

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES OF MEETING
MAY 18, 2021**

In attendance were Chairman Carl F. Kowalski; Vice Chairman Daniel L. Salvucci; Clerk Brian J. Bezanson; Member Randolph G. LaMattina; Member Justin R. Evans; and Town Administrator Lincoln D. Heineman. Chairman Kowalski opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Chairman Kowalski 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.

Chairman Kowalski asked everyone in attendance to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. This was followed by a moment of silence.

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve bill and payroll warrants. **Second** Mr. Bezanson. Roll call vote revealed: Mr. Bezanson – yes; Mr. Evans – yes; Mr. LaMattina – yes; Mr. Salvucci – yes; and Chairman Kowalski – yes. **So voted 5-0.**

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to accept correspondence in the Read File. **Second** Mr. Bezanson. Roll call vote revealed: Mr. Bezanson – yes; Mr. Evans – yes; Mr. LaMattina – yes; Mr. Salvucci – yes; and Chairman Kowalski – yes. **So voted 5-0.**

SCHEDULED EVENTS

Dangerous Dog Hearing

Chairman Kowalski announced a public hearing scheduled at 7:30 p.m. tonight will be postponed until June 8, 2021.

NEW BUSINESS

Consideration of Recommendation for Fire Chief Appointment

Mr. Heineman advised the Board that following the Civil Service process, Lieutenant Tim Clancy is at the top of the list of candidates for the position of Fire Chief. After discussing Lieutenants Clancy's experience with the department, Mr. Heineman recommended the Board appoint Lieutenant Clancy as Fire Chief, effective upon the retirement of Chief Grenno. Chief Grenno, who was present for this portion of the meeting, agreed. Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to accept the recommendation of Town Administrator Lincoln Heineman and Fire Chief Timothy Grenno to appoint Timothy Clancy to the position of Fire Chief effective July 9, 2021, at 5:01 p.m., subject to successful negotiation of an employment agreement. **Second** Mr. Bezanson. Chief Grenno provided further detail with respect to Lieutenant Clancy's education, training and experience with the department, noting the important role Lieutenant Clancy played in building the EMS system into what it is today; and highly recommended the Board vote to appoint.

Chairman Kowalski called for a vote in connection with the motion on the floor. Roll call vote revealed: Mr. Bezanson – yes; Mr. Evans – yes; Mr. LaMattina – yes; Mr. Salvucci – yes; and Chairman Kowalski – yes. **So voted 5-0.**

Chairman Kowalski congratulated Lieutenant Clancy.

Lieutenant Clancy thanked the Board and also thanked Chief Grenno and Mr. Heineman for their recommendation, noting his goal is to prepare the department for the future.

Chairman Kowalski suggested Mr. Heineman set aside time for a formal swearing-in ceremony for Lieutenant Clancy at a future meeting.

Each member of the Board congratulated Lieutenant Clancy on his promotion and thanked Chief Grenno for his service.

Finance Committee Chairman

Finance Committee Chairman Rick Anderson thanked the Board for allowing him to attend this evening in order to review the Finance Committee's recommendations in connection with the FY22 budget and articles being presented at the Annual Town Meeting. He went on to say the committee has concerns with an article on the warrant and a less than \$10,000 expense in the FY22 budget.

Chairman Kowalski asked Mr. Anderson if the Finance Committee is in agreement with all expenses in the budget with the exception of mandated busing. Mr. Anderson confirmed this, stating the Finance Committee voted to level fund mandated busing and he notified Superintendent Szymaniak of the vote earlier today.

Mr. Evans asked if it was the goal of the Finance Committee to get the School Committee and the superintendent to revisit this issue. Mr. Anderson stated that this recommendation is about the financial implications associated with mandated busing, noting this is not sustainable.

Mr. LaMattina noted that he attended the meeting where mandated busing was discussed and he believes people realize this issue requires more attention. He is unsure if this is just an arbitrary cut or more of a statement of the Finance Committee. He went on to say that if the Board agrees to reduce the funding for mandated busing the cost will still need to be paid, which will result in funds being taken from the curriculum of other education.

Mr. Anderson advised the Board the busing contract is due to be negotiated this year and he feels the time to make the reduction is now. The District spoke about identifying ways to cut down on the bus routes but there has been no concerted effort to follow up on that.

Chairman Kowalski asked if any members of the Board are in favor of amending the funds for mandated busing. Mr. Salvucci stated that Town Meeting will make that decision since the Finance Committee recommendation is what is presented. Chairman Kowalski disagreed with Mr. Salvucci's statement; however, Mr. Anderson agreed with Mr. Salvucci, and stated that in the absence of a Finance Committee, the Board of Selectmen would present the budget to Town Meeting. He also stated that he feels Mr. Heineman has been pushing to have a budget presented by the Board of Selectmen when the recommendations of the Finance Committee have always been brought before the voters. Mr. Evans agreed with Mr. Anderson's description of the process and he would like to see this issue brought before Town Meeting in order to hear what the voters think and to hear an explanation from the District. Chairman Kowalski stated that he always assumed the warrant belongs to the Selectmen because it's signed by them, not the Finance Committee.

Mr. Anderson commented that he feels this is moving in a direction that removes the Finance Committee from the process. He then advised the Board of the Finance Committee's concerns

with Article 40 and the proposed location of a cell tower and the environmental aspects that may not have been presented to the Board of Selectmen. The Finance Committee would like to see the Board of Selectmen research locations without committing Town Meeting to this one particular parcel.

Mr. LaMattina stated he does not feel there will be any financial implications and in addition, the proposal must be presented to both the Planning Board and Board of Appeals for approval as well.

Mr. Heineman outlined the process required for the proposal.

Chairman Kowalski asked again if anyone would like to amend the amount for mandated busing. All members of the Board agreed to move forward with the cost originally approved by the Board.

Mr. Anderson agreed to advise the Finance Committee of the Board's decision and noted there is no recommendation needed from the Finance Committee for Article 40.

Chairman Kowalski advised Mr. Anderson that Town Meeting may take place at Town Hall and if so, the warrant will be amended to reflect the correct location.

At 7:56 p.m. Mr. Anderson thanked the Board and departed from the meeting.

Proclamation: Robert Hayes, WHRSD

Chairman Kowalski announced a proclamation from the Board of Selectmen was presented to Bob Hayes at a recent School Committee meeting for his many years of service.

Constable Reappointment: William Scharnick

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve the request of William Scharnick to be reappointed to the position of Constable for a three-year term, through June 30, 2024. **Second** Mr. Bezanson. Roll call vote revealed: Mr. Bezanson – yes; Mr. Evans – yes; Mr. LaMattina – yes; Mr. Salvucci – yes; and Chairman Kowalski – yes. **So voted 5-0.**

June Meeting Schedule

The Board set their June meeting schedule for Tuesday, June 8, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. and Tuesday, June 22, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

Proclamations: Barbara White and Mary Kelly

Chairman Kowalski announced proclamations were presented to Board of Health members Barbara White and Mary Kelly for their years of service on the Board.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Update: COVID-19

Mr. Heineman discussed a series of Orders issued recently by Governor Baker, including lifting the use of face coverings and other restrictions, effective May 29, 2021, as well as the State of Emergency scheduled to end on June 15, 2021. He also noted temporary outdoor dining will end. Licensees can petition the A.B.C.C. if they wish to continue with outdoor dining. There is also an option for the Board of Selectmen to adopt a remote meeting policy. Discussion by the Board also took place regarding reopening town buildings. Mr. Bezanson **MOVED** to reopen all town buildings on June 1, 2021, barring any new information. **Second** Mr. Salvucci. Roll call

vote revealed: Mr. Bezanson – yes; Mr. Evans – yes; Mr. LaMattina – yes; Mr. Salvucci – yes; and Chairman Kowalski – yes. **So voted 5-0.**

Chairman Kowalski asked for a motion to amend the Annual Town Meeting Warrant to reflect the correct location and amended time of the meeting. Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to amend the June 2, 2021, Annual Town Meeting warrant to reflect a venue of Town Hall Auditorium and a start time of 7:30 p.m. **Second** Mr. Bezanson. Roll call vote revealed: Mr. Bezanson – yes; Mr. Evans – yes; Mr. LaMattina – yes; Mr. Salvucci – yes; and Chairman Kowalski – yes. **So voted 5-0.**

356 South Avenue and 66 Pond Street

Mr. Heineman advised the Board that 356 South Avenue and 66 Pond Street are industrial zoned and are currently on the market. A potential buyer has reached out to Mr. Heineman and Bob Curran regarding the properties. Mr. Heineman noted anything built will have to be industrial unless zoning relief is received.

Whitman Middle School Building Project

Mr. Heineman advised the Board that Owner's Project Manager proposals for the school building project are scheduled to go out in July.

At 8:29 p.m. Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** into **EXECUTIVE SESSION** pursuant to M.G.L., c.30A, §21a (2) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel; and (3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares.

Second Mr. Bezanson. Roll call vote revealed: Mr. Bezanson – yes; Mr. Evans – yes; Mr. LaMattina – yes; Mr. Salvucci – yes; and Chairman Kowalski – yes. **So voted 5-0.** Chairman Kowalski declared that having this meeting in Open Session will have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body. The meeting will reconvene in Open Session for the purpose of adjourning the meeting.

Chairman Kowalski 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.

At 8:53 p.m. Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting. **Second** Mr. Bezanson. Roll call vote revealed: Mr. Bezanson – yes; Mr. Evans – yes; Mr. LaMattina – yes; Mr. Salvucci – yes; and Chairman Kowalski – yes. **So voted 5-0.**