

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES OF MEETING
APRIL 20, 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.**

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve the Open Session minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, March 23, 2021. **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 HEARINGS/MEETINGS

Whitman Liquors – Change of Location

Chairman Kowalski opened a public hearing in connection with the application of Mokshrudra, Inc., dba Whitman Liquors, for a change of location from 682 Bedford Street to 421 Bedford Street. Present for the hearing on behalf of Mokshrudra, Inc. were Attorney Ian Hedges and Vijay Patel, manager of the business. Attorney Hedges advised the Board that the applicant is seeking permission to move to a larger location a half mile down the road, which will allow him to expand his business. Mr. Patel noted he has been in business at the current location for 6 years. Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve the application of Mokshrudra, Inc., dba Whitman Liquors, in connection with the All Alcohol Package Goods Store Liquor License for a change of location from 682 Bedford Street to 421 Bedford Street. **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.**

Attorney Hedges and Mr. Patel thanked the Board and departed from the meeting.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

COVID-19 Policy

Mr. Heineman stated the Board was provided with a revised version of the Town of Whitman COVID-19 Protocols for Employees prior to the meeting, and recommended the Board approve the revisions. He also suggested the Board consider changing the first paragraph in order to allow for inside appointments at Town Hall, as opposed to outside appointments. Mr. Salvucci asked Mr. Heineman if he received an opinion from the Board of Health. Mr. Heineman stated that he did not. Mr. Salvucci stated that he had the opportunity to speak with Health Inspector Dan Kelly earlier in the day and learned that the town is still in the red. Although he would like the Town Hall to be open to the public, he also wants people to be safe. Chairman Kowalski suggested Mr. Heineman consult with the Board of Health and ask that the issue be discussed at their next meeting. Mr. Evans agreed. Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to accept the revisions to the Town of Whitman COVID-19 Protocols for Employees with respect to travel, specifically section 8 and section 8b, as well as revisions made to the Staff Travel Notice. **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.**

Fire Chief Hiring Process

Mr. Heineman advised the Board that he has received a Fire Chief list from Civil Service and would like a sense of the Board on the timing of the process and an interview with the top candidate on the list. Chairman Kowalski stated that he would like to have the top candidate attend a meeting of the Board where he can be approved. He does not want to call this an interview as he does not believe the Board will have an outstanding reason to bypass the top candidate. Chief Grenno can present the top candidate and the Board will appoint him. Mr. Salvucci agreed. All members of the Board were comfortable with the format outlined by Chairman Kowalski. Mr. Heineman agreed to arrange to bring the candidate before the Board next month.

Update on Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness/Hazard Mitigation Plan

Mr. Heineman advised the Board that he, Chief Hanlon, Building Commissioner Bob Curran and Health Inspector Dan Kelly have been meeting with the Old Colony Planning Council to update the plan. Part of the process are 3 required workshops which are open to the public. The workshops will take place on April 28, April 30 and May 5. Information will be placed on the town website and those interested are encouraged to attend.

WMS/MSBA Status Update

Mr. Heineman advised the Board that last week the MSBA voted to move the Whitman Middle School project to module 2, which is a feasibility study. While the study is going on, a decision will be made as to whether the Whitman Middle School will be for grades 5 through 8 or grades 6 through 8. Mr. LaMattina agreed there are some big decisions to be made ahead. Regardless, the project will be done in the most fiscally responsible way.

Memorial Day

Mr. Heineman advised the Board that he has been working with the Veterans' Services Officer in order to come up with a plan for Memorial Day. The Health Inspector has confirmed that parades are not allowed at this time. The current plan is to have small ceremonies at cemeteries

throughout town on the morning of Memorial Day. Mr. Evans suggested asking WHCA to record the ceremonies and to air them during the day. Mr. Bezanson suggested asking WHCA to air the last Memorial Day Parade that was held.

Community Preservation Act Surcharge

Mr. Heineman advised the Board that a Community Preservation Act surcharge will be collected on all 4 quarters of the FY22 tax bills; and residents who qualify can apply for exemptions.

Dog Complaint

Mr. Heineman advised the Board of a dog complaint he had previously received from residents of Perry Avenue. The complainants had come to an understanding, in writing, with the owners of the dog who agreed that when they took the dog off their property, it would be fitted with a cage muzzle. The complainants have now notified Mr. Heineman that they would like a dangerous dog hearing to take place as they are looking for a larger penalty for the dog owners. Mr. Heineman will schedule a hearing during an upcoming meeting in May.

Grant from Executive Office of Public Safety & Security

Mr. Heineman stated Chief Hanlon and Deputy Chief Bombardier would like to purchase ballistic shields to be used in the event of an active shooter. A grant application will be filed this week with the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security.

TOWN MEETING

Town Meeting Date/Location

Because the town is still in the red, Mr. Heineman advised the Board that he feels it is best to hold the Annual Town Meeting on the field at the high school. His original thought was to postpone Town Meeting until June 7th, however Town Moderator Mike Seele is unavailable on that date. Mr. Seele is available on June 2nd or June 3rd, and Mr. Heineman has spoken with Superintendent Szymaniak who feels those dates would be a good option for use of the field, pending confirmation from the facilities director. Mr. Salvucci asked if the article for South Shore Voc Tech will be able to be voted on if Town Meeting is postponed until June. Mr. Heineman stated if the meeting is held on June 2nd or 3rd, there will not be a problem. If the meeting is held on June 7th, SSVT's counsel will need to pursue a resolution. Mr. Evans asked about the article for the sewer force main. Mr. Heineman stated that it will not be an issue. Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to postpone the Annual Town Election from May 3, 2021, to Wednesday, June 2, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. (with a rain date of Thursday, June 3, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.) or if necessary to Monday, June 7, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. (with the possibility of a substitute Town Moderator), subject to availability of outdoor space on the grounds of the Whitman-Hanson Regional High School. **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.**

Budget

Mr. Heineman discussed 3 changes made to the budget document – the combination of all expense lines under Town Meetings and Elections; delineation of the salaries for the Treasurer-Collector and Town Clerk; and the addition of a percentage column.

Board of Appeals FY22 Budget

Mr. Heineman advised the Board of a conversation he had with Board of Appeals Chairman John Goldrosen regarding the proposed reduction to the salary line for the recording secretary for the Board of Appeals. He also had a discussion with the recording secretary who indicated she has not had a salary increase in several years. Mr. Heineman explained that the Board of Appeals is not being singled out. The reason for the decrease was due to the fact that appropriations for the Board had not been spent for several years in a row. Mr. LaMattina suggested Mr. Heineman perform a comparison of the salaries for all recording secretaries to be sure they are being paid accordingly. Mr. Heineman agreed to do so.

Draft Warrant

Chairman Kowalski recommended voting on the draft warrant. Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** for discussion. **Second** Mr. Bezanson. Mr. Salvucci stated the Board has not yet seen all of the articles. Mr. Heineman suggested the Board vote on Article 2 this evening. The motion and second did not carry. Mr. LaMattina **MOVED** to approve the draft version of Article 2 as presented by Mr. Heineman. **Second** Mr. Bezanson. Mr. LaMattina thanked Mr. Heineman, Mr. Lytle and Mr. Lynam for all of their hard work. Mr. Evans expressed concern with long time employees not being paid equal to employees of other towns. Chairman Kowalski asked 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.**

NEW BUSINESS

Town Clerk –In-Person Early Voting

Town Clerk Dawn Varley was present and advised the Board that early voting by mail is required by law but in-person early voting is not. She then outlined the procedures for voting by mail and the extra amount of work put on her staff. She also outlined her plan for in-person early voting. She noted James Dunn has agreed to provide 2 students who will work free of charge. She will also utilize 2 election workers (due to the use of new equipment) who can be paid with funds from the CARES Act. She estimated this will cost \$800.00. She also advised the Board that most other towns will not be offering in-person early voting; however, the Town of Hanson is. Approval of the Board must include the voting hours; and she would prefer normal business hours from May 10th through May 13th. Mr. Lamattina stated that his concerns regarding the cost have been addressed. He then asked if the Board of Health has an opinion on this. Mr. Heineman stated that to the best of his knowledge, they do not. Mrs. Varley stated that she does not feel an opinion of the Board of Health is necessary. Chairman Kowalski disagreed. Mrs. Varley reminded the Board the DPW held a meeting in the Town Hall auditorium last week and the Board of Appeals is scheduled to hold public hearings later this month. Chairman Kowalski advised Mrs. Varley that the Board was in favor of that due to the need for public hearings. Mr. Heineman stated that if the goal is to increase or maximize voter turnout, he feels those who vote will vote whether in-person early voting is offered or not. Mr. Evans feels this can be operated in a safe manner and it makes sense to spread out the voting process over 4 additional days. Mr. Evans **MOVED** to authorize in-person early voting from Monday, May 10, 2021, through Thursday, May 13, 2021, during normal business hours, subject to review by the Board of

Health. **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.**

Town Meeting Election Warrant

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to sign the warrant calling for the May 15, 2021, Annual Town Election.

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.**

License Renewals: Fuel Storage, Junk Collector and Junk Dealer

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve license renewals for the following license holders for the period May 1, 2021, through April 30, 2022, subject to the submission of renewal paperwork, renewal fees and current tax status:

1. Fuel Storage Licenses

- a. Whitman Burial Vault/Watertown Engineering, 1200 Auburn Street
- b. The Stop & Shop Company, LLC #444, 465 Bedford Street
- c. TMC II Realty, dba Carey's, 672 Bedford Street
- d. Jiffy Lube International #1918, 691 Bedford Street
- e. Whitman Middle School, 100 Corthell Avenue
- f. Department of Public Works, 100 Essex Street
- g. Ceejay Realty Trust (Joseph Saccone), 106 Essex Street
- h. Conley School, 100 Forest Street
- i. Bullet Realty Co., dba T&K Asphalt Services, 7 Industrial Way
- j. Duval School, 60 Regal Street
- k. Trillium Fuel, dba Whitman Gas, 180 South Avenue
- l. OM South Avenue LLC, 311 South Avenue
- m. A.L. Prime Energy Consultant, Inc., 79 Temple Street
- n. Cumberland Farms, Inc., 280 Temple Street
- o. MKPM Whitman, LLC, dba New World, 359 Bedford Street

2. Junk Collector's Licenses

- a. Joseph Saccone (J. Saccone & Sons, Inc.), 106 Essex Street
- b. Peter J. Perry (P.J. Perry Trucking), 70 Kendrick Street
- c. Environmental Pick Up Corp., dba Conway Scrap Metal, 36 Vincent Street

3. Junk Dealer's Licenses

- a. Joseph Saccone (J. Saccone & Sons, Inc.), 106 Essex Street
- b. JC's Things (Carl Danforth), 356 South Avenue
- c. Whitman Estate Furniture, 356 South Avenue, Unit C

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.**

Dollars for Scholars: Request to Erect Fundraising Thermometer

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve the request of Michael Ganshirt on behalf of Whitman & Hanson Dollars for Scholars to erect a fundraising thermometer on the front lawn of Town Hall from April through the end of May. **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.**

Dollars for Scholars: “Dollars for Scholars Month”

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve the request of Michael Ganshirt on behalf of Whitman & Hanson Dollars for Scholars to declare April as “Dollars for Scholars Month”. **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.**

Whitman VFW: Buddy Poppy Drive

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve the request of Stephen Morse on behalf of Whitman VFW Post 697 to hold its annual Buddy Poppy Drive at Stop & Shop and the Whitman Post Office on May 29 & 30, 2021. **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.**

Board of Health: Rabies Clinic

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve the request of the Board of Health for permission to use the Animal Shelter, Essex Street, for a Drive-Thru Rabies Clinic for dogs and cats on Wednesday, June 23, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. **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.**

COA: Nomination to OCES Board of Directors

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve the recommendation of the Council on Aging to nominate Mary Holland to serve as the Town’s representative on the Board of Directors for Old Colony Elder Services for the period July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022. **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.**

Claim Agent: Amend Term Expiration Date

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to amend the 2/9/21 appointment of Lincoln Heineman to the position of Claim Agent to reflect a term expiration date of June 30, 2023. **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.**

Reappointment: Veterans’ Services Officer

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to reappoint Sara Lansing to the position of Veterans’ Agent/Veterans’ Graves Officer/Veterans’ Services Officer, through April 30, 2022. **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.**

The Board set their May meeting schedule for Tuesday, May 4, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. and Tuesday, May 18, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Heineman advised the Board that it will not be necessary to hold Executive Session this evening as he is still waiting to hear from Local 1769, IAFF, AFL-CIO.

At 8:44 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.**

Brian J. Bezanson, Clerk