

## **BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING**

**May 24, 2021**

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

Vice Chairman Ampagoomian 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.

**Vice Chairman Ampagoomian 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) **June 23, 2020 [Spring Annual Town Meeting].** A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the June 23, 2020 minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Collins, Melia, and Ampagoomian. 2) **February 22, 2021** A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to approve the February 22, 2021 minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Collins and Ampagoomian. Abstain/Melia. 3) **March 8, 2021** A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the March 8, 2021 minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Collins, Melia, and Ampagoomian. 4) **March 22, 2021** A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the March 22, 2021 minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Collins, Melia, and Ampagoomian. 5) **May 4, 2021 [Spring Annual Town Meeting]** A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the May 4, 2021 minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Collins, Melia, and Ampagoomian.

**PUBLIC HEARING/None.**

**APPOINTMENTS/By the Town Manager [Vote to affirm]:** 1) **Walter Warchol, Special Police Officer [Effective June 26, 2021 / 3-year term].** A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Collins to affirm the appointment of Walter Warchol as a Special Police Officer for a 3-year term. Vote yes/ Collins, Melia, and Ampagoomian.

2) **Donald Roy, Special Police Officer [Reappointment -Term to expire March 9, 2024]** A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Collins to affirm the reappointment Donald Roy as a Special Police Officer until March 9, 2024. Vote yes/Collins, Melia, and Ampagoomian.

3) **Jane Colonna, Adm. Asst. to the Building Inspector and Zoning Board of Appeals. Present: Jane Colonna and James Sheehan, Building Inspector.** The Town Manager advised the Board that Ms. Colonna's application and associated documentation was in their agenda packets. With that he turned it over to Mr. Sheehan. Mr. Sheehan then introduced Ms. Colonna to everyone. He mentioned that there were several applicants who applied for the job but that Jane had the most appealing background and skills to do the job. Ms. Colonna stated that she looks forward to the opportunity. A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to affirm the Town Manager's appointment of Jane Colonna as the Adm. Asst. to the

Building Inspector and Zoning Board of Appeals. Vote yes/Collins, Melia, and Ampagoomian.

**RESIGNATIONS:**

**Gerald Ouillette, Community Preservation Committee.** A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to accept the resignation of Mr. Ouillette from the Community Preservation Committee. Vote yes/Collins, Melia, and Ampagoomian. Selectman Ampagoomian requested a letter of thanks be sent on behalf of the Board thanking him for his years of service.

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT/None.**

**Compost Site (located at the Wastewater Treatment Plant) / Vote to name the site after Paul Monast and to place proper signage.** Town Manager Gaudette mentioned the Board of Health had received a request from a resident back in February to name the compost site after Paul Monast. He added the Board of Health recently met to discuss the request and voted unanimously to support it, which is stated in their letter included in tonight's agenda packet. Jeanne Gniadek, Board of Health Administrator, advised that Mr. Monast ran the compost site for 20 years and that residents just loved him! Together with the Board of Health, she enthusiastically voiced her support in naming the site after Paul Monast and hoped the Selectmen would vote to in favor. Ms. Gniadek mentioned there is money available in the compost site revolving fund to pay for signage. A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the request to name the compost site after Paul Monast. Vote yes/Collins, Melia, and Ampagoomian.

**Ashton Place Apartment Complex (Village of Rockdale) / Vote by Sewer Commissioners to reduce Sewer Connection Fees. Present: Attorney Henry Lane, James Shuris, DPW Director, and Mark Kuras, Sewer Superintendent.** The Town Manager began and said additional units are being added to the Ashton Place Apartment Complex and as part of the permitting and review process they have requested a reduction in the sewer connection fees. Mr. Gaudette pointed out that the sewer fees haven't been looked at since 2007, and it needs to be done at some point due to the fact that our rates do not differentiate between different types of housing units. For example, single family/multifamily homes and senior living units are treated the same even though seniors contribute less flow to the sewer system than single/multifamily homes. The Town Manager stated that if the Board intends to make a motion to reduce any fees, he recommends at a minimum that the Board eliminate the I & I fee (\$6,160) since the Town has done a good job of reducing flow into the sewer system. Based on prior sewer fee reduction requests, he did a calculation based on the per bedroom fee and 110 gallons per day, which is required by DEP, and came up with a total reduction of 41% (original fee was \$106,920 reduced to \$62,366.44) that he thinks is very fair. Attorney Lane would have liked a further reduction but since the policy is being applied uniformly, he is amenable to Mr. Gaudette's calculation and said there would be no further objection. James Shuris, DPW Shuris, concurred with the analysis the Town Manager, Sewer Supt. and he put together. Sewer Supt. Kuras also agreed and had no further comment. Selectman Melia voiced his support and reiterated that the fee schedule should be revised in the very near future and Selectman Collins concurred. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Collins to eliminate the I & I rates from the Town's sewer rates. Vote yes/Melia, Collins, and Ampagoomian. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Collins to approve a reduction in the sewer connection fees for Ashton Place Apartment Complex from the original amount of \$106,920 to \$62,366.44. Vote yes/Melia, Collins, and Ampagoomian.

**Pine Grove Cemetery/Randall and Shirley DeVries [Lot Nos. 260, 262 and 263, three full graves on Forest Ave East (South)].** A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the sale of lot Nos. 260, 262, and 263 (three full graves) on Forest Ave. East (South). Vote yes/Collins, Melia, and Ampagoomian.

**Town Manager's Report:** 1) **Key Meetings Attended:** Monday, May 10, 2021 – Attended the Board of Selectmen Meeting via Zoom. Tuesday, May 11, 2021 – Held Firefighters Association CBA negotiations. Tuesday, May 11, 2021 – Toured Northbridge Elementary School (NES) with Superintendent McKinstry. Wednesday, May 12, 2021 – Conference Call with Health Insurance broker and financial team regarding future plan procurement. Wednesday, May 12, 2021 – Conference Meeting with MMMA colleagues for Suffolk Graduate applications review. Thursday, May 13, 2021 – Conference Call with Tradition Energy to discuss Electricity Supply strategies. Monday, May 17, 2021 – Conference Call with School Staff and Parks & Rec regarding Fields use. Monday, May 17, 2021 – Conference Call with MIIA rep David Labonte regarding FY2022 renewal pricing. Tuesday, May 18, 2021 – Attended the Lt Governor's Town Managers call via Zoom. Wednesday, May 19, 2021 – Met with incoming Police Chief, Tim Labrie. Wednesday, May 19, 2021 – Met with Fire Chief David White. Thursday, May 20, 2021 – Met with John Brissette, Braley-Wellington, to discuss General Liability renewal bid. Thursday, May 20, 2021 – Conference Call with David Labonte, MIIA, to discuss General Liability renewal bid. Friday, May 21, 2021 – Personal Day Leave. 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 Town Manager is working with the OPM to secure temporary fence construction access from abutters. The OPM is working on punch lists as the project will approach substantial completion over the next couple months. The project timeline is on target for opening this Fall. 3) **Lasell Field Turf Project:** The project is essentially complete except for several punch-list items that we are working to get scheduled (loam and seed). 4) **Fire Station Project:** The BPCC has selected CHA as the OPM and TGAS as the architect for the project and the Town Manager has issued the Notice to Proceed. The design team has begun meeting with the Town and prepping for the baseline data for the design which includes the field survey and soil testing. A meeting with the BPCC will be next week on May 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm. 5) **Other Tasks:** Currently negotiating New Police Chief's Employment Agreement as well as the 4 Collective Bargaining Units. Also, bidding Electricity and Gas Supply rates for Town Buildings as well as General Liability and Workers Compensation Premiums.

**SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS:** **Selectman Melia/1)** Requested the reorganization of the Board of Selectmen be included on the next agenda. 2) Noticed there have been several ongoing complaints/issues with sewerage, drainage, etc. in the Stone Hill Condo development being built off of Church Street. Wants to know if the issues have been addressed. Town Manager Gaudette stated he will invite Dave Pickart, the Conservation Agent, to the next Selectmen's meeting on June 7<sup>th</sup> for a status update. Mr. Shuris then commented the Conservation Commission and DPW met onsite regarding flooding on Leland Road. They discovered there is a drainage swale that has been blocked up over the years resulting in the water not going into the pipe but instead flowing onto Leland Road and down towards the Mumford River underground. A company was contacted to come out and put a camera in the line, which was found to be collapsed and had several breaks. The DPW went out to bid to get prices to correct the problem and it is scheduled for some time in July 2021. Selectman Melia asked if the cost to fix it will be borne by the Town or by the developer. Town Manager Gaudette noted that when the Stone Hill Condo Development tried to tie into that line, due to the breaks in it, it just ended up flooding Leland Road. He also pointed out that the line is owned by the Town and the repair(s) will be paid for with Chapter 90/town funds. 3) Graffiti issues (Aubuchon Building on Church Street) – Asked Chief Warchol if he knows of any state law or town bylaw that allows the Town to try and get it cleaned up. Chief Warchol replied he does not know of any law/bylaw but will contact the owner of the building and request that they remove the graffiti. **Selectman Ampagoomian/Congratulated the Class of 2021** on their accomplishments and for getting through the school year by virtual learning, no sports to speak of, and a host of other "new" rules due to the COVID pandemic. He also commended all parents and teachers for their hard work and dealing with all the COVID guidelines.

**ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION/None.**

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

**Meeting Adjourned: 7:37 PM**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Russell D. Collins, Clerk**

**/sls**

## **LIST OF DOCUMENTATION**

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

**May 24, 2021**

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

- A.** 1) Copy of the June 23, 2020 [Spring Annual Town Meeting] 2) February 22, 2021  
3) March 8, 2021 4) March 22, 2021 5) May 4, 2021 [Spring Annual Town Meeting]  
- Copies of the minutes for June 23, 2020 [Spring Annual Town Meeting], February 22, 2021,  
March 8, 2021, March 22, 2021, and May 4, 2021 [Spring Annual Town Meeting]

#### **II. PUBLIC HEARING**

#### **III. APPOINTMENTS/By the Town Manager:**

- B. 1)** Walter Warchol, Special Police Officer [Effective June 26, 2021 (3-year term)]  
-Copy of memo from Chief Warchol to Town Manager Gaudette dated May 19, 2021  
**2)** Donald Roy, Special Police Officer [Reappointment - Term to expire March 9, 2024]  
-Copy of memo from Chief Warchol to Town Manager Gaudette dated May 19, 2021  
**3)** Jane Colonna, Adm. Asst. to the Building Inspector and Zoning Board of Appeals  
-Copy of job offer letter to Ms. Colonna dated May 20, 2021  
-Copy of Ms. Colonna's cover letter  
-Copy of Ms. Colonna's resume  
-Copy of Ms. Colonna's employment application  
-Copy of letter of recommendation (Estep)  
-Copy of letter of recommendation (Arsenault)

#### **RESIGNATIONS:**

- C.** Gerald Ouillette, Community Preservation Committee  
-Copy of resignation (email dated May 11, 2021)

#### **IV. CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT**

#### **V. DECISIONS:**

- D.** Compost Site (Located At The Wastewater Treatment Plant) / Vote to name the site after Paul Monast and to place signage  
-Copy of memo from Board of Health to Town Manager Gaudette dated May 12, 2021  
-Copy of resident's request to name the Compost Site after Paul Monast dated February 1, 2021
- E.** Ashton Place Apartment Complex (Village of Rockdale) / Vote by Sewer Commissioners to reduce sewer connection fees. Present: Attorney Henry Lane  
-Copy of letter from Lane and Hamer to Town Manager Gaudette dated November 18, 2020 and updated November 9, 2020
- F.** Pine Grove Cemetery/Randall and Shirley Devries [lots no. 260, 262 and 263, 3 full graves on Forest Ave. East (south)]  
-Copy of Cemetery deed

**VI. DISCUSSIONS**

**VII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

-Copy of Town Manager's Report for the period of May 10, 2021 to May 20, 2021

**VIII. SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS**

**IX. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

**X. CORRESPONDENCE**

**XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION**