

Approved April 19, 2022

Select Board
Meeting Minutes
April 5, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.
59 Main Street, Hatfield, Massachusetts

Present: Select Board Members Edmund Jaworski and Brian Moriarty; Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator; Darryl Williams, Chair, Kim Baker, Diane Bzozrowski, John Wilkes, Jr., Finance Committee; Adam Suzor and Mark Given of Suzor IT; Sharon Strzegowski, Treasurer; Robert Flaherty, Fire Chief

CALL TO ORDER Selectman Jaworski called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

PUBLIC FORUM

ANNOUNCEMENTS Selectman Jaworski reminded everyone that it's springtime and to drive carefully as kids and adults are out riding bikes and walking.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Selectman Moriarty made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of March 29, 2022, Selectman Jaworski seconded, no discussion, all in favor, aye, minutes approved.

POSTED BUSINESS

TOPIC 1 Open Space Committee proposed Connecticut River Multi-use trail: Mark Gelotte recapped the history of this project. This has been in conceptual stage for the last 12 to 14 years. Northampton was acceptable to a trail connecting Northampton and Hatfield. Mr. Gelotte said about 95% of trail will be in Northampton and will be close to the railroad tracks. In 2010 we brought this back to the Board of Selectman, they liked the idea and gave it basic approval as a concept. At that time, we didn't know if we could get funding. The Open Space Fund paid for a survey in 2010. Mr. Gelotte informed the Board that the letter from Wayne Feiden doesn't guarantee funding for the project. However, Mr. Feiden requested the Select Board take the step of endorsing the project and issue a letter of support. Mr. Gelotte said we are hoping the Board will support the project. Selectman Moriarty asked if the bike trail having the connection off Damon Road, would Hatfield be a beginning or ending point? Mr. Gelotte said if people ride their bikes to get on or off the trail it should not be a problem with people driving to the end of Elm Court and parking their car. The Select Board is concerned about traffic and parking at the end of Elm Court. Mr. Gelotte said there is an opportunity to create parking spaces and parking on the side of the street. Northampton also could offer street parking on the Northampton side. Mr. Gelotte said how much traffic would be produced on this, it's unknown and parking is a real issue. Selectman Moriarty said his concern is changing the traffic on Elm Court and I'm thinking of what residents may ask. Mr. Gelotte said we could restrict parking on Elm Court but I think there are solutions to the traffic. Selectman Jaworski asked Mr. Gelotte explain the funding of this, who pays for it, who maintains it? Mr. Gelotte answered that he didn't know all the details but it's

a MassDOT project - 97% of the trail is in Northampton, 3% in Hatfield. Mr. Gelotte said that at this point, it's just a letter of support. Selectman Jaworski said this would be safer than riding bikes on roads. We just worry about who will maintain it and what will it cost Hatfield. Selectman Jaworski asked if there would be a hearing on this in the future? Mr. Gelotte said he didn't know but I presume MassDOT would need to do that. The letter of support is not a guarantee of the trail. Selectman Moriarty made a motion that the Town of Hatfield support the proposed Connecticut River Trail from Hatfield to Northampton; Selectman Jaworski seconded, no discussion, all in favor aye, motion approved.

TOPIC 2 DPW Report Water & Sewer Billing Commitment: After review of the Treasurer's water and sewer billing commitment, Selectman Moriarty made a motion for collection of the FY 2022 water bills (Batch #2M) in the amount of \$239,804.11. The Select Board commits to you for collection the attached FY 2022 sewer bills (Batch #2M) in the amount of \$230,819.40. The Select Board commits to you for collection the attached FY 2022 fees (Batch #2M) meter repair fees in the amount of \$330.00 for a total amount committed for collection \$470,953.41, effective this spring; Selectman Jaworski seconded, no discussion, all in favor aye, motion approved.

TOPIC 3 FY2023 Budget Reviews/Capital Plan Projects/Annual Town Meeting Business with Finance Committee:

Suzor IT: Adam Suzor and Mark Given of Suzor IT came to explain their IT budget. Ms. Michonski spoke about eliminating the server and all the Town's data would go to the cloud; we talked about replacing 20% of the work spaces. Mark Given explained that the infrastructure needs to be replaced as it is old and botched at a cost of roughly \$37,000.00. This figure is for materials and the cost of services for replacing the infrastructure are included in Suzor's monthly invoicing. All total, the budget for IT is around \$86,000.00. Selectman Jaworski asked what do you get for the money? Mr. Suzor said it is all materials, labor is under the contract. With a new infrastructure, Suzor is hopeful that internet service will be better, and security would be up to date. Mr. Suzor explained that the Town has Office 365 license to cover cloud services, but some things haven't been moved because the network hardware is outdated.

Collector/Treasurer: Sharon Strzegowski, Treasurer/Collector presented her budgets. Tax title - \$5,000.00 increase for legal fees. County Retirement - increase of 12%. Unemployment - level funded. Treasurer's expense is level funded except for the \$20,000.00 for the new payroll software program. Collector's expense increase for postage, software and financial services. Treasurer salaries - level funded. Collector's salaries - level funded. OPEB liability town meeting approval for this she suggests \$10,000.00 as a starting point. Ms. Michonski reminded everyone that the Town voted the OPEB a few years ago. Ms. Bzozrowski asked where does the money go? Ms. Strzegowski answered that it's in a separate account. Group insurance \$47,000.00 increase for new employees. Medicare in the last 2 years ran short \$5,800.00 so she is looking for an increase of \$5,800.00. Loans - she gave the 2023-2024 loan reports, we have tried to change the financial situations regarding loans. The last document Ms. Strzegowski presented shows projects wherein monies had been appropriated but never fully used. Ms. Strzegowski said that she would clean up the list and come back at the next meeting with a dollar figure.

There was discussion of the figures in the budget workbook with most of the budgets put in the workbook.

Capital budget – There was discussion of what projects could be paid for from free cash. Once all final budgets are in, there will have a better handle on available monies.

Selectman Moriarty – debt exclusion question - because of a time constraint between now and the vote on the ballot question of what we walked through last week regarding waste water treatment. The ballot question reads shall the Town of Hatfield be allowed to exempt from the provisions of proposition two and one-half, so-called, the amounts required to pay for the bond issued in order to pay for the Wastewater Plant Upgrades and Improvements Project? Selectman Moriarty stated that this article must pass at both Town meeting and Town vote. Selectman Moriarty made a motion for that ballot question as I just read, Selectman Jaworski seconded, no discussion, all in favor, aye, motion approved.

Municipalities CARES Act Funds: There was \$16,737.00 not covered by CARES fund allocated to Hatfield and Ms. Michonski stated that needs to be taken care. Selectman Moriarty suggested this be paid for from ARPA funds. Most to Smith Academy went to HVAC but ran into an issue between FEMA and MEMA who would not agree with the Town's interpretation of what the funds could be used for. Selectman Moriarty said this was not misuse of funds, not over expenditure. Selectman Moriarty made a motion that the deficit in CARES Act funding be paid from APRA funds, Selectman Jaworski seconded, no discussion, all in favor, aye, motion approved.

UNANTICIPATED NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURN

Selectman Moriarty made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:27 p.m.; Selectman Jaworski seconded, no discussion, all in favor, aye, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully,

Karen Brodeur
Executive Assistant