

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

November 6, 2023

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those present.

PRESENTATION: Certificate of Special Recognition awarded to Colin Gava for attaining the rank of Eagle Scout. Present: Colin Gava, Eagle Scout and Charles Thompson, Committee Chairperson. Chairman Collins read aloud the certificate of Special Recognition and presented it to Mr. Gava, who explained his Eagle Scout project was to clear overgrowth from the grounds of St. Peter's Church over a 2-day period.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 1) June 26, 2023. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the June 26, 2023 meeting minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Unanimous. **2) July 17, 2023.** A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to approve the July 17, 2023 meeting minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Unanimous. **3) October 24, 2023 [FATM].** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the October 24, 2023 [FATM] minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Unanimous.

PUBLIC HEARING – 7:00 PM: FY24 Tax Rate Classification Hearing. Present: Robert Fitzgerald, Principal Assessor. A motion/Mr. Begin, seconded/Mr. Melia to open the public meeting. Vote yes/Unanimous. Mr. Fitzgerald began and explained that the purpose of this hearing is for the Selectmen to decide whether or not to shift the tax burden between the classes of residential, commercial and industrial and personal property. The breakdown would start with the 2023 levy limit, then you would add the proposition 2½, add new growth, add the debt exclusions then divide by the new valuation of the community. The estimated tax rate is \$12.09, which has not yet been approved by DOR. Last year, the tax rate was \$12.96, so if the estimated rate of \$12.09 is approved, it will be a decrease of .87 cents. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that compared to surrounding towns our tax rate is on the lower end. Continuing, he explained the options of the tax rate to the Selectmen. The first option is to have a single rate, which spreads the tax burden among all classes of property. The second option is to select a residential exemption, and the third option is to select a small commercial exemption. As is customary, the Board of Assessors recommends Option #1 - the single tax rate. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to close the public hearing. Vote yes/Unanimous. The Selectmen opted to keep a single tax rate, thus it does not require a vote. The tax rate will remain as is at a single rate.

7:05 PM: Alana Drive / Petition for Underground Electric Conduit Location. Present: Jeffrey Silva, National Grid. Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid requests permission to excavate the public highways and to run and maintain underground electric conduits together with such sustaining and protecting fixtures as it may find necessary for the transmission of electricity, said underground conduits to be located substantially in accordance with the plan #30860144 filed herewith marked – Alana Drive – Northbridge, Massachusetts dated October 5, 2023. Chairman Collins read aloud the public hearing notice. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to open the public hearing. Vote yes/Unanimous. Mr. Galvin, National Grid Rep., stated this petition is to install a primary pull box before the pole where the riser sweeps up onto the pole. This adjustment is due to water damage that has pooled in that area, and if it freezes it can crack the pipe and damage the lines. Selectman Ampagoomian asked what a pull box is and its purpose. Mr. Galvin explained that it is an entry point for the crews to be able to splice and work on the lines if need be and in this case it will prevent future water

damage. No abutters were present and therefore there were no comments.

7:10 PM: Lincoln Circle - Petition for Underground Electric Conduit Location. Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid requests permission to excavate the public highways and to run and maintain underground electric conduits together with such sustaining and protecting fixtures as it may find necessary for the transmission of electricity, said underground conduits to be located substantially in accordance with the plan #30623960 filed herewith marked – Lincoln Circle – Northbridge, Massachusetts dated October 12, 2023. Chairman Collin read aloud the public hearing notice. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to open the public hearing. Vote yes/Unanimous. Mr. Galvin explained that this is a similar situation where water was pooling, then froze and caused damage so this will resolve that issue. Mr. Shaun Touhey (abutter), 142 Roosevelt Drive, asked if there will be a disruption of service during the repair and if so how long. Mr. Galvin replied there would be an outage for the repair and it would likely be 6-8 hours if it needs extensive work. They will notify those that are affected in advance.

7:15 PM: Sprague Street - Petition for Underground Electric Conduit Location. Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid requests permission to excavate the public highways and to run and maintain underground electric conduits together with such sustaining and protecting fixtures as it may find necessary for the transmission of electricity, said underground conduits to be located substantially in accordance with the plan #30623962 filed herewith marked – Sprague Street – Northbridge, Massachusetts dated October 25, 2023. Chairman Collins read aloud the public hearing notice. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Begin to open the public hearing. Vote yes/Unanimous. Mr. Galvin explained that this is also similar to the previous requests. They will need to splice into the primary, repair both the riser and the primary cable and a pull box will be installed. No public were present for comments.

A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian seconded/Mr. Melia to close the 7:05, 7:10 and 7:15 public hearings. Vote yes/Unanimous. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the following petitions: 1) Alana Drive – Petition for Underground Electric Conduit Location/plan #30860144 dated October 5, 2023; 2) Lincoln Circle - Petition for Underground Electric Conduit Location/plan #30623960 dated October 12, 2023; and 3) Sprague Street - Petition for Underground Electric Conduit Location/plan #30623962 dated October 25, 2023. Vote yes/Unanimous.

APPOINTMENTS/Resignations/None

CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT/None

Our Lady of The Valley Regional School/Request to post a lawn sign on the Rockdale Common to advertise their Holiday Fair on Saturday, November 18, 2023 from 9AM to 3PM. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the request to post a lawn sign on the Rockdale Common to advertise their Holiday Fair on Saturday, November 18, 2023 from 9AM to 3PM. Vote yes/Unanimous.

Former Northbridge Elementary School [Request for Proposals]/Vote to allow the Town Manager to advertise. Selectman Melia asked about the process if several people are interested and submit proposals. Town Manager Gaudette replied that if we receive three, he suggested interviewing all three proposers and from there rank them and make a recommendation to Town Meeting. He further explained that if you had ten proposals you may want to create a small subcommittee to review and rank to bring it down to three, then have the Board interview. Selectman Melia asked where it will be advertised. Town Manager Gaudette replied that we are required to advertise in the Central Register and in addition to that we will advertise in the Milford Daily News and we will have information on our website. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian,

seconded/Mr. Begin to allow the Town Manager to advertise the former Northbridge Elementary School.
Vote yes/Unanimous.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT/None

SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS/None

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA/None

CORRESPONDENCE/None

EXECUTIVE SESSION/None

The next meeting is scheduled for November 20, 2023.

A motion/Mr. Begin, seconded/Mr. Begin to adjourn the meeting. Vote yes/Unanimous.

Meeting Adjourned: 7:23 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Begin, Clerk

/mjc

LIST OF DOCUMENTATION

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING - OPEN SESSION

November 6, 2023

PRESENTATION: Certificate of Special Recognition awarded to Colin Gava for attaining the rank of Eagle Scout. **Also present:** Charles Thompson, Committee Chairperson

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A. 1) June 26, 2023

- Copy of June 26, 2023 meeting minutes
- 2) July 17, 2023
- Copy of July 17, 2023 meeting minutes
- 3) October 24, 2023 [FATM]
- Copy of October 24, 2023[FATM]

II. PUBLIC HEARING – B. 1) 7:00 PM: FY24 Tax Rate Classification Hearing/Present: Robert Fitzgerald, Principal Assessor.

- Copy of public hearing notice
- Copy of tax rate classification memo
- Copy of tax rate classification breakdown
- Copy of surrounding towns tax rates
- Copy of pie chart of valuation by class
- Copy of tax shift options chart

2) 7:05 PM: Alana Drive – Petition for Underground Electric Conduit Location/Present: Jeffrey Silva, National Grid. Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid requests permission to excavate the public highways and to run and maintain underground electric conduits together with such sustaining and protecting fixtures as it may find necessary for the transmission of electricity, said underground conduits to be located substantially in accordance with the plan #30860144 filed herewith marked – Alana Drive – Northbridge, Massachusetts dated October 5, 2023.

- Copy of public hearing notice
- Copy of petition
- Copy of sketch
- Copy of DPW signoff
- Copy of Abutters memo request
- Copy of abutters list

3) 7:10 PM: Lincoln Circle - Petition for Underground Electric Conduit Location. Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid requests permission to excavate the public highways and to run and maintain underground electric conduits together with such sustaining and protecting fixtures as it may find necessary for the transmission of electricity, said underground conduits to be located substantially in accordance with the plan #30623960 filed herewith marked – Lincoln Circle – Northbridge, Massachusetts dated October 12, 2023.

- Copy of public hearing notice
- Copy of petition
- Copy of sketch
- Copy of DPW signoff
- Copy of Abutters memo request

-Copy of abutters list

4) 7:15 PM: Sprague Street - Petition for Underground Electric Conduit Location. Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid requests permission to excavate the public highways and to run and maintain underground electric conduits together with such sustaining and protecting fixtures as it may find necessary for the transmission of electricity, said underground conduits to be located substantially in accordance with the plan #30623962 filed herewith marked – Sprague Street – Northbridge, Massachusetts dated October 25, 2023.

- Copy of public hearing notice**
- Copy of petition**
- Copy of sketch**
- Copy of DPW signoff**
- Copy of Abutters memo request**
- Copy of abutters list**

III. APPOINTMENTS/Resignations/None

IV. CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT/None

V. DECISIONS:

C. Our Lady of The Valley Regional School/Request to post a lawn sign on the Rockdale Common to advertise their Holiday Fair on Saturday, November 18, 2023 from 9AM to 3PM

- Copy of email request**
- Copy of sign**

D. Former Northbridge Elementary School [Request for Proposals]/Vote to allow the Town Manager to advertise

- Copy of Request for Proposals**

VI. DISCUSSIONS/None

VII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT/None

VIII. SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS/None

IX. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA/None

X. CORRESPONDENCE/None

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION/None