

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING**  
**January 25, 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) at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82044021858?pwd=TUtQdWhjY3hHd3VXcWdKNitWeWkydz09> **Meeting ID:** 820 4402 1858; **Passcode:** 707123; **Dial by phone:** 1-646-558-8656. 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. 30 A, §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/None.**

**PUBLIC HEARING/None.**

**APPOINTMENTS/By the Board of Selectmen and Northbridge Housing Authority (Joint Appointment): Robert Burrows, Northbridge Housing Authority. Present: Brett Lambert, Executive Director, Northbridge Housing Authority.** Mr. Lambert explained that Mr. Burrows was previously on the Housing Authority and is looking to get back on. He further explained that the Housing Authority met last week and approved Mr. Burrows' appointment and is here tonight to recommend the Selectmen do the same. Mr. Burrows stated he was happy to have this opportunity to serve on the Housing Authority again. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to appoint Mr. Burrows to the Northbridge Housing Authority as a joint appointment with the Northbridge Housing Authority. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**By the Town Manager: Samantha Chatterton, Assistant Town Accountant/Vote to Affirm. Present: Neil Vaidya, Town Accountant.** Mr. Vaidya introduced Samantha Chatterton and explained that his former assistant left Northbridge for a position in another community leaving the Assistant Town Accountant's position open. He said the process to replace the Assistant began with the review of all resumes submitted before the deadline and then determining which applicants would be interviewed. Mr. Vaidya stated that Ms. Chatterton stood out among the viable candidates and noted that she also has four years of previous municipal experience along with a great attitude and will be an immense asset to the Town. Ms. Chatterton stated that she is looking forward to working in the Town of Northbridge and the interview was wonderful, which upped her excitement for this position. She added that she is looking forward to meeting all staff and will hit the ground running. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to affirm the Town Manager's appointment of Samantha Chatterton as the Assistant Town Accountant. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT:** Town resident, Daniel Aiello, 398 Roosevelt Drive, had questions pertaining to the current restrictions put in place by the Governor. He asked what the game plan is for ending the emergency order in Northbridge, and if no plan has been received to what extent is the board looking to go with the mandates. Mr. Aiello is also looking to have these questions answered by the Selectmen in an official form. Chairman Cannon advised that the Citizens Comments and Input portion of

the meeting is for residents to give input but is not for Q&A. She indicated the Board will make note of any questions and asked that he reach out to the Town Manager's Office so that a response can be prepared. Town Manager Gaudette agreed with that statement and explained that the Board of Selectmen has specific duties under the Town's Charter and Mass. General Laws. He stated that there are decisions being made that are affecting citizens of this town, that aren't necessarily being put in place by the local Board of Selectmen. He mentioned that the Board is responsible to understand, listen and be part of the conversation but we do not decide when we want the Governor's order to end. Mr. Gaudette advised him that he should go through the State Representatives and the State Department of Public Health where the information and regulations are coming from. In closing, Town Manager Gaudette mentioned that he would be happy to answer any questions via email so he can help track down the right people to answer those questions. Mr. Aiello asked who is responsible for enforcing the rules at the Town level. Mr. Gaudette replied the local Board of Health makes the regulations known to businesses and the town would have the ability to issue fines for those not in compliance.

**National Grid/Request permission for removal and/or pruning of hazardous public shade trees on Quaker Street (a scenic road) & Wolfe Hill Road / Present: James Shuris, Department of Public Works Director & Jeffrey Meola, Davey Tree.** Mr. Shuris explained that there are many public shade trees and Mass. General Law allows for the Selectmen to approve or disapprove the removal of them. Mr. Shuris explained that the assessment was prepared by Davey Tree Company and inspected the trees himself. Mr. Meola added that National Grid is required to perform these assessments by the Department of Public Utilities. He explained that they narrow the search down by the poorer working circuits. Selectman Athanas asked if there is a cleanup process. Mr. Shuris explained that National Grid cleans up the smaller branches and the DPW does the cleanup for the larger pieces. Selectman Ampagoomian asked if a public hearing was necessary in order to remove the trees. Mr. Shuris explained that M.G.L. 87 Sections 3 and 4 allow them to be removed by the Board of Selectmen, without a public hearing. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Athanas to approve the request for the removal and/or pruning of hazardous public shade trees on Quaker Street (a scenic road) & Wolfe Hill Road. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**JSC Management Group, LLC dba Burger King, 1141 Providence Road/Vote to approve Common Victualler License contingent approvals of the Building, Fire and Board of Health departments and completed paperwork/Present: Sean O'Brien, Vice President.** Mr. O'Brien advised that JSC Management Group is the new owner of Burger King in Whitinsville. The new restaurant design is called a pavilion and is the first of its kind. He stated they are extremely excited to do business in town and mentioned that they are looking to open on Thursday after they have a Board of Health and Fire inspection. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to approve the Common Victualler License for JSC Management Group, LLC dba Burger King, 1141 Providence Road, contingent upon the approvals of the Building, Fire, and Board of Health Departments. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**Annual Town Election (May 18, 2021) / Vote to give notice to the Town Clerk to place vacancies from elected boards on the Town Election Warrant.** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Collins to give notice to the Town Clerk to place vacancies from elected boards on the Town Election Warrant. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**Community Preservation Plan (DRAFT) -Present: Glenn King, CPC Chair & Gary Bechtholdt CPC Admin.** Mr. King explained that in 2017 the Northbridge voters adopt the Community Preservation Act, which creates a pool of money that the town can use for affordable housing, historical preservation and open space and recreation. He stated that the money comes from two sources; the first of which is a surcharge on the property tax and the second source is the State's match. The money is administered through a committee that is made of nine people that were appointed by the Board of Selectmen along with members from the Housing Authority, Conservation Commission, Historic Commission, Planning Board, Playground and Recreation, School Committee, and 3 Members At-Large. Proposals from Town

Committees or individuals are presented to the CPC for approval and if approved it moves forward to the Spring Town Meeting for approval. Mr. King explained that the committee has been meeting monthly for the last year and setting up its policies and procedures. Mr. Bechtholdt further explained that the plan itself is a playbook for the Community Preservation Commission that defines what the CPA is, identifies the goals, establishes procedures and the evaluation criteria, and details of the process for securing funds. Mr. Bechtholdt noted that the plan does have regulations for project completion. The [Community Preservation Plan](#) is available online. Selectman Melia asked if the CPC funds could be used for work at the Linwood basketball courts to make up the difference on what is in place for funding currently. Mr. King stated that it could potentially be used but the regulations are pretty strict on how the money is spent, one regulation being that it can't supplant a responsibility of the town. Mr. Bechtholdt requested that the Playground and Recreation Commission should propose a request to the CPC. Town Manager Gaudette added that he would talk to the chairman of the Playground and Recreation Commission. Selectman Ampagoomian asked how many residents participated and what were the typical questions asked. Mr. King replied typically the participation is low, but some of the inquiries included obtaining open space and a restoration of an historic fire apparatus. Selectman Collins asked how much money is in each category. Mr. King responded that in total there is about \$450,000 dollars, 30% of which is separated among 3 categories and the remaining amount is unallocated and can be spent on any of the 3 categories. Mr. Bechtholdt announced that the public hearing has been continued to Monday, March 1, 2021 at 6:30 PM.

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:** 1) **Key Meetings Attended:** Monday, January 11, 2021 – Attended the Board of Selectmen Meeting. Tuesday, January 12, 2021 – Conference Call/Vendor presentation with the Town Clerk and Moderator for electronic voting systems. Thursday, January 14, 2021 – Conference Call/Vendor presentation with the Town Clerk and Moderator for electronic voting systems. Friday, January 15, 2021 – Conference call with Financial Team and NFP regarding Fallon Health Insurance Renewal. Monday, January 18, 2021 – Town Offices closed due to MLK Holiday. Tuesday, January 19, 2021 – Conference Call with MMA staff and MMMA President Julie Jacobson, Auburn Town Manager, to prepare for the MMA Meeting. Wednesday, January 20, 2021 – Held a Department Managers Meeting. Wednesday, January 20, 2021 – Attended a BPCC Meeting. Thursday, January 21, 2021 – Facilitated an MMMA networking event at the MMA Annual Meeting (virtual). Friday, January 22, 2021 – Attended the MMA Annual Meeting (virtual). 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 working on providing close-out documents for the Town. The BPCC met this past week on January 20<sup>th</sup> to approve invoices and reduce retainage to an amount sufficient to cover remaining items. 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). 5) **FY2021 Budget:** The Town Manager is working on the FY2022 Budget and Capital Development. Staff submittals have been provided and the Town Manager has started developing a preliminary budget and 5-Year Capital Plan. The Town Manager will meet with the BPCC next week on Wednesday, January 27<sup>th</sup> to review and approve the 5-Year Capital Plan Update. The Town awaits the Governor's H1 Budget announcement expected at the end of January (27<sup>th</sup>), which will dictate local aid amounts. Town Manager Gaudette announced that the Community Development Block grant that was in tandem with the Town of Webster and other towns, which is a micro enterprise assistance grant and will be used for working capital to cover business costs such as rent, staffing, utilities, and costs of goods or for the purchase of PPE. The grant is designed to assist micro enterprise businesses, which are businesses

of five or fewer employees, including the owner(s) that have been adversely affected by COVID-19. Mr. Gaudette stated that grant awards are up to ten-thousand dollars. Visit the News and announcement section of the Northbridge webpage here: [www.northbridgemass.org](http://www.northbridgemass.org). Town Manager Gaudette further announced that the town was also awarded four thousand dollars that will be given to the Northbridge food pantry, which will assist with the cost of food purchases and the cost of a standing freezer.

**SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS/None**

**ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA/None**

**CORRESPONDENCE/None**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION/None**

Chairman Cannon announced that the next meeting is scheduled for February 8, 2021 at 7 PM.

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

**Meeting Adjourned: 7:53 PM**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Russell D. Collins, Clerk**

**/mjc**

**LIST OF DOCUMENTATION**

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

**January 25, 2021**

- I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES/None**
- II. PUBLIC HEARING/None**
- III. APPOINTMENTS/A. Joint Appointment by the Board of Selectmen and Housing Authority: Robert Burrows, Northbridge Housing Authority/Present: Brett Lambert, Executive Director, Northbridge Housing Authority**
  - Copy of talent bank form**

**B. By the Town Manager: Samantha Chatterton, Assistant Town Accountant/Present: Neil Vaidya**

  - Copy of memorandum from the Town Manager to the Board of Selectmen announcing the vacancy in the Town Accountants office**
  - Copy of memorandum from the Town Accountant requesting the Town Manager appoint Samantha Chatterton to the Assistant Town Accountant position**
  - Copy of cover letter of Samantha Chatterton**
  - Copy of resume of Samantha Chatterton**
  - Copy of application of Samantha Chatterton**
- IV. CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT/No documentation**
- IV. DECISIONS:**
  - C. National Grid/Request permission for removal and/or pruning of hazardous public shade trees on Quaker Street (a scenic road) & Wolfe Hill Road / Present: James Shuris, Department of Public Works Director & Jeffrey Meola, Davey Tree**
    - Copy of email from DPW Director James Shuris confirming the need to address public shade trees**
    - Copy of memorandum regarding the pruning and/or removal of hazardous public shade trees.**
    - Copy of Public Shade Tree Removal Permit**
  - D. JSC Management Group, LLC dba Burger King, 1141 Providence Road/Vote to approve Common Victualler License contingent approvals of the Building, Fire and Board of Health departments and completed paperwork/Present: Sean O'Brien, Vice President**
    - Copy of Common Victualler License application for JSC Management Group, LLC dba Burger King.**
    - Copy of REAP Form**
    - Copy of Workers' Compensation Affidavit**
    - Copy of certification of liability insurance**
  - E. Annual Town Election (May 18, 2021) / Vote to give notice to the Town Clerk to place vacancies from elected boards on the Town Election Warrant**
    - Copy of memo addressing the vacancies of elected boards**

- VI. DISCUSSIONS:**
  - F. Community Preservation Plan (DRAFT) -Present: Glenn King, CPC Chair & Gary Bechtholdt CPC Admin/None**
- VII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**
  - Copy of Community Development Block Grant Federal Cares Act Program Grant flyer**
- VIII. SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS**
- IX. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**
- X. CORRESPONDENCE**
- XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION**