Selectmen Minutes

Selectmen’s Meeting
91 Sohier Street
Willcutt Commons, Chart Room
Cohasset, MA

Selectmen Present: Kevin McCarthy, Chairman
Paul Schubert
Diane Kennedy
Keri Thompson
Jack Creighton

Others Present: Christopher Senior, Town Manager

Chairman McCarthy called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Pledge - Recited.

Public Comment - Fred Zotos 28 Old Coach Road spoke to the Town Manager and Chairman McCarthy at the Memorial Day events about the property at the corner of Jerusalem Road and Hull Street. He and others in the neighborhood are interested in a park for the children. Chairman McCarthy stated the Town has been discussing this property to use as affordable housing. Mr. Senior added that the Affordable Housing Trust has been in talks with Habitat for Humanity. Chairman McCarthy suggested Mr. Zotos reach out to the town manager and set up a time to discuss this.

License/Permits/Appointments - Approval of Date for Road Race by the Sea - Linda Fetcher 15 West Gate Lane stated this is the 44th running of the race. It is a 10K race along with a 10K walk. The route is the same and all net proceeds are donated to charity. Selectman Kennedy advised the Board she will not be voting since she is a member of Rotary. Motion by Selectman Creighton to approve the date of April 5, 2020 for the Rotary Road Race by the Sea, seconded by Selectman Thompson and the vote was unanimous (4-0). Selectman Kennedy abstained from the vote.

Board/Committee Appointments

Affordable Housing Trust - Applicant David Fifer 207 S. Main Street gave an overview of his experience. Motion by Selectman Thompson to appoint David Fifer to the Affordable Housing Trust, seconded by Selectman Kennedy and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

Master Plan Implementation Committee - Harbor Committee Rep. - Motion by Selectman Kennedy to appoint Tim Davis to the Master Plan Implementation Committee as the Harbor Committee Representative, seconded by Selectman Schubert and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

Approve - Local Action Unit document for Affordable Units at 390 Chief Justice Cushing Highway - Member of the Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) Steve Gaumer 30 Diab Lane advised the Board they are asking the Board to sign an application for the Local Action Units (LAU) that will be constructed on the second floor of 390 CJC Highway. The current landowner received a Special Permit from the Zoning Board for a residential use in a commercial district. There will be 20 units built, 5 will be affordable, but all 20 units will count toward the Town’s Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). Special Counsel for the AHT Cindy Amara added that the landowner is using MCO Housing Services to prepare and submit the application to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The application is...
complete and has been reviewed by Counsel for the Cohasset Affordable Housing Trust. Once the Board of Selectmen sign the document the MCO will submit to DHCD. The Board had a brief discussion. Selectman Schubert asked if all the units are equivalent. Attorney Amara stated the units themselves are not part of this discussion. Selectman Creighton asked if this document has been reviewed by Town Counsel and who had the authority to hire special counsel. Mr. Gaumer responded that the AHT has the authority hire special counsel and Attorney Amara has done an excellent job. Chairman McCarthy reiterated the fact that they have 20 units here that can go to the towns affordable housing count, which is a great accomplishment. This is one of the Selectmen’s goals.

**Motion by Selectman Schubert to direct the Chairman to sign the document stating the Town of Cohasset has approved, by special permit, the building of a 60,000 sq. ft. two-story mixed-use building to include both retail and residential units to be constructed within an existing shopping center. Twenty apartments will be built with 25% or 5 units being affordable to applicants earning up to 80% of median, seconded by Selectman Kennedy and the vote was unanimous (5-0).**

The Advisory Committee called their meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

**Motion by Selectman Schubert to move the PEB Policy discussion and vote after the FY20 Midyear Budget Update, seconded by Selectman Kennedy and the vote was unanimous (5-0).**

**FY20 Midyear Budget Update**- Director of Finance Don Piatt reviewed the budget to date with the Board. He reviewed expenditures and revenues. All trends look good so far this year. He has no concerns at this point. He reviewed Sewer and Water, which are both on target. Chairman McCarthy asked what the status is of the membranes at the Sewer Plant. Mr. Senior stated the order has been placed and it is on target to be replaced in spring. Side one is being replaced in March and side two is being replaced in April. The plant is running well and is being monitored closely. The Board had a brief discussion.

**PEB Policies-Discussion/Vote**- Member Katie Dugan was present. They met with Advisory Committee on 1/8/2020 and had a very good discussion. They deliberated and voted unanimously to approve both policies. Tonight, they are asking for the Selectmen’s approval. **Motion by Selectman Kennedy to approve the PEB Benefits Liability Trust Policy and Cash and Investment Policy as presented, seconded by Selectman Schubert and the vote was unanimous (5-0).**

**FY21 Budget Presentation-Joint Meeting with Advisory Committee**- Mr. Senior reviewed the foundations of how the budget is built, the starting points and major priorities. He advised the Board that new growth is down. He reviewed transfers to stabilization funds. He discussed the breakdown of shared expenses for the town/school including IT, South Shore Vo Tech and Health Insurance. The change in the proposed budget is 3%. This is the first look at the budget. He and Don Piatt have been working and meeting with departments over the last year. The Board and Advisory Committee had a brief discussion.

**Fundamental Speed Limit-Discussion/Vote**- Chief Quigley advised the Board the last time he came before them and discussed the Fundamental Speed Limit was on 1/22/19. The Board asked him to get feedback from Scituate and their speed reduction measures. Scituate has reported since implementing the Fundamental Speed Limit to 25 mph they have experienced a reduction in traffic complaints and speeding as a result of the town wide speed limit. Chief Quigley is recommending Cohasset follow suit
and reduce the speed limit to 25 mph. He believes this will bolster safety and reduce the number of speed signs throughout the town. The Board had a brief discussion about alternative solutions such as speed bumps, trees, islands and other traffic controlling techniques. Chief Quigley discussed engineering, education and enforcement as well. Board members discussed their experience with speed and experiments they did. After further discussion, the Board asked Chief Quigley to come up with a policy and have a bigger public discussion before voting. Chief Quigley agreed and will discuss further with the Town Manager as well. Tom Baker 18 Black Rock Road stated he would be happy to be on a safety committee if they need volunteers. Fred Zotos 28 Old Coach Road advised the Board he had sent in a letter regarding this topic. He has a lot of background in this area. Chairman McCarthy suggested he reach out and discuss with the Town Manager. He asked that Chief Quigley come back to the Board in a few weeks.

Sign Warrant for Presidential Primary—Motion by Selectman Thompson to sign the Presidential Primary Warrant as presented, seconded by Selectman Creighton and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

Town Manager Update—Mr. Senior advised the Board the Prudent Investor Act was approved and will be going into effect. He thanked everyone that work on making it happen. The Annual MMA Trade Show was this past weekend and it was a great event. He thanked everyone that attended. He has materials and would be happy to share if anyone is interested. The Town received an award from MIIA which he will present at the 2/11/2020 meeting. He is waiting to hear back from the South Shore Vo Tech on possible dates for the Board to tour. Also, waiting on dates from National Grid for a tour. Mr. Senior stated he has the town field engineer working on mapping out the town boundaries. Mr. Senior would like to set up some time over the week to take a photo of the 3 new electric vehicles with staff.

Selectmen Comments—Selectman Kennedy stated she attended the MMA conference this past weekend which was great. The Governor gave a great speech and appreciates all the work at the local level. His #1 priority is affordable housing. The Town has earned credits by training through MIIA. Selectman Schubert went to the CPC meeting on Monday and they went through the potential projects for ATM. He received an email from residents about parking at Blackrock Beach area. There is a parking problem in that area that needs to be discussed. Mr. Senior stated the 250th Committee will be coming back to the Board with an update proposal for Wadleigh Park. Selectman Thompson stated there was great conversations here tonight about affordable housing and speed limits. She reminded everyone that voter registration deadline is 2/12/2020. Selectman Creighton stated he has great concern with the legalities of how town counsel is being obtained. In the Town Manager Act it states that the Board of Selectmen appoint counsel and special counsel. He stated he doesn’t understand how the town has retained several special counsels without the Selectmen’s knowledge or approval. Mr. Senior responded that what Selectman Creighton just stated is not true. The Board approved special counsel contracts. This happened before Selectman Creighton joined the Board. Town Counsel Deutsch Williams broke up and they did not have labor counsel or other special counsels. Selectman Creighton requested a list of special counsel and contracts. Mr. Senior advised the Board he would like to discuss in the spring putting out an RFP for town counsel. Chairman McCarthy reminded the Board that State Representative Meschino and Senator O’Connor will be on the agenda on 2/11/2020. He asked that any questions the Board may have be sent to Tracey Connors so that they can come prepared.
Minutes-Motion by Selectman Kennedy to approve the minutes of 12/3/19, 12/17/19, 1/7/2020 and 1/14/2020, seconded by Selectman Schubert and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

Motion by Selectman Thompson to adjourn, seconded by Selectman Creighton and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

The meeting adjourned at 9:29 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Kevin McCarthy, Chairman

Documents
Application-D. Fifer
Application-T. Davis
Local Action Unit Document-390 CJC
FY20 Midyear Budget
FY21 Draft Budget
PEB Policies
Fundamental Speed Limit info
Presidential Primary Warrant
Minutes 12/3/19, 12/17/19, 1/7/2020, 1/14/2020