectman Jaworski seconded. Ms. Szych noted that the Board needed to specify the date of the meeting at which they would vote on the quorum.

During discussion Selectman Moriarty read motions to be made at upcoming meetings regarding the reduced quorum. He said I move that the Board of Selectmen post a notice that on Nov. 4, 2020 they will consider taking steps to reduce the quorum. The notice of the new quorum gets posted 7 days before Nov. 21st.

Selectman Moriarty read – I move that on Nov 4th the Board of Selectmen will decide to reduce the quorum during the COVID19 crisis, with the approval of the moderator to reduce the number as low as 10% than it otherwise would be therefore per the Town of Hatfield bylaws which specifies a quorum of 75 could be as low as 8. This motion would be for next Wednesday and would at that time be seconded.

And then, Selectman Moriarty read – I move the Board of Selectmen publish a notice at least 7 days before the November 21st Special Town Election advising what the quorum is.

Ms. Szych conferred with the Board and Ms. Michonski regarding the wording of the necessary motions. Selectman Szynal said the motion Selectman Moriarty just made about having a discussion Nov. 4th about reducing the quorum is all that is needed tonight. Selectman Jaworski withdrew his second of Selectman Moriarty's motion. Then Selectman Moriarty withdrew his motion.

Selectman Moriarty moved that the Board of Selectmen publish a notice at least 7 days before Nov 4th 2020 to consider taking steps to reduce the quorum for Special Town Meeting on Nov. 21st in alignment with the COVID19 crisis with the approval of the moderator that the quorum can be reduced to a number as low as 10% of what it otherwise would be and therefore pursuant to the Town of Hatfield bylaws which specifies a quorum of 75 could be as low as 8. Selectman Jaworski seconded. The motion was approved. Selectman Moriarty clarified the Board would meet in 2 weeks to discuss with the moderator what will be the quorum for Special Town Meeting on Nov. 21st.

Contract Award for Route 5 Water/Sewer Phase 1 Project-

Ms. Michonski reminded that at the last meeting the Board of Selectmen awarded the contract to the second lowest bidder because of work done poorly on a prior project by the low bidder. However, there is a lack of documentation on the complaints. There needs to be a process for complaints in future. Mr. Genovese said all filed complaints were turned over to the consulting engineer through CEI, but that was verbal. Selectman Szynal said we have concerns about running into the same type of problems on a larger project on a busier road.

Ryan Gueleher from Gueleher Enterprises, Inc. explained the patch work done by his company. Selectman Szynal explained concerns about the previous project was left and said the next project is on a road heavily traveled and controlled by the state. There will be a bond with DOT and the town, and a warranty period with stringent specs. Mr. Genovese said communication was lacking on Chestnut St, which was a big problem. This time CEI is providing a person to watch for problems.

MA DOT, Mr. Genovese, and Chief Dekoschak should be part of the pre-construction meeting and

there needs to be a clear communication process. Issues or concerns should be shared with the contractor. Mr. Genovese said it has to start on 11-4, and MA DOT will regulate it, though most work won't happen until Spring. Someone from the Board of Selectmen should attend the kick off process. Internal communication is important and we need to get back to whoever reaches out to us.

Selectman Moriarty moved the Route 5 water and sewer improvement project contract be awarded to Geeleher Construction. Selectman Jaworski seconded because of new information and advice from legal counsel. Selectman Szynal will do it on advice from legal and assurances from Mr. Geeleher that there will be a different scenario on 5 & 10 than was had on Chestnut Street. Ms. Michonski corrected that the name is Geeleher Enterprises.

Selectman Moriarty amended his motion to be rather than Geeleher Contractors to be Geeleher Enterprises, Incorporated. Selectman Jaworski seconded. This can be made do-able with communication. A member of the Board of Selectmen will be at the kickoff meeting.

All voting in favor, the motion was approved. Selectman Szynal said Geeleher will be held to their assurances.

Mr. Genovese gave an update of the solar project at the school.

Ms. Michonski presented a telework policy. It was sent to departments but she received only 2 responses. Police Chief said it should exclude emergency personnel. Selectman Szynal wants to formulate this policy for beyond COVID. She said this is for special circumstances and we are here to serve the public. She would like to talk about this at a department heads meeting and asked Ms. Michonski to send out the second draft.

Selectman Jaworski moved to adjourn. Selectman Moriarty seconded. The motion was approved and the meeting ended at 8:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ki J. Eno
Executive Assistant