

Approved April 4, 2023

Select Board
Meeting Minutes
March 28, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.
59 Main Street, Hatfield, MA

Present: Diana Szynal, Chair, Members Brian Moriarty (via remote) and Edmund Jaworski, Select Board

Also in attendance: Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator; Phil Genovese, DPW Director; Robert Flaherty, Fire Chief; Firefighters Michael Mazulis and Nicole Thornton, Alex Marquez and Liza Ashley of Zephyr Behavior Healthcare; Diane Brzozowski, Chair, Kim Baker, Sean Barry and John Wilkes, Jr., Finance Committee

CALL TO ORDER Chair Szynal called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS Robert Flaherty, Fire Chief brought forward two new firefighters, Michael Mazulis and Nicole Thornton who took over for Ricky Ciliberto. Chair Szynal thanked them for being here in Hatfield. Chief Flaherty said they are advancing their careers with further EMT training.

PUBLIC FORUM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Chair Szynal made a motion to approve the March 21, 2023 Minutes as presented; Selectman Jaworski seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved. Selectman Moriarty abstained as he did not attend that meeting.

POSTED BUSINESS

TOPIC 1 Zephyr Behavior Healthcare, Celebration of Autism Acceptance Month - Request approval for small parade from 62 Main Street to Lions Pavilion, April 22, 2023, 11:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.: Liza Ashley presented before the Board, they are opening their center on 62 Main Street. They talked to the Police Chief and he approved of this small parade. Selectman Jaworski said it's a great idea and thanked them for the work you are doing. Selectman Moriarty asked if the parade is rain or shine and will both sides of Main Street be closed? Ms. Ashley said the event is rain or shine but if it rains, the parade might be canceled. Chair Szynal said my feeling is the whole street should be closed with small children participating. The Select Board will let the Police Chief know the Select Board supports the parade.

TOPIC 2 **DPW REPORT** Authorize Sewer and Water Billing Commitment #2 for collection: Selectman Jaworski made a motion that we approve water in the amount of \$265,410.38, sewer in the amount of \$259,751.16 for a total commitment of \$525,161.54; Selectman Moriarty seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved.

TOPIC 3 Proposed Memorandum of Agreement between Northampton and Hatfield re: CT River Greenway Trail: Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator spoke to Rich Abbott and he understands the Select Board may want to hold off pending Town meeting vote on this. Ms. Michonski told the Select Board she wanted to present it to the Select Board prior to Town meeting. Chair Szynal said this is not an urgent matter and should be put off until after Town meeting.

TOPIC 4 Second Floor Town Hall Bathroom Renovation Update: Ms. Michonski updated the Board there is \$14,000.00 left in the account. Mr. Genovese said everything is complete, the radiators have been replaced. Selectman Jaworski asked if we can use the remaining funds for tables and chairs? Ms. Michonski said no because you have to re-appropriate those funds. Ms. Michonski suggested using ARPA funds for tables and chairs. Selectman Jaworski asked where are we with the cable agreement? Ms. Michonski informed the Board she and John Novak had a meeting with Attorney Solomon this afternoon. Mr. Novak said the cable connection is in the high school which needs to be moved to Town Hall. Mr. Novak said the money is in the cable budget and we can have Comcast reimburse us. Chair Szynal said we still have decisions to make on this. Selectman Jaworski said we need to get this on a future Agenda and Chair Szynal said after Town meeting. Selectman Jaworski suggested it be put it on a June Agenda.

TOPIC 5 Social Media Policy Draft: Chair Szynal asked for this topic to be tabled because it will take longer than the time left before the Finance Committee comes in.

A short break was taken at approximately 5:57 p.m. and the meeting restarted at 6:27 p.m.

TOPIC 6 Discussion of FY2024 Department Budgets and Capital Projects: Joint meeting with Finance Committee @ 6:15 p.m.: The budget workbook with updated revisions for the school and EMS was reviewed. Chair Szynal asked the Fire Chief if the numbers in the updated workbook would work for the Chief, he answered no. Mr. Flaherty said the ambulance will not be able to run with this budget and would give residents Monday through Friday 8 hours of coverage. Mr. Flaherty said from past history if Northampton provides coverage they will ask for an agreement with Hatfield for mutual aid as well as a fee. Chair Szynal said in the coming fiscal year, we need to have ambulance response. Selectman Moriarty agreed with the Board, we need to continue with the ambulances services we have. Ms. Michonski informed the Board I spoke with Town counsel about how to present the two budgets at the Town meeting and Town counsel suggested a single article with two columns. Mr. Barry asked what if people vote for the budget but not the override? Mr. Barry said that's why I think we need two separate articles. Chair Szynal said it has to be separate, the smaller budget along with another question with the larger budget; two separate articles. This way a budget is passed at the Town meeting. Ms. Michonski said there will be two budget articles and an article to vote the override. The override question, two budget articles, 1) balanced budget and 2) the override budget. Mr. Barry in order to balance the lower budget, may have to make cuts, dramatically. Chair Szynal said let's bring the workbook down to a level funded budget and go back to Department heads and tell them to make it work and get it back to us by next week. Mr. Barry said without school choice, there are only 100 students. I'm afraid of what will happen if the school is asked to dramatically cut their

budget. By not funding the school, you will have to lay people off and who is that? Selectman Moriarty said all departments should be asked to sharpen their pencils and look at where cuts can be made. We need to ask all departments to cut a percentage from their budgets. Chair Szynal said we are looking for \$124,000.00 for Department heads to cut. The Select Board agreed that Department heads would be asked to go back through their budgets and cut an additional 2%. Department heads will be asked to put in a few bullet points with what was cut and how they got there.

CONTINUED OLD BUSINESS

UNANTICIPATED NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURN Chair Szynal made a motion to adjourn; Selectman Jaworski seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; meeting ended at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully,
Karen Brodeur
Executive Assistant