

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING**  
**August 17, 2020**

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/82718033106?pwd=VVdQNnM2Z2tpdUllc2Y0RGhPZE9SZz09>

**Meeting ID:** 827 1803 3106; **Passcode:** 431757; **Dial by phone:** 1-646-558-8656. Board Members Present: Ampagoomian, Athanas, Cannon, Melia, 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 would 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:** **1) February 24, 2020.** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Athanas to approve the February 24, 2020 meeting minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Athanas, Cannon and Melia. Abstain: Collins. **2) March 9, 2020.** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Athanas to approve the March 9, 2020 meeting minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Athanas, Cannon and Melia. Abstain: Collins. **3) May 18, 2020.** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Athanas to approve the May 18, 2020 meeting minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Athanas, Cannon and Melia. Abstain: Collins.

**PUBLIC HEARING/None**

**APPOINTMENTS/By the Board of Selectmen:** **1) Trustees of Soldiers' Memorials (BOS chairman is the ex-officio per MGL Chapter 41, Sec. 105).** A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Collins to appoint Selectman Cannon to the Trustees of Soldiers' Memorials. Vote yes/Unanimous. **2) Charter Review Committee – 2 designees.** A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Athanas to appoint Selectman Collins and Selectman Melia to the Charter Review Committee. Vote yes/Unanimous. **3) Earth Removal Board – 1 designee [currently Selectman Ampagoomian].** A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Collins to appoint Selectman Ampagoomian to the Earth Removal Board. Vote yes/Unanimous. **4) Economic Development Committee – 1 designee [currently Selectman Melia].** A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to appoint Selectman Athanas to the Economic Development Committee. Vote yes/Unanimous. **5) Open Space & Recreation Update Committee [currently Selectman Ampagoomian].** Town Manager Gaudette explained that the Town Planner, Mr. Bechtholdt has been working with a consultant on drafting plans for the committee. He explained that currently it is not an involved committee. A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to appoint Selectman Athanas to

the Open Space & Recreation Update Committee. Vote yes/Unanimous. **6) School Building Committee [currently Chairman Cannon].** A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to appoint Chairman Cannon to the School Building Committee. Vote yes/Unanimous. **7) Janet Burke, Board of Registrars/Present: Linda Zywiec, Acting Town Clerk.** Mrs. Zywiec stated that there has recently been a resignation on the Board of Registrars. Mrs. Burke is a retired nurse and a longtime resident. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to appoint Janet Burke to the Board of Registrars. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**APPOINTMENTS/By the Town Manager: Laura Medeiros, Assistant Town Clerk [Vote to Affirm]/ Present: Linda Zywiec, Acting Town Clerk.** Town Manager Gaudette explained that with the Town Clerk retiring and the Assistant Town Clerk stepping into her place, it has left a position to fill. He stated that once applications were submitted and the interview process completed, they felt that Ms. Medeiros was the best candidate for this position. Ms. Medeiros then stated she is looking forward to working for the Town. A motion/Mr. Athanas, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to affirm the appointment of Laura Medeiros to the position of Assistant Town Clerk. Vote yes/Unanimous.

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

**No One Walks Alone Peer Recovery Support Center: 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Overdose Awareness Vigil (Virtual) on Monday, August 31, 2020 – Request to place flags and a banner on Town Common/ Present: Craig Maxim, Programs Consultant, Family Continuity and Rebecca Zwicker, Program Director, No One Walks Alone [NOWA] Recovery Support Center.** Mr. Maxim announced they were awarded a contract for a recovery support center and they were fortunate to receive it. He said the purpose of the vigil is to help bring awareness to victims of overdose and their families. Ms. Zwicker explained that they hope to make this year's vigil bigger by placing 250 flags and a sign on the Town Common, from Saturday, August 29<sup>th</sup> until Saturday, September 12<sup>th</sup> to bring more awareness and let those in need know that help is available. Ms. Zwicker explained the vigil will be held virtually, with guest speakers being present at the church. Selectman Melia asked if there has been an increase of overdoses due to the pandemic. Mr. Maxim responded that he doesn't know a specific number but with increased isolation due to the pandemic and for those individuals in early recovery, there is a decrease in availability to meet in person, which increases the chances of an overdose. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Collins to approve the above request to place flags and a banner on Town Common in support of the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Overdose Awareness Vigil, from Saturday, August 29<sup>th</sup> until Saturday, September 12<sup>th</sup>. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**Fairlawn Christian Reformed Church/Request for a One-Day Weekday Entertainment License for a Drive-in Movie event on Friday, September 18, 2020 (Rain date: September 25, 2020) at 7:30 PM/Present: Brandon Hehn.** Mr. Hehn mentioned they typically have events throughout the season, but with the pandemic they have not been able to host any events. Thus, he thought it best to host a drive-in movie event with the required social distancing. He then went on to explain they have an inflatable screen to project the movie onto and noted they have received the copyright to show the movie. Selectman Athanas asked how they would be projecting the sound. Mr. Hehn replied that they would be transmitting it through channel 87.7 FM on the radio. A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the above request for a One-Day Weekday

Entertainment License for a Drive-in Movie event to take place on Friday, September 18, 2020 (Rain date: September 25, 2020) at 7:30 PM subject to the approvals of the Police Chief and Fire Chief. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**Hannah Drive [Carpenter Estates Subdivision] / Vote intention to layout Hannah Drive as a public way.** Town Manager Gaudette explained that the first step in the street acceptance process is for the Selectmen to vote their intention to layout the road as a public way and refer the matter to the Planning Board for a recommendation. The Planning Board will then hold a public meeting to discuss everything. After that is completed, the Board of Selectmen will be asked to vote to layout the road and sign the mylar plans. The last step in the process is town meeting approval. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Athanas to vote their intention to layout Hannah Drive as a public way and refer this matter to the Planning Board for a recommendation. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**Vote to disband the following committees/1) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System [NPDES] Advisory Committee [Stormwater Discharge Permit].** Mr. Gaudette advised this committee has not been active for a very long time and is no longer needed because there is a Regional Stormwater Coalition comprised of 29 other towns that has been doing the required work for the permit. He advised the Board to dissolve both the NPDES Advisory Committee as well as the Solar Energy Committee that has not met for a long time. **2) Solar Energy Committee.** There being no further discussion, a motion/Mr. Athanas, seconded/Mr. Melia to disband both the NPDES and Solar Energy Committees as recommended by the Town Manager. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**State Primary [September 1, 2020]/Vote to sign the warrant.** A motion/Mr. Athanas, seconded/Mr. Melia to sign the State Primary Election Warrant. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**Fall Annual Town Meeting [October 27, 2020] / Vote to place Selectmen's articles on the warrant.**

**ARTICLE 1 (Budget transfers) and ARTICLE 2 (Bills of a prior year):** A motion/Mr. Athanas, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to place Articles 1 and 2 on the Fall Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**Town Manager Evaluation Process.** Mr. Gaudette requested the Board to submit their individual evaluation forms to Sharon Susienka in his office in the next couple weeks. In the meantime, he will send the Board a copy of his current year's goals along with a narrative of what he accomplished. At the next meeting, September 14<sup>th</sup>, the Board will review the Town Manager's performance. Mr. Gaudette also asked the Board to develop some new goals for him to work on over the next year, which should be submitted to Chairman Cannon for discussion at the September 14<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT: 1) Artificial Turf Field Project (Lasell Field).** The Town Manager noted there is a punch list of items that are currently being completed. The last part of the project will be the bleachers and the press box. He will be reviewing everything (bills and punch list items) with the Building Committee this week. **2) Fire Station Project.** Mr. Gaudette noted the Fire Station vote passed both town meeting and the town election ballot. He said the

Building Committee will be looking to advertise a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to hire our Owner's Project Manager (OPM) who will oversee the Architect and then the construction. Mr. Gaudette mentioned he had spoken to Chairman Cannon about the Police Chief's pending retirement, which is mandatory at age 65. He reported that the Assessment Center, which is a process to replace Civil Service positions, has been completed. He hopes to narrow down the top qualified applicants and select an individual for an appointment within 6 months so the newly appointed individual can then shadow the Chief for the last six months of his tenure.

**SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS: Selectman Melia.** 1) Stated that Off. Chickinski will be retiring soon and asked if there was a process in place to replace his position (upon his retirement) and if so, has it begun yet. The Town Manager responded that due to the state's budget crisis, the town had instituted a spending/hiring freeze, so the process has been delayed. He reported he was also waiting to see what the Governor's 9C budget cuts are going to be, however, if the town's financial situation remains solid, he will begin the process to replace Off. Chickinski's position. 2) Brought up the subject of remote participation and said he is ready to return to face-to-face meetings. He requested the Town Manager to see if it is allowed under the Governor's regulations. 3) Mentioned that Mason Road and Swift Road are in terrible shape. He would like to have these roads prioritized for repair/repaving prior to the opening of the new Balmer School. Mr. Luchini said those roads are not on this year's plan but will certainly keep that in mind for the next phase. **Selectman Ampagoomian/1)** Asked if the 9C cuts are going to be ending. The Town Manager responded they can still happen, but he will feel more confident about our financial situation after December when the cuts are generally made. 2) Inquired about the area near the Chiropractor's Office on Rt. 122 where a stream washed out part of the road during the big storm we had. Also mentioned the catch basin near Kearns that is deteriorated and if it was going to be fixed. Mr. Luchini responded that the State has been in town for a couple of weeks repairing a bunch of stuff, but he does not know what they plan to do with these 2 areas. He did see where the road washed out on Rt. 122 and noted that rip rap has been placed at the edge of the road with asphalt on top of it. He also advised he has not seen the catch basin near Kearns. 3) Asked about Plummer's Corner intersection. Mr. Luchini replied that the study is still moving forward but the Safety Committee posed a question about signaling delays but stressed the study is moving forward. **Selectman Athanas/1)** Asked what the school's plan was for the upcoming school year (remote, hybrid, or in-person) and suggested bringing in someone from the School Department to update the Board on the school's plans. 2) Asked if the matter of trash collection could be looked at again. Private haulers vs town-sponsored. He said it is a matter of aesthetics (there are trash containers out every day of the week due to the town having many haulers) and also a matter of trying to get the cost under control. **Selectman Collins** mentioned the compost site and the fact that you can't get past the leaf pile because it is so far out. Mr. Luchini said the DPW dumps leaves there, but the compost site is under the purview of the Board of Health. He suggested hiring someone or renting a piece of equipment to remove some of the debris. He stressed that that area is very swampy and heavy equipment could sink. Mr. Collins then inquired if the leaves could be placed on the sewer beds and Mr. Luchini said he didn't believe so but would check with DPW Director Shuris and report back. **Chairman Cannon/1)** Inquired whether there is any plan to pave the top of Prospect Street from the work that was done last year. Mr. Luchini noted there are several punch-list items that need to be completed in that area. 2) Provided an update on the Balmer School Project adding that the School Building Committee voted to approve a change order up to \$500,000 for an irrigation system for the new Balmer School, which she did not support emphasizing it was not part of the

original scope of the project and she felt the voters should have a say. She added that though there were significant savings during the course of the project, those savings should have been passed on to the taxpayers. Ms. Cannon advised that the extra money was approved on the condition that well tests are successful so a well can be used for watering.

Chairman Cannon announced the next Selectmen's Meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 14, 2020 at 7:00PM.

**ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA/None**

**CORRESPONDENCE/None**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION/None**

A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Athanas to adjourn the public meeting. Vote yes/Unanimous.

**Meeting Adjourned: 8:05 PM**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Russell D. Collins, Clerk**

**/mjw**

## **LIST OF DOCUMENTATION**

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

**August 17, 2020**

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

- A. 1) February 24, 2020**
  - Copy of February 24, 2020 meeting minutes**
- 2) March 9, 2020**
  - Copy of March 9, 2020 meeting minutes**
- 3) May 18, 2020**
  - Copy of May 18, 2020 meeting minutes**

#### **II. PUBLIC HEARING/None.**

#### **III. APPOINTMENTS/By the Board of Selectmen:**

- B. 1) Trustees of Soldiers' Memorials (BOS chairman is the ex-officio per MGL Chapter 41, Sec. 105)**
  - No documentation**
- 2) Charter Review Committee – 2 designees**
  - No documentation**
- 3) Earth Removal Board – 1 designee [currently Selectman Ampagoomian]**
  - No documentation**
- 4) Economic Development Committee – 1 designee [currently Selectman Melia]**
  - No documentation**
- 5) Open Space & Recreation Update Committee [currently Selectman Ampagoomian]**
  - No documentation**
- 6) School Building Committee [currently Chairman Cannon]**
  - No documentation**
- 7) Janet Burke, Board of Registrars/**Present:** Linda Zywiec, Acting Town Clerk**
  - Copy of Talent Bank Form**

- C. By the Town Manager:** Laura Medeiros, Assistant Town Clerk [Vote to Affirm]/  
**Present:** Linda Zywiec, Acting Town Clerk
  - Copy of resume**
  - Copy of Town of Northbridge employment application**

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

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

- D. No One Walks Alone Peer Recovery Support Center - 2nd Annual Overdose Awareness Vigil (Virtual) on Monday, August 31, 2020 – Request to place flags and a banner on Town Common/ Present: Craig Maxim, Programs Consultant, Family**



Continuity and Rebecca Zwicker, Program Director, No One Walks Alone Recovery Support Center

**-Copy of letter dated July 29, 2020 from Family Continuity requesting permission to put flags in Memorial Park to raise awareness about opioid overdose.**

**-Copy of letter dated August 11, 2020 from the Trustees of Soldiers' Memorials granting permission to use Memorial Park for their Overdose Awareness event.**

**E. Fairlawn Christian Reformed Church/Request for a One-Day Weekday Entertainment License for a Drive in Movie even on Friday, September 18, 2020 (Rain date: September 25, 2020) at 7:30 PM/****Present:** Brandon Hehn

**-Copy of One-Day Entertainment License application**

**-Copy of REAP Attestation Form**

**-Copy of Workers Compensation Affidavit**

**F. Hannah Drive [Carpenter Estates Subdivision] / Vote intent to layout Hannah Drive as a public way**

**-Copy of the Planning Board's memo dated August 10, 2020 requesting the Selectmen to vote their intent to layout Hannah Drive as a public way.**

**G. Vote to disband the following committees: 1) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System stormwater discharge permit Advisory Committee; 2) Solar Energy Committee**

**-No documentation**

**H. State Primary [September 1, 2020]/Vote to sign the warrant**

**-Copy of the State Primary warrant**

**I. Fall Annual Town Meeting [October 27, 2020] / Vote to place articles on the FATM warrant**

**-Copy of draft FATM warrant**

**-Copy of the Planning Board's memo dated August 12, 2020 announcing their vote to sponsor a street acceptance article for Hannah Drive at the FATM**

## **VI. DISCUSSIONS**

**J. Town Manager Evaluation Process**

**-Copy of blank evaluation form**

## **VII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT – No Documentation**

## **VIII. SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS – No Documentation**

## **IX. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA – None**

## **X. CORRESPONDENCE – None**

## **XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None**