

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES OF MEETING
JUNE 19, 2019**

The meeting took place in the Selectmen's Meeting Room located in the upper level of Town Hall. In attendance were Chairman Carl F. Kowalski; Vice Chairman Daniel L. Salvucci; Clerk Brian J. Bezanson; Member Justin R. Evans; and Town Administrator Francis J. Lynam. Mr. LaMattina was absent. Chairman Kowalski opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Chairman Kowalski asked everyone in attendance to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. This was followed by a moment of silence.

At 6:32 p.m. Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** into **EXECUTIVE SESSION** in accordance with the M.G.L., Chapter 30A, Section 21a, (2) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel. **Second** Mr. Bezanson. Roll call vote revealed: Mr. Bezanson – yes; Mr. Evans – yes; Mr. Salvucci – yes; and Chairman Kowalski – yes. **So voted 4-0.** The meeting will reconvene in Open Session.

At 7:00 p.m. the meeting reconvened.

Chairman Kowalski announced the meeting is being recorded and televised by WHCA.

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve bill and payroll warrants. **Second** Mr. Bezanson, **so voted 4-0.**

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to accept correspondence in the Read File. **Second** Mr. Bezanson, **so voted 4-0.**

Chairman Kowalski opened public forum and Mr. Salvucci advised the Board that he has received several calls concerning the traffic light pole at Cortell Avenue, which appears to be leaning. At an Old Colony Planning Council – Metropolitan Planning Organization meeting on June 18th, Mr. Salvucci spoke with someone from MassDOT who promised to have the pole inspected and repaired if necessary.

SCHEDULED HEARINGS/MEETINGS

Installation of Gas Main – Lee Avenue

National Grid permit representative Barbara Kelleher presented the Board with a proposal to install a gas main in order to provide service to 18 new homes. Mr. Salvucci asked if National Grid will be cutting into any existing streets. Ms. Kelleher said yes, in front of 2 homes on Hogg Memorial Drive. Mr. Salvucci expressed concern with this as it usually leaves a trench along the edge which results in deterioration of the street. Mr. Evans advised the Board that because he works for the Department of Public Utilities and will most likely be working on this project, he will abstain from voting on this issue. Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve the petition of National Grid to install and maintain approximately 245 feet, more or less, of 2 inch gas main I Lee Avenue from the existing 2 inch main at #15 Lee Avenue, northerly to Donahue Avenue; and

approximately 747 feet, more or less, on Donahue Avenue from the new 2 inch gas main on Lee Avenue, easterly to the end of main at Lot #14 Donahue Avenue, in order to provide gas service to 18 new houses. **Second Mr. Bezanson, so voted 3-0-1** (Mr. Evans abstained).

Installation of Pole with Anchor – Viking Drive

National Grid engineer Simon Yeung presented the Board with a proposal to install a pole with anchor in order to reroute service to 8 Viking Drive. Mr. Salvucci asked if this proposal was presented to the Planning Board. Mr. Lynam said no, the Board of Selectmen typically deals with pole installation. Mr. Lynam then asked Mr. Yeung if the location of the anchor will impede the sidewalk. Mr. Yeung advised Mr. Lynam that there is no sidewalk nor is there a plan for one; and the anchor will be placed 5 feet off the pavement. Mr. Yeung then explained the reason for this petition to Mr. Evan MacCleod, owner of 8 Viking Drive. Following discussion, Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve the petition of Massachusetts Electric Company and Verizon New England, Inc. to install pole 16-50 on Viking Drive, with an anchor, in order to reroute service to feed existing house #8. This service currently aerially trespasses one of the new lots in the upcoming residential development. **Second Mr. Bezanson, so voted 4-0.**

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Line Item Transfers

Mr. Lynam presented the Board with requests for line item transfers. The first request was from Mr. Lynam to transfer \$750.00 from Line Item #172 (Norfolk County Agricultural High School) to Line Item #7 (Administrative Assistant) in order to cover a shortfall in salary. Mr. Lynam explained the administrative assistant to the Board of Selectmen works 36 to 37.5 hours per week; however, there are occasions where she works longer hours which is the reason for the shortfall. His second request is to transfer \$25,300.00 from Line Item #172 (Norfolk County Agricultural High School) to Line Item #245 (Street Lighting). Mr. Lynam explained that when the FY19 budget was prepared, he expected the rental charges for the street lights to be removed due to the town purchasing the lights. Because the street light project is currently 90 percent complete, the town is still incurring rental charges. He advised the Board that he expects a good portion of the money will be returned to the town. The third request is from DPW Superintendent Dennis Smith to transfer \$222.65 from Line Item #427 (Maintenance) to Line Item #422 (Electricity). Mr. Lynam advised the Board that there was a 25 to 28 percent increase in electrical costs last year. This is simply moving funds from one utility line to another. Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve the following line item transfers:

- \$750.00 from Line Item #172 (Norfolk County Agricultural High School) to Line Item #7 (Administrative Assistant).
- \$25,300.00 from Line Item #172 (Norfolk County Agricultural High School) to Line Item #245 (Street Lighting).
- \$222.65 from Line Item #427 (Maintenance) to Line Item #422 (Electricity).

Second Mr. Bezanson, so voted 4-0.

BUDGET REVIEW

Timeline re: Fall Town Meeting

Mr. Lynam advised the Board that the votes taken at Town Meeting last night have been sent to the Collins Center for incorporation into the capital plan they are designing; and noted the bigger task will be for the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee to design a plan for an override.

Mr. Lynam discussed the need for establishing a core group of individuals to develop a strategic and capital plan by October; and suggested the group consist of 2 members of the Board of Selectmen, 2 members of the Finance Committee, 1 member of the WHRSDC, the superintendent and business manager for the school district and representatives of the DPW and public safety. Chairman Kowalski agreed and asked Mr. Lynam if he can put a group together before June 24th. Mr. Lynam advised the Board that he will get to work on this tomorrow and will identify the participants by the end of this week. He has also asked the assistant town administrator to begin developing an outline of the current numbers and what will be needed to move forward with an override.

Issues with Force Main Pipe

Mr. Lynam advised the Board of an issue with the force main pipe that delivers sewage to the Brockton treatment plant. The pipe was installed in 1984 and was expected to last 30 to 40 years. Because there are some major concerns with weakness in the pipe, a firm has been engaged to perform an assessment. If replacement of the pipe is necessary, the cost will be \$8 million. Replacement will be included in future planning. The DPW Commissioners will be watching the process closely and will provide information as they receive it.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT (cont'd)

Pleasant Street – On-Street Parking Complaints

Mr. Lynam advised the Board of complaints he has received from residents of Pleasant Street regarding on-street parking. He asked the Old Colony Planning Council to perform an assessment of South Avenue and Pleasant Street and he received a 64 page report last week. He has not yet had the time to review it, but he will report back to the Board in August. Mr. Lynam went on to say that the residents would prefer to see on-street parking eliminated however, Pleasant Street serves as a connector to route 58. Mr. Salvucci asked if there is a problem with commercial vehicles traveling on the street. Mr. Lynam stated that he did not expect to see a large number and he is not sure the state would allow the town to exclude heavy vehicles. He also noted public safety officials have looked at the issue and do not feel parking restrictions are necessary. Mr. Lynam will meet with the DPW and the police to review the results of the study.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Housing Production Plan

Assistant Town Administrator Lisa Green advised the Board that the Old Colony Planning Council is providing a technical assistance grant for the purpose of creating a Housing Production Plan for the planning and development of affordable housing. The plan, which allows communities to control how affordable housing will be developed, has been adopted by many surrounding towns, including Hanson. A survey conducted by the Old Colony Planning Council is the first step in the process. A link to the survey, which will gather housing data will be placed on the town's website if the Board agrees to move forward with the process. Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to support a Housing Production Plan and to allow a link to the survey prepared by the Old Colony Planning Council to be placed on the town website. **Second** Mr. Bezanson, **so voted 4-0.**

NEW BUSINESS

Town Administrator: Contract of Employment

Chairman Kowalski announced that after a series of meetings that took place in executive session, an agreement on a contract with the town administrator has been reached. The contract contains a 1 percent salary increase as voted by Town Meeting. Any future increases will be negotiated with the Board and will be subject to funding by Town Meeting. Mr. Lynam advised that the contract does not contain more benefits than the previous contract; and noted that some of the benefits available to him have been scaled back. Chairman Kowalski stated that he hopes to see this contract become a model for future contracts as Mr. Lynam has taken the lead on reducing contractual burden to the town. Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to conclude negotiations with the Town Administrator and to ratify the contract of employment between the Town of Whitman and Francis J. Lynam for the period July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2022. **Second** Mr. Bezanson, **so voted 4-0.**

FY20 Board/Committee Vacancies

Chairman Kowalski announced board/committee vacancies for FY20 and advised those who may be interested in filling a position to contact the Selectmen's office.

Resignation: Pat Goldmann

Chairman Kowalski read into the record a proclamation that was presented to Council on Aging member Pat Goldmann by Mr. Bezanson last week. Mr. Bezanson **MOVED** to accept the resignation of Pat Goldmann from the position of Member, Council on Aging, effective June 30, 2019. **Second** Mr. Salvucci, **so voted 4-0.**

WR Cars, Inc.: Request to Increase Vehicle Limit/Amendment to Ownership

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve the request of WR Cars, Inc. to increase the vehicle limit from 20 to 35 in connection with the Class II Auto Dealer's License on the premises located at 991 Bedford Street; and to amend the license to reflect the names of both owners of the business. **Second** Mr. Bezanson. Chairman Kowalski noted that Building Commissioner Robert Curran has indicated he is not opposed to increasing the number of vehicles for sale. Hearing nothing further, Chairman Kowalski called for a vote in connection with the motion on the floor. **So voted 4-0.**

July Meeting Schedule

The Board set their July meeting schedule for Tuesday, July 9, 2019, at 7:00 p.m. Chairman Kowalski announced that the meeting will begin in the auditorium for a Firefighter Promotional Ceremony and then move to the Selectmen's Meeting Room for all remaining business. Mr. Lynam noted that the last chance for the Board to vote on FY19 line item transfers will be July 9th. Mr. Evans advised the Board that he will not be available on July 9th. Chairman Kowalski stated that he will be traveling out of the country on July 9th, and it will be very important for Mr. Salvucci, Mr. Bezanson and Mr. LaMattina to make themselves available for that meeting.

Treasurer-Collector: Change to RE & PP Bills/Increase in Demand Fee

Treasurer-Collector Mary Beth Carter addressed the Board and stated that in an effort to reduce costs and increase revenue, she is seeking the Board's support in connection with a change in the mailing of real estate and personal property bills. Rather than mailing out one bill per quarter,

she is proposing sending out two bills at a time, twice per year, with each mailing containing two remittance slips and two return envelopes. Bill due dates will not change; and this will save the town approximately \$5,200 in postage costs annually. Mrs. Carter went on to say that the taxes for many residents are paid automatically by their mortgage company. Several other towns have converted to this process and it is working well. Chairman Kowalski suggested offering reminders of payment due dates at Board of Selectmen meetings. Mrs. Carter agreed and also suggested postings be made available on the town website and Facebook page. Mr. Salvucci questioned whether senior citizens would be able to adapt to the change and advised Mrs. Carter that he is not comfortable with changing the process. Mrs. Carter stated that this will be a learning process and she feels that seniors will be able to adapt. Mr. Bezanson **MOVED** to support the proposal of Town Treasurer-Collector Mary Beth Carter to reduce the number of real estate and personal property bills that are mailed out annually from 4 bills to 2 bills, with each mailing containing 2 separate quarterly bills, with no change to payment due dates. **Second** Mr. Evans, **so voted 3-1** (Mr. Salvucci opposed).

Mrs. Carter advised the Board that she would like to increase the demand fee from \$10 to \$15, which could generate approximately \$25,000 annually. Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve the request of Town Treasurer-Collector Mary Beth Carter to increase the demand fee from \$10 to \$15.00. **Second** Mr. Bezanson, **so voted 4-0**.

OLD BUSINESS

Recycling Update

Assistant Town Administrator Lisa Green advised the Board that the pink bag program has been a success. Over the first 6 months, 13 tons of textiles have been collected resulting in a payment to the town of \$277 and a savings in tonnage costs paid to Waste Management of \$1,004.25.

Mrs. Green went on to say that this is a beneficial program; and asked residents not to put textile waste in the trash. Instead, residents are asked to place any unwanted textiles into the pink bags which are available at the DPW and the Selectmen's office.

At 7:52 p.m. Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting. **Second** Mr. Bezanson, **so voted 4-0**.

Brian J. Bezanson, Clerk

