



OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Chaz Sexton-Diranian, *Chairman*

Veronica Kell, *Vice Chairman*

Theresa A. Morse, *Clerk*

R. Eric Slagle, Town Administrator

RECEIVED
MAY 03 2023

TOWN OF TOWNSEND
TOWN CLERK

Topic: Board of Selectmen

Time: March 28, 2023 18:00 Eastern Time {US and Canada}

I. PRELIMINARIES:

1.1 Call the meeting to order and roll call.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

1.3 Announce the meeting is being recorded.

1.4 Chairman's Additions or Deletions.

1.5 Review/Approve the meeting minutes for 11/15/2022, 02/21/2023

Board of Selectmen meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. with Chaz Sexton-Diranian present in person and Veronica Kell present in person, Theresa Morse present in person.

Pledge of Allegiance recited.

Chaz Sexton-Diranian announced that the meeting is being recorded, is live on channel 9 and will be on the Town's YouTube channel afterwards.

Additions: 2.4 Solar Canopy Discussion at 7:30PM
Deletions: None

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to approve meeting minutes for 11/15/2022. Motion was passed with all in favor unanimously.

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to approve meeting minutes for 02/21/2023. Motion was passed with all in favor unanimously. Minutes will be put on letterhead.

II. APPOINTMENTS AND HEARINGS:

2.1 Andrew Johnson from the Good Farm. (6:05)

On zoom at 6:50PM. Andrew Johnson gave a quick background and history of the Good Farm. He would like to grow a customer base locally at Townsend Common to market produce and eggs with a setup of a 10x10 tent set up by the main intersection with a sign pointing in the direction. Friday afternoons between 3PM and 6PM proposed but not set for a specific time. Alisa Struthers from the Historic District Commission was present remotely and gave input regarding signage and an application needed and Roger Rapoza Superintendent of Cemetery and Parks was present remotely and gave input as to use of parking lot. Roger Rapoza mentioned it was in the past not an issue to use the parking lot and can present it at their April 12th Commission meeting. Parks and Cemetery approved the Lions Club too and will get a letter to the Board with the Commission approval.

It was asked for everyone to pick up after themselves the Town won't do the cleanup. The Agricultural Commission would be suited to making decisions if there are more people interested and want to speak to the Town Administrator.

The Board agreed to this for right now as a one-person farmers' market set up for late May to October and an extension can be made after a talk with the Town Administrator.

Andrew Johnson's next steps were outlined: talk to the Board of Health, fill out the Historic District Commission application (on website) for the signage and talk to Roger Rapoza to get the letter from the Commission.

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to allow Andrew Johnson to set up his farmer's store The Good Farm on the Town Common parking lot from May til October 2023 from 3PM to 6PM on Fridays. Motion was passed with all in favor unanimously.

2.2 One Day Special Liquor License
- Townsend Congregational
Church. (6:30)

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to grant a One Day Special Liquor License to Townsend Congregational Church. Beth Klein spoke. The license is requested to sell beer and wine on May 13th from 5PM-10PM for the fundraiser for the Church. A service was hired to sell beer and wine. The service is known to the Town, licensed, tip certified and own liability insurance. Conditions were read. The motion was passed with all in favor unanimously.

2.3 Meeting with School Committee
members re: plan of override
promotion for Town Meeting. (7:00)

Randee Rusch from the NMRSD School Committee was present. She gave a news update to the School Budget and assessments given some numbers were 200K less and one school bus eliminated to save some money. The next steps would be to know from the Town how much the Town can afford and how much the override will be. The NMRSD Communication Sub-Committee of the Schools is working on a message to roll out to the Public. Nothing has changed from the budget message the Superintendent rolled out and the reasons for the override are all still the same. COVID setbacks, extra services and interventionists were needed to bring students up to speed out of the pandemic, out of district placements increased in number and costs, insurance costs increased. The Board asked about time frame for the Communication Committee to get the word out to the families and the district that Townsend will require an approx. override of \$820K and maybe spread the word at the Earth Day event. The timeline was currently unknown, but Randee Rusch is in communication with the Chair of the Communication Committee. The schools are also still waiting on the State numbers. The Board informed Randee Rusch that

2.4 Presentation of Solar Canopies Select

Townsend is putting this on the April Ballot, so if the school number goes up it would create a problem. Randee Rusch agreed the schools cannot go up with the number. If the numbers come in less there can be outreach done. Veronica Kell recommended to vote the schools separately from the General Government.

The Board asked for the School Committee Representative to get in touch with the Town Administrator. Nancy Haines had reached out on 3/28/23 to the Town Administrator for a discussion in the next days. The Town will make cuts when it is known if the override passes after Town Meeting. R. Eric Slagle will reach out to the School Administration first thing tomorrow about the override.

The Board of Selectmen meeting of April 11th was set for a Presentation of the Schools, Randee Rusch is to let the School Administration know ahead of time to have the budget presentation ready.

Alan Giles from Select Energy was present, and a presentation was screenshared about the Solar Canopies

Select offered a Solar and Storage Program (Battery Storage) for when the solar system must shut off if the power is out. The Battery can provide electricity to the building. A battery can be educated through software so it can drive the cost down. Can be connected to a generator for the building to stay online longer. Alan Giles went over locations for solar canopies on Town property.

Highway: the building cannot handle the extra weight for solar. Canopy would interfere with traffic.

Library has a great parking lot for solar canopy implementation, would provide 100% of the electric load, it would be installed over the parking lot, space for parking would not be lost.

Police station to offset 100% of their electric load, install one rectangle over the parking area.

110% explained: the 10% to offset that demand charge to get the Unitil bill to zero. The contract would be 25 years. Financial analysis showed the contract rate forecast of Unitil rate increase over the years and site visit is scheduled for next week. This cost included purchase charge and delivery charge of the electricity. 22 cents over the next 25 years. The panels last 25 years, production will decline over time. Adding panels over time can be done and the contract can be amended. It would be two separate contracts for two separate systems, one for 25 and one for 15 or 10 ish. Can run concurrently. Can refresh the contract with new equipment if load increases over time (bigger panels etc). lots of options.

Engagement Process slide explained: Under the RFP process the longest time spend will be with the Utility provider. 2nd part will be incentives with the State. To lock in the incentives a Letter of Intent and then a Town Meeting vote with the authority of the Town administrator to sign the contract would be required. The incentives go to the company as the Town does not own the panels, and there is zero cost to Town for installation. At the end of the contract the panels will be dismantled at no cost and recycled. There are parts that cannot be recycled, but that is less than 10%. At the end of contract, the Town can decide to keep the solar panels, but production will be much less. There is no time limit to the Letter of Intent, it lasts all year. If it needs to be extended, then the Letter of Intent can be amended. If an upgrade is needed to the solar canopy, the company will carry it.

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to authorize the Town Administrator to enter into a non-binding Letter of Intent with Solect Energy to pursue the necessary agreement with Unitil to put the canopies on the police station and the library with the intent to go forward at Fall Town meeting. Motion was passed with all in favor unanimously.

III. APPOINTMENTS OF OFFICIALS/PERSONNEL(taken out of order):

3.1 Appointment of Marylou Vest as
a member of the Council on Aging.

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to appoint Mary Lou Vest as a member of the Council on Aging with a term to expire June 30, 2025. Motion was passed with all in favor unanimously.

3.2 Appointment of Amy Perry as a
member of the Playground
Committee for a one-year term.

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to appoint Amy Perry as a member of the Playground Committee for a one-year term to expire June 30, 2024. Motion was passed with all in favor unanimously.

3.3 Appointment of Kirsten Biron as
a member of the Playground
Committee for a two-year term.

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to appoint Kirsten Biron as a member of the Playground Committee for a two-year term until June 30, 2025. Motion was passed with all in favor unanimously.

3.4 Appointment of Amy
Harrington as a member of the
Playground Committee for a three-
year term.

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to appoint Amy Harrington as a member of the Playground Committee for a three-year term to expire June 30, 2026. Motion was passed with all in favor unanimously.

3.5 Appointment of Everett Smith as Summer Water Intern to the Water Department.

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to appoint Everett Smith as Summer Water Intern to the Water Department. Motion was passed with all in favor unanimously. Dave Vigeant added that he will start when he is done with his freshman year in college.

3.6 Appointment of Julia Holt as Summer Water Intern to the Water Department.

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to appoint Julia Holt as Summer Water Intern to the Water Department. Motion was passed with all in favor unanimously. Dave Vigeant added she will graduate from North Middlesex in June.

3.7 Appointment of Mark Mullins as Water Tech D-1 to the Water Department.

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to appoint Mark Mullins as Water Tech D-1 to the Water Department. Motion was passed with all in favor unanimously.

3.8 Appointment of Andrew Seamans as Full-Time Firefighter Paramedic to the Fire-EMS Department.

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to appoint Andrew Seamans as a Full-Time Firefighter-Paramedic to the Fire-EMS Department. Motion was passed with all in favor unanimously. Clarification was made that this position filled an open spot.

IV. MEETING BUSINESS:

4.1 Granting of renewal of Junk Dealer License – MJS Metals through May 1, 2024.

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to renew the Junk Dealer License for MJS Metals through May 1, 2024. Motion was passed with all in favor unanimously. Clarification was made that nothing can be changed on the process of granting the license through the Board prior to renewal through the Town Clerk.

4.2 Planning Board Mandatory Second Referral Notice for 22 Main St.

Comment: The Board trusts the Planning Board with their decision over this application. The Board would want clarification that this project is not within the limits of MassDot jurisdiction. Laura Shifrin (remote) clarified that the Planning Board is aware of the UPWP submission.

4.3 Acceptance of picture donations for the Annual Report 2022.

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to accept the picture donations for the Annual Report 2022. It was noted that one picture was repeated. The motion was passed with all in favor unanimously.

4.4 Performance Review of Town Administrator and Administrative Assistant.

A Self-Evaluation for R. Eric Slagle and Sabrina Moore is due back to the Board on April 4, 2023. Each Board member will evaluate R. Eric Slagle based on the performance evaluation from last Summer and give it to HR by the 11th. The one-year anniversary is May 16, 2023. By April 18th the Summary review will be due.

4.5 Review and Approve Nashua Rivers Wild & Scenic Stewardship Council 2022 Report.

Veronica Kell elaborated on the history of this report as the purpose is to distribute funds of the land protection grants that were awarded to the communities within the Wild & Scenic area. The year of the report Townsend received \$4533 for the Adams dam to look at the erosion along the bank and the Town was awarded funds for FY23 as well for easements.

Motion was made by Theresa and seconded by Veronica Kell to review and approve the Nashua Rivers Wild & Scenic Stewardship Council 2022 Report. Motion was made with all in favor unanimously.

4.6 Discussion and vote on bus routes to submit to MART.

Bus routes were discussed with the Transportation Task Force and must be accepted by MART. These are suggested Bus routes for the General Public in Townsend who cannot use the bus service that the Council on Aging offers. There were 2 sets of routes suggested for weekdays and weekends to get people to the Fitchburg intermodal center to catch other buses and the commuter rail. Veronica Kell read the email from Bruno Fisher into record. Minibuses with bike racks on the back on the weekends seating 14 passengers. The Park and Ride area behind Town Hall is Town Hall parking lot, eventually into the field. Mail is from Bruno Fisher for the next step of MART process, wanted routes, then it would be an estimate of cost provided to the Town, then for a marketing coordinator to market the cost in Town from MART. 30 min lapse from Townsend to Fitchburg. 13 min until the train leaves. A meeting was held with Bruno Fisher after approval by MART. An overflow parking was out of the question as lighting is not good there. Community One-Stop application was put in to upgrade the parking lot. Goal is to have a parking area that is well lit. Library parking lot is not as easy to get in and out to Fitchburg. Thank you to the Transportation Task Force. The intent is to run it for free the first year to see what the ridership is.

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to send the information as discussed to MART for the dates and times of the bus routes to get a cost estimate. Motion was passed with all in favor unanimously.

4.7 Proposed language for CPA Adoption (taken out of order).

The first paragraph was from a different memorandum, R. Eric Slagle asked to disregard it. It is laid out in the statute for ballot submission. The language in the main paragraph is the language needed to adopt the CPA. The total amount of surcharge can be 1,2, or 3 percent. R. Eric Slagle read the possible exemptions into record:

1. Property owned and occupied as a domicile by any person who qualifies for low-income housing or low- or

moderate-income senior housing in the Town, as defined in Section 2 of said Act.

2. Class three, commercial, and class four, industrial, properties as defined in G.L. c.59, §2A.
3. \$100,000 of the value of each taxable parcel of residential real property.
4. \$100,000 of the value of each taxable parcel of class three, commercial property, and class four, industrial property as defined in section 2A of said Chapter 59.

R. Eric suggested to the Board to recommend exemptions number 1 and 3. The Board agreed. Another Town vote, ballot vote can only change the percentage and exemption once adopted. Every community always gets the first round not necessarily the others. Once it is adopted it must be maintained for 5 years. The match is based on the funds the Town will bring in not the percentages. For every 5K of your tax bill you will be paying less than a hundred dollars towards the surcharge. It is based on the value of the house. These incoming funds will help supporting Town services and needed repairs to important buildings.

Motion was made by Veronica Kell and seconded by Theresa Morse to put the CPA question on the Annual Town Meeting warrant with the language provided including a 2% surcharge and exemptions 1 and 3. Motion was made with all in favor unanimously.

4.8 Review FY24 Budget Summit.

Changes to the Budget FY24:

- Set aside additional funding for the snow and ice, 25K added. Deficit of the snow and ice, the number will be larger since it went down before the last ice storm.
- Line 20: 25K for the MART Park and Ride cost.
- Health Care numbers were trued up: staffing increase in Water Department Employees and more staff eligible for Health Care (recap sheet), the placeholder is a soft number right now.
- Peg Access Transfer: Placeholder as number is not known yet for the 3rd quarter (then this will reflect 3 quarters worth of money from FY23). Possible rewording of TCAM agreement.
- Housing Authority number R. Eric Slagle will doublecheck that number.
- The three supervisors have not been corrected yet.
- Recreation and Deputy Director were not talked to yet.
- Paving money is kept if override does not pass this money may be used. This may be an area to make up funds without eliminating services.

4.9 Discussion of Townsend Historical Society request for painted crosswalk.

V. WORK SESSION:
5.0 ARPA Projects

- Line 563 Curbside pickup for trash. That override was 600K the cost now is at 755K. The costs were absorbed into the budget for this year. But the trash contract will be reevaluated. This budget is for the last year of the contract. R. Eric Slagle will reach out to the Board of Health.
- Changes in staffing consolidations are not in this budget. Changes will be a reduction in the costs.

Chaz Sexton-Diranian read letter received from the Historical Society into record. R. Eric Slagle explained that based on conversations held with engineers for the painted bike lanes in that area it is way too close to the intersection to put a crosswalk, which would make it potentially more dangerous. This was previously asked about Kittleson and Associates when Bill Rideout requested it. Goes against their recommendations. Veronica Kell read the letter from Kittleson into record. There is the ability for a guard to stop traffic crossing the street. The Board is taking no action at this point. But will be looked at for future grants.

- ADA Compliance on Town Playground (deferred) ARPA Project request/allocation form, identify the project the funds will be taken from. Estimate of the ADA compliance, grant funding checking for that. Park Grant may be something deadline July 13th and supplement with ARPA money. Chaz Sexton-Diranian will talk with the Kids Kountry Playground Committee.
- Assessment of Repair/Maintenance needs at Town Buildings (infrastructure sidewalks, R. Eric Slagle is to ask Jen from Capital Strategic and digital records and fill out two allocation forms for the two new projects for the next meeting).
- Allocate \$10,000 for Bandstand Repairs/Improvements (Recap Sheet has an additional 10K in for the Bandstand as a free cash allocation) OTHER COVID RELATED EXPENSES – ARPA 15 Chaz Sexton-Diranian will be in contact with the Bandstand Committee. Quotes to move forward and lead paint removal any time now.

All 3 would be eligible under ARPA. Checked with Jen from Capital Strategic.

The Town can spend the ARPA funds on any municipal purpose because 3 MIO in revenue replacement general government. Police records and Library records, digital records new contract.

In process of finishing Union negotiations

5.1 Town Administrator Updates and Reports

- Executive Session in next weeks with updates.
- RFPs for Town buildings will be finished soon, to be presented on the 4th.
- Bids due for the bike lanes are next week.

5.2 Reports from Board liaisons

5.2.1 General Government

5.2.2 Elected Boards

5.2.3 Public Safety

Theresa Morse: Energy Committee: New grant out, eligibility talks for hybrid and electric vehicles forwarded to R. Eric Slagle to look at. The Finance Committee had a meeting on 3/28/23 at 4PM.

Chaz Sexton-Diranian: Water Department in July on a Monday or Tuesday talks with Senator Cronin around 11AM for a groundbreaking. The Planning Board concern in regard to membership. Volunteers are needed. Shout out to the Public to get involved.

Veronica Kell: Housing Trust: request an email address for a that@townsendma.gov. Community One-Stop - looking to apply for community space with park and ride and fitness court. First round to the Commonwealth places program. The fitness court will be dropped, because of 50K max money which required a local match of 50%.

5.3 Announcements/Communications

- Theresa Morse read into record: Clear pads for Veterans Women's wellness retreat and VIP visitors this Saturday. Highest ranking officers and females in the area are coming for a speech and lunch.
- MART – Letter of acceptance received.
- Planning Board Decision 5 Turnpike Road
- Resignation Joan Savoy from Conservation Commission
- The Chair accepted the client advisory from Town Counsel Supreme Judicial Court Ruling for open meetings and to not have public comment period as an open comment period and to be removed as an agenda item. If an issue needs to be discussed, a meeting request is to be placed with the Town Administrator.
- Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell to remove the public comment section from the Board of Selectmen meeting agenda. Motion was passed with all in favor unanimously. For any questions the Public can call the office and talk to the Town Administrator.

5.4 Next meeting:

5.5 Review and sign payroll and bills payable warrants out of session.

April 4, 2023

Motion to review and sign payroll and bills payable warrants out of session was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell.

Motion was passed with all in favor unanimously.

VI: EXECUTIVE SESSION:

None

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Veronica Kell at 9:17PM

Recording of meeting found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xtq3KvbsZ1A&list=PLQpCwUSpXeCa-inxdzK0jQMgEx3wCFBbE&index=3>

Minutes submitted by Sabrina Moore on 05/02/2023.