

## BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

August 14, 2023

A meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order by Chairman Collins at 6:30 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:** Proclamation presented to Brendan Hester. Chairman Collins read aloud the proclamation and presented it to Mr. Hester and congratulated him on a job well done. Selectman Melia congratulated him on everything that he has accomplished. He asked if it was true that he only missed the Senior British Open by a stroke or so. Mr. Hester replied that he was a couple holes away from qualifying and it was a fun event. Selectman Melia asked what his future plans are. Mr. Hester replied that he greatly appreciates all of the support from the town and Pleasant Valley and he believes the best is yet to come. Selectmen Begin, Ampagoomian, Paulhus, and Collins wished him all the best.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** 1) **July 13, 2023 [Special Meeting].** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Begin to approve the July 13, 2023 meeting minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Unanimous. 2) **May 8, 2023.** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Begin to approve the May 8, 2023 meeting minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**PUBLIC HEARING: 7:05 PM/V.E. Properties IX, LLC–Application for Underground Storage Tank License to store 5,000 gallons of propane (5–1,000 gal. tanks) on property located at 600 Commerce Drive, Whitinsville, MA [Eyepoint Pharmaceuticals]/Present:** DiLeo Gas & Vincent Osterman, Landowner. Chairman Collins read aloud the public hearing notice. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian seconded/Mr. Melia to open the public hearing. Vote yes/Unanimous. A representative from DiLeo Gas was present in place of Mr. DiLeo who was unable to attend. He stated that a new building will be constructed for appliances inside and outside, mostly for heating and will require a large amount of propane for those appliances. Town Manager Gaudette added that the Fire Department reviewed the plans as well. Selectman Melia asked why developers are using propane over natural gas. The rep stated that a lot of it is availability, he further explained that the pipeline has its limitations and there is a high fixed cost for getting the pipeline installed. With propane, they supply the tanks, which makes it cost-effective. Selectman Collins asked if the tanks going in are triple depth. The rep stated that they meet the American Society of Mechanical Engineers standards and are built to the top tier grade and installed with cathodic protection so overtime they won't rust away in the ground. The tanks are tested yearly to ensure their safety. Chairman Collins asked any abutters to come forward at this time. Muriel Emond of 141 East Street, Whitinsville, asked how long the tanks will be there. The rep replied that they are permanent. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to close the public hearing. Vote yes/Unanimous. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to approve V.E. Properties IX, LLC's application for an Underground Storage Tank License to store 5,000 gallons of propane (5–1,000 gal. tanks) on property located at 600 Commerce Drive, Whitinsville, MA [Eyepoint Pharmaceuticals]. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**APPOINTMENTS: By the Town Manager/Vote to affirm:** 1) **Jeffrey Mayer, Student Police Officer/Present: Police Chief, Timothy Labrie.** Chief Labrie introduced Student Police Officer Jeffrey Mayer, who has been employed by the Town of Northbridge since March of 2019 as a dispatcher, and is currently the lead dispatcher. Chief Labrie added that Mr. Mayer is a hard-working employee, very reliable and he is looking forward to having Mr. Mayer as a police officer. He will start the academy in November and should be completed by May. Mr. Mayer explained that he was born and raised in the Town of Grafton, went to high school at BVT, and worked in carpentry for six years while getting his degree at Quinsigamond

Community College. After that he attended Anna Maria College for Criminal Justice. After graduating he worked in Doulgas as a part-time dispatcher, where the Chief encouraged him to reach out to Northbridge where there was a full-time opening. He stated he now lives in town and looks forward to his future here. The Board welcomed him and congratulated him on this step in his career. A motion/Mr. Begin, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to affirm the Town Manager's appointment of Jeffrey Mayer as a Student Police Officer. Vote yes/Unanimous. **2) Kayleigh Labrecque, Senior Library Assistant/Present: Rebecca Sasseville, Library Director.** Ms. Sasseville introduced Kayleigh Labrecque and noted that she has been working at the library for a year as a Junior Library Assistant and added Ms. Labrecque has been doing an excellent job. Due to a resignation last month, there is now an opening for a Senior Library Assistant, for which she applied. Ms. Labrecque stated that she is grateful to have been working at the library and she looks forward to this new role. The Board congratulated her on this next step of her career. A motion/Mr. Begin, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to affirm the Town Manager's appointment of Ms. Labrecque as the Senior Library Assistant. Vote yes/Unanimous. **3) Bettyjean Bedrosian, Assistant Treasurer/Collector. Present: Julie Harris, Treasurer/Collector.** Ms. Harris explained that the former Assistant Treasurer Collector left the Town, which created the vacancy that Ms. Bedrosian applied for and Ms. Harris feels that she will do a wonderful job. She explained Ms. Bedrosian has many years of experience in banking, including municipal, which will be a huge asset to her office. Ms. Bedrosian thanked the Board for the opportunity and expressed that she is looking forward to it and is excited to start. The Board of Selectmen welcomed her aboard and congratulated her on her new position here with the Town. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to affirm the Town Manager's appointment of Bettyjean Bedrosian as the Assistant Treasurer/Collector. Vote yes/Unanimous. **4) Derek Perkins, Heavy Equipment Operator-Highway.** Town Manager Gaudette noted that Mr. Luchini was not able to attend the meeting tonight to introduce Mr. Perkins and added that they are looking to get him on board as soon as possible. Mr. Perkins stated that he grew up in Douglas, was previously working at Yellow Freight, which went out of business and that led him to apply for the Town of Northbridge opening with the Highway Department. Mr. Perkins stated that he has his CDL, Class A, and two-way hydraulics license, also known as a Hoisting license. The Board welcomed him and wished him all the best in his career here with the Town. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Begin to affirm the Town Manager's appointment of Derek Perkins as a Heavy Equipment Operator in the DPW Highway Division. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**By the Board of Selectmen/Vote to Appoint: 1) Central Mass. Regional Planning Commission: a) Delegate and b) Alternate.** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to appoint Selectman Ampagoomian as the delegate and Chairman Collins as the alternate for the Central Mass. Regional Planning Commission. Vote yes/Unanimous. **2) Economic Development Committee [BOS Rep].** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to appoint Selectman Melia to the Economic Development Committee. Vote yes/Unanimous. **3) Green Energy Committee [BOS Rep].** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to appoint Selectman Paulhus to the Green Energy Committee. Vote yes/Unanimous. **4) Open Space & Recreation Plan Update Committee [BOS Rep].** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to appoint Selectman Begin to the Open Space & Recreation Plan Update Committee. Vote yes/Unanimous. **5) Rainer Forst, Community Preservation Committee [Member at Large].** Mr. King, Chaiman of the Community Preservation Committee explained that they have a member at large position open. Mr. Forst was a member of the Committee through the Planning Board, and his term has ended and he would like to be appointed as a member at large. When he was on the committee, he had great attendance, contributed and was highly engaged and they recommend the Selectmen appoint him. A motion/Mr. Begin, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to appoint Rainer Forst to the Community Preservation Committee as a Member at Large. Vote yes/Unanimous. **6) Muriel Emond, Economic Development Committee [Member at Large]/ Present: William Davis, Chairman.** Mr. Davis was not able to attend the meeting. Ms. Emond introduced herself and stated that she is fairly new to the town and would like to get involved. She noted that she has worked with businesses in other roles and felt it was a good fit for this committee. A motion/Mr. Begin seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to appoint Ms. Emond to the Economic Development Committee. Vote yes/Unanimous. **7) Carla Longpre, Disability**

**Commission/Present: Bruce Frieswick, Chairman.** Mr. Frieswick introduced Ms. Longpre to the Board stating that she brings fantastic credentials to the table and will be a great addition to the Disability Commission. They look forward to having her experience on their Commission along with her advocacy. Ms. Longpre thanked the Board for this opportunity stating that she is born and raised in Northbridge and has dedicated her life to serving those in need. She explained she does have a disabled son as well. She looks forward to taking on this role and advocating for those that need it. A motion/Mr. Begin seconded/Mr. Melia to appoint Ms. Longpre to the Disability Commission. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**RESIGNATION: Michael Haslam, Playground and Recreation.** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to accept the resignation of Michael Haslam from the Playground and Recreation Commission and to send a letter of appreciation. Vote yes/Unanimous.

#### **CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT/None**

The Board took the following matter out of order.

**RASU Jumbo Donuts Shop, LLC dba Jumbo Donuts, 1115 Providence Road, Whitinsville, MA 01588 – Anita Mathema, Mgr. [Transfer from The Donut Shop dba Jumbo Donuts- Chris Mitkonis, Mgr.] /Subject to departmental sign offs and payment of all monies owed to the town/Present: Anita Mathema, Mgr.** Ms. Mathema stated she has applied for a transfer of the non-alcoholic common victualler license from The Donut Shop [Chris Mitkonis, Mgr.] to RASU Jumbo Donuts Shop, LLC [Anita Mathema, Mgr.]. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to transfer the non-alcoholic common victualler license from The Donut Shop dba Jumbo Donuts- Chris Mitkonis, Mgr. to RASU Jumbo Donuts Shop, LLC dba Jumbo Donuts, 1115 Providence Road, Whitinsville, MA 01588 – Anita Mathema, Mgr. subject to departmental sign offs and payment of all monies owed to the town. Vote yes/Unanimous.

The Board resumed the meeting in the order posted on the agenda.

**Northbridge Elementary School Feasibility Study Recommendations/Vote to advertise RFP for Disposal/Present: David Eisen, Abacus Architects.** Mr. Eisen explained that they are doing a feasibility study for the reuse of the Elementary School and he will review the report. The purpose of the study is to broaden the understanding of redevelopment options, build support, provide a background on building and site conditions, planning and design ideas and design guidelines for redevelopment. He explained that the area in context and the areas around it determine the value. Originally, they were looking to keep the administration building and look to developing the rest of the property, but then the thought about relocating the admin building and developing the entire property for better utilization of the space. The study provided options as far as the most likely uses if it went to developers. If that were the case it would likely be town houses, duplexes or an apartment complex. He said the question is whether a developer would be interested in buying the school and reusing it. Conceivably, you could tear down some of the school and reuse some of it for housing, but the problem is it is a big floor plate and the cost effectiveness is uncertain. Another option would be for a developer to remove all the interior partitions and use it for light industrial use. Mr. Eisen showed the Board some redevelopment sketches. He noted that another reuse could be rebuilding the Senior Center. He explained that it could be the Town's Senior Center where the town would pay the fees for renovating or have a private or non-profit company who might be willing to develop the site. If the property were expanded to include the School Administration building and property, in addition to the senior center, you could also build senior housing there. Another option could be to make the space into a park. Mr. Eisen recommended the town decide what its priorities are. Some priorities based on the public meeting included removal of the building, adding needed housing, business space, recreation space, downtown revitalization, reinforcing the character of Linwood Ave., weaving the site into the surrounding neighborhood and adding to the town revenue through sales and taxes. The Town will need to establish design guidelines, solicit and evaluate proposals, consider sale or retention, and bring the property forward

to Town Meeting to make the decision. Town Manager Gaudette noted that this is the transition period where the Building Planning and Construction Committee has completed their task, which was to oversee the feasibility study and work with the architect on the process. There was a vote at town meeting where the article sought to sell the building, but it was turned down and the voters asked for a more concrete idea as to what could be planned for the site. This is now in the hands of the Board of Selectmen and discussion tonight should include whether or not the Board of Selectmen feels they are ready to advertise the site. Town Manager Gaudette noted that we would include a copy of the report and environmental studies in the RFP, where we would have a chance to interview the proposers, which could be a public process to allow the residents and voters to chime in on the process. Selectman Begin asked Mr. Eisen what he felt was the most viable option. Mr. Eisen stated that he felt if the town went out to an RFP to the development community you would be likely to get multi-unit housing. Selectman Paulhus expressed that he felt it was important to review the priorities and weigh those options based on the feedback from the residents. Selectman Ampagoomian asked what was the most common suggestion that they received from residents. Mr. Eisen stated that open space was popular, a non-profit organization ranked high as well. This tends to be difficult to do as you would need to rehab the building. Mr. Eisen noted that there were a lot of different suggestions though that did not sway one way in particular. Selectman Melia stated that he is open-minded but would like to see tax revenue coming back to the Town, or Town houses for an over-55 community. Chairman Collins added that he would like to see a Community Center with senior housing next to it. Selectman Paulhus asked when it came time to advertise if it would be an all or nothing deal. Town Manager Gaudette noted that we likely wouldn't know what we get until they come in. Mr. Gaudette then suggested the Board authorize him to draft an RFP and once completed he would bring it to the Board to review and give input. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded to allow Town Manager Gaudette to draft a Request for Proposals for the Northbridge Elementary School. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**Open Sky Community Services, 50 Douglas Road [Valley Bag Toss event – Saturday, October 14, 2023 from 12 PM – 5 PM (Rain date: October 15<sup>th</sup>) @ Community Plaza and the Whittin Mill]/Request for a one-day wine and malt license.** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Begin to approve Open Sky's request for a one-day wines and malts license for their Valley Bag Toss event to be held on Saturday, October 14, 2023 from 12 PM – 5 PM with a rain date of October 15<sup>th</sup>. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**Armenian Apostolic Church Annual Picnic/1) Request for a one-day wines and malts license for the Annual Church Picnic event – Sunday, August 20, 2023 from 12 PM – 6 PM; and 2) Request for a one-day all alcoholic license for the Surf and Turf night event – Thursday, September 14, 2023 from 5 PM to 9 PM.** A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to approve the above requests for a one-day wines and malts license for the Annual Church Picnic event – Sunday, August 20, 2023 from 12 PM – 6 PM and a one-day all alcoholic license for the Surf and Turf night event – Thursday, September 14, 2023 from 5 PM to 9 PM. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**Safety Committee Meeting Minutes [May 17, 2023]/Vote to accept the recommendations.** Selectman Ampagoomian asked if signs would be posted for the closing of the causeway. Police Chief Labrie stated that they would have signage on the north side of the causeway. Selectman Paulhus asked if the parking lot with the crosswalk at the Elementary School would have solar-operated cross walk lights installed. Chief Labrie explained that there would be flashing lights for pedestrians between Lake Street, Crescent Street and the school. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Melia to accept the recommendations of the May 17, 2023 Safety Committee Meeting Minutes. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**Fall Annual Town Meeting [October 24, 2023] / Vote to place Selectmen's articles on the Warrant.** Town Manager Gaudette noted that there are a couple of articles on the warrant which are the standard articles every Fall Town Meeting. Article 1 is for any prior year bills, article 2 would be to make any amendments to the budget that was approved in the Spring, and the remaining articles are sponsored by

other boards. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to place articles 1, and 2 on the Fall Annual Town Meeting Warrant [October 24, 2023]. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**Riverdale Cemetery Deed – Phyllis Kuik, Grave 7C, Hemlock Ave.** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the sale of grave 7C, Hemlock Ave. to Phyllis Kuik. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**Pine Grove Cemetery Deed – James and Lois Hassey/Vote to approve the sale of Lot No. 33, Fir Ave.** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the sale of lot No. 32 Fir Ave. to James and Lois Hassey. Vote yes/Unanimous.

## **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

**SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS:** Selectman Ampagoomian requested a tour of the Fire Station to see the progress that has been made. Town Manager Gaudette replied that he would get something set up. Selectman Begin thanked DPW Director Luchini for getting the street sweeper out to Samuel Drive, Shannon Drive, Delwyn Barnes Drive, and Carpenter Road as it was much needed. It looks a lot better and the drainage has improved. Chairman Collins asked about the Benson Road property. Town Manager Gaudette stated that he reached out to Mr. Pickart for a status update and the last thing they are working on is putting together a constraint map for the site, which is useful for flagging wetlands and for determining what can be developed on the site. He noted that he will invite Mr. Pickart to a meeting in September with a further update. Selectman Paulhus asked for an update on the drainage concerns on the Doulgas Road property. Town Manager Gaudette stated that he would make a note to speak with Mr. Pickart about that when he comes in for his update in September as well.

**ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA:** Selectman Ampagoomian requested that the Rockdale Pocket Park be added for discussion. He noted that he has some concerns about parking and safety due to loitering.

## **CORRESPONDENCE/None**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: 6:30 PM - Under M.G.L. c.30A, Sec. 21 #6** – To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real estate, and under **M.G.L. c.30A, Sec. 21 #3** – to discuss strategy with respect to litigation.

Chairman Collins announced that the next scheduled meeting is set for September 11, 2023 at 7 PM.

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

**Meeting Adjourned: 8:25 PM**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Thomas Begin, Clerk**

/mjc

**LIST OF DOCUMENTATION**

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

**August 14, 2023**

**Presentation: Proclamation presented to Brendan Hester**

- I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A. 1) July 13, 2023 [Special Meeting]**  
-Copy of July 13, 2023 meeting minutes
- 2) May 8, 2023**  
-Copy of May 8, 2024 meeting minutes
- II. PUBLIC HEARING: B. 7:05 PM/V.E. Properties IX, LLC–Application for Underground Storage Tank License to store 5,000 gallons of propane (5–1,000 gal. tanks) on property located at 600 Commerce Drive, Whitinsville, MA [Eyepoint Pharmaceuticals]/Present: Paul DiLeo, DiLeo Gas & Vincent Osterman, Landowner**  
-Copy of public hearing notice  
-Copy of application for license  
-Copy of map  
-Copy of request for abutters list  
-Copy of memo addressed to abutters
- III. APPOINTMENTS: C. By the Town Manager/Vote to affirm: 1) Jeffrey Mayer, Student Police Officer/Present: Police Chief, Timothy Labrie**  
-Copy of offer letter for Jeffrey Mayer  
-Copy of resume
- 2) Kayleigh Labrecque, Senior Library Assistant/Present: Rebecca Sasseville, Library Director**  
-Copy of position opening  
-Copy of offer letter  
-Copy of cover letter  
-Copy of resume
- 3) Bettyjean Bedrosian, Assistant Treasurer/Collector/Present: Julie Harris, Treasurer/Collector**  
-Copy of offer letter  
-Copy of resume  
-Copy of application  
-Copy of reference
- 4) Derek Perkins, Heavy Equipment Operator-Highway**  
-Copy application  
-Copy of position opening
- D. By the Board of Selectmen/Vote to Appoint: 1) Central Mass. Regional Planning Commission: a) Delegate and b) Alternate**  
-Copy of letter from CMRPC requesting a Delegate and Alternate



2) Economic Development Committee [BOS Rep] 3) Green Energy Committee [BOS Rep]  
4) Open Space & Recreation Plan Update Committee [BOS Rep]  
-Copy of memo listing committees with vacancies that require a Selectmen's Rep.

5) Rainer Forst, Community Preservation Committee [Member at Large]  
-Copy of Talent Bank Application

6) Muriel Emond, Economic Development Committee [Member at Large]/ Present: William Davis, Chairman  
-Copy of Talent Bank Application

7) Carla Longpre, Disability Commission/Present: Bruce Frieswick, Chairman  
-Copy of Talent Bank Application

E. RESIGNATION: Michael Haslam, Playground and Recreation  
-Copy of resignation letter

**IV. CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT**

**V. DECISIONS:**

F. Northbridge Elementary School Feasibility Study Recommendations/Vote to advertise RFP for Disposal/Present: David Eisen, Abacus Architects  
-Copy of presentation

G. Open Sky Community Services, 50 Douglas Road [Valley Bag Toss event – Saturday, October 14, 2023 from 12 PM – 5 PM (Rain date: October 15<sup>th</sup>) @ Community Plaza and the Whittin Mill]/Request for a one-day wine and malt license  
-Copy of application for a special license  
-Copy of Revenue Enforcement and Protection Attestation  
-Copy of Workers' Compensation  
-Copy of Hold Harmless Agreement  
-Copy of Certificate of Liability  
-Copy of Tips certification  
-Copy of license routing slip

H. Armenian Apostolic Church, 315 Church Street 1) Annual Church Picnic event – Sunday, August 20, 2023 from 12 PM – 6 PM/Request for a one-day wine and malt license  
-Copy of application for a special license  
-Copy of Revenue Enforcement and Protection Attestation  
-Copy of Workers' Compensation  
-Copy of Hold Harmless Agreement  
-Copy of license routing slip

2) Surf and Turf night event – Thursday, September 14, 2023 from 5 PM to 9 PM/Request for a one-day all alcoholic license  
-Copy of application for a special license  
-Copy of Revenue Enforcement and Protection Attestation  
-Copy of Workers' Compensation  
-Copy of Hold Harmless Agreement

**I. Safety Committee Meeting Minutes [May 17, 2023]/Vote to accept the recommendations**  
**-Copy of May 17, 2023 meeting minutes**

**J. Fall Annual Town Meeting [October 24, 2023] / Vote to place Selectmen's articles on the Warrant**  
**-Copy of draft Fall Town Meeting Warrant**

**K. Riverdale Cemetery Deed – Phyllis Kuik/Vote to approve the sale of Grave 7C, Hemlock Ave.**  
**-Copy of Riverdale Cemetery Deed to Phyllis Kuik**

**L. Pine Grove Cemetery Deed – James and Lois Hassey/Vote to approve the sale of Lot No. 33, Fir Ave.**  
**-Copy of Pine Grove Cemetery Deed to James and Lois Hassey**

**M. RASU Jumbo Donuts Shop, LLC dba Jumbo Donuts, 1115 Providence Road, Whitinsville, MA 01588 – Anita Mathema, Mgr. [Transfer from The Donut Shop dba Jumbo Donuts- Chris Mitkonis, Mgr.] /Subject to departmental sign offs and payment of all monies owed to the town/Present: Anita Mathema, Mgr.**  
**-Application for a Common Victualler license**  
**-Copy of Revenue Enforcement and Protection Attestation**  
**-Copy of Workers' Compensation affidavit**  
**-Copy of business certificate request**  
**-Copy of license routing slip**

**VI. DISCUSSIONS**

**VII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

**VIII. SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS**

**IX. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

**X. CORRESPONDENCE**

**XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION: 6:30 PM - Under M.G.L. c.30A, Sec. 21 #6 – To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real estate, and M.G.L. c.30A, Sec. 21 #3 – to discuss strategy with respect to litigation.**