

Approved April 25, 2023

Select Board  
Meeting Minutes  
April 18, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.  
59 Main Street, Hatfield, MA

Present: Select Board Diana Szyal, Chair, Member Brian Moriarty; Selectman Jaworski absent

Also in attendance: Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator; Diane Brzozowski, Chair, Kim Baker, Darryl Williams, Sean Barry and John Wilkes, Jr., Finance Committee; Phil Genovese, DPW Director; Robert Flaherty, Fire Chief; Kerry Flaherty, President, Fire Association; Lydia Szych, Town Clerk; Jonathan Benson and Robert Slysz, The Polish Club; Denise Allard and Mark Cappadona of Colonial Power Group

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PUBLIC FORUM**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** Selectman Moriarty made a motion to approve the Select Board Minutes from both the April 4, 2023 and April 10, 2023 meetings; Chair Szyal seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved.

**POSTED BUSINESS**

**TOPIC 1** The Polish Club Request for Change of Manager: Robert Slysz and Jonathan Benson presented before the Board requesting a change of manager from Richard Ross to Jonathan Benson. Selectman Moriarty made a motion to approve the changing of manager at The Polish Club; Chair Szyal seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved.

**TOPIC 2** Colonial Power Group – Discussion of current electricity aggregation program rate and future pricing: Denise Allard and Mark Cappadona came before the Board to discuss the electricity aggregation program rate and future pricing. Mr. Cappadona informed the Board of good and bad news: the pricing is the same as Eversource West at \$.22157 and Eversource is \$.20991. Colonial Power Group made a defense plan last year. Eversource will go back out to bid soon for the rates between July – December. Mr. Cappadona stated rates have come down 30% but are still at historic highs. We need to wait to see what Eversource rates will be. Selectman Moriarty asked if there is an advantage to waiting for a few weeks? Mr. Cappadona replied we will know what they purchased from July 1<sup>st</sup> through June soon. Hatfield resident Mr. O'Dea asked if we are locked into this rate? Mr. Cappadona replied the Town cannot cancel but the consumer can opt out. Mr. O'Dea asked if residents are stuck with 22 cents through the winter and Mr. Cappadona said yes. Mr. Cappadona suggested residents pick another company

for the next six months and if Colonial Power rates go down, residents can always opt back into the program. Mr. O'Dea asked how can companies offer say 12 cents? Mr. Cappadona answered because they don't do winter rates. Mr. Cappadona said residents can call 508-485-5858 ext. 1 to ask questions of Colonial Power or go to [www.ColonialPower.com/Hatfield](http://www.ColonialPower.com/Hatfield). Mr. Cappadona informed the Board we will know what next winter's rates will be around November.

**TOPIC 3**      FY2024 Budget, Capital Projects and Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles: Discussion and review with Finance Committee @ 6:00 p.m.: Ms. Michonski was just made aware the current vocational tuition and transportation budget has a shortfall of about \$70,000.00. Chair Szynal asked if this has happened before, and Mr. Williams said at the end of every fiscal year we transfer money around to cover shortfalls. Chair Szynal does not want to use ARPA funds for this. Chair Szynal asked how much longer we have to use the funds and Selectman Moriarty answered about 3 more years. The Finance Committee said there will need to be another \$190,000.00 needed for the vocational tuition and transportation budget for next year. Chair Szynal thought it very strange that this comes up a day or so after the deadline. Mr. Williams posed the question if we must find \$190,000.00 to cover the vocational tuition and transportation, whose budget does that come from? Mr. Barry answered if 2½ doesn't pass, you will have more issues to be worried about. Ms. Michonski informed everyone that she and the accountant are looking at projects that have been completed so that unused monies can be put back into free cash. Mr. Williams suggested taking \$160,000.00 from free cash to put into snow and ice. Ms. Michonski said the climate smart comprehensive plan is \$29,000.00 and thought those funds could be taken from ARPA. Robert Flaherty, Fire Chief was asked how many jaws-of-life there are in the Fire Department. The Fire Chief said every vehicle is now equipped with jaws-of-life. Mr. Barry asked why the second floor is listed as a priority on the warrant. Ms. Michonski said to hold meetings up there; the second floor is necessary because more boards and committees want to use Town Hall to hold their meetings we are running into issues. Chair Szynal said no decisions have been made on what to do with the second floor. Mr. Barry suggested creating a capital stabilization line so we can put money aside for things that break down in the future.

It was agreed that the override questions would go towards the beginning of the warrant so that if parents with children come to Town meeting, they do not need to stay late.

## **CONTINUED OLD BUSINESS**

## **UNANTICIPATED NEW BUSINESS**

**ADJOURN** Chair Szynal made a motion to adjourn; Selectman Moriarty seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; meeting ended at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully,  
Karen Brodeur  
Executive Assistant