

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

February 28, 2022

A meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order by Chairman Ampagoomian at 7:00 PM, Northbridge Town Hall, 7 Main Street, Whitinsville, MA. Board Members Present: Ampagoomian, Athanas, Cannon, Collins and Melia. Also Present: Adam D. Gaudette, Town Manager.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those present.

Presentation of Retirement Plaques to: James Shuris, DPW Director. Town Manager Gaudette noted that Mr. Shuris has been great to work with and a team player with all Departments, especially with Highway Superintendent Mr. Luchini and Sewer Superintendent Mr. Kuras, who have been able to learn a great deal from him. He said we appreciate all that he has done for the town, including the Roads program, grants such as Complete Streets and the TIP program. We appreciate all the hard work and wish him well in his retirement. The Selectmen showed their gratitude for all the hard work he has done and wished him the best in his retirement. Town Manager Gaudette read aloud and presented Mr. Shuris with a plaque. Mr. Shuris stated that the ten years here in Northbridge have been the best years of his life. He added that he has enjoyed working with Mr. Kuras and Mr. Luchini in addition to the staff in Northbridge. Mr. Luchini added that the groundwork he laid will still continue to move them forward and he appreciates everything that Mr. Shuris has taught him over the years. Mr. Luchini wished him all the best in his retirement. Mr. Kuras commented that he has been great to work for and wished him a happy retirement.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES/None

PUBLIC HEARING/None

APPOINTMENTS/Resignations/None

CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT: Gloria Grenier, 1945 Hill Street, stated that she has a concern to share concerning her mailbox that continues to get destroyed every snowstorm. She is looking to see what can be done so the plow drivers will be more careful. Town Manager Gaudette sought clarification as to whether it is the plow blade hitting the mailbox or the snow. Ms. Grenier replied that in a previous storm she witnessed the blade hit the mailbox. Town Manager Gaudette explained that mailboxes are in the Town's right-of-way and typically it's the force of the snow that causes the mailbox to get damaged, but he would take her packet of information and have the Interim DPW Director look into it.

Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce: 1) Request permission to hold the Sidewalk Sale event on Church Street on Saturday, June 18, 2022 from 10 AM to 2 PM; 2) Request permission to close Church Street on Saturday, June 18, 2022 from 9 AM to 3 PM from Park Street to the intersection of Cross Street; 3) Request a one-day entertainment license for June 18, 2022 from 10 AM to 2 PM for a DJ; 4) Request permission to hang a banner across Church Street from June 12, 2022 to June 19, 2022 to advertise the Sidewalk Sale on June 18, 2022 from 10 AM to 2 PM. Present: Lesley Woods, Crafty Nest Owner & Heather Glode, Lulu's owner. Ms. Glode explained that she was involved in one sidewalk sale, which she explained was a wonderful event and a huge boost for business. Ms. Woods stated that she has been part of the Sidewalk Sale event since they brought it back and noted that it is wonderful to talk to the attendees. A motion/Mr. Melia seconded/Mr. Collins to approve BVCC's requests as follows: to hold the Sidewalk Sale event on Church Street on Saturday, June 18, 2022 from 10 AM to 2 PM; to close Church Street on Saturday, June 18, 2022 from 9 AM to 3 PM from Park Street to the intersection of Cross Street; request for a one-day entertainment license for June 18, 2022 from 10 AM to 2 PM for a DJ; request permission to hang a banner across Church Street from June 12, 2022 to June 19, 2022 to advertise the Sidewalk Sale on June 18, 2022 from 10 AM to 2 PM. Vote yes/Unanimous.

Open Sky Community Services/Request to hang a banner across Church Street from Sunday, May 29, 2022 until Sunday June 12, 2022 to advertise the 37th Annual Valley Friendship Tour on June 11, 2022. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Ms. Cannon to approve Open Sky's request to hang a banner across Church Street from Sunday, May 29, 2022 until Sunday June 12, 2022 to advertise the 37th Annual Valley Friendship Tour to be held on Saturday, June 11, 2022. Vote yes/Unanimous.

The following item has been moved out of order.

Insurance Claim/Present: Jeffrey Deiana. Mr. Deiana is seeking payment for damages done to his van. He explained that he and his son witnessed a plow driver clearing the roadway and pushed heavy slush into his van. He filed a claim with his insurance company, which came to \$2,700 in damages with a deductible of \$500 but has not had his van fixed. He stated he is looking for the reimbursement of the \$500 deductible. Mr. Deiana advised that he filed a claim through the Town's insurance, which was denied. Selectman Melia noted that towns and cities are exempt from liability unless the claimant can show negligence. Town Manager Gaudette further explained that there is no line item in our budget for paying things like this out, we pay the insurance company and if it is determined that we were negligent then the insurance company would cover those costs. Mr. Deiana asked if the town paid out potholes. Town Manager Gaudette replied that we do not and further explained that it is the same process where the claim is submitted to our insurance company to review and make a determination as to whether the town was negligent.

Spring Annual Town Meeting [May 3, 2022]/Vote to place articles on the Warrant. Present: Town Manager, Adam Gaudette. Town Manager Gaudette provided the board with an update on the Spring Annual Town Meeting Warrant. He said the Police, Fire and DPW departments will go before the Finance Committee on Wednesday, March 2nd, to present their budgets and begin talking about ARPA. He then advised the Board that the warrant for the Spring Annual Town Meeting will close on Friday, March 4, 2022, at 12:00 Noon. Forthcoming, there will be a public hearing with the Finance Committee on March 16th, the Spring Annual Town Meeting on May 3rd at 7 PM, and after that will be the Annual Town Election on May 17, 2022. Town Manager Gaudette reported that the changes discussed at the last meeting have been updated in the Capital Plan. The decision was to pull out the Fire Department storage building from the Capital Plan and instead be a warrant article. With those changes, other items were able to be funded in full such as sidewalk and pavement maintenance, the remaining portion of funds for the complete streets match, and the Police Department sewer connection. Town Manager Gaudette reviewed the articles. **Article 1 (Board of Selectmen) - Prior year bills.** Town Manager Gaudette stated that we typically have a few small expense items as well as insurance related items. **Article 2 (Board of Selectmen) - Budget Transfers.** This will approve appendments to articles from the May 4, 2021 meeting and the October 26, 2021 meeting. **Article 3 (Finance Committee) – FY'23 Omnibus Budget.** This is the overall budget for next year. **Article 4 (Board of Selectmen) – Sewer Enterprise Budget.** The Board of Selectmen act as Sewer Commissioners and this is to approve the Sewer Enterprise budget. **Article 5 (Board of Selectmen) – Water Enterprise.** The Board of Selectmen also act as Water Commissioners and this is to approve the Water Enterprise budget. **Article 6 (Board of Selectmen) – Chapter 90 funds.** This will allow us to spend Chapter 90 funds to improve the roads in town. Selectman Athanas asked if there was an estimate on the Chapter 90 funding. Town Manager Gaudette replied that it is the same as in years past. **Article 7 (Board of Selectmen) – Compensating Balances Agreements.** This will allow the Treasurer/Collector to enter into compensating balance agreements. **Article 8 (Board of Selectmen) – Revolving Funds.** This will set the spending limits for the revolving funds in FY23. There are no changes to the amounts from last year. **Article 9 (Board of Selectmen) - Pine Grove Cemetery.** This is to transfer funds from the Pine Grove Trust to operate the cemetery in FY23. Selectman Athanas questioned the amount of cash in this account. Town Manager Gaudette replied that this specific article is left over money that was budgeted in past years. He further explained that there are two other accounts; the capital has over a hundred thousand in it and the Trust has over three hundred thousand, which we stay away from using. **Article 10 (Community Preservation) –** This article will disburse the funds received from taxes into the different accounts. **Article**

11 (Community Preservation Committee) – This article will approve the spending of funds for administrative tasks. **Article 12 (Community Preservation Committee)** – This article contributes funds to renovate the Linwood Basketball complex. **Article 13 (Board of Health)** – Funds for the Quaker Street Landfill to meet DEP action plan requirements. **Article 14 (Board of Selectmen)** – For improvements at Pine Grove Cemetery. **Article 15 (Board of Selectmen)** – Sewer Enterprise for funding of programs and/or improvements. **Article 16 (Board of Selectmen)** – Water Enterprise to fund water main improvements in Linwood Avenue, Court Street, and Edgemere Avenue. **Article 17 (Board of Selectmen)** - Town Building Maintenance Fund. **Article 18 (School Committee)** - Building Maintenance Funds for improvements at the Schools. **Article 19 (Board of Selectmen)** – Capital Projects. **Article 20 (Board of Selectmen)**- Capital Projects. **Article 21 (Board of Selectmen)** – Additional funds for the Fire Station project. **Article 22 (Zoning Board of Appeals)** – MBTA Zoning permitting requirement. **Article 23 (Finance Committee)** – This article will transfer any remaining funds into stabilization. Selectmen Melia asked about the CPC looking into buying the Castle Hill Property and if any of the CPC articles are in relation to that. Town Manager Gaudette replied that they have not submitted an article on that as of yet. Selectman Collins asked if the Turnout Gear that is crossed out on the Capital Plan is being funded through something else. Town Manager Gaudette replied that it is being funded through ARPA. A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to place all Selectmen-sponsored articles on the Spring Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Vote yes/Unanimous.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT: Fire Station Project Update. Town Manager Gaudette noted that Article 21 is for the additional funding of the Fire Station project. The process consists of the architect hiring and subbing out a cost estimator, which will price every little detail, and in addition the OPM will go through a pricing process as well. Once those are completed, they go through a reconciliation, which is how they come up with the projection. Currently the estimate is at twenty-three million, two hundred and thirty-three thousand, which includes a million-dollar contingency, the contracts we have for the architect, and funds for the OPM. Town Manager Gaudette informed the Board that this includes the planning wing and the storage building. Town Manager Gaudette recommended hold a public meeting with the Finance Committee and the Selectmen to discuss these numbers and the article. While the project is already approved, we will need to ask the Townspeople for additional funds needed.

1) Key Meetings Attended: Monday, February 14, 2022 – Weekly Conference Call for the Fire Station Project. Monday, February 14, 2022 – Attended the Board of Selectmen's Meeting. Tuesday, February 15, 2022 – Zoom Conference call with G. Bechtholdt and B. Massey, Planning Board Chair. Wednesday, February 15, 2022 – Attended the Finance Committee Meeting. Thursday, February 16, 2022 – Met with Attorney Henry Lane and Developers Ed and Bill Renaud. Friday, February 18, 2022 – Conference Call with State Representative Muradian to discuss State ARPA funding. Wednesday, February 23, 2022 – Conference Call with NFP and Finance Team. Wednesday, February 23, 2022 – Virtual IAC Meeting to discuss Health Insurance provider selection. Wednesday, February 23, 2022 – Attended the BPCC Meeting to discuss Fire Station Project and select a firm to do the NES Reuse Study. Thursday, February 24, 2022 – Met with Bob Fitzgerald and Alan Clapp from NEXAMP to discuss McQuade's Lane Solar PILOT. Thursday, February 24, 2022 – Met with DPW Team to discuss WWTP Improvements. **2) Fire Station Project:** The pre-qualifications for Subs and GC's were reviewed and ranked by the BPCC at their meeting this past week on February 23rd. The Design Team has advertised an early site package which is due next week March 2nd. After receiving this, the Construction documents will be finalized and then advertised in mid-April. The project budget has been reconciled and the Town Manager will give the BOS an update on the additional funds required at their meeting this coming February 28th. **3) Northbridge Elementary School Reuse Study:** The BPCC has interviewed two firms and this past week on February 23rd reviewed the proposed scope and fees. They will make a decision in early March and select a firm to do the study. **4) Fire Department Radio Communications Study:** The RFP for this project was due on January 28th. We received five (5) proposals. Chief White, Chief Labrie, and the Town Manager reviewed and ranked the proposals and selected CTA to perform the study. A Notice to Proceed will go out next week. **5) Fire**

Department Strategic Plan: The Town Manager and Fire Chief selected the consultant CPSM for this project. The services agreement has been finalized and the Town Manager issued the Notice to Proceed. The Project is expected to be completed in the next 90 days. **6) Fallon Health Insurance Replacement:** The Town Manager has been working with the Finance Team and NFP to solicit pricing for health insurance plans as Fallon is getting out of the municipal market. The RFP was advertised and the Town received several responses. NFP and staff team had the providers proposing plans present to the IAC. The IAC will be making a final recommendation next week. **7) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA):** The Town will be receiving \$4.9M which can be used for projects/programs in response to the recovery effort brought on by the pandemic. The Town Manager issued Project Request application Documents to staff and area non-profit organizations for the purposes of accessing Federal Relief Funds issued to the Town through the American Rescue Plan Act. The Town Manager will provide a Funding Project Plan as part of the FY2023 Budget and Capital Planning Process starting with the Finance Committee on March 2, 2022. **8) FY2023 Budget and Capital Plan Development:** The Town Manager will be providing the Board of Selectmen with an updated Draft Warrant for their meeting this coming February 28th so they can vote to set their articles on the warrant. The FinCom will start hearing department presentations on their FY2023 Preliminary Budgets next week on March 2nd.

SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS/None

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA/None

CORRESPONDENCE/None

EXECUTIVE SESSION/None

A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Athanas to adjourn the public meeting. Vote yes/Unanimous.

Meeting Adjourned: 7:40 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Russell D. Collins, Clerk

/mjc

LIST OF DOCUMENTATION

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING - OPEN SESSION

February 28, 2022

Presentation of Retirement Plaques to: James Shuris, DPW Director

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES/None

II. PUBLIC HEARING/None

III. APPOINTMENTS/Resignations/None

IV. CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT/None

V. DECISIONS:

A. Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce/ 1) request permission to hold the Sidewalk Sale event on Church Street on Saturday, June 18, 2022 from 10 AM to 2 PM; 2) request permission to close Church Street on Saturday, June 18, 2022 from 9 AM to 3 PM beginning at Park Street to the intersection of Cross Street; 3) request for a one-day entertainment license for June 18, 2022 from 10 AM to 2 PM for a DJ; 4) request permission to hang a banner across Church Street from June 12, 2022 to June 19, 2022 to advertise the Sidewalk Sale on June 18, 2022 from 10 AM to 2 PM/ Present: Lesley Woods, Crafty Nest Owner & Heather Glode, Lulu's owner.

-Copy of Requests

-Copy of DPW Signoffs

-Copy of Police Department sign offs

-Copy of One-day entertainment license application

-Copy of Revenue Enforcement and protection attestation

-Copy of Workers' Compensation Affidavit

-Copy of License Routing Slip

B. Open Sky Community Services/ Request to hang a banner across Church Street from Sunday, May 29, 2022 until Sunday June 12, 2022 to advertise their 37th Annual Valley Friendship Tour on June 11, 2022

-Copy of email request

C. Spring Annual Town Meeting [May 3, 2022]/ Vote to place articles on the Warrant/ Present: Town Manager, Adam Gaudette

-Copy of FY23 budget calendar

-Copy of Capital Projects listing

-Copy of Draft Town Meeting Warrant

VI. DISCUSSIONS:

D. Insurance Claim/ Present: Jeffrey Deiana

-Copy of email request

-Copy of images of damage to van

-Copy of snowplow claim reported to the Town's Insurance

-Copy of claim information provided by the Town's insurance company

-Copy of email regarding the plowing schedule

- Copy of denial letter from the insurance company
- Copy of timeline provided by Mr. Deiana
- Copy of affidavit of Jeffrey Deiana
- Copy of affidavit of Nate Deiana

VII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- E. Fire Station Project Update**
-Copy of cost projection table

VIII. SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS/None

VIII. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA/None

X. CORRESPONDENCE/None

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION/None