Select Board Minutes
Tuesday, February 1, 2022
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 participants:
Stu Sklar, Rich Maiore, Kara Minar, Alice von Loesecke
Erin McBee was not present.

Town Department attendees:
Town Administrator Tim Bragan, Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro and Executive Assistant Julie Doucet

Additional participants:
Police Chief James Babu, Officer Aaron Cavanaugh, CPC Chair Didi Chadran, OSC Chair Peter Dorward, Dave Maxson from Isotrope

Introduce Police Officer Aaron Cavanaugh
Chief Babu introduced Officer Aaron Cavanaugh. He reported a thorough hiring process was conducted Office Cavanaugh comes will impressive qualifications and experience. Officer Cavanaugh is excited to join the Harvard Police Department and work under Chief Babu. Chief Babu noted the department is now fully staffed.

Community Preservation Committee (CPC) recommendations
CPC Chair Didi Chadran announced the Dept of Revenue issued supplemental trust fund distribution for CPA communities. He explained this allowed the CPC to award the requests received.
Requests received:

Requesting Organization	Application Title	Mass CPA Category	Amount Requested by Applicant	Amount Approved by CPC Vote
Parks & Recreation	Completion of Town Docks	Open Space & Conservation	$25,000.00	$25,000.00
Parks & Recreation	Mooring/Raft AnchoringSystem	Open Space & Conservation	$30,000.00	$30,000.00
Parks & Recreation	Safety Improvements to Harvard Parks & Playgrounds	Open Space & Conservation	$36,000.00	$10,352.00
Open Space Committee	Community Harvest ProjectAgricultural Preservation Restriction	Open Space & Conservation	$100,000.00	$100,000.00
Open Space Committee	Still River Woods	Open Space & Conservation	$50,000.00	$50,000.00
Harvard Fire Department	Fire Reports Preservation	Historic Preservation	$11,495.00	$11,495.00
Harvard Historical Commission	Shaker Herb House	Historic Preservation	$58,500.00	$58,500.00
Harvard Town Hall	Civil War Tablet Restoration	Historic Preservation	$11,774.50	$11,774.50
Town Hall	Preservation of HistoricDocuments	Historic Preservation	$21,480.00	$21,480.00

MAHT	Affordable Housing	Affordable Housing	$38,879.00 (estimated @ 10%)	$38,879.00
		Subtotal:	$383,128.50	**$357,480.50**

Additional CPC funding warrant:

CPC	CPC Expenses	CPC Administration	$2,500.00
Town Hall	Town Hall Debt Service	Historic Preservation	$48,000.00 estimated
		Subtotal:	**$50,500.00**
		TOTAL WARRANTED:	**$407, 980.50**

Update from the Open Space Committee (OSC)
Chair Peter Dorward gave the update which included:

- recap of the OSC goals
- map - identifying potential active recreation sites
- map – priority scoring of land for open space protection
- CPC requests
- open space protection/funding via capital improvement plan
- active recreation capital improvement plan

The board members were pleased with the update. Alice von Loesecke requested future discussion on town/conservation land that could work for active recreation. She suggested a top five. Dorward highlighted a few items for consideration by the Select Board. He mentioned the committee membership has a two-year term that will expire in 2022. He believes there is more work to be done therefore an extension could be warranted. He also suggested a reduction in the membership by two admitting making quorum has been difficult and replacing the DPW Director with the Director of Community Education and Recreation as more appropriate fit. The Select Board members were amenable to the suggestions and agreed to take action at an upcoming meeting.

Minutes
By a roll call vote, Minar – aye, Sklar – aye, Maiore – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve the 1/18 minutes, as presented.

Public Communication
Kerri Green, Oak Hill Road, noticed a discussion topic related to an entertainment license for Carlson Orchards. She asked the board to consider the overhead doors allowing sound to travel into the residential neighborhood. She also asked the building capacity limits be adhered to.

Stephanie O'Keefe, Oak Hill Road, agreed with Green in asking the select Board to consider the abutters in any decisions made.

Staff Report/Updates (Attachment A)
Chair Stu Sklar poled his fellow board members on holding the spring atm outdoors. All were open to the idea and will act on this at their next meeting.

Review and discuss feedback from the balloon/crane test on the Hildreth House property
David Maxson from Isotrope reviewed their analysis from the test. Photographs taken during the test were included to provide visuals from varying locations in town. He noted for optimal ground elevation and effective tower height for visibility test 140 feet back in the woods was the location chosen. They discussed options with respect to tower designs. Maxson said the location is very good therefore he expects multiple carriers would be interested. Kara Minar asked about easements. Maxon said utility and access easements are normal for this type of site. The Select Boards thanked Maxson and will add this as a topic for further discussion at an upcoming meeting.

Shaker Herb Shed
By a roll call vote, Minar -aye, Maiore – aye, von Loesecke – aye, Sklar – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve the letter of support for the Shaker Herb shed grant as properly dated.

Discuss granting an entertainment license to Carlson Orchards
Stu Sklar asked his fellow board members if they would consider acting on the entertainment license request without a formal notice in the newspaper or letter to abutters. He commented on the number of hearings already held for this applicant. He noted boards policy does allow them to act on the request without a hearing. The board members were in agreement the varying requests have been a bit onerous and convoluted over the past few years. All agree public comment is helpful and necessary therefore including this opportunity for residents to speak is a must. Kara Minar thought it would be helpful to find a way to streamline this process including a full understanding of operations thus far and what else they may be planning on to avoid any additional hearings/requests for at least up to a year. They decided to act on the request at their next meeting with a full discussion and opportunity for the public to comment as well.

Select Board Budget
Tim Bragan wondered if the members had any additional questions. Alice von Loesecke asked about addressing the increase for water treatment costs and the need to increase rates. She asked about the increase in the benefits line item which Maria Sobalvarro explained the Worcester County retirement assessment came out after budgets were due.

Staffing/Operation changes:

- Bragan explained the finance department is requesting additional hours for the receptionist position to include the accounting duties currently being done by the Assistant Town Clerk. This will provide administrative assistance to the Finance Director.
- Bragan said the position being created to take on administrative duties for the land use boards and building department will be essential for the departments that will be moving to the Hildreth House.
- In addition, this position will also allow for a full-time conservation agent and the Executive Assistant in the Town Administrators office to assist the HR Director and procurement.

Von Loesecke also asked about Transfer Station bags for senior citizens.

Review Select Board Budgets
Alice von Loesecke worked with member Erin McBee on this task. She explained the highlighted items they flagged as requiring updating. Von Loesecke will provide a clean version for action at the next meeting.

Code of Conduct
This item will be acted on at the next meeting when all the board members are present.

Review Personnel Board's recommended work from home policy
HR Director Marie Sobalvarro reported the Personnel Board has voted in favor of a Work from Home Policy. The policy has been heavily edited and modified prior to them taking a vote. They will hold a required public hearing as well. The board will act on the policy at their next meeting.

Select Board Reports
Stu Sklar reported on his testimony before the joint committee on Beacon Hill.
Kara Minar met with the Planning Board on the zoning reforms regarding multifamily housing in MBTA designated communities. They will attend an upcoming Select Board meeting.
Alice von Loesecke reported the Bare Hill Pond Committee is working to help prevent/delay/mitigate blue green algae issues.

Executive Session, per MGL Ch. 30A, s. 21(a)3
By a roll call vote, Minar –aye, Maiore – aye, von Loesecke – aye, Sklar – aye, the board voted unanimously to enter into executive session at 9:15pm as per MGL 30A Sec. 21.3 To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government's bargaining or litigating position. The Board will reconvene into open session only to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15pm.

Documents referenced:
FY23 – CPC recommendations (ver.6)
OSC update – dated 2.1.2022
Hildreth Crane Visibility Test – dated 1.21.2022
Shaker Herb Shed letter – dated 2.1.2022
Carlson Orchards Entertainment license request – dated 12.14.2022
SB policies – Jan 2022
Code of Conduct – dated 1.13.2022
Remote Work policy – dated 1.11.2022

Attachment A

Staff Report
February 1, 2022

1. Attached are the lists of Expiring terms and Vacant Terms which the Board requested it receives on or before February 1st annually.

2. Marlene was successful in having the Town remain with just one precinct. This will save us costs and time for each election we have going forward.

3. ARPA Update:
   a. A couple of weeks ago I informed the Board of the ARPA update and provided a connection to those updates from the Treasury. The changes need to be discussed so that the Board can make an informed decisions about the use of the funds. Currently the Board committed funds to the Water Treatment project but in lieu of the changes the Board needs to decide what it wishes to do.
   b. Attached is some information from a webinar that was held in January.
4. Budget
   a. Tomorrow night's Budget Meeting with FinCom will have the Public Buildings and DPW Departments addressing their questions from the Finance Committee.
   b. The House, Senate and Administration & Finance have agreed on a 2.7% revenue growth number a couple of weeks ago, which represents a slowdown in growth. The Governor's budget has since come out and the attached Cherry Sheets show us gaining revenue in certain areas and our expenses going up in others. I have also attached a spreadsheet showing Chapter 70 and UGGA over the years as well.

5. Our FY22 Snow and Ice budget has been depleted and on January 26, 2022, per Massachusetts General Law, I approved deficit spending for the DPW Snow and Ice Budget Lines (see attached)

6. The move to Blue Cross/Blue Shield insurance is starting to move forward and will be completed by the end of May. As an update, the Board knows that the new insurance company provided us rates that were ~5% below our current MNHG rates. MNHG has just announced it is increasing their plan costs via one of the attached options (see attached). As you can see this means potentially a ~7% to ~9% increase for those on Tufts and Harvard and an ~11.5% to ~12.3% for those that were on Fallon who are going to MNHG's lowest plan. This means all the work Marie did, along with the vote of our IAC, and ultimately the vote of the Board has saved our employees and the Town a considerable amount of money.

7. After posting for the upcoming Town Clerk vacancy, we received 8 resumes: 4 of whom had Town Clerk experience, 1 of whom had municipal experience but no Town Clerk experience. After further review, we'd opted to narrow the first-round to three candidates. This was narrowed to 2 candidates after Marie, Marlene, and Catherine conducted initial interviews. We (Stu, Marie, Catherine, and myself) have held the final interviews for the Town Clerk position and will be announcing the appointment once things are finalized with the chosen individual. It is our hope to have the new person start before the end of February.

8. The Town Clerk is looking ahead to the nomination of candidates for the Town Election and wanted to know if the Board is looking at doing nomination papers again this year as opposed to holding a caucus? I presume that if the Board is having an outdoor Town Meeting then it is quite possible that the Board would continue with nomination papers. Please make a determination so I can inform the Town Clerk.

9. Attached is an article regarding a proposed Cannabis Bill which has passed through a Joint Committee quickly. This could pose an issue for Community Host Agreements (CHA). The Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) is looking for control over these agreements and the legislature may give them that authority. It is not yet sure how this would impact our CHA but it is quite possible that it could. We need to alert our Representative and Senator that anything that would negatively impact a communities ability to negotiate a mutual deal with Cannabis businesses should be rejected and giving control to the CCC to nullify agreements is not what should happen.

10. The SB Chair, Harvard Sanitarian, Harvard Building Inspector, and myself visited Friendly Crossways last week to talk with the owners (Mary Helan Vesanka and Keith Turner) and find out what they do and how their business operates. The purpose of the meeting was to be able to give them guidance in complying with the various regulations and get them into compliance. The meeting yielded a lot of information and the Sanitarian and Inspector told them they would get back to them after they had time to process the information and determine what they could and could not do. Overall it was an enlightening and productive meeting.

11. Attorney Lanza has attempted to get in touch with Attorney Poitras of the Bromfield Trust but has not heard back. In an effort to move this matter along I had him proceed with drafting the attached documents which the Board can discuss at your next meeting.

12. The deadline for submitting reports for the Annual Town Report has passed and those that have not yet submitted anything need to do so immediately. We have been notified by the printer that due to labor and

supply issues that it could take up to 6 to 7 weeks to get the Annual Report printed and delivered to the Town. This means Julie does not have spare time to wait for delayed reports and has to put this together sooner rather than later. So please get your reports in or they may not make it into the final report this year.

13. Finally, ten days from today will be our Town Clerk's last day before she retires. I want to take a moment and thank her, Marlene Kenney, publicly for all she has done while here in Harvard. We were able to hire Marlene away from Groton and we have been blessed with her talents ever since. She has worked through some tough times while here and has always done an amazing job, and just like one of her predecessors (Janet Vellante) she is leaving us in a better place than when she arrived. My deepest appreciation goes out to Marlene and I wish her a relaxing and well deserved retirement.