

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES OF MEETING
JANUARY 11, 2021**

In attendance were Acting Chairman Daniel L. Salvucci; Member Dr. Carl F. Kowalski; Member Randolph G. LaMattina; Member Justin R. Evans; and Interim Town Administrator Lisa M. Green. Acting Chairman Salvucci opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Acting Chairman Salvucci read the following into the record:
In accordance with Governor Baker's March 12, 2020, Order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c.30A, §20, this meeting is being held remotely in an on-line conference mode hosted on Zoom.com and members of the public are not able to physically attend. The meeting is being broadcast live on Comcast channel 12 and can be viewed via live stream at WHCA.tv. It will subsequently be broadcast on YouTube.com.

Acting Chairman Salvucci asked everyone in attendance to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. This was followed by a moment of silence dedicated to former Whitman Planning Board Chairman Joseph Foscaldo and the mother of Executive Director of Old Colony Planning Council, Mary Waldron.

At 6:33 p.m. Mr. Evans **MOVED** into **EXECUTIVE SESSION** pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A, §21a (2) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel. **Second** Dr. Kowalski. Roll call vote revealed: Mr. Evans – yes; Dr. Kowalski – yes; Mr. LaMattina – yes; and Acting Chairman Salvucci – yes. **So voted 4-0.** The meeting will reconvene in Open Session.

Acting Chairman Salvucci read the following into the record:
In accordance with Governor Baker's March 12, 2020, Order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c.30A, §20, the Executive session portion of the meeting will be held in an on-line conference mode hosted on Zoom.com and members of the public will not be able to physically attend. No broadcast of Executive Session will be made.

The meeting reconvened at 6:45 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

Vote to Ratify Town Administrator Contract

Dr. Kowalski announced the Board has successfully negotiated a 3 year contract with the new Town Administrator, Lincoln Heineman. The contract is effective February 8, 2021, through June 30, 2024, and the salary is consistent with market value. Dr. Kowalski **MOVED** to approve the contract between the Town of Whitman and Lincoln Heineman for the period February 8, 2021, through June 30, 2024. **Second** Mr. LaMattina. Roll call vote revealed: Mr. Evans – yes; Dr. Kowalski – yes; Mr. LaMattina – yes; and Acting Chairman Salvucci – yes. **So voted 4-0.**

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Update: COVID-19

Chief Grenno announced that numbers are on the rise, with 10 to 20 new cases per day in town. He also expressed his frustration with another town office having to be shut down for the second time in two weeks due to an employee reporting to work sick. He asked the Board to weight its options and consider disciplining employees who go to work when they are not feeling well.

Discuss Updating COVID-19 Travel Policy

Mr. LaMattina stated that he stands by requiring a 10 day quarantine for employees who are returning from vacation after traveling; and suggested town counsel be involved in drafting a policy. Interim Town Administrator Lisa Green agreed to contact town counsel regarding this issue and to present the Board with the updated policy at the January 19th meeting.

Chief Grenno advised the Board that vaccinations for first responders will begin on Wednesday. Eventually, sites will be set up at Harvard Court and Stetson Terrace. He encouraged residents to reach out to their primary care physicians or pharmacies for vaccines in order to avoid the rush. He also reminded everyone that they will still be required to wear face masks after getting the vaccine.

Special Town Meeting Warrant

Public Works Commissioners Chairman Kevin Cleary and DPW Superintendents Bruce Martin and Dennis Smith were present. Mr. LaMattina **MOVED** to pass over this subject. **Second** Dr. Kowalski for discussion. Mr. LaMattina stated that he is opposed to holding a special Town Meeting due to safety concerns. Massachusetts has seen 7,000+ cases of COVID-19 per day, Whitman's numbers are skyrocketing and he feels this is an unnecessary risk. In addition, at a meeting held recently the Board of Health recommended against it.

Acting Chairman Salvucci stated that he was also in attendance at that meeting and he feels the Board of Health was hesitant, noting there was no vote by the Board of Health. He also watched the meeting of the Buildings, Facilities and Capital Expenditures Committee where one member came up with the idea of holding the special Town Meeting outside. He also would like to hear from the DPW as to whether the article regarding replacement of the sewer main could be postponed until the annual Town Meeting. If they feel this can wait until May, then he will not have an issue with it; however, his fear is there will be a major break in the main before then.

Mr. LaMattina stated that he is more concerned with holding a meeting that could cause many people to get sick. He also does not feel that if the main were to break the DEP would hold the town responsible.

Mr. Cleary agreed that the number of COVID cases in town has increased; and stated that he has no issue with postponing this until May. He then suggested being proactive and reaching out to Brockton with notification of this decision. The Public Works Commissioners are meeting tomorrow evening and he will report the decision of the Board of Selectmen at that time.

Dr. Kowalski stated he appreciates Mr. Cleary's common sense attitude; noting it's a big risk if we bring a lot of people together. He then suggested possibly holding a special Town Meeting in April and stressed the importance of following the lead of our health department.

Mr. Evans advised the Board that he spoke with the health inspector earlier today and she strongly suggested postponing the special Town Meeting.

Dr. Kowalski **MOVED** to amend the motion made by Mr. LaMattina and to pass over discussion of the January 27, 2021 special Town Meeting warrant and to postpone said meeting indefinitely.

Second Mr. LaMattina. Roll call vote revealed: Mr. Evans – yes; Dr. Kowalski – yes; Mr. LaMattina – yes; and Acting Chairman Salvucci – yes. **So voted 4-0.**

At 7:13 p.m. Dr. Kowalski **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting. **Second** Mr. LaMattina. Roll call vote revealed: Mr. Evans – yes; Dr. Kowalski – yes; Mr. LaMattina – yes; and Acting Chairman Salvucci – yes. **So voted 4-0.**

Brian J. Bezanson, Clerk