



James M. Kreidler, Jr.
Town Administrator

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Wayne Miller, *Chairman*
Veronica Kell, *Vice Chairman*
Joseph Shank, *Clerk*

SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 2, 2021 AT 6:00 P.M.

Governor Baker declared a State of Emergency to respond to COVID-19 on March 10, 2020 and ordered a suspension of certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A, s 20.

The Board of Selectmen closed the town offices, including boards and committee meetings consistent with the Governor's order, to public access to promote social distancing and reduce the spread of COVID-19

I. PRELIMINARIES - VOTES MAY BE TAKEN:

- 1.1 The meeting was called to order at 6:00P.M.
Roll call vote taken showed 3 members present: Chairman, Wayne Miller (WM) Vice-Chairman, Veronica Kell (VK) and Clerk, Joseph Shank (JS)
- 1.2 Pledge of Allegiance
- 1.3 WM announced the meeting is being tape recorded and broadcast on Channel 9.
- 1.4 Liaison Assignments and Board organization.

WM welcomed JS to the Board. WM explained what the liaison assignments are. JS to take Don Klein's assignments (Public Works and Elected Boards) VK to keep General Government and WM to keep public safety (please see attached liaison assignments)

VK moved to keep Veronica Kell with General Government as written on the sheet Wayne Miller with Public Safety and assign Joe Shank to Public Works and Elected Boards/Commissions/Officials. JS seconded. Unanimous vote.

JS moved that VK be the Chair WM be the Vice-Chair and Joseph Shank be the Clerk. VK seconded. Unanimous vote.

- 1.5 Chairman's Additions or Deletions.
VK asked for 5 additions: (1). Cares Act Round II funding as previously discussed at the work session for Housing and the Fire Department; (2). request from Karen Clement for discussion of a spring program at the Library, (3). Minutes for December 22nd, November 23rd, and November 17th. WM tabled the minutes so he could review. (4). Agenda item 4.7 to be moved to 4.11, (5). The 43D for the Planning Board and the DLT A grant for expediated permitting to be discussed at next meeting.

VK would like the Agricultural Commission posting on the next agenda for approval noting the Open Space Committee is already posted. WM to table 3.1 until the next meeting. There were no volunteer response forms submitted for consideration of appointment.

VK voiced concern for the 43D expedited permitting and the timeline/deadlines for warrant articles to be submitted. The Planning Board is also working on an over 55 bylaws for town meeting. Mr. Kreidler explained if the Board knows of an article that is going to be submitted; it can serve as a place holder until warrant article is finalized.

Mr. Kreidler to reach out to the Planning Board Administrative Assistant to get the documentation on the bylaws for discussion at the next meeting.

1.6 Public Comment Period.

Lauri Shifrin, Housing Authority expressed she was offended and disappointed in a comment that was made referencing a meeting that was to be set up, further explaining she is a volunteer. Mr. Kreidler responded to clarify his intentions with the comment made and apologized if it was taken as offensive, stating it was not meant to be.

Joan Savoy asked if the letter she sent to the Board today will be addressed. WM said it would be.

II. APPOINTMENTS AND HEARINGS – VOTES MAY BE TAKEN:

2.1 Discussion with Town Clerk, Kathy Spofford, RE: Dog Licenses, Election, and Census

Kathy Spofford reminded the public the census is due and requested all residents return as it helps with grant applications and inactive voting status. Kathy Spofford reminded everyone that late fees for dog licensing will start on March 1st and she will be picking the number 1 dog tag contest soon. March 5, 2021 is the last day to pull nomination papers for the Annual Town Election and they are due back on March 8, 2021.

VK asked if there would be mail-in voting. Kathy Spofford replied; the early voting act has expired.

III. APPOINTMENTS OF OFFICIALS/PERSONNEL – VOTES MAY BE TAKEN:

~~3.1 Review/Approve posting for the Open Space & Recreation Committee.~~

~~3.1.1 Discuss/Appoint any Open Space and Recreation Committee applications received.~~

3.2 Consideration of Appointment-Treasurer/Collector Candidate- Jared Aponte contingent upon successful contract negotiation, medical exam, and CORI check. Mr. Kreidler put this agenda for consideration noting it was tabled from last week to give the Board more time to review. Mr. Kreidler commented that VK had been in touch with the finance team to discuss the appointment recommendation. Mr. Kreidler introduced Mr. Aponte to the Board (virtually).

WM stated after speaking with the finance team he respects their recommendation for appointment.

VK read the posting for the position into the record and expressed concerned the applicant does not have the required education or experience. VK introduced herself to Mr. Aponte and asked a series of questions to include: his experience and education, experience with cash operations and how it could be improved or changed, when certification would be completed, and his longevity commitment to the town.

JS explained he has been in business a long time and looking at Mr. Aponte's resume he expressed concern with the short period of time he was employed with his previous jobs. Mr. Aponte explained there were growth opportunities and personal like experiences and a moved to North Carolina which effected his longevity in his previous employment. JS asked how he works with other employees. Mr. Aponte said the Board is welcome to contact his former employers and co-workers and they will say I work well with others. Mr. Aponte commented he goes above and beyond to help others whether in his office or another. JS stated he spoke with the Assessor and the Accountant and they both spoke very highly of you, further stated he has mutual friends and they spoke highly of you as well.

Mr. Kreidler informed the Board he did check his references and everyone he spoke to said Mr. Aponte has excellent work product and easy to work with.

JS moved to consider the appointment of Jared Aponte contingent upon successful contract negotiation, medical exam, and CORI check with a one-year probationary period. VK seconded. Unanimous vote.

IV. MEETING BUSINESS - VOTES MAY BE TAKEN:

4.1 Review/Discuss/Approve amended donation/license agreement RE: Senior Center

The Board reviewed the revised license (see attached).

Mr. Kreidler explained the previous license was reviewed by Counsel and adopted by the Board. The license in the packet were the changes made by donor. JS has reviewed both the accepted and the new license. JS would like to accept the license and stay out of it.

VK explained she worked with Town Counsel on the original donation/license. VK outlined a few concerns regarding insurance and other safeguards and would like clarification of building closing reference of the license. VK would like the Town Administrator to work with Sterilite to clarify some of the wording. VK suggested a work session with Mr. Shepherd to discuss some of the concerns.

The Board scheduled a meeting on February 8th at 9:00A.M. to discuss if Mr. Shepherd is available.

4.2 Discuss/Vote Joint Purchase Arrangement, RE: Health Insurance

Mr. Kreidler met with the Insurance Advisory Group to discuss the joint purchase arrangement that is being contemplated without a change in the benefit level. Town Counsel is working on the agreement and researching if Chapter 32 (b) Section 12 is a local option that would need to be accepted at town meeting before entering into the JPA.

Mr. Paicos met with the Board for any questions and noted the request for proposals is set to go out next week.

JS requested to receive the paperwork from past Selectmen's business e so he knows what happened prior to being elected. Mr. Kreidler explained the proposal is to allow us to join with other Communities and send all of the towns out to bid vs just Townsend, which would allow for a lower claim's ratio.

Mr. Paicos explained the current insurance carrier (MIIA) has stated upon renewal the premium would be -6% to 6.8%. Mr. Pacos said he was confident if Townsend joined with Dunstable and Templeton there would be a savings for all three communities. Mr. Pacos explained the town is not subject to Chapter 30B. This will allow Mr. Paicos to negotiate better prices dependent upon what insurance carriers come back with for a premium.

Additional discussion: HMO Blue would stay the same for one year which would give the town leverage to negotiate with MIIA, additional years, could see other carriers. Dunstable & Templeton are also with MIIA, claims data needed for future years, quotes will go back to joint purchasing agreement and then will go back to Selectmen for a decision.

Mr. Shelton, Finance Committee asked about claims data and the premium into the future if the savings would carry forward in the long-term view. Mr. Paicos relayed other communities are interested in joining the JPA.

JS: I guess we want to make a motion to vote to the joint purchase agreement reference health insurance. JS amended upon Counsel's review of 32B section 12. VK seconded Unanimous vote.

4.3 Discuss/Vote-Town Administrator Goals and Objectives 2021

VK would like to move this agenda item to a work session. VK would like Mr. Kreidler to provide the Board with his accomplishments for the last year and what his goals would be going forward and submit to the Board. VK asked that both Board members make their goals before the work session using the smart goals. JS would like to add the operating procedures and organization chart (4.6) VK to schedule a work session.

4.4 Discuss/Vote on concept for Shared Winter Streets and Spaces Grant

VK shared the grant documentation with the Board members (please see attached). VK explained a group as been working together to write the grant and the main focus is bike lanes, signage, bike racks, and sidewalk repair. VK explained it is a Mass DOT grant and is due February 26th. VK relayed they are working with a Planner and the meeting was recorded and on you tube. VK commented the historic district (attached) could affect signage. The goals are to get people out to the parks in town. VK reviewed the map with the proposed bike lanes for entrance into Howard Park. VK commented the group would like to make Jefts Street a one-way street. Ms. Hoff commented the town has many outdoor assets and the focus is usability. VK would like the cross walks repainted.

VK would like the Board's support and sign off on the plan. VK relayed the team should have a final product by February 16th.

JS: I make a motion that the Board of Selectmen approve the Share Winter Streets and Spaces Grant. JS amended "to approve the concept for the Shared Streets grant. VK seconded. Unanimous vote.

4.4.1 Continued Public Engagement

Mr. Kreidler asked the Board if they would like to ask folks at the meeting if they have any comments for the public engagement. WM commented it might be better to have the team host a public meeting for feedback on the grant.

VK inquired as to how to make a street one-way. Mr. Kreidler informed the Board they are the Road Commissioners by law and they could vote to do that.

~~4.5 Discuss Policies and Procedures to be updated - set work session date to discuss.~~

~~4.5.1 Selectmen Operating Policies (see 4.3)~~

~~4.6 Discuss Organizational Chart and set work session date to further discuss.~~

~~4.7 Discuss Draft Decision Tree RE: Citizens in Need (Housing, Fuel, Food, etc.)~~

4.8 JS moved to declare surplus items as listed on the agenda.

Xerox multi-functional copier

3 black toners Polaroid Camera with film cartridge

2 yellow toners 5 Blackberry Phone

2 cyan toners Sony Cybersshot digital camera

2 magenta toners HP digital camera

2 waste containers Verizon 4g LTE Jetpack

1 2nd BTR

1 fuser

odor filter

VK seconded. Unanimous vote.

4.9 JS: I declare surplus an old police radar trailer with the value to be determined by the Chief Procurement Officer and the Police Chief. VK seconded. Unanimous vote.

- 4.10 Review/Discuss/Approve changes to permit fees for Plumbing, Electrical, Building, and Driveways as submitted by the Building Commissioner.

The Board reviewed the updated fees (see attached). Mr. Chartland, Building Commissioner joined the meeting and explained each of inspection fees. VK inquired as to the last time the fees were reviewed/updated. VK agreed with the Building Commissioner to look at computer software for the land use departments.

JS: moved to approve changes to permit fees for plumbing electrical building and driveways as submitted by the Building Commissioner. VK seconded. Unanimous vote.

- 4.11 Discussion, RE: how to apply for fuel assistance funded by the Community Development Block Grant.

VK shared the draft decision tree (see attached). VK noted the senior center newsletter also handles fuel assistance so the program would need to be rolled into that.

Joan Savoy commented it was the New England Farm workers counsel that works with the senior center for fuel assistance. VK reviewed with the Board how the programs would work. Additional discussion included what would qualify for the use of the worthy funds and what referrals would go the housing administrator.

JS & VK would like the lighted message board to let people know of the programs. WM would like to see the final plan before voting.

- 4.11.1 Discussion, RE: Advertising for all social programs (lighted sign, flyer wording, etc.)

WM suggested a Board member work with Mr. Kreidler on the lighted message boards. VK to work with Mr. Kreidler for flier and message boards.

- 4.11.2 Discuss Draft Decision Tree RE: Citizens in Need (Housing, Fuel, Food, etc.)

Wayne Darragh, COG works with Montachusets Opportunity Counsel for help with fuel assistance. Mr. Kreidler explained how the program works under the CDBG. Mr. Darragh joined the Board to discuss the program and how the CDBG works with Montachusets Opportunity Counsel.

Joan Savoy asked questions regarding the fuel assistance program. Mr. Darragh reviewed the process as to how COG is involved with the fuel assistance portion of the grant. Mr. Kreidler to give the Board an update at a future meeting after speaking with MPO.

- 4.12 Discussion, CDBG report including status of funding and Selectmen oversight.

Mr. Darragh explained the reports are sent into the State and that he can print and give them to Mr. Kreidler. The Board reviewed the contract for the administration of the CDBG grant. Additional discussion included: housing rehabilitation process and inspection, qualifying what could be used toward the affordable housing goals

from the rehabbed homes under the grant program. VK to work with Mr. Kreidler and the Housing Authority and COG for review of the affordable housing goals.

VK read an email submitted by Ms. Savoy.

4.13 Review/Sign Chapter 90 Project request, RE: Highland Street

The Board reviewed the request (see attached) JS: I make a motion that we sign out of session the Chapter 90 project for Highland Street. VK seconded. Unanimous vote.

*update Covid Cares Act II: Mr. Kreidler explained the reconciliation has been extended by one month until the end of March.

*Request from Ms. Clement: Friends of the Library in cooperation with the Library to see places in town as a fundraiser. Different stops would be planned to get people out to see the history of the town. Ms. Clement requested to use town property for the scavenger hunt.

JS: I make a motion to approve the Townsend scavenger hunt. VK seconded. Unanimous vote.

*Mr. Kreidler informed the Board the DLTA for GIS assistance for the masterplan was submitted by the 3:00P.M. deadline and would need the Board support and endorsement. Chaz Sexton, Housing Authority joined the meeting and explained the work that is being requested by the grant and the timeframe for the mapping is June.

JS: I make a motion the DLTA grant proposed by the Planning Board. VK seconded. Unanimous vote.

V. WORK SESSION - VOTES MAY BE TAKEN:

5.1 DCR & property on Rt 13

Mr. Kreidler explained he could not reach Ms. Barry (noting this carried over from a previous meeting) relaying he met with Vicky Tidman, Assessor and looked at the records and it still cannot be determined who the owner of the trust is. Mr. Kreidler to ask the Assistant Tax Collector where the process is in the tax taking.

5.2 Purple Heart Community

The Board reviewed the email submitted by the Veterans' Agent, Joe Mazzola (see attached).

JS: I make a motion that we accept and approve the town becoming a purple heart community on August 7th. VK amended with the understanding the Office of the Veterans Affairs takes the lead on doing whatever is required. WM mentioned they are still pursuing the traveling wall that heals to come to Townsend. VK seconded. Joe

Mazzola, Veterans' Agent explained the entire country is on August 7th stating he will take the lead on it and give an update. Unanimous vote

5.3 Town Administrator updates and report.

5.3.1 FY22 Budget

5.3.1.1 Governor's Budget (House-1)

5.3.1.2 NMRSD Budget Public Hearing Recap

5.3.1.3 Budget /ATM calendar

Mr. Kreidler described where the town was in the budget process noting the school had their budget meeting last night commenting the budget increase for Townsend is \$600,000. Mr. Kreidler explained the increase for the school is more than the town can raise under prop 2.5. Mr. Kreidler commented Pepperell cannot absorb that increase. The School Committee is going to continue to work to reduce the increases being asked for. Mr. Kreidler informed the Board he would be sending version 8 of the budget with known expenditures/revenues to date. Mr. Kreidler informed the Board with the proposed increase for the schools and 5% increase from Health Insurance adding in the new comp/class plan the budget has a \$207,000 deficit. Mr. Kreidler relayed when the budgets are submitted by the departments, they will be incorporated into the budget workbook.

Mr. Kreidler emailed a calendar for the budget/town meeting and asked the Board to vote open/close warrant. VK asked if we could extend the date beyond the bylaw. Mr. Kreidler commented they could submit a place holder and submit after the date.

Mr. Kreidler asked for a motion to call the warrant for the annual and special town meeting open tomorrow February 3, 2021 at 9:00A.M. and that warrant for the annual close at 5:00P.M. on March 1st and the warrant for the special close at 5:00P.M. on April 2, 2021 and that the meeting be held on May 4th. JS: I make a motion as read by Jim. VK seconded. Unanimous vote.

5.4 Board of Selectmen announcements, updates, and reports.

VK: informed the Board that Talk of the Town with a Selectman will be on February 11th at 11:30A.M and you can get a zoom link from Katie Petrossi at the Senior Center.

WM relayed he will be meeting with the Fire Chief to discuss his budget and he will report back to the Board at the next meeting.

5.5 Reports from Board liaisons. (none)

5.6 JS: I make a motion that we review and sign the payroll and bills payable warrants out of session. VK seconded. Unanimous vote.

VI: EXECUTIVE SESSION - VOTES MAY BE TAKEN:

JS: executive session pursuant to GL c. 30A, s. 21(a)(2) To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel Treasurer Collector. VK seconded.

JS: executive session pursuant to GL c. 30A, s. 21(a)(3) To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares re: AFSCME-all groups and IAFF and we will not be returning out of executive session. VK seconded. Roll call vote: WM (YES) VK (YES) JS (YES).

For a detailed discussion please see click here: <https://youtu.be/teMaYU4av1U>

Respectfully submitted by,

Carolyn Smart
Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator

Meeting Minutes for February 2, 2021 released on _____, 2021.