



Select Board Minutes
Tuesday, May 17, 2022
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:

Stu Sklar, Erin McBee, Alice von Loesecke
Rich Maiore and Kara Minar were absent.

Town Department attendees:

Town Administrator Tim Bragan, Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro, Executive Assistant Julie Doucet

Additional participants:

Harvard General Store owner Scott Hayward, Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair Kerri Green,

Liquor License Hearing for the Harvard General Store

Request is for an alteration of their on-premise beer/wine license

Stu Sklar opened the hearing explaining the purpose of this hearing is to consider and alteration of the on-premise license held by the Harvard General Store. Sklar invited store owner/manager Scott Hayward to speak about his request. Hayward explained he is interested in extending the outdoor seating area and create an additional storage space on the first floor. During the Covid pandemic the patio area was expanded for social distancing this will make the expanded area a permanent part of the licensed premise.

There was no public comment

Sklar closed the public portion of the hearing.

His fellow board members did not have any additional questions therefor the hearing was closed.

By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, von Loesecke – aye, Sklar – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve the application for an alteration of license premise for the General Store.

Agricultural Advisory Commission proposal for new Right to Farm signs

Commission Chair Kerri Green explained the commission is interested in utilizing grant funds awarded to the town through the Climate Action Plan for new signs. Green said the commission plans to integrate the logo used on the Harvard Grown brochures. She shared pictures of signs from the Town of Groton that inspired the preferred design. They are asking to place signs at town line entry points: 110 Bolton/Harvard, Bolton Rd, Brown Rd, Stow Rd, Stow Rd/Codman, 111 Boxborough, Old Littleton, Littleton, 110 Ayer/Harvard and 6 Interior directional signs possibly at Still River by Prospect, Bolton Rd by East Bare, Oak Hill & Woodchuck, Ayer Rd by Old Shirley, Ayer Rd between Route 2 and Ayer line. Green explained directional signs would be purchased by the farms. She confirmed sign locations will be coordinated with the public safety and public works departments. The board members were pleased with the design and the overall concept. By a roll call vote, McBee -aye, von Loesecke – aye, Sklar – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve the proposal with an additional sign at Finn Road.

Minutes

By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, von Loesecke – aye, Sklar – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve minutes of 4/12 & 4/26, as presented.

Public Communication

Justin Brown, Planning Board Chair, spoke about the Ayer Rd TIP project. He was puzzled about why discussions resurfaced after it was determined this project does not meet the requirements to include a roundabout. He said TEC engineering has done great work with traffic calming mitigation strategies. Brown remains caution about substantial changes at this point in the process that may put the project at risk.

Stu Sklar explained since discussions began six years ago on traffic calming measures for Ayer Road a roundabout was part of the approach. He understands at this time why it is not necessary however either way this project will require a town meeting vote and public support is essential.

Brown agreed public support is important therefore focus on the roundabout which only addresses as small portion of the roadway would hopefully not deter overall support for the project.

Wade Holtzman, Bolton Rd, reported the public safety department continues to stop vehicles and he is still offering his property as a good location for one of the mobile speed signs.

Staff Report/Updates (Attachment A)

Discuss replacing tree on the common

Town Administrator Tim Bragan reported unfortunately the tree planted to replace the former tree used for the common holiday tree lighting is dying. He said the Tree Warden is requesting permission to replace the tree. By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, von Loesecke – aye, Sklar – aye, the board voted unanimously to authorize the Tree Warden to work with the Hazel family and Acorn & Tree Landscaping to remove the diseased tree and replace with a new one on the common.

Transfer Station Fee

Based on the recommendation from the DPW Director the board acted on increasing the fee for disposal of mattresses. By a roll call vote, Sklar – aye, McBee – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to increase the price of mattresses from \$10 to \$25 per piece effective July 1, 2022.

Ginny Thurston Scholarship

Stu Sklar and Executive Assistant Julie Doucet reported two letters of interest were received and vetted. Sklar announced one very deserving Bromfield graduate will receive the scholarship this year.

Eagle Scouts/Girl Scout Gold Awards with proclamations

The board recognized the accomplishments of several local Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts with proclamations acknowledging their achievement.

Eagle Scouts

Alex Myles
John Zobbi
Tim Zobbi
Sawyer Madison
Scott Patuto

Gold Award

Arianna Thornton
Rebecca Miller
Robin Miller

Resale request for 15 Littleton Road Unit 1A (Local Initiation Program Home)

By a roll call vote, von Loesecke – aye, McBee – aye, Sklar – aye, the board voted unanimously to not exercise right of first refusal for 15 Littleton Road Unit 1A.

Resignation from the Park & Recreation Commission

The board recognized the resignation of Michelle Lauria and thanked her for her service.

Update on Ayer Road TIP project

Stu Sklar said basically DOT and TEC are able to support changes to the design such as narrowing lanes and shoulders but inclusion of a roundabout is unlikely. He reported the recent traffic study had similar numbers to 2019 therefore there is not a hard argument for a roundabout. He understands the project must not be put in jeopardy and more importantly town support for the project is imperative to helping fund any property takings or final engineering plans. Erin McBee agrees town support is important and more importantly for residents to understand if we do not receive this grant funding for repaving of the roadway the cost will fall solely on the town to fund. Alice von Loesecke advised the next board to work within the parameters set and appreciate any modifications that can be made but we must preserve our place in the TIP program. She is confident most residents will understand the logic and vote favorably. Sklar will be exiting the Select Board after the town election but offered to come back to discuss this project.

Fire Dept Items

Surplus Fire Truck

By a roll call vote, von Loesecke – aye, McBee – aye, Sklar – aye, the board voted unanimously to surplus pumper engine 2 in Still River.

Out of state travel request

By a roll call vote, von Loesecke – aye, McBee – aye, Sklar – aye, the board voted unanimously approve out of state travel (pre-construction meeting) for the Fire Chief and four crew members.

Rural and Small-Town Grant Program

Assistant Town Administrator Maire Sobalvarro explained this grant program can be used for infrastructure, engineering and schematic designs. She has spoken with the DPW Director who will work on an application for \$400,000 to prepare schematic/engineering designs for connection to the water system in Devens. She noted the Water Commissioners had recommended further investigation on this option.

One Day Entertainment Licenses for Carlson Orchards

By a roll call vote, Sklar – aye, McBee – aye, von Loesecke – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve the dates listed for 30 one day entertainment licenses as presented tonight.

(April 16 & 30 / May 7,8,14,21,26 / June 3,4,11,18,25 / July 2,9,16,23 / August 5,6,7,12,13,14,20,27

Sept 10,17,24 / Oct 8,15,16)

Farewell comments

Alice von Loesecke expressed how wonderful and what a great opportunity it has been serving on the Select Board. She was honored to work with the town departments and help behind the scenes. She has enjoyed working with her fellow board members admitting it was an interesting experience at times! Von Loesecke served six years on the Select Board and felt the quality of the board was always fantastic and was impressed with the amount of cooperation. She feels much has been accomplished and emphasized how important it is to work together. She will certainly be visiting. She noted the transition from the Finance Committee to the Select Board was a good one.

Stu Sklar began by thanking everyone in the Town Administrators office for helping him achieve the goals he had set and for keeping everything moving along. He thanked his family as well admitting serving on the Select Board took much of his time and sometimes his sanity! He said it has been a pleasure to serve as an elected official in town. He does plan to be around for further discussions related to the Ayer Road project. He also continues his interest in all things Devens moving forward and is disappointed at the recent approach from MassDevelopment.

Erin McBee thanked both Alice and Stu for their dedication and energy serving on the Select Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

Documents referenced:

General Store hearing – application dated 5.3.2022

Ag Commission request – pictures/locations date 5.17.2022

Eagle Scout proclamation requests – May 2022

Gold Award letter – dated April 2022

Resale paperwork for LIP property – dated May 2022

Lauria resignation letter – dated 5.12.2022

Ayer Rd project – DOT letter dated 5.10.2022 & email correspondence from MRPC dated 5.9.2022

Carlson Orchards Entertainment License updated request letter – dated 5.2.2022

Staff Report May 17, 2022

1. As of July 1, Notary services will again be offered at the Town Hall and the Police Station. This was halted due to change in insurance regulations and Ms. Sobalvarro was able to work this into our insurance portfolio at minimal cost.
2. The non-mandatory walk through for the COA @ 16 Lancaster County will be held tomorrow morning; bid packages have been pulled by the attached prospective bidders.
3. The Town Hall lift is out of order and until the parts come in there are no public meetings by boards or committees in Town Hall.
4. House Bill 4739, our speed limit regulation special legislation, is to have a hearing soon at the state House and Representative Sena's office said they would notify us when it would be (stay tuned).
5. Mass DOT has received approval for statewide funding for the Winter Recovery Assistance Program (WRAP). This will provide Harvard approximately \$213,265. And is based on 63.95 miles of roadway in town. Attached is the information regarding the program.
6. State Updates: (See SHN articles attached)
 - a. The State financial coffers grew again in April due to Casino Revenues. While less than the month before April was still one of the best months on record according to the SHNS on May 16, 2022.
 - b. State Tax revenue also grew in April and was \$3 Billion higher than last April's revenue numbers. (See attached article from SHNS)
 - c. The Senate announced they would begin debate on their FY 2023 budget bill on May 24th (see attached). The Senate had planned and did include boosts to local aid in their budget proposal. This will increase Harvard's UGGA by about \$43,000. if passed See SHNS and MMA articles related to these items
 - d. One of the issues facing cities and towns is no different that what the public is facing, rising fuel prices. This is hitting school transportation budget especially hard this year as well as next year (See attached).
7. With the departure of the Economic Development Director and after speaking with SB Members and Planning Members we have posted the Town planner Position on the MMA website, with consideration given to resumes before June 1. This position is also posted on the MA Chapter of the APA.

8. Notice and Reminders:

- a. A copy of the Town of Harvard Memorial Day Ceremonies for 2022 is attached. As expected, the ceremonies take place on Monday, May 30, 2022 and the parade starts at 10:00 AM (see attached)
- b. SB Appointments will happen on June 21, 2022 and we ask that you review the list you received and let us know if there are any issues you have with any of the pending appointments. The HR Director will be conducting exit interviews, for those individuals that are getting off boards and committees, to collect data and comments of what they enjoyed and what they disliked.
- c. This is the last SB meeting for Mr. Sklar and Ms. Von Loesecke and we wanted to take a minute and thank them for their many years of service to the Town and we wish them well in their retirement from municipal government work.