

Approved: November 16, 2021

Select Board
Meeting Minutes
November 2, 2021, 5:30 pm
59 Main Street, Hatfield, MA
Virtual GoToMeeting

Present: Select Board Chair Diana Szynal and Members Edmund Jaworski and Brian Moriarty. Also present were Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator; Phil Genovese, DPW Director; Claudia Sarti, COVID Coordinator; Robert Flaherty, Fire Chief; Lydia Szych, Town Clerk; Mimi Kaplan, PVPC; Lawrence "Doc" Pruyne of The Reminder

CALL TO ORDER Chair Szynal called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

PUBLIC FORUM Lydia Szych, Town Clerk, presented before the Select Board to discuss the day of luminarium. Ms. Szych reminded the Board that the Townspeople voted at Town Meeting on May 8, 2000 that the luminarium event would be held on the Sunday before the 24th of December. Ms. Szych said the date has been changed in the past two years because of COVID and the 350th. Ms. Szych encouraged the Board not to move the date to Saturday and keep it on Sunday.

ANNOUNCEMENTS Chair Szynal announced the passing of Bob Bartlett who was elected to the Planning Board in 1973 and served on the Planning Board for 43 years until he resigned in 2016. He also worked for the Town for many years. Chair Szynal also announced the passing of Dorothy Smarz who served on the Board of Selectmen from 1990 to 1996. The Select Board sends their condolences to the families. Chair Szynal announced that the Old Mill Inn Café and Bar is now open to the public. Selectman Moriarty congratulated the boys' soccer team on winning the western Mass championship. Selectman Jaworski reminded everyone that on November 11th at 11:00 a.m. there will be a ceremony at Town Hall for our Veterans. On November 9th the Council on Aging will hold a coffee hour for the Veterans. If you are interested in attending, call the Council on Aging at 247-9300 to let them know you will be attending. Selectman Moriarty was approached by a resident informing him that Channel 15 is having issues. Selectman Moriarty informed the public that the server is having problems. Be aware that some of the normal programming is not available. Chair Szynal mentioned that the girls' field hockey and soccer made it to post season. They all qualified for State.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Selectman Jaworski made a motion to accept the October 26, 2021 meeting minutes; Selectman Moriarty seconded, all in favor, aye, minutes approved.

POSTED BUSINESS

COVID-19 Report Update: Claudia Sarti, COVID Coordinator informed the Select Board that things are trending in the right direction, only two cases in the last week and they were two members of the same household.

@6:00 P.M. Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Public Meeting: Mimi Kaplan, Senior Planner of PVPC presented before the Select Board with a presentation of the updated mitigation plan. Chair Szynal

opened the hazard mitigation update plan public meeting. Ms. Kaplan reminded everyone that this is the second public meeting. There is an updated draft and she is seeking public comments on the plan. If anyone would like to review the plan, you can find it on the Town's website and the PVPC website. She thanked the Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee members for their hard work. After her presentation of the plan including what FEMA considers to be a disaster, how to prevent disasters, critical infrastructure inventory, Ms. Kaplan informed everyone that the committee will meet one more time to take the comments made and incorporate them into another draft. Ms. Kaplan said that you can give public feedback until November 15th. Chair Szynal thanked everyone who took part in this process. Lawrence Pruyne of The Reminder publication asked if there was any prioritization to the strategy? Ms. Kaplan responded that the Committee gave priority to different strategies which is all referenced in the handout.

Town Administrator Report:

Award Bid for Fuel Tank Replacement: Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator informed the Select Board of the meeting the previous night with the Finance Committee. Ms. Michonski stated that for this project, there is Town authorization for \$95,000.00 from the May town meeting. The lowest bid was Sovereign Builders at \$148,838. The Finance Committee recommends \$54,000.00 be taken from the CLFRF funds. If in the future the State tells us it's not eligible for this, the Committee will take a look at alternate funding. Ms. Michonski said she will put the contract together for signature. Selectman Moriarty made a motion to award the fuel tank removal bid to Sovereign Builders, Inc. for \$148,838.00; Selectman Jaworski seconded, no discussion, all in favor, aye, motion approved.

Prospect Court Pedestrian Bridge Project/Community Preservation Application – Letter of Support:

Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator informed the Board that this issue goes back to 2015. A project for the Prospect Court Pedestrian Bridge project was approved by the Community Preservation Committee. However, when the bids came in, they were significantly higher. It has been put on hold since. Ms. Michonski informed the Board that the owner of the Old Mill Inn has prepared a letter to the Select Board in support of this project and that she would like the Board to sign a letter to the Hatfield Community Preservation Commission to move forward with this project. Ms. Michonski reminded the Board that there was a report done on this previously. Phil Genovese, DPW Director, said there was a lot of work done in the past. Selectman Moriarty informed townspeople to be clear, CPA did approve funding in the past but the final cost exceeded what CPA and town meeting approved. Mr. Genovese will open up another Mass Works grant. Ms. Szych asked if anyone has explored a Massachusetts Historical grant. Ms. Michonski will contact the Massachusetts Historic Society to see if there may be a grant for this type of project. The Select Board signed the letter to the Hatfield Community Preservation Commission.

Town Hall Space Update: Ms. Michonski reminded the Select Board that she updated them about the use of Town Hall space at the last meeting. After speaking with more department heads, most offices are overwhelmed with files, documents and cabinets and that, inadvertently, she overlooked the Building Inspector. His office is too small and he needs more space. Ms. Michonski said she would talk with the Building Inspector to inquire if hangers for the maps and more cabinets would help.

Conservation Commission Membership Update: Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator

presented before the Board at the last meeting. Since then, she spoke to Bob Hennessy, Chair of the Conservation Commission and Dr. Gonzalez is still interested in serving on that Board. The Conservation Commission will be meeting soon and Mr. Hennessy will bring this matter up with the Commission. Ms. Michonski will put this matter on the annual Town Meeting warrant to reduce the number of members.

White Rock Trail/Town Property on Mountain Road Update: Ms. Michonski updated the Select Board regarding the cost of the survey for the White Rock Trail property. She reminded the Board that there is a dispute between the Town and a resident because the resident put up no trespassing signs on what Open Space says is Town property. Ms. Michonski will keep the Board updated as developments occur.

Holiday Schedule: Ms. Michonski reminded the Select Board that in past they have been generous to allow employees to take Friday after Thanksgiving as a paid holiday. Selectman Moriarty made a motion to grant the Friday after Thanksgiving a paid holiday, Selectman Jaworski seconded, no discussion, all in favor, aye, motion approved. In years past, when the Christmas and New Year's holidays fell on a weekday, the Select Board would gift employees 4 paid hours the day before. Because these holidays fall on a weekend this year, the Board does not feel the need to do that. Chair Szynal expressed her desire to take this issue up earlier next year so that employees can make plans in advance for their holiday time off.

Date of Annual Luminarium: There was discussion between the Select Board, Town Clerk and Fire Chief regarding the day of the annual luminarium. Ms. Szych reminded the Board that because of a town vote at an annual meeting, townspeople voted to hold the annual luminarium on the Sunday before the December 24 each year. The Select Board agreed that when luminarium first occurred, Peter Rackelbush was in charge of the event. Since that time, things have changed and there is not a Board or Committee running the event. Luminarium is a town event. The Select Board members stated that they had a lot of positive feedback from residents who preferred it be held on a Saturday. Ms. Szych also stated that the same vote that declared it the Sunday before the 24th, also gave the Selectmen jurisdiction over the funds and said that Selectman should work with other Town Boards and Committees. Chair Szynal brought up that there are no other Town boards or committees involved at this time. Ms. Szych, legally it needs to be a town vote to change the day of the event. Robert Flaherty, Fire Chief informed the Board that when Peter Rackelbush retired five years ago, the whole event was going to stop because no one wanted to do it. However, the Fire Department has been overseeing it for the last 5 years and no one has contacted the Fire Chief or the Department to advise them of the day of the event. It was agreed that certain people and committees/Board would be contacted and if needed, to schedule another Select Board meeting to take up only this issue.

2022 License Fees: Ms. Michonski informed the Select Board that we are in the process of renewing licenses for 2022. For 2021 the Select Board waived all auto amusement, entertainment and liquor license fees for bars, clubs and restaurants and asked the Board if they wanted to consider doing that again for 2022. There was discussion as to how the Town could help these businesses recover from closing due to COVID and these businesses are still struggling. Selectman Moriarty made a motion to waive 2022 fees as were waived in 2021, Selectman Jaworski seconded, no discussion, all in favor, aye, motion approved. The Select Board agreed that in the spirit of supporting our businesses, it's a small gesture on our part but well received by the businesses.

Selectman Jaworski made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:42p.m., Selectman Moriarty seconded, all in favor, aye, motion adjourned.

Respectfully,

Karen Brodeur
Executive Assistant