



**Select Board  
Minutes  
Tuesday, May 18, 2021  
7:00pm**

**The Select Board Regular Meeting was held virtually in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L.c.30A. S.20.**

**Select Board member present:**

Alice von Loesecke, Kara Minar, Stu Sklar, Lucy Wallace, Rich Maiore

**Town Department attendees:**

Town Administrator Tim Bragan, Assistant Town Administrator/HR Director Marie Sobalvarro, Executive Assistant Julie Doucet

**Annual Town Meeting follow up**

*Bromfield House*

The board members discussed possible next steps regarding the Bromfield House. They agreed the School Committee must be more of an advocate especially considering any proceeds from this property must be used for educational purposes. Rich Maiore will work with the School Committee and Park & Recreation on a vision for potential uses. With the new school now completed the Bromfield House will be officially vacated this fall. They pondered the best time to revisit this topic; fall or spring 2022. Town Administrator Tim Bragan will request Town Counsel attain the appropriate decision on who controls any proceeds from sale of the property. The board decided to disband the Bromfield House Committee now that they have completed their initial charge. By a roll call vote, Sklar – aye, Minar – aye, Maiore – aye, Wallace – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to disband the Bromfield House Committee.

*Planning Board capital request for Commercial District Planning Program*

The board discussed how they can best support the Planning Board in their efforts on this moving forward. Members had some ideas and plan to follow up with the Planning Board.

**Ideation Committee appointments**

By a roll call vote, Wallace – aye, Sklar – aye, Minar – aye, Maiore – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to appoint SusanMary Reddinger, Bob O'Shea and Charles Oliver to represent their respective boards. Lucy Wallace nominated Kara Minar to serve as the Select Board representative. By a roll call vote, Sklar – aye, Wallace – aye, Maiore – aye, Minar – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to appoint Kara Minar as their rep.

**Minutes**

By a roll call vote, Minar – aye, Wallace – aye, Sklar – aye, Maiore – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve the regular and executive session minutes from the 5/4 meeting, as presented.

## Staff Report/Updates

- A list of upcoming events was distributed. Tim Bragan noted issues you will see, brought on by Covid restrictions, is that September looks to be busy as a number of groups moved their events to after the earlier expected reopening date of August 1<sup>st</sup>. This will cause busier than normal weekends for that month. This change in the scheduling of events will also create an issue with the Board's policy of not having too many events filling up weekends so as to give residents some relief. We do expect things will go back to normal next year.
- There are continued efforts on a number of fronts at the transfer station:
  - We have received three volunteers to help re-open the TIOLI and need just a couple more and this need will just be through June.
  - 2021/2022 Transfer Station Stickers will be available via on-line or mail starting tomorrow.
  - Efforts continue on bringing electronic "Dump Dollars" to the fruition and we expect that it could be up and running sometime in July.
- The insurance company has settled the claim for the totaled chipper that was destroyed last month and we will be getting just over \$18,000 from them and Tim Kilhart will be using a portion of the \$40,000 line item from CPIC to help pay the rest. New chipper is approximately \$53,000 and would not be in until July or probably August.
- Bragan met with Dr. Dwight last week and we are working on combining Bridges, Community Education, and Park and Recreation. She and Bob O'Shea had met prior and we are looking to see how it would work. They drafted a job description and we will run it through our personnel system but it may end up being a School position if it cannot reach a certain level within our system. We also talked about changes to Munis that Jared and Ingrid have been discussing and agreed to move ahead with two projects (Munis Dashboard and updating Munis Chart of Accounts). Jared is going to FinCom for a reserve fund transfer for \$18,000 for our portion of the Chart of Accounts change and Dr. Dwight agreed that the school would pick up their half and also pay for the Dashboard change (\$5,200 one time fee and \$1,300 annually) since it will be used mostly by the School Department. Jared and Ingrid are also working on a better budget presentation for Town Meeting which will be debuted next spring.
- Update on Change to Mailing FinCom Book. This change, if the Board looks at complaints received at Town Hall, was generally accepted. We had one verbal complaint, between Select Board and Town Clerk offices, nine books were mailed, two picked up in SB office with a handful picked up at TC office, and overwhelming majority picked up at Town Meeting. We had 309 people attend Town Meeting, which is more than last year.
- Budget Update:
  - The Senate Budget was released last week and is \$1.32 billion higher than last year's budget and is \$55.7 million less than the House budget
  - With this version of the budget released the impact on the estimated Cherry Sheet (see attached) is an increase of just less than \$10,000 with no corresponding increase in assessments or charges.
  - The differences between the House and Senate will be worked out in Conference Committee and then the budget goes to the Governor for acceptance and line-item veto. We will hopefully know more at the end of June/beginning of July.
  - On the State revenue front April collections came in higher than expected and Gaming revenue continues to get better at the State's Casinos (see attached articles).

- The Devens Covid Vaccination Clinic is opened and distributing vaccines with walk-ins welcomed. To schedule an appointment people can go to [vaxfinder.mass.gov](https://vaxfinder.mass.gov), search by Local Board of Health clinic and look for the Clear Path for Veterans New England/Devens site. (see attached) Currently they have Moderna vaccines but are working to get the Pfizer vaccine so that they can vaccinate a wider group of folks especially the 12- to 15-year-old population.
- As you all know, the Governor announced yesterday the change in a number of Covid restrictions for May 26, 2021 and that on June 15, 2021 he will be rescinding the executive Order that we have been working under since last spring. The reason for the delay in the rescinding of the Executive order is so He can work with the legislature on certain aspects of legislation so that certain things that were put in place can continue. For example the General Store expansion of its liquor footprint was one of those things that you as a Board was able to do because of the Executive Order.
- Most of the announcement yesterday had to do with easing or ceasing mask restrictions and increasing or eliminating limits on gatherings. With respect to wearing a mask in public buildings there is no way we can determine who in the public is or is not vaccinated and as such will require those employees that have not been vaccinated to continue to wear mask and those that have been vaccinated will have the option of wearing a face covering or not. This seems to be the best and easiest way to continue to keep staff safe without mandating all employees to continue to wear masks.
- We are working on the detail numbers of the Cares Act and will report out at the June 1, 2021 Select Board Meeting. However, in reviewing the Cares Act, Sections 6029c (1)(A) and 603c (1)(A), payments from the Fiscal Recovery Funds to respond to the negative economic impacts of the Covid-19 public health emergency includes non-profits. As allowed, we are looking to provide a grant to Fivesparks in the amount of \$20,000 to assist them with rental payments, utilities, and insurance costs for the past 14 months (May 2020 to June 30, 2021). We will be working with them on this grant.
- The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) guidelines came out eight days ago (see attachments) and There is a 150 page "Interim Final Rule" which we are reviewing and both Marie and I are attending seminars on this as well. We hope to have a detailed outline for the Board for either the June 1<sup>st</sup> meeting or the Strategic Planning Session and this will depend on the detail of information we will be getting.
- Recently there has been a move by the Cannabis Control Commission to take greater control over Community Host Agreements as the attached documents show. Our agreement is still viable and we have received the first payment but if the CCC continues this negative press movement toward the agreements I do not know what will happen in the future. This is just a heads up.

#### **Discuss next steps for the annual appointment process; schedule any necessary interviews**

The board decided to conduct interviews for the Conservation Commission at their June 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.

#### **Discuss Diversity Statement**

The board changed disability in the statement to physical ability.

#### **Harvard Unitarian Universalist Church request for use of tree for their Remembrance Ribbon Project in honor of Memorial Day**

By a roll call vote, Wallace – aye, Sklar – aye, Maiore – aye, Minar – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to allow UU church to decorate tree near Elm street with ribbons.

**Ginny Thurston Scholarship**

Alice von Loesecke and Rich Maiore reviewed the letters of interest and were pleased to report a very qualified candidate has been chosen to receive the award for this year.

**Town Administrator contract**

Alice von Loesecke said the administrators review needed to be completed prior to action on the contract.

**Strategic Planning Session preparations**

The Select Board decided on Wednesday, June 16<sup>th</sup> for the meeting with the location to be determined but preferably the porch at the Hildreth House.

**Select Board Reports**

Lucy Wallace asked when might be a good time for an update from the Harvard Devens Jurisdiction Committee and if the board would consider keeping her as the Select Board Representative.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm

Documents referenced:

Annual Appointment information – FY22