

Select Board
Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2021, 5:30 pm
59 Main Street, Hatfield, MA
Virtual GoToMeeting

Present: Select Board Chair Diana Szynal, Edmund Jaworski and Brian Moriarty. Also present were Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator; Bob Flaherty, Fire Chief; Phil Genovese, DPW Director; Lydia Szych, Town Clerk; Brenna Duquette, Administrator, Housing Authority; Cheyenne Burnham of The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts; Kathie Gow, Historical Society and Amy Hahn, Historical Commission; and Darryl Williams, Chair, Finance Committee

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

PUBLIC FORUM Kathy Gow read a statement from Bob Wagner, Chair, Community Preservation Committee which is about the Town Hall use and the Historical Museum. Ms. Gow further stated that she is the curator of the Historical Museum which is owned by the Town and managed by the Historical Society. She requested the Select Board reconvene the subcommittee of last year to determine what would be the best location for the historical collection. Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator stated the topic on the agenda was there so the Select Board would begin to look at the needs of Town Hall and use of the second floor. To get the ball rolling, Selectman Moriarty asked if Kathy Gow, Edmund Jaworski, Amy Hahn and Bob Wagner could at least start the initial meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS Chair Szynal stated that school is in full swing and going very well. The Hatfield sports teams are off to a great start.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Selectman Moriarty made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of August 17, 2021; Selectman Jaworski seconded; no discussion, all in favor, aye, Minutes approved.

POSTED BUSINESS

Firefighters Assistance Grant Award: Chief Flaherty informed the Board that he received a phone call from Senator Warren's office informing him that the Fire Department won the Homeland Security Grant in the amount of \$161,238.10 to be used for communications equipment. Chair Szynal recognized the work Chief Flaherty put into getting this grant as enormous and the grant is very competitive in nature. The Board thanked Chief Flaherty for all of his hard work in getting the grant and congratulated him.

Housing Authority Executive Director – Capawonk Parking Lot Project Update: Brenna Duquette, Administrator Housing Department, updated the Board that she was very excited the project is coming to an end. The final completion date will be within two weeks. Ms. Duquette mentioned that the project was behind schedule due to no fault of the construction company. Ms. Duquette stated that the residents were very forgiving with the project delays and she appreciates the Town working with us and giving leeway to the residents to use Town Hall parking lot. The Select Board stated the project looks great

and Selectman Jaworski said parking spaces are now numbered. Selectman Moriarty mentioned that it will now be safer for residents getting in and out of their cars.

COVID-19 Report, COVID Coordinator: Claudia Sarti did not show up for the meeting. Selectman Moriarty stated that as residents started receiving the phone calls on Mondays, it is nice to see that last night's call was only one new case.

Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund: Darryl Williams, Chair, Finance Committee joined the meeting as he just wanted to keep up to date. It was agreed that the Finance Committee would join the Select Board at the September 28th meeting to discuss the funds the Town will be receiving. Selectman Moriarty informed everyone that there is another round of funding from the government which is separate from the Cares Act. There was some initial discussion on what the funds can and cannot be used for. Mr. Williams stated that he is looking forward to the next meeting and wanted to be sure that some of those funds are being used to pay for the COVID Coordinator. Selectman Jaworski asked if by the next meeting, all departments would have a listing of what their needs are and if some of those funds could be used to meet those needs. Ms. Michonski mentioned that the Town would need to have those funds tracked and reports filed, which could be quite involved. Ms. Michonski mentioned that Bob Flaherty, Fire Chief, made himself available to do this but she suggested out sourcing or have the accountant do it as she is doing that for other communities.

Certification of Single Voting Precinct: Lydia Szych, Town Clerk, informed the Board that the Board needs to certify to be a single voting precinct and that the Select Board needs to approve the plan showing the precinct line which has not changed since 1845. By certifying, Ms. Szych informed the Board that they would also be approving a data block information sheet which is the culmination of the census work done in 2020. You are approving what the state approved 10 years ago. Chair Szynal read the description of Hatfield from Wikipedia. Selectman Jaworski made a motion that the Town of Hatfield remain a single-precinct town; and that we accept the Plan, Block Data Report and legal description supplied by the Secretary of State's Office, Local Election Districts Review Commission; Selectman Moriarty seconded, all in favor, aye, motion approved. Selectman Moriarty made a motion to rescind the vote on August 16, 2021; Selectman Jaworski seconded, all in favor, aye, motion approved.

One Day Special Alcohol Permit to The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts for Event on September 26, 2021: Cheyenne Burnham of The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts presented before the Board and stated that the *Will Bike for Food* will be taking place on September 26th and from 7:00 pm they will have an after-party which will include beer, cider and wine. Selectman Moriarty made a motion to approve the One Day Alcohol Permit to The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts for the event on September 26, 2021, Selectman Jaworski seconded; all in favor, aye, motion approved.

DPW Report: DPW Union Negotiations: Phil Genovese, DPW Director, and Ms. Michonski informed the Select Board that as a result of prior negotiations with the union and the superintendents are not negotiating a contract and are now considered non-union Town employees, they are entitled to the 2% COLA. Selectman Moriarty reminded everyone that this is part of the bulk vote to approve the COLA payrate and was not done for these two employees. Selectman Moriarty made a motion to approve the 2% COLA salary increases for the two superintendents; Selectman Jaworski seconded, all in favor, aye, motion approved.

Discussion of increase for FY2022 water and sewer rates: Mr. Genovese presented to the Select Board the rate increases for FY2022 for water and sewer rates. Chair Szynal suggested a hearing on September 29, 2021. Mr. Genovese informed the Board that the West Street is going well. He informed the Select Board that the price of salt went up from \$49.00 a ton to \$71.00 a ton.

Town Administrator's Report: Financial Update: Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator, informed the Board the Treasurer met with the accountant and the FY21 reconciliation will be filed within the next day. The accountant will be submitting her balance sheet and schedule of indebtedness to close out FY21 at end of September to early October. The auditor may be able to do an audit in early November. Treasurer's office is completely reconciled. The Board was very grateful to the Treasurer, accountant and auditor for all their hard work.

Town Vehicle Use Policy: For the Board's consideration, Ms. Michonski is asking the Board to consider accepting the proposed Town Vehicle Use Policy and the effective date. Selectman Moriarty stated that the Town has never had an official vehicle use policy. This puts a policy in place and there will not be questions going forward. Selectman Moriarty made a motion to approve the calculation for the valuation for tax purposes using the Commuting Rule IRS Publication 15-B Employer's Tax Guide to Fringe Benefits effective January 1, 2022; Selectman Jaworski seconded, all in favor, aye, motion approved. Selectman Moriarty thanked the Treasurer, Ms. Michonski, the accountant and the auditor for all their hard work -- we got there as we usually do.

Hazard Mitigation Plan Update: Ms. Michonski informed the Board that a group of Town employees have been working with PVPC on updating the Town's mitigation plan. The next step is a public meeting on October 18th, which is a way for folks to weigh in and make comments. Then the plan will be finalized for the Board to vote and sent to MEMA. Chair Szynal recognized the hard work of all involved.

Hiking Trail, Horse Mountain: Ms. Michonski wanted to formally thank Dennis and Dawn Morin who offered some of their property to the existing trail. Ms. Michonski said we are still working on a memorandum of agreement and that the Select Board sent a thank you letter. Selectman Moriarty recognized that the thank you note was overdue and that it was not intentional. Selectman Moriarty went on to say that this Board does not operate this way and even though overdue, how kind and generous the Morins have been, thank you and we apologize for the delay and we appreciate everything.

April 22, 2022 Road Race: Ms. Michonski informed the Board that the organizer of this event has been in touch with her and the Police Chief. The Police Chief has no concerns with this event. However, the Select Board would like to speak directly with the organizer at a meeting very soon.

Discussion of Town Hall Use and Historical Museum: Selectman Jaworski stated that this topic was not about the museum but that we should have a discussion about what the Town's needs are. In order to use the second floor of Town Hall, a handicap bathroom would need to be installed. There was some initial discussion about different needs of departments within Town Hall. Selectman Moriarty suggested that at the next department head meeting, Ms. Michonski would ask each department head to make a list of their space needs and those lists would be incorporated into further discussions.

Chair Szynal reiterated how very upset she is that there was not a report from the COVID coordinator. Chair Szynal mentioned this is not the first time she missed a meeting and that the COVID coordinator needs to report to the meetings to let the townspeople know what's going on. Selectman Moriarty mentioned that if the COVID coordinator can't make it to a meeting, then someone from the Board of Health should be at the meeting. Chair Szynal mentioned that when Kerry Flaherty was the COVID coordinator the Select Board had a report every meeting and that I think not showing up for the meeting is inexcusable.

Selectman Jaworski made a motion to adjourn at 7:18 p.m. and Selectman Moriarty seconded the motion; all in favor, aye, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully,

Karen Brodeur
Executive Assistant