

Select Board Minutes
Tuesday, June 16, 2020
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:

Chair Alice von Loesecke, Rich Maiore, Kara Minar, Stu Sklar, Lucy Wallace

Town Staff participants:

Town Administrator Tim Bragan, Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro, Executive Assistant Julie Doucet, DPW Director Tim Kilhart

Additional participants:

Harvard General Store owner Scott Hayward, School Committee member SusanMary Reddinger, Planning Board Chair Erin McBee

Ayer Rd Construction project

DPW Director Tim Kilhart came with feedback he received from the Department of Transportation (DOT) on why they are not recommending a roundabout for traffic calming as part of this project. In their opinion the area does not have enough volume therefore the high cost to install a roundabout is not justified. DOT does support installation of a crosswalk with crossing lights. Select Board members Kara Minar and Stu Sklar were very disappointed and surprised considering when they began this endeavor DOT was very supportive of the roundabout. Von Loesecke expects narrower driving lanes will also help to slow traffic. Kilhart understands their frustration but reminded the members this project would be impossible to complete without state funding through the TIP program and it is a very competitive process. He reported the 10% design meeting is being held on Monday, June 22nd with TEC Engineering giving a presentation.

Annual Appointments

Executive Assistant Julie Doucet noted two updated to the master reappointment list of Megan Glew continuing on the Bare Hill Pond Watershed Committee and Mario Cardenas on the Elm Commission.

New appointments

By a roll call vote, Wallace – aye, Minar – aye, Maiore – aye, Sklar – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to appoint David Henderson to the Cable Committee.

Council on Aging

By a roll call vote, Wallace – aye, Minar – aye, Maiore – aye, Sklar – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to appoint Kim Schwarz to the Council on Aging.

By a roll call vote, Wallace – aye, Minar – aye, Maiore – aye, Sklar – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to appoint Jane Biering, Gwendolyn Leonard and Rebecca Kelley as associate to the Planning Board.

The Board of Health has a current member who wishes to continue and a new volunteer interested in serving on the board. The Select Board decided to invite them both to a meeting when they can speak with both of them prior to making any decisions. The same was true for the Conservation Commission with three current members interested in continuing and three new volunteers stepping forward. The Select Board decided to invite them to a meeting when they can speak with all those interested in serving prior to making any decisions. They decided on June 30th prior to their special meeting at 7pm. By a roll call vote, Wallace – aye, Minar – aye, Maiore – aye, Sklar – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to appoint all those seeking reappointment but the Board of Health and the Conservation Commission.

Public Communication

Erin McBee, Planning Board Chair, offered to speak with Sklar and Minar about what she learned through the process with DOT. She too was confused at first about the removal of the roundabout from the plan but has a better understanding of why.

Minutes

By a roll call vote, Wallace – aye, Minar – aye, Maiore – aye, Sklar – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve minutes of 5/19 and 6/2, as presented.

Special Meeting Announcement

The Select Board will hold a special meeting on June 30th with Apple Guy Flowers LLC, an adult marijuana cultivation establishment, which is seeking approval to operate in Harvard. They will introduce their team and describe their plans.

Update from the Budget Working Group subcommittee

Von Loesecke outlined actions if the override does not pass. She explained the working group agreed to cover the \$320,000 by keeping a police officer position vacant, skipping this year's merit increases for town employees, reducing the tree warden's budget, and not filling three vacant teaching positions (two at HES and one at Bromfield). Facing at least an \$820,000 deficit, the group then agreed that the \$320,000 cuts originally intended to occur only if the override failed would be the first cuts to be made. To address the remaining \$500,000, the group proposed to use \$200,000 from the town's Stabilization Fund, increase employee and retiree health insurance contributions from the current 20 or 25% to 30% (at least \$125,000 in savings), reduce the contribution to the Town's OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefits) fund by \$75,000 for one year, and use \$100,000 from the the school's Devens fund for one year. In order to revise health insurance contributions with the school teachers reopening of their contract is required. Wallace and Minar asked about that process. School Committee member Susan Mary Reddinger admitted reopening the contract is a difficult to reopen and is not an expeditious process. Maiore asked for assurance if the contract is not opened the school department will be required to find those equivalent savings elsewhere. Minar asked about the Police & DPW contracts. Bragan expects those contract changes to be settled within the next 30 days. He reported the state budget is set for release in July. Minar and Sklar expressed their interest in utilizing additional OPEB funds however von Loesecke said they must be cautious when utilizing one time funds. Von Loesecke and Reddinger are working on a *Consider This* piece for publishing in the Harvard Press prior to the ATM.

Harvard General Store - outdoor dining request

Owner Scott Hayward provided the board with a narrative and design plan for offering outdoor dining. (Appendix A). He will offer breakfast, lunch and dinner on the patio. His current on-premise license includes the outdoor area next to the store. He is requesting an expansion of this area so he can accommodate the necessary space to comply with Covid guidelines. Hayward asked if he would be able to offer all alcohol instead of only beer and wine. He would like to have the area leveled out if possible utilizing funds from the Little Women movie production. Bragan explained the ABCC is allowing changes to license premises however he would still be limited to only beer and wine as the license was initially issued. Next, they discussed hours of operation.

By a roll call vote, Wallace – aye, Minar – aye, Maiore – aye, Sklar – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to provide the Harvard General store operating hours outside during the pandemic from 8:00am to 11:00pm daily per diagram and narrative submitted with wine and beer allowed to be served from 10:00am to 10:00pm.

By a roll call vote, Maiore – aye, Sklar – aye, Wallace – aye, Minar – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to allow the general store to direct grading of area next to the general store per diagram and cover with stone dust.

Annual Town Meeting (ATM)

Bragan reported all preparations are underway. He shared a document outlining Covid precautions that will be taken to ensure the ATM is safe for all who attend. He expects the budget article to be longer than usual.

The board decided which member will speak to which articles:

1 & 2 AV, 4-8 SS, 10 LW, 14, 15, 16 KM, 18 SS, 20 & 21 RM

The board decided to allow the Moderator to resolve when the Citizen of Note award will be given.

Review of the Warrant

By a roll call vote, Maiore – aye, Sklar – aye, Wallace – aye, Minar – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously in favor of page one articles.

By a roll call vote, Maiore – aye, Sklar – aye, Wallace – aye, Minar – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously

By a roll call vote, Maiore – aye, Sklar – aye, Wallace – aye, Minar – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously in support of articles 5,6,7,8.

By a roll call vote, Maiore – aye, Sklar – aye, Wallace – aye, Minar – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to support article 9 (capital items).

By a roll call vote, Maiore – aye, Sklar – aye, Wallace – aye, Minar – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to continue the meeting after 10:00pm.

By a roll call vote, Wallace – aye, Sklar – aye, , Minar – aye, Maiore – nay, von Loesecke – nay, the board voted by majority to support article 10 for replacement of the old library roof.

By a roll call vote, Maiore – aye, Sklar – aye, Wallace – aye, Minar – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to support the Hildreth House expansion.

By a roll call vote, Minar – aye, Sklar – aye, Wallace – aye, Maiore – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to support replacement of the middle school ramp.

Covid

Bragan reported there is one new case in town. He said playing field safety signs have been installed.

Summer Schedule

The board will hold their Strategic Planning Session on July 9th. Regular meetings will be held on July 7, 21st and August 11th.

1/12th Budget

By a roll call vote, Minar – aye, Sklar – aye, Wallace – aye, Maiore – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve a 1/ 12th budget for FY2021 for a minimum of \$3,000,000 with \$1,373,934 projected education costs.

There was no executive session.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40pm.

Documents referenced:

Ayer Rd design issues with roundabout – dated 6.16.2020

Annual appointment lists – FY21

Volunteer forms: Henderson – dated June 2020, Schwar dated 3.16.2020, Biering dated 3.11.2020, Leonard dated 5.22.2020, Kelley dated 5.26.2020

