

Select Board Minutes
Thursday, August 27, 2020
9:30am

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:

Chair Alice von Loesecke, Rich Maiore, Kara Minar, Stu Sklar, Lucy Wallace (Maiore exited the meeting at 10am)

Town Department attendees:

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

Additional participants:

School Committee Chair SusanMary Redinger, Finance Committee member Jennifer Finch

Daytime Childcare for town employees

Chair Alice von Loesecke received a request from School Superintendent Linda Dwight asking the Select Board to endorse a letter of support to offer daytime childcare at the Unitarian Church. She explained with school districts reopening plans being different from district to district this would offer a solution to Harvard teachers and other town employees with school age children.

Lucy Wallace was able to speak with Redinger before the meeting to ask a few questions. She was concerned about the hours ending at 2pm when Town Hall staff work until 5pm, if the employees hired to run the program will be eligible for benefits and about the cost being dependent on how many sign up. She understands there is a real need for childcare and trying to offer this service is a good idea.

Finance Committee member Jennifer Finch confirmed the Bridges program (before & afterschool care) was always self-funded including salary and benefits. She understood the rental fee for use of the church space would require funding from another source.

Kara Minar asked about liability coverage. Bragan and Sobalvarro will consult with the town's insurance company to attain the appropriate coverage. She also wondered about the program considering the concept of cohorts and not intermingling. Stu Sklar supports the initiative however is bothered this program will likely not help all town employees.

SusanMary Redinger joined the meeting to answer questions. Her understanding was this program began as a way to help Harvard teachers but was expanded to all town employees. As far as the 2pm closing time, Redinger explained teachers will be teaching at school in the mornings and then remote classes in the afternoon therefore care after 2pm will not be necessary.

HR Director Marie Sobalvarro surveyed town employees but mostly because of the hours there was little interest.

The board members agreed to support the program but if all town employees are unable to benefit from it the endorsement letter should not implicate it can. After confirming with the Superintendent, Redinger said the letter can be revised to say for only school employees.

By a roll call vote, Wallace – aye, Sklar – aye, Minar – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to endorse letter as amended and authorize Alice von Loesecke to sign.

The meeting was meeting adjourned at 10:25am.