

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING**  
**February 8, 2021**

A virtual meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order by Chairman Alicia Cannon at 7:00 PM, using Zoom Video Communication (Video Conferencing App). Board Members Present: Cannon, Athanas, Melia, Ampagoomian, and Collins. Also Present: Adam D. Gaudette, Town Manager.

Chairman Cannon asked all attendees to mute their microphones unless they are speaking or wish to speak. Inappropriate comments and/or disruptive behavior will result in immediate dismissal.

**Chairman Cannon read the following aloud:** Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order concerning imposition on strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, meetings of the Northbridge Board of Selectmen will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** **1) March 2, 2020 [Special Meeting].** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the March 2, 2020 meeting minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Athanas, Cannon and Melia. Abstain: Collins. **2) October 19, 2020.** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the October 19, 2020 meeting minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Unanimous. **3) November 9, 2020.** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the November 9, 2020 meeting minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Unanimous. **4) December 7, 2020.** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the December 7, 2020 meeting minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Unanimous. **5) December 21, 2020.** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the December 21, 2020 meeting minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Unanimous. **6) December 21, 2020 [Exec. Sess.].** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve but not release the December 21, 2020 executive session meeting minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Unanimous. **7) January 11, 2021.** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the January 11, 2021 meeting minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Unanimous.

Chairman Cannon announced that it was not 7:10 PM so the Board moved forward with the Appointments, Citizens Comments, and the 1<sup>st</sup> decision item.

**APPOINTMENTS/By the Board of Selectmen: Northbridge Contributory Retirement Board [Selectmen's Appointee]: Sharon Susienka / Vote to reappoint.** Mrs. Susienka explained that she was appointed to the Board in 2003 and since then has served as Vice Chairman. She mentioned her current term will expire on February 24<sup>th</sup> and is requesting to be reappointed by the Select Board for another 3-year term. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Collins to reappoint Sharon Susienka to the Northbridge Contributory Retirement Board as the Selectmen's appointee. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT:** Daniel Aiello of 398 Roosevelt Drive stated that he reached out to the Town Manager and was impressed and please with his quick response to his reply. He stated that the feedback from the last meeting and speaking with the Town Manager, it is the Board's policy to not assess the individual mandates and enforce them as is, so there is no evaluation of the mandate. Mr. Aiello expressed that it doesn't matter the consequences of the mandate whether they cause personal injury or harm, infringe upon our human rights, or constitutional rights and it's the Board's policy to just take the mandate that is being passed down and enforce it without any regard to the impact it may have on individuals or the community. Mr. Aiello stated that he feels this is a fair interpretation and if the Board's

policy is just to follow and enforce the mandates, he feels it is the Town's policy to be allegiant to Governor Baker, not to support the human and constitutional rights of the citizens of Northbridge. Mr. Aiello stated that he will be following up with the Town Manager with further questions.

**Northbridge Beautification Project/Request to have lights professionally installed on the Town Common for the 2021 Holiday season, contingent upon approval of the Trustees of Soldiers Memorials [Meeting scheduled February 9, 2021]/Present: Cheryl Tivnan.** Chairman Cannon announced that she asked that this request remain on the agenda and be contingent upon the approval of the Trustees of Soldiers' Memorials, as they are not meeting until tomorrow, Tuesday, February 9, 2021. Ms. Tivnan stated that they would like to get permission to have lights installed on the Town Common and also add the Rockdale Common for the 2021 Holiday season, subject to funds being raised to cover the costs. She advised that if approval is received, they will begin reaching out to businesses and citizens to request donations for the upcoming year. She noted that last year they raised about \$10,000 dollars; half of that was from citizens and Unibank covered the remaining portion. Mr. Ampagoomian thanked Ms. Tivnan for the work she put in and stated he received a lot of positive feedback from the public. He also asked if she had received any feedback herself. Ms. Tivnan stated she has received an overwhelming amount of feedback through Facebook. Selectman Collins asked where donations can be sent to. Ms. Tivnan replied that any donations can be sent directly to Unibank to the Northbridge Beautification Project, also there is a Venmo account, which gets transferred to the Unibank account. A motion/Mr. Athanas, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the request to have lights professionally installed on the Town Common and in Rockdale for the 2021 Holiday season, contingent upon approval of the Trustees of Soldiers Memorials. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**PUBLIC HEARING: 7:10 PM Applications to transfer the following licenses from Roby Dee, Inc. dba Valley Pub [Robert DeDominick] to S.D. Briere LLC dba Valley Pub [Stephanie Briere, Mgr.], 40 Plummer Avenue, Whitinsville, MA 01588 1) All Alcohol General On-Premise, 2) Non-Alcoholic Common Victualler, 3) Automatic Amusement Device [Juke Box], and 4) Entertainment.** A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Collins to open the public hearing. Roll call vote: Mr. Athanas/yes, Mr. Ampagoomian/Yes, Mr. Collins/Yes, Mrs. Cannon/Yes, and Mr. Melia/Yes. Chairman Cannon read aloud the public hearing notice. Attorney Holland stated that he represents Mrs. Briere and her husband Mr. Briere and briefly explained Stephanie's work career. He stated that she has spent her career in restaurant and bar service and management and is presently an employee of Valley Pub and it is her intention to take over the business as is and under the same terms and conditions as Valley Pub has been operating for a number of years. Mrs. Briere stated that she is very excited to get started and she was the first person to work at Valley Pub when it first opened. She mentioned that her family lives in town and her children attend school in town. Selectman Melia mentioned that the license should be contingent upon the final requests from the department heads. Town Manager Gaudette added that the two Departments remaining are the Fire Department for a fire inspection and the Board of Health for permits. Chairman Cannon offered the floor to any audience members or abutters. No abutters were present. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Collins to close the public hearing. Roll call vote: Mr. Athanas/yes, Mr. Ampagoomian/Yes, Mr. Collins/Yes, Mrs. Cannon/Yes, and Mr. Melia/Yes. A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the transfer of the following licenses from Roby Dee, Inc. dba Valley Pub [Robert DeDominick] to S.D. Briere LLC dba Valley Pub [Stephanie Briere, Mgr.], 40 Plummer Avenue, Whitinsville, MA 01588 1) All Alcohol General On-Premise, 2) Common Victualler, 3) Automatic Amusement Device [Juke Box], and 4) Entertainment, all contingent upon the fire inspection, the approval of the Food Permit from the Board of Health, and payment of any monies owed to the Town. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**REPM, Inc. Owner/Developer of Stone Hill Condominiums [Senior Living Development] / Vote to accept gift in the form of a monetary donation / Present: Gary Bechtholdt, Town Planner and Duane Boucher, Principal Broker, REPM, Inc.** Mr. Bechtholdt introduced Mr. Boucher and explained that he is one of the developers of the Stone Hill Condominiums, which is located off of Church Street and currently

under construction. Tonight, he is here to present to the town the first of 7 monetary donations, which is part of the Planning Board's Special Permit approval and allows for a payment in lieu of having affordable housing units. Mr. Bechtholdt stated that tonight's donation is in the amount of \$50,000 dollars. Mr. Bechtholdt explained that it is typical that these monetary donations be presented to the Board of Selectmen to be accepted as a gift. Mr. Bechtholdt provided a breakdown of the total donation amounts and what they will go towards and explained the Selectman can designate tonight's donation to any of the following categories: \$50,000 towards design/construction of a pocket-park at the site of the former Rockdale Youth Center; \$50,000 to the Senior Center to be used for capital improvements and/or programs; \$200,000 towards design/construction of bike path and/or walking trails along Linwood Ave (Mumford Riverwalk); \$50,000 towards improvements to Linwood Playground; \$50,000 towards roadway and/or sidewalk improvements along Church Street; \$50,000 to be deposited into Northbridge's CPA -Community Preservation Act funds; and \$17,500 towards planning initiatives. Mr. Bechtholdt stated the Planning Board suggests these funds be designated for the improvements to Linwood Playground under the direction of the Playground and Recreation Commission. Mr. Boucher stated that the check has been remitted to the town already and as construction progresses, they will continue to make the donations. Selectman Ampagoomian asked about the developments and the blasting. Mr. Boucher replied that they have not completed blasting yet but are close. He also said that they tried moving the equipment around and away from the residential homes to minimize noise as best as possible. Selectman Melia asked what the time frame is for the donations/payments. Mr. Boucher explained that it is based on the pace of building permits, and the goal is to complete the project over the course of 4 years, but it will depend on the market. Selectman Melia mentioned that the bike path that is set for receiving one of these monetary donations, comes out to Linwood Avenue, where there is currently not enough room for the pedestrians. Selectman Melia stated that he hopes to see the issue in that area resolved as a part of that portion. Mr. Bechtholdt added that the Safety Committee flagged that area as a priority, so funding would complement that. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Collins to accept a monetary donation from REPM, Inc. in the amount of \$50,000, earmarked for the Linwood Playground. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**Whitin Community Center - Hearts of Kindness/Request to hang hearts in Memorial Park and the Rockdale Common/Present: Heather Elster, Executive Director.** Ms. Elster explained that they have done this event in years past, but this year will be a little different, as it will be a challenge in getting a large group of people together, with the current restrictions in place. She stated that this year they would like to hold the Hearts of Kindness event on the Rockdale Common and it would be done similarly to how it was done in Memorial Park. Ms. Elster stated that it is about 200 hearts that the kids make with a note of kindness that they have done or will do. The hearts would go up Friday, February 12, 2021 and come down Monday, March 1, 2021. Selectmen Collins asked if there will be a police officer present with the kids. Ms. Elster replied that they did receive a comment today, was that a lot of the sidewalks are not cleared and asked if it would be possible to have them cleared. Mr. Luchini stated that he could send the sidewalk plow down to have that strip of sidewalk cleared. Ms. Elster stated that they don't typically get a police officer as they stay on the sidewalks. Selectman Ampagoomian asked if it would just be the Rockdale area and not Memorial Square. Ms. Elster stated that it would just be Rockdale this year as it got too complicated trying to coordinate multiple groups with the COVID regulations. A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the request to hang hearts on the Rockdale Common. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**Spring Annual Town Meeting - Draft Warrant [May 4, 2021].** Town Manager Gaudette began with a review of the budget calendar, which started with his goals last September. He has worked with staff in December and January in developing the FY22 budget update and the 5-year capital plan. The plan was then approved by the Building Planning and Construction Committee and then submitted to the Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen. He explained that he would be reviewing the articles we have so far, but the warrant doesn't close for another few weeks. Town Manager Gaudette stated that he would be working on a preliminary budget with staff and the Finance Committee and would be back in front of the Selectmen for them to vote to place the Selectmen-sponsored articles on the warrant. **ARTICLE 1: (Board**

**of Selectmen):** to appropriate and/or transfer funds for the payment of prior year bills. **ARTICLE 2: (Board of Selectmen):** this article covers amendments for last year's budget approvals and to balance anything that has come up during the year that was not originally account for. Typically, you will see snow and ice and other miscellaneous items to be balanced before the end of the fiscal year. **ARTICLE 3: (Finance Committee):** to establish a budget for FY22 beginning July 1, 2021. **ARTICLE 4: (Board of Selectmen):** Sewer Enterprise Funds. **ARTICLE 5: (Board of Selectmen):** Water Enterprise Funds. **ARTICLE 6: (Board of Selectmen):** To approve Chapter 90 proceeds to be used by the Department of Public Works for the repair and maintenance of Town roads. **ARTICLE 7: (Board of Selectmen):** for the Treasurer/Collector to enter into a compensating balance agreement or agreements for FY 2022. **ARTICLE 8: (Board of Selectmen):** To set the FY22 spending limits for the Town's revolving funds. **ARTICLE 9: (Board of Selectmen):** to establish the budget for the Pine Grove Cemetery overseen by the Director of Public Works. **ARTICLE 10: (Community Preservation Committee):** Spending authorization for the Community Preservation Committee. **ARTICLE 11: (Community Preservation Committee):** Spending authorization for the Community Preservation Committee. **ARTICLE 12: (Board of Health):** to handle remediation for the Quaker Street Landfill. **ARTICLE 13: (Board of Selectmen):** to appropriate and transfer funds from the Sewer Enterprise Fund for capital projects. **ARTICLE 14: (Board of Selectmen):** Water Enterprise Capital Article. **ARTICLE 15: (Board of Selectmen):** Pending funding the purpose is for Capital projects funding. **ARTICLE 16: (Board of Selectmen):** Building Maintenance Fund. **ARTICLE 17: (School Committee):** Capital requests for the School Department. Any remaining articles would be any petitions if received. Town Manager Gaudette stated that one potential article will be from the Town Clerk's Office to make an amendment to the Town Bylaws to allow for use of electronic voting. Town Manager Gaudette reviewed the Capital plan listing the projected projects pending funding. The Balmer School, for which the second borrowing is coming up, the Fire Department station will also be upcoming. He noted he will have specifics for the Capital Plan once funding is set. Selectman Melia asked when will the Board know when the funding will be available for the Capital Plan. Town Manager Gaudette explained that it will need to be in place by March 22<sup>nd</sup> for the Selectmen's meeting as the articles will be voted on at that time and should have it set by the middle of next week. Selectman Ampagoomian asked when the removal of the temporary classrooms would commence. Town Manager Gaudette replied that once it is approved at Town Meeting and the Town Clerk certifies the funds and the Town Accountant sets up the accounts we can start right away if they are tied to free cash or surplus from the previous year. They will need to go over the planning and procurement prior to the physical removal of the modular classrooms. Selectman Athanas asked if there was a value to the modular classrooms once removed. Town Manager Gaudette explained that they are well past the typical lifespan and they were used longer than they were meant to be. Selectman Athanas asked if there has been a decision for the Annex building once the current departments are moved to the new building. Town Manager Gaudette stated that he has money set aside in the Capital Plan for the Building Planning Construction Committee for building reuse studies on old buildings and the first on the list will be the Northbridge Elementary School since that will come off the schedule first. Once they work through that study as the Fire Station design and construction effort is in place eventually the Annex building and Fire Station will be part of that building reuse study.

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT: 1) Key Meetings Attended:** Monday, January 25, 2021 – Conference Call with Chair Cannon to prep for the Board of Selectmen Meeting. Monday, January 25, 2021 – Attended the Board of Selectmen Meeting. Tuesday, January 26, 2021 – Conference Call with Town Counsel Doneski to the discuss Fire Dept. Project OPM Agreement. Tuesday, January 26, 2021 – Conference Call for Police Chiefs/Managers Committee to discuss Police Reform Bill. Wednesday, January 27, 2021 – Regional Town Managers Zoom Meeting. Wednesday, January 27, 2021 – Attended a BPCC Meeting. Tuesday, February 2, 2021 – Conference Call with NPS Superintendent McKinstry and Business Manager Walker to discuss FY2022 Budget. Wednesday, February 3, 2021 – Negotiations (virtual) with Northbridge Dispatchers Unit. Friday, February 5, 2021 – Zoom Meeting with Selectmen/Town Manager administration team. **2) Balmer School Building Project:** Project construction by Fontaine Brothers continues with precautionary measures in place per State construction guidelines for construction projects moving forward

during the pandemic. The majority of the site work has been completed allowing for work to be conducted in the interior of the building (framing, drywall, painting, finishing, etc.). The Town Manager continues to work with Town Counsel and the OPM on agreements for fence replacement for the abutters off Overlook Street. **3) Lasell Field Turf Project:** The project is essentially complete except for several punch-list items that won't be completed until the spring (loam and seed). The GC Green Acres is also working on providing close-out documents for the Town. **4) Fire Station Project:** After holding interviews the BPCC voted unanimously to select CHA as the OPM for the Fire Station project. The Town Manager is working on behalf of the BPCC to negotiate the services agreement with general terms and conditions (reviewed by Town Counsel) as well as scope of services and fee with CHA. CHA has already provided a draft RFQ for the BPCC to review which will be used to advertise in order to select a design team (architect). The BPCC will be meeting with CHA next on February 15<sup>th</sup> to kick-off the project. **5) FY2022 Budget & Town Meeting Warrant:** The BPCC approved the 5-Year Capital Plan Update last week and the Town Manager submitted to the BOS and the FinCom this past Monday, February 1<sup>st</sup> per the Code of Bylaws. The Town Manager will provide a draft warrant to the Board of Selectmen this Monday, February 8, 2021 and meets with the Finance Committee on February 17, 2021 to discuss the draft FY2022 Budget. Town Manager Gaudette added that he received language from Town Counsel on the Armenian monument for the Pine Grove Cemetery, which has been forwarded to Peter Bedigian.

**SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS:** **Selectman Melia 1)** offered condolences to the Woeller family for the loss of Laura Woeller who passed away this past Saturday at the age of 70, after a short battle with cancer. She worked as the Assistant Treasurer/Collector for twenty-eight years.

**ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA/None**

**CORRESPONDENCE/None**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION/None**

Chairman Cannon announced that the next meeting (virtual) is scheduled for 7 PM on Monday, February 22, 2021.

A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to adjourn the public meeting. Vote yes/  
Unanimous.

**Meeting Adjourned: 7:54 PM**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Russell D. Collins, Clerk**

/mjc

## **LIST OF DOCUMENTATION**

### **BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING - OPEN SESSION**

**February 8, 2021**

#### **I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

##### **A. 1) March 2, 2020 [Special Meeting]**

**-Copy of March 2, 2019 meeting minutes [Special Meeting]**

##### **2) October 19, 2020**

**-Copy of October 19, 2020 meeting minutes**

##### **3) November 9, 2020**

**-Copy of November 9, 2020 meeting minutes**

##### **4) December 7, 2020**

**-Copy of December 7, 2020 meeting minutes**

##### **5) December 21, 2020**

**-Copy of December 21, 2020 meeting minutes**

##### **6) December 21, 2020 [Exec. Sess.]**

**-Omitted as the minutes have not yet been released**

##### **7) January 11, 2021**

**-Copy of the January 11, 2021 meeting minutes**

#### **II. PUBLIC HEARING: B. 7:10 PM Applications to transfer the following licenses from Roby Dee, Inc. dba Valley Pub [Robert DeDominick] to S.D. Briere LLC dba Valley Pub [Stephanie Briere, Mgr.], 40 Plummer Avenue, Whitinsville, MA 01588 1) All Alcohol General On-Premise**

**-Copy of public hearing notice**

**-Copy of completed application packet**

**-Copy of Certificate of Organization**

**-Copy of Operating agreement**

**-Copy of Purchase and Sale agreement**

**-Copy of Amendment to the Purchase and Sale Agreement**

**-Copy of Promissory Note**

**-Copy of birth certificate**

**-Copy of Corporate Vote**

**-Copy of Pledge Agreement**

**-Copy of Quitclaim Deed**

**-Copy of Commercial Lease**

**-Copy of layout**

**-Copy of Certificate of Insurance**

**-Copy of tips certification**

##### **2) Common Victualler**

**-Copy of Common Victualler application**

##### **3) Automatic Amusement Device [Juke Box]**

**-Copy of Automatic Amusement Device application**

**4) Entertainment**

**-Copy of Entertainment License application**

**-Copy of Revenue Enforcement and Protection Attestation**

**III. APPOINTMENTS/By the Board of Selectmen: C. Northbridge Contributory Retirement Board [Selectmen's Appointee]: Sharon Susienka / Vote to reappoint**

**-Copy of letter to the Chairman of the Board of selectmen from Sharon Susienka requesting to be reappointed as the Selectmen's appointee to the Contributory Retirement Board**

**IV. CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT**

**V. DECISIONS:**

**D. Northbridge Beautification/Request to have lights professionally installed on the Town Common for the 2021 Holiday season, contingent upon approval of the Trustees of Soldiers Memorials [Meeting scheduled February 9, 2021]/Present: Cheryl Tivnan**

**-Copy of email request to decorate the Rockdale Common in addition to the Town Common for the 2021 Holiday season**

**E. REPM, Inc. Owner/Developer of Stone Hill Condominiums [Senior Living Development] / Vote to accept gift in the form of a monetary donation / Present: Gary Bechtholdt, Town Planner and Duane Boucher, Principal Broker, REPM, Inc.**

**-Copy of memorandum explaining the Stone Hill Condominiums monetary donations**

**F. Whittin Community Center - Hearts of Kindness/Request to hang hearts in Memorial Park and the Rockdale Common/Present: Heather Elster, Executive Director**

**-Copy of email request to hang hearts in the Rockdale Common for the Hearts of Kindness Program**

**-copy of Hearts of Kindness flyer**

**VI. DISCUSSIONS:**

**G. Draft Warrant Articles for Annual Town Spring Meeting Warrant [May 4, 2021]/Town Manager**

**-Copy of Five-Year Capital Plan**

**-Copy of the Spring Annual Draft Town Meeting Warrant**

**VII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT/None**

**VIII. SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS/No documentation**

**IX. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA/None**

**X. CORRESPONDENCE/None**

**XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION/None**