

Approved: February 1, 2022

Select Board
Meeting Minutes
January 11, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.
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; Robert Flaherty, Fire Chief; Rich Abbott, Chair, Open Space Committee; Tim Kane, MacKae Freeland and Milo Childs of Treeworks of MA; Laurie Dell'Olio, Town Accountant; Michael Wood, Interim Superintendent; Christy Boudreau, David Keir, Capital Improvement Planning Committee; Kimberly Baker, Sean Barry, Diane Brzozowski, John Wilkes, Jr. and Darryl Williams, Chair, of the Finance Committee; Audrey Weston and Doc Pruyne of The Reminder

CALL TO ORDER Chair Szynal called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

PUBLIC FORUM

ANNOUNCEMENTS Chair Szynal noted that Selectman Moriarty is joining remotely. Selectman Jaworski wished everyone a Happy New Year and said we are under a temporary mask mandate due to spike in COVID cases in Town. Chair Szynal thanked the DPW for their great work on the bad weather recently and keeping our roads open. We thank them for their hard work.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Selectman Jaworski made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of December 8, 2021, Selectman Moriarty seconded, no discussion, all in favor, aye, minutes approved.

POSTED BUSINESS

Open Space Committee, Chair Rich Abbott – Discuss Pavilion Construction Project: Rich Abbott presented before the Board to discuss the pavilion construction project and reminded the Board that the project went out to bid last June, there was one bid for \$300,000.00 which is three times the amount allotted. Based on the bid amount and the estimate of 2020, we purchased another cost estimate in October which was \$320,000.00. Mr. Abbott said another CPA application for \$200,000.00 was submitted but he is not sure if it will be approved. After discussion it was agreed that Mr. Abbott would put the project to bid again and, in the meantime, look into a prefab pavilion. The Board expressed deep concern with the current bids given that a home could be constructed for that price.

Treeworks of MA, Tim Kane: Tim Kane, MacKae Freeland and Milo Childs of Treeworks presented before the Select Board requesting the Select Board revisit the host agreement and the 3% community impact fee. Treeworks informed the Board that a lot of towns are dropping the 3% impact fee because those towns have found no impact upon their community. The owners of Treeworks of MA stated that, in their opinion, there has only been a positive impact upon the community. Chair Szynal told Treeworks that she would need time to review this. Chair Szynal also told Treeworks that this is a very competitive business. We are a great community to work with. However, the Town has not received

revenue from Treeworks as of this meeting; for the community to enter into the agreement; no fees paid and now we are being asked to drop the 3%? The Select Board agreed that before making any decision, they want time to gather input from our departments. Selectman Jaworski said if we are to provide future education on this, we are not ready to make a decision on this. Tim Kane told the Board that he appreciates the feedback and would like to continue the discussion and that the first payment would not be due for another six months. The owners of Treeworks mentioned that they have purchased a considerable amount of materials from RK Miles and other businesses in town. Milo Childs told the Board the community impact fee is to go towards negative impacts which is stated in a way for the Town to show how the business has had a negative impact upon The town but that there has only been a positive impact shown by the jobs to the residents of Hatfield and supporting local businesses. Why should we be penalized and isolated from other businesses in Town, no other business pays a fee and why should we be penalized? Chair Szynal reminded Treeworks that the 3% was put in place by the Cannabis Commission and Treeworks knew and understood this when they got into the business.

Resignations/Appointments: Selectman Jaworski made a motion to appoint Robert Hennessy as Conservation Commission rep to the Community Preservation Committee replacing Harrison Bardwell, Selectman Moriarty seconded, no discussion, all in favor, aye, motion approved.

Selectman Moriarty made a motion to accept the resignation of Harrison Bardwell as Conservation Commission Rep to the Community Preservation Committee, Chair Szynal seconded, no discussion, all in favor, aye, motion approved.

Selection Jaworski, with regret, made a motion to accept resignation of Cole Leighton from the Police Department, Selectman Moriarty seconded, no discussion, all in favor, aye, motion approved.

David Keir stated that Capital Improvement Committee has an opening and looking for another member. If someone is interested, contact Marlene Michonski. There is information posted on the Town website.

DPW Report – Personnel Items: Phil Genovese, DPW Director presented before the Select Board and thanked all the guys for all their hard work due to shortage from COVID. We are working shorthanded and the ice storm came quickly but we all stepped up and got the job done. Mr. Genovese is looking for the clothing allowance and safety shoes for two superintendents. Selectman Jaworski made a motion to continue the policy of awarding \$600.00 for each of the supervisors for clothing allowance and shoes; Selectman Moriarty seconded, no discussion, all in favor, aye, motion approved.

With regard to the reclassification for the highway superintendent, Chair Szynal made a motion to reclassify the highway superintendent; Selectman Jaworski seconded, no discussion, all in favor, aye, motion approved. Chair Szynal reminded everyone that this was decided at Town meeting last May.

Municipal Cyber Security Awareness Grant: Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator, informed the Board that the application for municipal cyber security awareness was submitted for the Town and school to participate in a year-long training to test everyone's knowledge on cyber security.

Town Clerk – Delinquent Dog Licenses for 2021: The Town Clerk pursuant to M.G.L. c.140 submitted a list of delinquent dog licenses to the Select Board. When dogs owners fail to license their dogs, the Select Board may issue a warrant to the Animal Control Officer. Chair Szynal asked if the owners have

been notified and Ms. Michonski told her by mail, email and telephone. Chair Szynal read the warrant for townspeople which states that any dog seized by the Animal Control Officer can be put down. Selectman Jaworski told townspeople - be smart and get your dog licensed. Selectman Jaworski made a motion to approve the warrant, Selectman Moriarty seconded, Chair Szynal was hesitant in that she has issue with the language about euthanizing dogs. Chair Szynal, all in favor, aye, motion approved.

IT Support Services: Ms. Michonski informed the Select Board that she decided it was in the Town's best interest to look at terminating IT services with Paragus and requested quotes from other companies. Suzor IT of Greenfield works with other Towns and is familiar with local government and schools. Suzor IT took over IT services as of January 1st. Chair Szynal asked if there is a financial savings to this and Ms. Michonski said yes.

Town Hall, Second Floor Balcony: Selectman Jaworski informed the Board that we received a report from Jacob Smith Engineering & Design as a result of a previous discussion. We wanted to know if the balcony can support anything. Jacob Smith will come in and review the space to determine load capacity and provide a design to bring it up to code and is requesting \$1,800.00 for a proposal and design. Selectman Jaworski made a motion to spend \$1,800.00 to get a proposal and design from Jacob Smith Engineering & Design; Selectman Moriarty seconded, no discussion, all in favor, aye, motion approved.

Master Plan Update: Ms. Michonski wants to move forward with next master plan update. A list of boards and committees that would be represented on the master plan committee was given to the Select Board and Ms. Michonski noted that planning and historical are not on the list. The Planning Board Chair agreed that historical would need to be on the list. Discussion was had about having someone from Housing and Council on Aging be on the committee with 3 at large seats which would bring the number to an odd number. Darryl Williams said it is a very big job, there were changes on the previous committee as they moved along. Chair Szynal said she wanted to be sure that the elderly are being properly represented on the committee. Mr. Williams said he doesn't think it hurts to put people from the other committees on there because people will drop off as time goes by. Ms. Michonski said she would add the Council on Aging and the Housing Authority with 3 at large.

Fire Chief Flaherty – Ambulance Operations Update: Robert Flaherty, Fire Chief presented before the Select Board to inform the Board again that it is becoming critical to change his department from a volunteer to hourly staff. He said that the number of calls have increased - 15% increase in fire calls alone. We are having trouble covering the current calling department. Volunteering is down across the country. People need to be aware the Town is changing and relying on a volunteer fire department is not cutting it. We need to move to full staffing. We are now at day 11 in 2022 and we have had 26 calls and he has been on 22 of them. It's come to be where you can't rely on call volunteers and I can't do everything myself. He put proposals together for 2023. We have a large elderly population in Town and you may have to wait for an ambulance from Northampton, Goshen, etc. Chief Flaherty has no employees who work in-town. Chair Szynal informed the Select Board that they are not looking for a decision tonight but just to make everyone aware. I would urge people to reach out to Chief Flaherty and get background on this so everyone has more information for a longer and more detailed meeting. Chief Flaherty said that he would need around \$72,000.00 for a full year 16 hour employee. He has people calling for shift work, not volunteer. Chair Szynal suggested the Finance Committee reach out to the Fire Chief to discuss this.

Joint Meeting with Capital Improvement Planning Committee and Finance Committee re Use of ARPA Funds: Chair Szynal informed everyone that tonight's discussion is around the use of ARPA funds. We are getting \$971,000.00 in ARPA funds with specific parameters with which the funds can be used. The Select Board's main concern is that the funds are used in a fiscally responsible manner and not spent all at once. The money needs to be used over a period of five years. Laurie Dell'Olio informed everyone that the ARPA funds can now be used for anything. Mr. Barry agreed that is the way it now reads. Ms. Michonski informed the Board and Committees that the money cannot be used for debt settlements, reduce tax levy or pension debt. Chair Szynal said she liked the idea of using it for infrastructure projects. David Kier stated that he agreed with Chair Szynal and once the capital plan is done and submitted to the Select Board, there will be a very clear list of things that need to be done. Department heads have submitted things they need. Mr. Genovese informed the Board and Committees that he submitted infrastructure projects and the longer they wait, the prices keep going up, up, up. There are infrastructure projects in the water department and sewer departments. We have worked hard to get solid numbers, seems like it keeps going on and on with no decisions made. We did not submit a wish-list, these projects are highly important.

There was a discussion with the school members about the funding for reimbursement of COVID funds the school received. David Keir mentioned that this money will run out if you are using it for replacement parts. The school bought the air purifiers and you need to keep replacing filters and bulbs. Chair Szynal stated that we need to be sure the funds are used fairly throughout the Town. Chair Szynal reminded everyone that there was a large sum of money given to the school from previous COVID relief funds. How was it used, what did you buy? Selectman Jaworski asked if the school spent all their COVID money. Mr. Wood said the school did not anticipate replacement of the filters and bulbs in the existing machines and the money was spent out of our budget and not COVID monies. Chair Szynal said she would like to see an accounting from the school as to where the previous COVID relief funds were spent. Ms. Dell'Olio informed everyone that the Town has received \$485,000.00 to date. After further discussion, the Select Board, Finance Committee and Capital Improvement agreed to fund the following projects:

COVID coordinator: \$6,552.00

Single audit for ARPA funds: \$5,000.00

Financial report for ARPA funds: \$3,100.00

Air purifiers town offices: \$10,843.00

Medify air purifiers – school buildings: \$9,733.00

Fuel tank project: \$55,000.00

Broadband extension to wastewater treatment plant: \$8,500.00

Replace Maple St Lift Station Generator & Transfer Switches: \$125,000.00

Filtration Plant Logic Controller & SCADA Upgrade: \$60,000.00

Route 5 Water Main: \$100,000.00

Isolation gowns, gloves, cleaning wipes for ambulance: \$1,500.00

3 Lifepak 1000 & 6 Lifepak CR2 AED's: \$19,000.00

Filters: \$5,500.00

TOTAL: \$409,728.00

Selectman Moriarty made a motion to approve the ARPA funds as discussed for the various projects as read by Chair Szynal (listed above), Selectman Jaworski seconded, no discussion, all in favor, aye, motion approved.

OLD BUSINESS

UNANTICIPATED NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURN

Selectman Jaworski made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 p.m., Selectman Moriarty seconded, all in favor, aye, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully,

Karen Brodeur
Executive Assistant