

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

April 26, 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/None

PUBLIC HEARING/None

APPOINTMENTS: Joint Appointment By the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board: Andrew Howden, Planning Board (Associate Member) / Present: Brian Massey, Plan. Bd. Chairman. Mr. Massey stated that after reviewing his resume and meeting with Mr. Howden he would be a great addition to the Planning Board. A Motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to appoint Mr. Andrew Howden to the Planning Board as an Associate Member. Vote yes/Unanimous. **By the Town Manager: Jonathan Shenian, Jr., Heavy Equipment Operator / Present: Jamie Luchini, Highway Supt.** Mr. Luchini introduced Mr. Shenian to the Board and stated that this position was vacated last February and due to the hiring freeze it has remained vacant. He advised there were four great candidates who applied for the position. Continuing, he mentioned that Mr. Shenian has a Class A CDL license and a 2A/1C Hydraulic license, which is above and beyond what is required for the position. Mr. Luchini also noted that Mr. Shenian has been a plowing contractor for the town for the last several years and has done a stand-up job. Mr. Shenian then stated he comes from a big family in Town and he is looking forward to this opportunity as it is something he has wanted to do for a long time. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to affirm the Town Manager's appointment of Mr. Shenian as a Heavy Equipment Operator. Vote yes/Unanimous.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT: Yvette Ayotte-Kind stated that she has been cleaning up litter around town and is now asking for help. She stated that ice fishermen have left half of a dresser and people are leaving trash everywhere. Ms. Ayotte-Kind added that she is not able to reach everything around the waterways and is hoping the town will help and add some signs. Chairman Cannon thanked Ms. Ayotte-Kind for her efforts around Town and for bringing it to their attention and added that it is something that can be looked into as far as what can be done.

Village Congregational Church Harvest Festival [Saturday, September 25, 2021]. Present: Harriet Forman. 1) Request to hang a banner across Church Street from Sunday, September 12, 2021 to Sunday September 26, 2021; 2) Request to close Church Street from the corner of Church Street and Linwood Avenue to the intersection of Church Street and Park Street in front of the Post Office; 3) Request to use Memorial Park, on Saturday, September 25, 2021 from 8 AM until 4 PM; and 4) Request to obtain a One-

Day Weekday Entertainment License for the Harvest Festival – same date/time. Ms. Forman stated that in addition to these applications she has also submitted a form to the Board of Health for a food permit and plans to adhere to the COVID guidelines that are in place at the time of the event. A motion/Mr. Collins seconded/Mr. Melia to approve all 4 requests as noted above for the Village Congregational Church's Harvest Festival to be held on Saturday, September 25, 2021 from 8 AM until 4 PM. Vote yes/Unanimous.

Operation Graduation Committee/Request to hang a banner across Church Street from May 23, 2021 until May 30, 2021 to congratulate the class of 2021[Present: Julie Cray]. Ms. Cray stated that this happens to be the 30th year of Operation Graduation and felt it would be a nice surprise to congratulate the seniors. She stated that they have a design for the sign but it has not yet been printed as they were looking to gain approval first. A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to approve the request from Operation Graduation Committee to hang a banner across Church Street from May 23, 2021 until May 30, 2021 to congratulate the class of 2021. Vote yes/Unanimous.

REPM, Inc. [Stone Hill Condos] / Vote to accept a monetary gift in the amount of \$50,000. Town Manager Gaudette explained that as part of the Planning Board's approval the developer is required to make donations to the Town. This donation is earmarked for capital improvements at the Northbridge Senior Center. Mr. Gaudette explained that tonight he would ask that the Board accept the monetary determination. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Collins to accept the monetary gift in the amount of \$50,000 from REPM, Inc. Vote yes/Unanimous.

Devaney Energy / Request reduction in Underground Storage Tank License Fee. Town Manager Gaudette explained that several meetings ago the Board approved the application for an underground storage tank license, which is priced per tank. He stated that they have 50 tanks and each tank is \$200 bringing the total to \$10,000. Mr. Gaudette stated that they did provide a brief letter, which is in the packet, but they are not in attendance at the meeting. Selectman Athans asked if the Fire Chief needs to inspect all 50 tanks. Town Manager Gaudette answered yes both the Fire Chief and the Building Inspector would need to go out and inspect the tanks and would also require permits of their own. Selectman Melia added that once the houses are built the town would be receiving a substantial amount of money and feels it is a cost they were not planning on and supports assisting them. The Town Manager added that Devaney Energy is the company installing the tanks but not to say that they aren't going to charge the developers Stone Hill. Selectman Collins stated that the company would still be making money off the contract for delivery services and added that they are an out-of-town company. He also added that he does not have an issue approving a deal but doesn't feel it should be reduced to \$200 as they are requesting. Chairman Cannon added that she would like to better understand the transaction between the two companies and hear from Devaney Energy before making a decision to reduce the cost and would prefer to defer this a future meeting. Town Manager Gaudette stated that he appreciates that decision and added that it has been difficult to get them to a meeting and to have them provide us an extensive and well supported reasoning as to why the Board should grant them their request. The Town Manager emphasized that it has been very difficult to get them to a meeting to request a reduction; there has been no effort on their part. Selectman Athanas suggested no more than a 50% percent reduction because there is a cost to doing business. Selectman Ampagoomian agreed with Mr. Athanas' concept but then he recommended no more than a 25% reduction. The Board concurred that if Devaney Energy wants a reduction in the UST License fee that they must attend a Selectmen's Meeting to state their case. Therefore the Board decided to defer this request to a subsequent meeting. There being no further discussion, a motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Collins **not** to grant Devaney Energy a reduction in the Underground Storage Tank license fee. Vote yes/Unanimous.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT – 1) Reminded everyone about Spring Annual Town Meeting next week because the town has to set next year's budgets and get funding for capital projects, etc. **2)** Fire Station Project – Architect has been hired and the OPM is handling everything. The BPCC is also on board. The timeline is about 8-12 months to design and another 8-12 months to build, etc. **3)** Hiring Process for Police

Chief –Reminded everyone that current Police Chief Walter Warchol will be retiring on June 25th and advised the replacement process is well underway, thus he is prepared to make his recommendation for appointing a new Police Chief at the May 10th Selectmen’s Meeting.

Selectman Ampagoomian asked when the Board might be able to meet in person. Town Manager Gaudette responded that the Governor has released new guidance and Town Hall will be re-opening on May 10th on a part-time basis with proper protocols in place. For Board meetings, the Town Manager would like to phase it in and noted there are options. One option is to use a hybrid model where the Board can meet in person and the public can watch on Cable and use Zoom to make comments or the Board and required attendees can meet in person and the public can get access through cable and Zoom.

SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS: Selectman Athanas asked about the status of Pine Grove. Highway Superintendent Luchini said they are doing the fall clean-up and tree clean-up. He said after town meeting they will start spring/summer tasks. **Selectman Ampagoomian/1)** inquired about the plan to replace all the trees that were removed. Mr. Luchini said there is no plan at this time as he wants to clean up after the tree removal first and then revisit this matter. **2)** Commented that President Biden formally acknowledged the Armenian Genocide by the Turkish Government. He further pointed out that April 24th was his uncle’s 101st birthday. **Selectman Melia/1)** advised if anyone has anything that needs to be changed in the Town Charter to please bring it to his attention as he is the Board’s designee to the Charter Review Committee. **2)** asked if the school project is still on schedule. Chairman Cannon said as far as she knows it is. Town Manager Gaudette interjected and said the old school will be demolished during the summer when the kids are out of school. **Chairman Cannon** asked about the Bylaw Review Committee and noted we are still waiting for the Town Moderator to appoint his 2 designees and how should it be handled. The Town Manager said to begin to meet if there is a quorum.

Chairman Cannon reminded everyone the next meeting is scheduled for 6:30p.m. on Tuesday, May 4, 2021 [Spring Annual Town Meeting] and then 7:00p.m. on Monday, May 10, 2021.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA/None

CORRESPONDENCE/None

EXECUTIVE SESSION/None

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

Meeting Adjourned: 7:51 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Russell D. Collins, Clerk

/mjc

LIST OF DOCUMENTATION

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING - OPEN SESSION

April 26, 2021

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

II. PUBLIC HEARING

III. APPOINTMENTS:

Joint Appointment By the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board:

A. Andrew Howden, Planning Board (Associate Member) / Present: Brian Massey, Chairman, Planning Board

-Copy of Memo to Chairman Cannon from Gary Bechtholdt dated April 22, 2021

-Copy of Andrew Howden's Talent Bank Form

B. By the Town Manager: Jonathan Shenian, Jr., Heavy Equipment Operator / Present: Jamie Luchini, Highway Supt.

-Copy of letter to Town Manager Gaudette from Highway Supt. Luchini dated March 18, 2021

-Copy of Mr. Shenian's cover letter

-Copy of Mr. Shenian's resume

-Copy of Mr. Shenian's Town of Northbridge employment application

IV. CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT

V. DECISIONS

C. Village Congregational Church Harvest Festival [Saturday, September 25, 2021]/Present: Harriet Forman. 1) Request to hang a banner across Church Street from Sunday, September 12, 2021 to Sunday September 26, 2021; 2) Request to close Church Street from the corner of Church Street and Linwood Avenue to the intersection of Church Street and Park Street in front of the Post Office; 3) Request to use Memorial Park, on Saturday, September 25, 2021 from 8 AM, until 4 PM; and 4) application to obtain a One-Day Weekday Entertainment License for Saturday, September 25, 2021 from 8 AM, until 4 PM

-Copy of email request dated April 12, 2021

-Copy of Memorial Park Request Form

-Copy of Hold Harmless Agreement

-Copy of REAP Form (tax form)

-Copy of Worker's Comp Affidavit

-Copy of Certificate of Insurance naming Town as an additional insured

-Copy of Certificate of Exemption

-Copy of application for One-day (Weekday) Entertainment License

-Copy of REAP Form (tax form)

-Copy of Worker's Comp Affidavit

-Copy of Certificate of Exemption

-Copy of Certificate of Insurance naming Town as an additional insured

-Copy of License Routing Slip

D. Northbridge Operation Graduation [Present: Julie Cray] / Request to hang a banner across Church Street from May 23, 2021 until May 30, 2021 to congratulate the Class of 2021

-Copy of email request from Julie Cray dated April 19, 2021

E. REPM, Inc. [Stone Hill Condos] / Vote to accept monetary gift in the amount of \$50,000

-Copy of memo to Chairman Cannon from Gary Bechtholdt dated April 12, 2021

-Copy of memo to Chairman Cannon from Gary Bechtholdt dated February 1, 2021

F. Devaney Energy / Request reduction in Underground Storage Tank License Fee

-Copy of proposal requesting a reduction in the Underground Storage Tank Fee

VI. DISCUSSIONS

VII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

VIII. SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS

IX. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

X. CORRESPONDENCE

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION