

Approved January 2, 2024

Select Board
Meeting Minutes
December 12, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.
59 Main Street, Hatfield, MA

Present: Select Board: Diana Szynal, Chair, Members Edmund Jaworski and Greg Gagnon

Also in attendance: Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator; Michael Dekoschak, Police Chief; Robert Flaherty, Fire Chief and Jacob Sanborn; MacKae Freeland and Tim Kane of Treeworks; Phil Genovese, DPW Director; Rich Abbott, Chair, Open Space Committee; Chris Omasta; Micki Sanderson and Cathy Olsen, Co-Chairs of Historical Commission; Theodore Casey

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS Chair Szynal informed everyone the new tax rate of \$15.31 has been approved. Real estate tax bill will be sent by the end of the month. Chair Szynal also recognized the passing of Stanley Sadowski. Chair Szynal said Stanley was the building inspector in Town for a long time. Our condolences to his family. Chair Szynal recognized the retirement of Jim Klepacki last Friday. He worked for the Town for 38 years and we all thank you for your years of service. Luminarium is December 23 - candles to be lit at 5:30 and fireworks at 6:45 which will be lit off by the pavilion. Billings Way will be closed at 12:00 pm and there will be no parking down there. Parking is available at the high school and church.

PUBLIC FORUM Micki Sanderson and Cathy Olsen, Co-Chairs of the Historical Commission presented before the Board asking for the Board's assistance in the housing, preserving, and displaying the artifacts. Ms. Sanderson stated we are charged with the preservation of the artifacts, and we are making an appeal to help us find a site for them. We do not have adequate space for the artifacts. Right now, all the artifacts are in 4-5 different places. Sadly, Ms. Sanderson stated, CPA money is not an answer. I would like to have further discussions on how to remedy this situation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Selectman Gagnon made a motion to approve the Select Board meeting minutes of October 17, 2023; Selectman Jaworski seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved. Selectman Gagnon made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of November 14, 2023; Selectman Jaworski seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved.

POSTED BUSINESS

TOPIC 1 Police Chief – Request for Letter of Support from Town for golf cart legalization:

Chief Dekoschak presented before the Board - we are see a lot of golf carts on the roads and it's illegal to drive them on the roads. A lot of people are using golf carts and we - as the Police Department - cannot ignore this. Chief Dekoschak does not disapprove of golf carts on the roads, but we need to make it legal. Chief Dekoschak spoke with Representative Sabadosa to propose legislation to regulate golf carts. We need a letter from the Board to the legislature asking them to take the issue up to allow us to regulate golf carts. Chair Szynal asked when you say regulate, you would be registered with the Town Clerk and insured? The Chief replied the bylaw would be like Chapter 90. The Select Board agreed to investigate it and do what we can because it has become a thing here.

TOPIC 2 Fire Chief: Introduction of new Full Time Hire: Robert Flaherty, Fire Chief presented before the Select Board with the new full-time hire - Jacob Sanborn. Mr. Sanborn comes to Hatfield with 8 years of fire and EMS experience.

The Board took topics out of order.

TOPIC 8 Rte. 5 Water and Sewer Infrastructure Project, Costs Update from Engineer: Ms. Michonski informed the Board she received the updated cost information from the engineer, Mr. Ohl. Ms. Michonski reminded the Board he came to a Board meeting during the middle of the summer. Ms. Michonski reminded everyone we received an extra \$1.5 million from MassWorks as the project ran over and Mr. Ohl is now requesting an additional \$268,020.00, which is less than what he was requesting last summer. Chair Szynal asked is this in addition to the \$1.5? Ms. Michonski replied yes. Selectman Jaworski suggested that Mr. Ohl come to a meeting in January and explain the additional costs. We went to MassWork and got an additional \$1.5 and I want this explained to me. The Board agreed that Mr. Ohl should attend a meeting to explain these costs.

TOPIC 3 Appointments/Resignations: Resignation of George Ashley, III: Ms. Michonski informed the Board that a resignation letter was received from George Ashley, III from Historical Commission. Selectman Jaworski made a motion to accept - with regret - George Ashley's resignation; Selectman Gagnon seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved.

Appointment of Election Workers: Ms. Michonski informed the Select Board that Jean Brown and Lydia Szych have requested to be appointed as election workers. Selectman Jaworski made a motion to appoint Jean Brown and Lydia Szych as election workers; Selectman Gagnon seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved.

TOPIC 4 Smith Academy Park Improvements: Recommendation to award construction bid for pavilion: Ms. Michonski informed the Board that several bids were received for work on the

pavilion. Rich Abbott and Micki Sanderson presented before the Board and are very excited to receive the bids. Open Space met and voted to award the bid to Keiter Builders. Mr. Abbott informed the Board the construction start date is April 15, 2024 and construction should take 8 to 12 weeks. Selectman Jaworski thanked Open Space Committee for all their work in finally getting this project completed. Selectman Jaworski made a motion to award the contract to Keiter as presented; Selectman Gagnon seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved.

TOPIC 5 Treeworks, LLC: Discuss 2018 Host Community Agreement; Review and consideration of proposed Host Community Agreement Renewal: MacKae Freeland and Tim Kane presented before the Select Board. Chair Szynal informed the Board that since the last meeting, she met with Mr. Freeland and we spoke about the agreement and how we can move forward. Chair Szynal stated we are working towards a solution which will be fair to everyone.

TOPIC 6 DPW REPORT: Wage/Salary Rate Adjustment Request: Phil Genovese, DPW Director and Garrett Barry presented before the Board with Theodore Casey who was hired to replace James Klepacki and began working on December 11, 2023. Selectman Gagnon made a motion to approve the wage/salary rate adjustment request for Theodore Casey; Selectman Jaworski seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved.

Chris Omasta – reducing speed limit on Molloy Avenue: Mr. Omasta presented before the Select Board informing the Board cars have been speeding down the road for quite some time. Speed limit signs (25 mph) were put up in the last couple of days. Mr. Omasta asked if there a way to drop the speed limit to 20 or 15 mph or to put up the yellow “go children slow” signs? Mr. Genovese stated this would be the simpler thing to do and they will get the signs put up soon.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades Project – Letter of Conditions and Pre-Bid Requirements: Ms. Michonski presented the Select Board with the Right-of-Way Certificate which needs approval of the Board. After reviewing the Certificate, the Board noted the map was not included. Selectman Jaworski made a motion to approve the Right-of-Way Certificate depending upon getting the map; Selectman Gagnon seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved.

TOPIC 7 TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT: Financial Report Update: Ms. Michonski updated the Select Board the interim treasurer/collector will be meeting with the accountant. The Treasurer’s office wrapped up their records for FY23; are working on reporting retirement payroll; have taken steps on FY23 tax taking; and are working on cash receipts for FY24. The accountant is scheduling the audit for FY23 and is working with the school on tying up some variances. The Assistant Treasurer/Collector is posting receipts and reconciling through November. The accountant is also working on the school’s year-end report. We have submitted the recap and set the tax rate.

2024 Annual License Renewals: Ms. Michonski presented the Select Board with the 2024 annual License Renewals. Selectman Gagnon made a motion to approve the 2024 annual license renewals as presented; Selectman Jaworski seconded; no discussion; all in favor –aye; motion approved.

Amend All Alcoholic Beverages Liquor License of Cantina, 127 Elm Street: Ms. Michonski informed the Board that Cantina decided not to include the outdoor dining area in their alcohol application and the Board needs to rescind the vote of November 14, 2023 approving the liquor license with the outdoor dining area and revote the new license without the outdoor dining area. Selectman Gagnon made a motion to approve the amended All Alcoholic Beverages Liquor License of Cantina, 127 Elm Street; Selectman Jaworski seconded; no discussion; all in favor –aye; motion approved. Selectman Gagnon made a motion to rescind the vote of November 14, 2023 for Cantina at 127 Elm Street; Selectman Jaworski seconded; no discussion; all in favor –aye; motion approved.

Discuss draft FY25 Budget Meetings with Departments: Ms. Michonski presented the Select Board with the FY25 budget meeting schedule. Ms. Michonski stated the list is just the Select Board meetings with the departments and not with Finance. Finance will meet with elected Boards. Ms. Michonski is trying to minimize the process.

Planning Board, Special Municipal Designation: Ms. Michonski informed the Select Board that a member of the Planning Board's regular profession is creating headstones. She is asking the Select Board to designate the classification of special municipal employee designation to all employees (members) of the Planning Board, pursuant to MGL c.268A. Chair Szynal made a motion that we designate all members of the planning board special municipal employees of the Planning Board, pursuant to MGL c.268A; Selectman Gagnon seconded; no discussion; all in favor –aye; motion approved.

T-Mobile Hometown Grant Application Update re: Smith Academy Park Improvements Update: Ms. Michonski informed the Board she and Rich Abbott met to see if the Town would benefit from having T-Mobile as the mobile carrier. They applied for a grant but the Town did not receive favorable news on the award.

Request from The Pro-Life Legal Defense Fund for permission to raise a pro-life flag in Hatfield: Discussion and consideration: Ms. Michonski informed the Board she received a request from The Pro-Life Legal Defense Fund for permission to raise a pro-life flag on Town owned property in Hatfield. The Board's position is to not get involved in doing this. Chair Szynal stated we need to draft a policy for flags and signs into the bylaws.

CONTINUED OLD BUSINESS

UNANTICIPATED NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURN

Selectman Gagnon made a motion to adjourn; Selectman Jaworski seconded; all in favor – aye; motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Respectfully,
Karen Brodeur
Executive Assistant