

Select Board Minutes

January 4, 2022

Tuesday, January 4, 2022

Virtual Meeting – 143TV and Zoom

Select Board Present: Keri Thompson, Chair
Corey Evans
Diane Kennedy
Jean Healey Dippold
Jack Creighton

Others Participating: Christopher Senior, Town Manager

Chairperson Thompson called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. and asked for a Roll Call Vote; All present. Chairperson Thompson asked for a motion to go into executive session exemption #2-to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. The Board will get an update on labor negotiations. Motion moved by Select Member Evans, seconded by Select Member Kennedy.

The Board entered executive session at 6:36 pm

The Board exited executive session and went back to open session at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge-Recited.

Public Comment-None.

Community Health Update-Chief Silvia, Chief Quigley, Health Director Pam Fahey, Mary Goodwin, and Glenn Pratt were present. Pam Fahey reviewed the most recent strain of Covid19 Omicron and what they have learned about it to date. The cases in Cohasset have gone up significantly. They have scheduled booster clinics; they are ordering home test kits and there will be a regional drive through testing site next week. Mr. Pratt stated they are in good shape with PPE.

Fire Chief Recruitment Process-Update-Mr. Senior stated the town is at the point that they need to have a search process for the new fire chief as Chief Silvia has to retire. He advised the Board they received 18 applicants, screened 6 and they now have 4 finalists for the next round with the assessment center. It has been a good strong process. The hope is to have a candidate in front of the Board sometime in February.

Emergency Management Update-Chief Silvia and Glenn Pratt were present for the discussion. Mr. Senior stated Chief Silvia and Glenn Pratt have worked together on emergency management for the past 20 years and have done a wonderful job. They are in the process of hiring the new fire chief and part of that responsibility will be emergency management. Glenn Pratt will be mentoring the new chief. The board thanked Chief Silvia and Glenn Pratt for the years of work. Chief Silvia stated he has been proud to be on a great team with Glenn Pratt as the leader of the team. Glenn Pratt provided history of how the emergency management team started. Select Member Creighton asked why the job description for the fire chief includes emergency management director. Mr. Senior stated the Board has had a great discussion tonight about how important it is that the next fire chief has emergency management experience. There are no plans to change Glenn Pratts role in emergency management. He is welcome to stay as long as he is willing.

Ballfield Leasing Process-Contract & Procurement Manager Michelle Leary gave an overview of the timeline of the RFP and process. The Board reviewed the RFP and suggested some edits. Ms. Leary will post the draft on the website to get input from the public.

Master Plan Implementation Committee-Funding Plans for Elm Street & Zoning-Mr. Senior stated that based on the comments and discussion at the last meeting it is appropriate for the planning staff to meet again with the working group to refine the scope and scale of the project. They will take a harder look at the plan. They will come back to the Board in a couple of weeks with something more modest. This project came out of the Master Plan, and it is very important, they just need to refine it. They are also relooking at different ways to fund. Ralph Dormitzer-111 Atlantic Avenue stated he strongly disagrees with the plan for Elm Street. He stated in 1973 properties were taken, elm trees removed, and the street was widened. The objective was restoring the beauty of the street. He feels the result of the work that MPIC and the consultant have done is not the objective of restoring the beauty of the street. They need to reconsider what they are doing here. Select Member Kennedy stated the MPIC and Planning Director should be part of the conversation tonight. Select Member Evans stated there has been a lot of work done, surveys, public meetings, and forums to get to this point. There is a lot of data over the past few years of public input that shouldn't just be pushed aside.

Sewer Intermunicipal Agreement-Discussion and Vote on framework for agreements with Hull and Scituate-Select Member Evans gave an overview of the current situation in the harbor. The main reason why they are talking about regional sewer is the pollution in the gulf river. The Harbor and Bassing Beach were closed last summer due to runoff from private septic systems. Part of the area affected is in Scituate. The town has an IMA with Hull that expires in 2026. The Cohasset treatment plant has capacity limitations and Scituate is looking to partner and add sewer in North Scituate. There have been discussions between Cohasset and Scituate since 2020. Select Member Evans, Chair of Sewer Bill McGowan and Chris Senior have met several times with Scituate. They have identified priority areas, flow calculations, existing infrastructure, and ideas of how they could work collaboratively. He is looking to see if there is interest in the Board voting on priorities, appoint liaisons, engage with Scituate & Hull and report back to the Board. Chairperson McGowan stated he and the commission are very upset about how this conversation is going. They did not know there would be a presentation and vote tonight. They have been working on this idea for over several years now and they feel as if they are being pushed aside. He didn't realize Corey was the lead on this. Chairperson Thompson stated this is not an attempt to exclude the sewer commission. This was to get an update to the Select Board since they haven't had one in a while. Select Member Evans stated he created this presentation to bring the Board up to date on the conversations they have had so far. The vote was just to keep the conversation moving. Chairperson McGowan stated he would like for the Sewer Commission and Select Board to have a joint meeting. The Board agreed to schedule a joint meeting with the Sewer Commission.

Town Manager Update-Mr. Senior acknowledge Jen Oram in the Planning Department who has worked with the town for many years and has taken a job with the Town of Hingham. He thanked her and wished her well. The Town received an award from Government Finance Officials Association for the FY21 Budget Book and FY20 CAFR. He thanked the Finance Team and Advisory for their hard work. He has distributed the draft calendar for the annual budget planning for ATM. The citizen petition deadline for ATM is February 14th.

Select Board Comments-Select Member Creighton thanked members of the community for letters and emails in support. Sometimes he asks pointed questions and it ruffles feathers, but he does it because he cares about the town. Chairperson Thompson stated the next meeting on communications and goals will be on Zoom. They are following the Board of Health’s recommendations and will keep the meeting virtual for the next month or so. Select Member Evans stated he is going to try and listen a little better and encourages his colleagues to do the same. There are a lot of people doing a lot of good work. Select Member Dippold wished everyone happy holidays. She hopes everyone remains healthy and the schools remain open. Also, following up on Select Member Evans comment, she hopes everyone can work together, compromise and find better ways to make progress on some long-term issues. Select Member Kennedy stated the MMA Conference is coming up and as of today it is still in person, and everyone will be required to show their vaccine card and be tested onsite.

Motion by Select Member Kennedy to adjourn, seconded by Select Member Creighton. Roll Call Vote; All aye.

The meeting adjourned at 10:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Keri Thompson, Chair

Documents

Minutes

Draft RFQ for Barnes Field

Regional Sewer Update