

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

February 14, 2022

A meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order by Chairman Ampagoomian at 7:00 PM, Northbridge Town Hall, 7 Main Street, Whitinsville, MA. Board Members Present: Ampagoomian, Collins and Melia. Also Present: Adam D. Gaudette, Town Manager. Selectman Athanas and Selectman Cannon were absent and it is duly noted.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those present.

Ms. Elster of the Whitin Community Center presented the George Marston Whitin Community Award to Chairman Ampagoomian. Ms. Elster read the award aloud and noted that she feels it is the most prestigious award. Chairman Ampagoomian thanked Ms. Elster for selecting him for this award.

Presentation of Retirement Plaques to: 1) Richard Brooks, Working Foreman (DPW). Chairman Ampagoomian announced that Mr. Brooks was not able to attend tonight's meeting. ***2) Steven Dupre, Deputy Fire Chief.*** Chairman Ampagoomian stated that Mr. Dupre is retiring after 45 years of service as a Call Firefighter. Chairman Ampagoomian read aloud and presented the plaque to Mr. Dupre. Mr. Dupre thanked the Board for having him tonight.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES/1) October 18, 2021. A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the October 18, 2021 minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins and Melia. **2) November 8, 2021.** A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the November 28, 2021 minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins and Melia. **3) November 22, 2021.** A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the November 22, 2021 minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins and Melia. **4) December 6, 2021.** A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the December 6, 2021 minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins and Melia. **5) December 20, 2021.** A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the December 20, 2021 minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins and Melia. **6) January 24, 2022.** A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the January 24, 2022 minutes as presented with the readings omitted. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins and Melia.

PUBLIC HEARING/None

APPOINTMENTS: By the Board of Selectmen (Vote to appoint) / 1. Rev. Ethan Drutchas, Whitinsville Downtown Crossroads Historic District Commission (Historical Society Rep.). Mr. Drutchas told the Board that is currently the Senior Minister at the Village Congregational Church and has been there since October of 2018. He stated that one of his passions is history, especially local history, and added his undergraduate degree is in History. He has had great pleasure since arriving here and learning about the history of this community. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Collins to appoint Rev. Drutchas to the Whitinsville Downtown Crossroads Historic District Commission as the Historical Society's Rep. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins and Melia.

2. Bryan Bradley, Zoning Board of Appeals (Assoc. Member) / Present: Doug Curving, ZBA Chair. Mr. Bradley is a recent Whitinsville resident, as of December. He spent nine years in the army and wanted to serve his community in a different way. Mr. Curving stated that after speaking with Mr. Bradley, he feels he will bring some great attributes to the Zoning Board. A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to appoint Bryan Bradley to the Zoning Board of Appeals as an Associate Member. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins and Melia.

By the Town Manager (Vote to affirm) / 1. Jamie Luchini, Interim DPW Director/Present: Jamie Luchini/Highway Superintendent. Town Manager Gaudette explained that with the upcoming retirement of current DPW Director James Shuris it made sense to transition Mr. Luchini into the position. He also commended Mr. Luchini for his hard work as the Highway Superintendent, his team player attitude, and feels this will be a great fit for him. Mr. Shuris added that Mr. Luchini has a can-do attitude, gets along well with staff and residents, and it is a pleasure to have him step into this position. Mr. Luchini thanked Mr. Shuris for everything that he has taught him over the last eight years and he is excited to move up to the Director's position. He added that it has been great working in this town, working with all town departments, and he looks forward to his future career here. A motion/Mr. Collins, seconded/Mr. Melia to affirm the Town Manager's appointment of Jamie Luchini as the Interim DPW Director. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins and Melia.

2. Lillian Thompson, Assessors Clerk. Present: Robert Fitzgerald, Principal Assessor. Mr. Fitzgerald explained that they have been in need of an Assessor's Clerk for some time and he looks forward to having Ms. Thompson fill that position. Ms. Thompson added that she lives in Uxbridge, has a son in college and a daughter in High School. She noted that she previously worked for Uxbridge as a day care aid in the after-school program. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Collins to affirm the Town Manager's appointment of Lillian Thompson as the Assessors Clerk. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins and Melia.

Board of Health/Present: Jeanne Gniadek, Board of Health Administrator.

3a. Prem Sai Nagabhyrava, Regional Epidemiologist. Ms. Gniadek explained that Ms. Nagabhyrava is being hired as the Regional Epidemiologist through a grant, which represents eight towns in the Blackstone Valley: Blackstone, Douglas, Hopedale, Mendon, Millville, Upton, Uxbridge and Northbridge. Ms. Nagabhyrava stated she has lived in Shrewsbury her entire life, completed her undergraduate degree at Boston University and received her master's degree from Tulane University, where she majored in epidemiology. She is currently finishing her second master's degree at Boston University in Medical Sciences. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Collins to affirm the appointment of Prem Sai Nagabhyrava as the Regional Epidemiologist. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins and Melia.

3b. Debra Vescera, Regional Public Health Nurse. Ms. Gniadek introduced Ms. Vescera and explained that she is also being hired through a grant for contact tracing, which represents the same eight towns. Ms. Vescera will be assisting the other Public Health Nurses for the eight communities. Ms. Vescera stated that she is a very seasoned Public Health Nurse and mentioned she worked for the City of Worcester as the Public Health Nurse and eight towns in the Southern Worcester County area. She added that she is very passionate about her job and is currently completing her Master's in Public Health Nursing - Population Based Health from Worcester State University. She also teaches Public Health Clinical at Worcester State University. Ms. Vescera is looking forward to starting here in the Town of Northbridge. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Collins to affirm the appointment of Debra Vescera as the Regional Public Health Nurse. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins and Melia.

3c. Kaitlin Donahue, Part-Time Health Inspector, subject to pre-employment requirements. Ms. Gniadek noted that Ms. Donahue is not part of a grant. Ms. Edmands originally filled the position when Ms. Gilcrest retired last October, but since then, Ms. Edmands was hired as a full-time Regional Health Inspector. Ms. Gniadek added that she and Ms. Donahue worked together at the vaccination clinic where she saw her hard work ethic and she is very much looking forward to having Ms. Donahue join the Board of Health team. Ms. Donahue stated that she is originally from Upton and now lives in Uxbridge. She is currently working in Uxbridge as their Health Inspector but is looking to fill the rest of her time with the Northbridge position. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Collins to affirm the appointment Kaitlin Donahue as the Part Time Health Inspector. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins and Melia.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT/None

Stone Hill Partners, LLC [Stone Hill Condos] / Vote to accept monetary gift in the amount of \$100,000.00 (Mumford Riverwalk improvements). Town Manager Gaudette explained that this represents the sixth payment to the Town as part of their special permit that was approved. These funds will be designated for construction improvements to the Mumford Riverwalk. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Collins to accept a monetary gift in the amount of \$100,000 from Stone Hill Partners, LLC to be used towards the Mumford Riverwalk improvements. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins and Melia.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

Draft Spring Town Meeting Warrant (includes draft Capital Funding Plan). Town Manager Gaudette reviewed the budget calendar with the Board. Town Manager Gaudette then reviewed the draft warrant with the Board. Town Manager Gaudette informed the Board that the Fire Station Project, with the rising costs is now unfortunately over budget. After removing some items from the project, which was discussed at the previous Selectmen's meeting, the Board was supportive of going back to Town Meeting and the Ballot to request additional funding. At the last meeting, the plan was for Blackstone Valley Tech to build the outbuilding, but unfortunately BVT is backed up and the construction team felt it was not a good march for their students. Town Manager Gaudette asked the Board how they would like to go about asking for additional funds and explained they can use surplus revenue on the Capitol Plan or include it in the ballot question and a Town Meeting Article. Selectman Melia felt that the full amount should go to Town Meeting and on the Ballot, since there are capital projects that should not be postponed. Selectman Collins agreed. Town Manager Gaudette noted that for the next meeting he will revise the Capitol Plan. At the first meeting in March with the Building Planning and Construction Committee we should have a dollar amount to put into the article. The plan is to have the bid numbers in hand before Town Meeting. Selectman Ampagoomian asked about the possibility of petitioning the State to waive the prevailing wages. Town Manager Gaudette explained that it would not be possible since we are required to pay prevailing wage. Town Manager Gaudette noted that the ARPA funding and explained that he will go over that at a future meeting. **1) Key Meetings Attended:** Monday, January 24, 2022 – Weekly Conference Call for the Fire Station Project. Monday, January 24, 2022 – Attended the virtual BOS Meeting. Monday, January 24, 2022 – Conference Call with Town Counsel to discuss upcoming Civil Service appeal hearing. Tuesday, January 25, 2022 – Conference Call with M. Walker to discuss NPS capital projects. Wednesday, January 26, 2022 – Participated in Insurance Advisory Committee Meeting (virtual) with NFP to discuss Insurance Provider proposals. Friday, January 28, 2022 – Conference Call for the Fire Station Project to prep for following week's BPCC Meeting. Friday, January 28, 2022 – Conference Call with each Department Head to discuss the FY2023 line item budget. Monday, January 31, 2022 – Weekly Conference Call for the Fire Station Project. Tuesday, February 1, 2022 – Virtual Hearing with the State Dept of Human Resources (Civil Service) regarding our recent Lieutenant appointment. Tuesday, February 1, 2022 – Attended the virtual BPCC Meeting to discuss the Fire Station Project, NES Reuse Study and the 5-Year Capital Plan. Wednesday, February 2, 2022 – Virtual Conference Call with Heather Elster (WCC) and Mass Development regarding possible Annex Community Project. Thursday, February 3, 2022 – Virtual Meeting for the Library Strategic Plan. Thursday, February 3, 2022 – Met with Chief Labrie to discuss FY2023 Budget. Monday, February 7, 2022 – Weekly Conference Call for the Fire Station Project. Wednesday, February 9, 2022 – Met with Cheryl Tivnan to discuss a Cultural Council Grant. Wednesday, February 9, 2022 – Phone Call with Ross Smith re: the closing of West Hill Road. Friday, February 11, 2022 – Attended the virtual Massachusetts Managers Association Annual Meeting. **2) Fire Station Project:** The architect continues to work on the design which now again includes the Planning Wing. The Design Team has advertised an early site package this past week on February 9th in an effort to have a clear site for construction bids. Pre-qualifications for Subs and GC's have been submitted and the group will be providing rankings to the BPCC for a vote at their next meeting on February 23rd. We also hope to have updated reconciled costs at this meeting as well. Unfortunately, we received some bad news that BVT won't be able to construct the Storage Building. The Town Manager will be discussing with the Board of

Selectmen this coming Monday, February 14, 2022. **3) Northbridge Elementary School Reuse Study:** The BPCC held interviews this last week and will be looking to select the most qualified firm to perform the study at their next meeting on February 23rd. **4) Fire Department Radio Communications Study:** The RFP for this project was due on January 28th. We received five (5) proposals. Chief White, Chief Labrie, and the Town Manager are reviewing the proposals in preparation of making a consultant selection next week. **5) Fire Department Strategic Plan:** The Town Manager and Fire Chief selected the consultant CPSM for this project. The services agreement has been finalized and the Town Manager issued the Notice to Proceed. The Project is expected to be completed in the next 120 days. **6) Fallon Health Insurance Replacement:** The Town Manager has been working with the Finance Team and NFP to solicit pricing for health insurance plans as Fallon is getting out of the municipal market. The RFP was advertised and the Town received several responses. NFP and staff team had the providers proposing plans present to the IAC. The plan is to make a decision with the IAC in the next week or two. **7) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA):** The Town will be receiving \$4.9M which can be used for projects/programs in response to the recovery effort brought on by the pandemic. The Town Manager issued Project Request application Documents to staff and area non-profit organizations for the purposes of accessing Federal Relief Funds issued to the Town through the American Rescue Plan Act. The Town Manager will provide a Funding Project Plan as part of the FY2023 Budget and Capital Planning Process starting with the Finance Committee on February 16, 2022. **8) FY2023 Budget and Capital Plan Development:** The Town Manager will provide the Board of Selectmen with a preliminary Draft Warrant on February 14th and will be meeting with the FinCom on February 16th to discuss the FY2023 Preliminary Budget.

SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS: Selectman Collins asked if there was any progress on the drainage at the School. Interim DPW Director Jamie Luchini replied that they talk weekly and it is a work in progress. Selectman Melia congratulated both Mr. Brooks and Mr. Shuris on their retirement.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA/None

CORRESPONDENCE/None

EXECUTIVE SESSION/None

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

Meeting Adjourned: 7:50 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Russell D. Collins, Clerk

/mjc

LIST OF DOCUMENTATION

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING - OPEN SESSION

February 14, 2022

Presentation of Retirement Plaques to: 1) *Richard Brooks, Working Foreman (DPW)*
2) *Steven Dupre, Dep. Fire Chief*

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. 1) October 18, 2021

-Copy of October 18, 2021 meeting minutes

2) November 8, 2021

-Copy of November 8, 2021 meeting minutes

3) November 22, 2021

-Copy of November 22, 2021 meeting minutes

4) December 6, 2021

-Copy of December 6, 2021 meeting minutes

5) December 20, 2021

-Copy of December 20, 2021 meeting minutes

6) January 24, 2022

-Copy of January 24, 2022 meeting minutes

II. PUBLIC HEARING/None

II. APPOINTMENTS: By the Board of Selectmen/Vote to appoint:

B. 1. Rev. Ethan Drutchas, Whitinsville Downtown Crossroads Historic District Commission (Historical Society Rep.)/No documentation

2. Bryan Bradley, Zoning Board of Appeals (Assoc. Member) / Present: Doug Curving, ZBA Chair

-Copy of Talent Bank form for Bryan Bradley

By the Town Manager/Vote to affirm:

C. 1. Jamie Luchini, Interim DPW Director/Present: Jamie Luchini/Highway Superintendent

-Copy of memo from the Town Manager recommending the appointment of Jamie Luchini

2. Lillian Thompson, Assessors Clerk/Present: Robert Fitzgerald, Principal Assessor

-Copy of cover letter from Lillian Thompson

-Copy of Application of Lillian Thompson

-Copy of resume of Lillian Thompson

Board of Health Department / Present: Jeanne Gniadek, Board of Health Administrator:

3a. Premsai Nagabhyrava, Regional Epidemiologist

-Copy of resume of Premsai Nagabhyrava

3b. Debra Vescera, Regional Public Health Nurse

-Copy of resume of Debra Vescera

3c. Kaitlin Donahue, Part-Time Health Inspector, subject to pre-employment requirements

-Copy of memo recommending appointment of Kaitlin Donahue

-Copy of resume of Kaitlin Donahue

-Copy of application of Kaitlin Donahue

IV. CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT

V. DECISIONS

D. Stone Hill Partners, LLC [Stone Hill Condos] /Vote to accept monetary gift in the amount of \$100,000.00 (Mumford Riverwalk improvements)

-Copy of memo regarding the monetary gift

VI. DISCUSSIONS/None

VII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

E. Draft Spring Town Meeting Warrant (includes draft Capital Funding Plan)

-Copy of memo regarding the budget, capital, and warrant

-Copy of Spring Town Meeting calendar

-Copy of draft Spring Annual Town Meeting Warrant

-Copy of Capital Program

VIII. SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS/No documentation

IX. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA/None

X. CORRESPONDENCE/None

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION/None