

PRESENT: Select Board Members Bill Greathead, Margaret Scarsdale, and Tony Beattie; Town Administrator, Andrew MacLean; Executive Assistant, Tracie Looney

This meeting was remote participation only. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. Pledge of Allegiance was said. Mr. Greathead announced that the meeting is being cablecast live, and recorded for future cablecast by Pepperell Community Media.

1. AGENDA PACKET (Exhibit 1)

2. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

No minutes at this time.

3. BILL AND PAYROLL WARRANTS

Since the last meeting the Select Board have approved the following payroll and bill warrants:

- On February 17, 2021 payables warrant #33B was signed for \$32,475.60
- On February 18, 2021 payroll warrant #34A was signed for \$262,363.07

4. SELECT BOARD APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS

4.1 Finance Committee Appointment

Kevin A. Bragg has submitted a request to be appointed to the Finance Committee. Mr. Bragg was in attendance to answer any questions from the Board.

On a motion made by Ms. Scarsdale and seconded by Mr. Beattie, it was unanimously voted to appoint Mr. Bragg to the Finance Committee with the term to expire on June 30, 2021.

5. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Written Submittals: The Town Administrator presented to the Board a few written submittals received in the office:

- Charter Communication letter with Annual Compliant Form 500 for 2020
- Nashoba Valley Town Administrator Working Group letter to Governor regarding COVID-19 vaccination site at Devens

Audience Comments: No audience comments

6. REPORTS

6.1 Town Administrator's Report

The Town Administrator gave a brief overview for his report:

- The Town Hall sewer line failure issue and future repair
- Discussion of regional effort to bring COVID-19 vaccinations to this area

6.2 Select Board's Report

Among other things, the Select Board mentioned they attended various town meetings such as Finance Committee, Planning Board and others. Mr. Beattie working with State regarding solar farms and composting. Ms. Scarsdale drafted an Expression of Interest letter that will be submitted as part of the Town's ONE-Stop Community grant in a couple of months. Mr. Greathead continues to monitor the COVID situation and urges everyone to stay safe.

Master Plan Implementation Team (MPIT) Update

The Board gave updates on the progress they have made with their responsibilities to the Master Plan Implementation tasks.

7. DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

7.1 Soil Reclamation Proposal Update

No update at this time.

7.2 COVID-19 Updates

The Town Administrator reviewed the chart with the local COVID-19 numbers and informed the Board the COVID-19 numbers are decreasing.

7.3 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

The Select Board was presented with the Draft Hazard Mitigation Plan at their last meeting on February 8th, 2021. Lisa Davis, Town Planner; Beverly Woods, North Middlesex Council of Governments; and Gabrielle Belfit, from Tighe and Bond presented the draft plan and answered questions from the Board. On a motion made by Mr. Beattie and seconded by Ms. Scarsdale, it was unanimously voted to send the draft Hazard Mitigation Plan to Mass Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) as the next step in the review process.

7.4 Special Town Meeting Discussion

The Town Administrator explained that the Board needs to set the quorum for the Special Town Meeting. The Special Acts of 2020 allow the quorum to be reduced to as little as 10% of the standard quorum (75). Therefore, a quorum as low as eight persons is allowed by vote of the Select Board. The Board has set the quorum at 30 for the two previous Town Meetings. This discussion and potential vote have been properly noticed per the Special Acts of 2020. Discussion followed regarding potential weather issues, lack of radio connection, voting issues, and financial costs that might arise during the outdoor Town Meeting. This temporary reduction during the pandemic will ensure that the wishes of the petitioners and the Town may be acted upon in a timely manner.

On a motion made by Ms. Scarsdale and seconded by Mr. Beattie, it was unanimously voted to reduce the quorum for the Special Town Meeting from 75 to 30.

The Select Board may consider a recommendation on the article at the Special Town Meeting. The article proposed was originally created by the Town but was moved from the table at the November Special Town Meeting.

On a motion made by Ms. Scarsdale and seconded by Mr. Beattie, it was unanimously voted to recommend the article for the Special Town Meeting.

7.5 Committee Charge Update – Invasive Species

At the February 8, 2021 Select Board meeting, a proposal to form a new committee on Invasive species was proposed. The Board asked that a formal committee charge be created for future consideration. A draft charge has been submitted.

On a motion made by Ms. Scarsdale and seconded by Mr. Beattie, it was unanimously voted to approve the Invasive Species Charge with edits and a Committee member term to expire on December 31, 2021.

7.6 Assign a Local Rapid Recovery Planning

The town applied for and received a Local Rapid Recovery Planning grant which is intended to help local businesses recovery from the pandemic. The Town is to establish an advisory group to work with the grant

consultant to include local business people, staff, and a Select Board member. Margaret Scarsdale has asked to be the Select Board representative.

On a motion made by Mr. Beattie and seconded by Mr. Greathead, it was voted to appoint Margaret Scarsdale to represent the Select Board on the Local Rapid Recovery Planning grant advisory team. Ms. Scarsdale abstained.

7.7 Cares Act Extension

The workplace benefits offered in the FFCARES legislation in 2020, expired on December 31, 2020. The Select Board extended some of those benefits to town employees, at local expense, through March 1, 2021. While the pandemic continues, there is progress with vaccinations rising and case counts falling. Should the benefits protection be extended? The Town Administrator explained the Select Board can extend this benefit timeline.

The FFCARES act provided up to 80 hours of paid coverage to an employee to keep them in quarantine or isolation to reduce the spread of the virus. This was afforded to employees due to suspected or known exposure, whether on the job or off. Beyond 80 hours, the employee would use personal time off, if necessary. This is a maximum benefit, not per occurrence and includes any hours used prior to December 31, 2020. It also does not apply for voluntary 'casual' out of state travel where employees are expected to quarantine upon return from certain locations until a negative test is achieved or they have quarantined for 10 days.

On a motion made by Mr. Beattie and seconded by Ms. Scarsdale it was unanimously voted to extend the benefits described above through June 30, 2021.

7.8 Agricultural Advisory Board Discussion

The Agricultural Advisory Board has asked to present to the Select Board on their role in the community and to request a change to their Board structure. Ms. Rosoff presented to the Board and recommended the Board support two proposed articles for the upcoming 2021 Town Meeting. One article would be to adopt MGL Part 1, Title VII, Chapter 40, Section 8L: Municipal Agricultural Commission. Second article would be to amend the Right to Farm Bylaw, removing Section III (B) and Section IV.

Audience Comment

Chuck Walkovich gave the Board an update on the Master Plan Implementation Team progress.

8. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Ms. Scarsdale and seconded by Mr. Beattie, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracie Looney, Executive Assistant

APPROVED:

Bill Greathead, Chairman

Margaret Scarsdale, Clerk

Tony Beattie

Remotely Approved: April 12, 2021