

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING
September 12, 2022

A meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order by Chairman Collins at 6:14 PM, Northbridge Town Hall, 7 Main Street, Whitinsville, MA. Board Members Present: Ampagoomian, Collins, Melia and Paulhus. Also Present: Adam D. Gaudette, Town Manager.

Chairman Collins announced that the Board would be going into Executive Session and declared that having an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the body.

A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to go into Executive Session **Under M.G.L. c.30A, Sec. 21 #2** – To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel. **Under M.G.L. c.30A, Sec. 21 #1** – To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health rather than the professional competence of an individual, provided that the individual involved in such executive session has been notified in writing by the governmental body, at least 48 hours prior to the proposed executive session. Notification may be waived upon agreement of the parties. A governmental body shall hold an open meeting if the individual involved requests that the meeting be open. If an executive session is held, such individual shall have the following rights: (a) to be present at such executive session during discussion or considerations which involve that individual. (b) to have counsel or a representative of his own choosing present and attending for the purpose of advising said individual and not for the purpose of active participation in said executive session. (c) to speak in his own behalf. Roll call vote: Selectman Ampagoomian/Yes, Selectman Melia/Yes, Selectman Paulhus/Yes and Chairman Collins/Yes.

Open Session Adjourned: 6:15 PM

Executive Session Convened: 6:16 PM

Executive Session Adjourned: 6:54 PM

Open Session Reconvened: 7:00 PM

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those present.

Presentation of Retirement Plaque to: Mark Kuras, former DPW Sewer Division Superintendent. Chairman Collins presented a retirement plaque to retired DPW Sewer Division Superintendent Mark Kuras. Mr. Collins thanked Mr. Kuras for his 41 years of service to the Town. Mr. Luchini also thanked Mr. Kuras for his many years of dedication to the town and joked that he shouldn't go too far because they might need to lean on him for some of the knowledge he possesses. Mr. Kuras thanked everyone and said he enjoyed what he did and hopes that he left the Sewer Department in good shape.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES/None

PUBLIC HEARING/None

APPOINTMENTS/By the Town Manager (Vote to Affirm). 1) Michael Havalotti, Sewer Superintendent [effective June 27, 2022]. Mr. Luchini, DPW Director, introduced Mr. Havalotti to the Board and commented that due to Mr. Kuras' retirement after a long tenure with the Town, Mr. Havalotti has stepped up to fill the position of Sewer Superintendent. Mr. Luchini noted that Mr. Havalotti has been an employee of the Town for 22 years and has a vast amount of knowledge about the operations of the Sewer Department. Mr. Havalotti said he was grateful for this opportunity and noted that he is only as good as the people around him. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to affirm the appointment of Michael Havalotti as Sewer Superintendent. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins, Melia and Paulhus. **2) Matthew Gjeltema, Assistant Chief Operator**

[effective August 15, 2022]. Mr. Luchini explained that due to the promotion of Mr. Havalotti to Sewer Superintendent, there is now a vacancy in the Assistant Chief Operator's position. He mentioned that Mr. Gjeltrema has been working for the Sewer Department over 5 years, is fully licensed and has been an asset to the Department. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to affirm the appointment of Matthew Gjeltrema as the Assistant Chief Operator for the Sewer Department, effective August 15, 2022. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins, Melia and Paulhus.

By the Board of Selectmen: 1) Kelley Gamble, Whitinsville Downtown Crossroads Historic District Commission [Property Owner Rep. for Open Sky Community Services]. Ms. Gamble introduced herself to the Board, noting that she works at Open Sky, where she has been employed for 32 years. Her current roll is Vice President of Community Engagement, which entails a lot of being involved in the community and to increase activities in the communities where they are located. Her interest in the Commission is not only being a representative of Open Sky but also her passion for the Mill. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to appoint Kelly Gamble to the Whitinsville Downtown Crossroads Historic District Commission. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins, Melia and Paulhus.

2) MBTA Advisory Board/Designee to attend meetings. The MBTA Advisory Board is looking to fill the vacancy for a Selectmen's Representative to attend their meetings. Selectman Melia stepped forward to serve on this Board. A motion/Mr. Paulhus, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to appoint Selectman Melia as the Selectmen's Representative to the MBTA Advisory Board. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins, Melia and Paulhus.

RESIGNATIONS: Shawn Roby, Playground and Recreation Commission. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to accept the resignation from Shawn Roby, Playground and Recreation Commission and send a letter thanking him for his service. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins, Melia and Paulhus.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT/None

Fall Annual Town Meeting [October 25, 2022] / Vote to sign the FATM Warrant upon completion and final review by Town Counsel. Town Manager Gaudette explained that there are three articles, the first is to pay prior year bills, the second is for budget transfers and the third is to acquire Castle Hill Farm, which is being brought forward by the Community Preservation Committee. A motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to sign the Fall Annual Town Meeting Warrant, upon completion and final review by Town Counsel. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins, Melia and Paulhus.

Whitinsville Christian School/Request to hang a banner across Church Street from Sunday, September 25, 2022 to Sunday, October 9, 2022 to advertise their Dutch Apple Pie sale. A motion/Mr. Ampagoomian, seconded/Mr. Melia to approve the Whitinsville Christian School's request to hang a banner across Church Street from Sunday, September 25, 2022 to Sunday October 9, 2022 to advertise their Dutch Apple Pie sale. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins, Melia and Paulhus.

Town Manager Evaluation. Chairman Collins announced that the Board held an executive session to discuss the Town Manager's evaluation. The overall result is that Mr. Gaudette scored a 4.75 out of 5. With that the Board agreed to a 3% merit raise and will begin to negotiate a new contract. There being no further discussion, a motion/Mr. Melia, seconded/Mr. Ampagoomian to approve the Town Manager's 3% merit increase and to begin contract negotiations. Vote yes/Ampagoomian, Collins, Melia and Paulhus.

Eyepoint Pharmaceuticals/Intent to apply for Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Agreement. Present: Brandon Pyers, Deloitte. Town Manager Gaudette introduced Mr. Pyers. Mr. Pyers explained that they have been working for about a year on various aspects of an expansion process and new manufacturing facility. Next, Mr. Joe Musiak introduced himself as the Director of Facilities and Engineering for Eyepoint Pharmaceuticals. Also present Craig Chatham, Vice President of Planning and Analysis, Ron Honing, Legal Counsel, Wayne Stuart from Deloitte, Kevin Kuros, of the Massachusetts Office of Business Development. Eyepoint Pharmaceuticals is a company that develops innovative therapeutics for patients with serious eye disorders. They

have FDA approved technologies on the market and technology for a sustained release drug delivery. Currently, they are headquartered in Watertown, MA. Two commercial products that they market are DEXYCU, which is a single dose treatment for inflammation following ocular surgery, and YUTIQ, which is a once-a-month treatment for macular degeneration. As of right now, Mr. Pyers explained that Northbridge is the preferred site from a data analytics and process perspective. Mr. Musiak indicated that the area they are looking at a location in Osterman Park off Church Street Extension, as it suits their requirements. The Watertown location is in an old mill building, where they have expanded as much as they can, but no longer have the space they need for growth and manufacturing for their products. The Watertown location will still be used as a research center and manufacturing will be repurposed for clinical manufacturing of new products. All of the commercial manufacturing will be done at the new Northbridge facility. They are targeting a 40,000 square foot space, with a 15-year lease and options to extend as it takes a long time to build these manufacturing facilities and get FDA approvals and certification to manufacture in them. They estimate they will have 45 full-time employment positions. Mr. Chatham stated that they are still waiting for internal board approval, which they want to make as favorable as possible. They anticipate that a Tax Increment Financing Agreement is going to aid in a favorable outcome. Mr. Pyers explained that a Tax Increment Financing Agreement is a reduction of incremental new real property taxes, so any property built on the land would pay a bit less than what they normally would. In this scenario, it would be a reduction of the lease rate between the company and the property owner. In the earlier years of the agreement, the exemption is higher creating lower property taxes, which is gradually reduced over the term of the agreement. Mr. Kuros explained that his office manages the economic incentive program, which TIFs are a part of. He also said that about half of the TIF agreements they see has the developer making some investment on behalf of the tenant, but the job creator is the tenant. He also mentioned that their board meets quarterly, leaving the next available meeting in December. Local-only applications are due the first week of November, but requires Town Meeting approval. Mr. Kuros advised that the Office of Business Development is here to make sure that process goes smoothly, but they do not get involved in the contract negotiations. When an agreement is reached, they will need to review it to make sure it is aligned statutorily. Town Manager Gaudette offered that since the Fall Town Meeting warrant is closed, they could attend the next Selectmen's meeting, where the Board could vote to set a special Town Meeting to be held on the same date as the Annual Town Meeting. It would be for the one warrant article and, if approved by the voters, it would move forward to the State. Mr. Kuros noted that the format of the warrant article can include specific terms if it has already been negotiated or you can use the verbiage to authorize the Selectmen to negotiate. Selectman Melia asked when Eyepoint Pharmaceuticals was established. Mr. Honing replied that the company dates back 20-25 years under a predecessor name and has been in the Watertown area for at least two decades. Chairman Collins asked if all goes to plan, what would be the estimate for a shovel in the ground. Mr. Pyers stated that once negotiations are final, construction would begin shortly thereafter hopefully early next year. Town Manager Gaudette proposed that the board allow him to continue discussions and provide the board with further information at the next meeting. The Board concurred.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT: Town Manager Gaudette was out last week but noted that there will be a meeting with the DPW Director and Parks and Recreation tomorrow on September 13th to discuss design programming for the Linwood Basketball Courts.

SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS: **Selectmen Ampagoomian/1)** noted that there has been a lot of trash left at the Linwood Ballfield / parking lot area. Town Manager Gaudette stated that typically they will have a group discussion with the DPW, Police and Board of Health. Mr. Luchini stated that the DPW typically picks up debris if someone dumps it. He also noted they have added trash receptacles to a lot of areas, which has helped. **2)** pointed out there is a lot of graffiti in the Plummer Skate Park. Mr. Luchini explained the DPW does not maintain the skateboard park as he believes it is under the jurisdiction of a group called the Friends of Plummer Skate Park, who he will call. He added they just did a bunch of work on the equipment and you can't just spray it off as it is a special poly paint. **3)** asked when Mass Highway will fix the sunken culvert pipe on Rt. 122 by the Riverdale Cemetery. Mr. Luchini stated he did not know, but he will look into it. **4)** asked for an update on the roads program. Mr. Luchini reported that it should be completed on Saturday; and the only thing left to do is structure work on lower Church Street that will be done on Wednesday, then paving on Saturday. **Selectman Melia/1)** continuing the road's program discussion, he asked when the list for next year's roads program would

be compiled and asked the DPW Director to take a look at East Street. Mr. Luchini stated that the list he has is a running list, which will be reevaluated by priority for next year's paving season adding that East Street is on the list. **2)** asked what the latest drought status is. Town Manager Gaudette responded that he will check into it with the Water Company and noted that the notice was still on the website. He also added that he thought the drought was still ongoing. Mr. Luchini also added that the DEP has not lifted any restrictions either. **Selectman Paulhus/ 1)** asked how the Hill Street sidewalk project was coming along. Mr. Luchini answered that they are doing sections as money becomes available. They have been working towards completing larger sections of sidewalk. **2)** mentioned the drainage at Northbridge Elementary School. Mr. Luchini replied that he contacted the School Facilities Director and was informed that the recent drainage work they did has held up well, but there was one section where the warning track comes out that caused the most wash out, and they are aware of it. **Selectman Collins** emphasized the importance of the drainage at the Elementary School and requested a copy of the punch list items.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA: Ambulance Fund (uncollectible accounts write off). Town Manager Gaudette noted that with him being out of Town last week he didn't have a chance to meet with the Fire Chief and the Town Accountant but he will have the information available for the next meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE/None

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

Meeting Adjourned: 8:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Paulhus, Clerk

/mjc

LIST OF DOCUMENTATION

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING - OPEN SESSION

September 12, 2022

EXECUTIVE SESSION 6:00 PM

Presentation of Retirement Plaque to: Mark Kuras, former DPW Sewer Division Superintendent

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES/None

II. PUBLIC HEARING/None

III. APPOINTMENTS: A. By the Town Manager: 1) Michael Havalotti, Sewer Superintendent [effective June 27, 2022].

-Copy of memorandum regarding the appointment

2) Matthew Gjeltema, Assistant Chief Operator [effective August 15, 2022].

-Copy of memorandum regarding the appointment

B. By the Board of Selectmen: 1) Kelley Gamble, Whitinsville Downtown Crossroads Historic District Commission [Property Owner Rep. for Open Sky Community Services].

-Copy of Talent Bank Form

2) MBTA Advisory Board/Designee to attend meetings

-Copy of letter from the MBTA Advisory Board

C. RESIGNATIONS: Shawn Roby, Playground and Recreation Commission

-Copy of letter of resignation from Shawn Roby

IV. CITIZENS' COMMENTS/INPUT

V. DECISIONS: D. Fall Annual Town Meeting [October 25, 2022] / Vote to sign FATM Warrant upon completion and final review by Town Counsel

-Copy of draft Fall Annual Town Meeting Warrant

E. Whitinsville Christian School/Request to hang a banner across Church Street from Sunday, September 25, 2022 to Sunday, October 9, 2022 to advertise their Dutch Apple Pie sale

-Copy of email requesting to hang a banner

F. Town Manager Evaluation

-Copy of Cumulative Score Sheet

VI. DISCUSSIONS: G. Eyepoint Pharmaceuticals/Intent to apply for Tax Increment Financing Present: Brandon Pyers, Deloitte

-Copy of letter regarding the Tax Increment Financing Agreement from R. Gary Bechtholdt

-Copy of letter of Intent from Eyepoint Pharmaceuticals

-Copy of table showing the estimated payment projections

-Copy of draft Tax Increment Financing Agreement

-Copy of Property Map

VII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT/None

VIII. SELECTMEN'S CONCERNS/No documentation

IX. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA: Ambulance Fund (uncollectible accounts write off)
-No documentation

X. CORRESPONDENCE/None

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION: H. 6:00 PM Under M.G.L. c.30A, Sec. 21 #2 – To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.

I. Under M.G.L. c.30A, Sec. 21 # 1 – To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health rather than the professional competence of an individual, provided that the individual involved in such executive session has been notified in writing by the governmental body, at least 48 hours prior to the proposed executive session. Notification may be waived upon agreement of the parties. A governmental body shall hold an open meeting if the individual involved requests that the meeting be open. If an executive session is held, such individual shall have the following rights: (a) to be present at such executive session during discussion or considerations which involve that individual. (b) to have counsel or a representative of his own choosing present and attending for the purpose of advising said individual and not for the purpose of active participation in said executive session. (c) to speak in his own behalf.