

Approved April 2, 2024

Select Board
Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2024 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; Ryan Geeleher; Mike Ohl, CEI; Micki Sanderson and Cathy Olson, Co-Chairs, Historical Commission; Phil Genovese, DPW Director

CALL TO ORDER Chair Szynal called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS None

PUBLIC FORUM No one.

CONSENT AGENDA Selectman Gagnon made a motion to approve the March 4, 2024 and March 12, 2024 meeting minutes; Selectman Jaworski seconded; however, a correction to be made to the March 4, 2024 minutes. The approval amount for the USDA grant should be \$2,406,000.00 and not \$3,406,000.00; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved.

POSTED BUSINESS

The Select Board took a topic out of order.

TOPIC 2 Historical Commission, Co-Chairs Micki Sanderson and Cathy Olson discussion of Town owned location for the artificial storage/display/education space of Hatfield's historical collection: Chair Szynal informed Micki Sanderson and Cathy Olson, Co-Chairs of the Historical Commission an estimate has been received from the contractor. Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator stated the estimate to level the floor and framing over the existing floor is \$9,968.00. Selectman Jaworski stated, at the last meeting, we discussed Historical using the balcony area. Selectman Jaworski looked at the area and spoke to the Building Commissioner and DPW Director. We could take \$30,000.00 from ARPA funds to put in two receptacles above the new floor, a mini split, make the ceiling repairs, have the trim fixed, fix the trim over the door, the walls painted and any and all repairs and if we used ARPA funding and it would be paid back over time from not paying the storage fees. I suggest using ARPA funds and getting the repairs completed. If we took the money from ARPA funds which are at \$305,063.00, that would leave \$275,063.00. We still have funds available if needed. My suggestion is we move ahead so that the balcony area can be used by Historical to put their stuff in. It may take a month or two to get the work done and we would be able to give Tim Paciorek three months' notice. Chair Szynal stated I would add we should also include those shelves that were mentioned – the movable shelves and the door be rekeyed. Ms. Sanderson stated I think this should work out

perfectly. Ms. Sanderson stated we would like to put out the artifacts for public viewing. I hope we can work together to come up with reasonable dates and times and we could use the space for pop-up exhibits. Chair Szynal made a motion that we approve this estimate we have to do the work and we authorize up to \$30,000.00 of ARPA funds be used as outlined and use the moveable shelves and let the Historical Commission use the space along with the Society; Selectman Gagnon seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved.

TOPIC 1 Rt. 5 Water and Sewer Infrastructure Project Discussion w/Contractor Ryan Geeleher Enterprises, Inc. and Project Engineer Mike Ohl: Chair Szynal asked Michael Ohl and Ryan Geeleher about the work schedule. Mr. Ohl replied the start date is April 1st. We sent out a schedule to residents in the project area. We will not issue updates unless something changes. Mr. Geeleher stated the final paving will be in November. Chair Szynal asked Mr. Geeleher, other than weather delays you don't see any delays? The only problem Mr. Geeleher can foresee is traffic control. Chair Szynal stated I would like information about what the requirements are because maybe there are people in Town who would do this. Chair Szynal stated I certainly hope we will be respectful to the property owners regarding safety as they have been patient. Chair Szynal continued as long as we communicate with residents and keep them apprised of the work schedule - let's wrap it up this year. Selectman Jaworski stated Massworks said they will make us whole, let's hope that happens. Regarding residents connecting to the sewer lines, Mr. Ohl stated we are looking at September 1, they could get their contractors lined up for the connections. Selectman Jaworski asked if you have a definite end date, could you let us know? The Select Board discussed waiving the hook up fee and a time limit. There was a suggestion of two years from completion date. The Select Board agreed if a homeowner has an issue and is not able to connect within that two-year limit, they can talk to the Town Administrator. Selectman Jaworski made a motion we approve the waiver of the \$1,000.00 connection fee and should be able to do it within two years from the completion date and this only pertains to the 5 & 10 project and after those two years if there is still an issue they can come to us and we can discuss for special circumstances; Selectman Gagnon seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved. Phil Genovese suggested sending memo along with an application and let residents know they need to fill out an application.

TOPIC 3 FY2025 Budget and Proposed Articles for Annual Town Meeting Discussion: Ms. Michonski informed the Select Board they have the first draft of the Articles; we received a request from the school, there is a deficit of \$11,180.00 for transportation; snow and ice is an unknown deficit; the Articles have three projects added - there is a sewer assessment, storm water and drinking water assessment project. Ms. Michonski stated there is a DEP grant and the Town's portion is relatively small. We are expecting to hear about the award soon. Ms. Michonski informed the Select Board that free cash has been certified in the amount of \$362,395.00; the general fund of \$405,563.00; and cable of \$293,725.00. Ms. Michonski reminded the Select Board that ballot questions must be submitted by April 16 to the Town Clerk to include an override. On April 23rd the Select Board will approve and sign the warrant. Ms. Michonski sent the latest budgets to the Finance Committee and Select Board; and the Finance Committee is meeting tomorrow with the Treasurer. Chair Szynal stated we met with Finance

last week and got a lot of work done. I hope this budget season, while difficult, is more streamlined than over the last few years.

TOPIC 4 APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS

Appointment of R. Scott Pomeroy as Inspector of Animals: Ms. Michonski informed the Select Board she received notification from Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources for the nomination of an inspector of animals. Selectman Jaworski made a motion to appoint R. Scott Pomeroy to Inspector of Animals according to the handout included in our packets; Selectman Gagnon seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved.

Appointment of Sara Berthe to the Recreation Commission: Ms. Michonski informed the Board Sara Berthe has requested appointment to the Recreation Commission. After reviewing Ms. Berthe's letter, Selectman Gagnon made a motion to appoint Sara Berthe to the Recreation Commission; Selectman Jaworski seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved.

TOPIC 5 TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Recommendation from Treasurer/Collector re: pay increase for Asst. Treasurer/Collector: Ms. Michonski informed the Select Board the Treasurer/Collector is requesting a rate pay increase due to the fact that she has taken on the responsibilities of the Treasurer/Collector until a new Treasurer/Collector can be appointed. Ms. Michonski stated she is very valuable to that office while the Treasurer is out; she has stepped up and took on a considerable amount of responsibility. She has filled the void of the Treasurer/Collector. Chair Szynal asked if this increase is within the budget. Ms. Michonski replied there may be a deficit because she is looking for the increase to be retroactive from January 1st. Chair Szynal stated I have no issue voting this but want to know if they need a transfer. Selectman Gagnon made a motion that we increase the payrate as indicated on the Wage/Salary Rate Adjustment Request for Tammy Wendolowski; Selectman Jaworski seconded; no discussion; all in favor – aye; motion approved.

CONTINUED OLD BUSINESS

TOPIC 6 Discussion of Rt. 5 Sewer Connection Fee – Courtesy to waive fee for new users:
This matter was taken up under Topic 1.

NEW BUSINESS

UNANTICIPATED NEW BUSINESS: Ms. Michonski stated the Town files a report with Green Communities each year listing all new Town vehicles. We received notification that the vehicle that DPW Director acquired doesn't meet the requirements for the Green Communities grant. Green Communities wants an explanation as to why we purchased the vehicle which is not energy acceptable. Mr. Genovese provided a letter stating the reasons he acquired the vehicle he is driving. After reviewing the letter, Chair Szynal signed it.

TOPIC 7 EXECUTIVE SESSION MGL. Ch. 30A, §21a, 2. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining

sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel regarding Treasurer/Collector position:

TOPIC 8 EXECUTIVE SESSION MGL, Ch. 30A, §21a, 3. To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares for the purpose of renewing the Department of Public Works, Laborers Teamsters Union Agreement.

Selectman Gagnon made a motion to move into executive session under MGL, Ch. 30A, §21a #2. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel for Treasurer/Collector position and executive session MGL, Ch. 30A, §21a, 3. To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares for the purpose of renewing the Department of Public Works, Laborers Teamsters Union Agreement and not return to regular session; Selectman Jaworski seconded; Szynal – aye; Gagnon – aye; Jaworski – aye.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 6:19 pm

Respectfully,
Karen Brodeur, Executive Assistant