

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MAY 1, 2019
REGULAR SESSION

Members Present: David Andrade, Nelson Almeida, David Viera,
Chris Zorra, Justin Sullivan

Town Administrator: Shawn E. Cadime

Chairman Andrade opened the meeting at 7 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence for the recent shooting victims in California and North Carolina.

He announced that, in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 20(f), anyone who wanted to record the meeting must notify the Chairman. The Board of Selectmen is recording via audio and visual.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE OPENINGS UPDATE

Mr. Viera announced that volunteers are needed on the Cultural Council (2 BOS), Economic Development Committee (2 BOS), Energy Committee (1 BOS), Historical Commission (3 BOS), Recycling Committee (up to 4 BOS), Taxation Aid Fund Committee (1 BOS).

COMMUNITY SPEAKS – None.

PRIORITY MATTERS

**Ceremonial Induction of Brian DiCristoforo to the Position of Full-Time Police Officer
Patrolman 3rd Class**

Deputy Chief David Enos advised the Board had approved the hiring of Mr. DiCristoforo last year. He then attended the Springfield Police Academy.

Patrolman DiCristoforo was sworn in by Town Clerk Florice Craig. His wife, Megan, pinned his badge.

Presentation of an Invasive Plants Study by Bethany Smith

Conservation Agent Jennifer Miller introduced Bethany Smith, a senior at Seekonk High School. She explained her independent study project on Invasive Species.

The Superintendent of Schools and two School Committee members were in attendance. Mr. Cadime joked that it would be appropriate to motion that Ms. Smith would not have to take final exams.

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Consider the Appointment of Melissa Miller Emerson to the Taxation Aid Fund Committee

Mr. Cadime advised he interviewed Ms. Emerson. She has a financial background and is looking forward to helping seniors. He highly recommended the appointment. Ms. Emerson was in attendance.

A motion was made by Mr. Almeida, seconded by Mr. Viera, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Melissa Miller Emerson to the Taxation Aid Fund Committee.

Accept the Resignation of Justin Labonte as a Firefighter/Paramedic from the Fire Department, Effective April 1, 2019

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Almeida, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept the resignation of Justin Labonte as a Firefighter/Paramedic with the Seekonk Fire Department, effective April 1, 2019.

Mr. Viera asked why it just came before the Board. He felt the Board should have gotten it at the end of March.

Mr. Cadime said the reason for the resignation is that he was unable to fulfill the paramedic requirement.

Consider the Conditional Offer of Employment to Russell Pray as a Probationary Third Class Firefighter

Acting Chief Alan Grocott advised that Mr. Pray is a 20 year veteran of the East Providence Fire Department and he obtained the rank of captain. He requested the appointment of Russell Pray as a probationary third class firefighter.

Mr. Cadime recommended the appointment.

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To extend a conditional offer of employment to Russell Pray as a Probationary Third Class Firefighter.

Prior to the vote Mr. Almeida asked what happened to make him leave the East Providence position?

Mr. Viera noted that Mr. Pray previously was a full time firefighter in Seekonk. He wanted to make sure that Mr. Pray will start at entry level. He asked about the Addendum to the Contract regarding the payback.

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Acting Chief Grocott explained the Addendum is for those who attend the academy. Firefighter Pray doesn't need to do that. Also, Mr. Pray paid out of pocket for the paramedic status.

Consider the Conditional Offer of Employment to Douglas Leon as a Probationary Third Class Firefighter

Acting Chief Grocott advised that Mr. Leon is currently with the Bourne Fire Department. He is a Seekonk resident and wants to work where he lives. He has an Associate Degree in Criminal Justice and is one credit away from holding a degree in fire science.

Mr. Cadime recommended the appointment.

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Almeida, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To extend a conditional offer of employment to Douglas Leon as a Probationary Third Class Firefighter.

Consider the Conditional Offer of Employment to Ingrid Gustafson for the Position of Secretary for the Department of Public Works

Asst. DPW Superintendent Scott Olobri recommended the conditional offer of employment to Ingrid Gustafson. He noted the position has been vacant for some time. It is a part-time position which is budgeted for full-time effective July 1, 2019.

Mr. Olobri recognized and thanked Mrs. Jan Parker who has been filling in at the DPW office. She will continue to fill in during the transition.

Mr. Cadime recommended the appointment.

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Zorra, and it was

VOTED: 4 Ayes; 1 Nay; To extend a conditional offer of employment to Ingrid Gustafson.

The vote: Mr. Viera – Aye; Mr. Zorra – Aye; Mr. Sullivan – Aye; Chairman Andrade – Aye; Mr. Almeida – Nay.

Prior to the vote, Mr. Zorra asked how many people had applied for the position.

Mr. Olobri said about 150.

Mr. Almeida noted that she has had several jobs.

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Mr. Olobri felt it was due to financial stabilization of the jobs.

Consider the Appointment of Deputy Fire Chief Alan Grocott to the Position of Acting Fire Chief

Mr. Cadime noted that Chief Healy's last day of employment was Friday. He recommended the appointment of Deputy Chief Alan Grocott as Acting Chief until the position is filled.

A motion was made by Mr. Almeida, seconded by Mr. Viera, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Deputy Chief Alan Grocott as Acting Fire Chief.

Board members agreed this is a bittersweet time with the retirement of Chief Healy.

PUBLIC HEARING

Consider the Request for an "Iron Dog Competition" Special Event Promoted by Working Dog Magazine to be held at Grady's Auto, 250 Pine Street, Seekonk, MA

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To open the public hearing at 7:29 p.m.

Chairman Andrade said this is a follow up to discussion at the previous meeting.

Mr. James Lamonte of Roman K9 Academy showed a video of K9 competition.

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To close the public hearing at 7:41 p.m.

Mr. Viera asked Mr. Lamonte to talk about explosives.

Mr. Lamonte said this course is lined with mock explosives. They don't have real narcotics or explosives.

He thanked Karlene and Paul Germane for allowing him to use their facility – Grady's Auto.

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Zorra, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the request for an "Iron Dog Competition" special event to be held at Grady's Auto, 250 Pine Street, Seekonk, MA on June 7, 2019.

LICENSE HEARING

Consider the Request for a Change of Manager of an Annual On-Premise All Alcohol Beverage Liquor License for RARE Hospitality Int. Inc., d/b/a LongHorn Steakhouse #5518, 80 Highland Avenue, Seekonk, MA; Anderson Colombo to be Manager (tabled from April 17, 2019)

This is the second time that no one showed up to represent LongHorn.

Mr. Cadime confirmed that they were notified as well as the corporate office.

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To indefinitely postpone the request for a change of manager at LongHorn Steakhouse.

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Zorra, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To notify LongHorn in Seekonk, the corporate office, and the ABCC, via certified mail, return receipt requested, that for the second time no one has represented LongHorn at a license hearing for change of manager.

OLD BUSINESS – None.

NEW BUSINESS

Joint Meeting with the School Committee and Aitken School Expansion Building Committee to Discuss and Approve the Ballot Question Relative to the Aitken School Expansion

School Committee Chairwoman Kim Sluter and Supt. of Schools Dr. Rich Drolet were in attendance as well as members of the School Committee, the building committee, the OPM, and the design team.

Ms. Sluter thanked the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee for the support of the two warrant articles.

The building committee and the School Committee met the previous day. Article 23 will be amended on the floor from \$2M to \$1.5M for the air conditioning. Article 22 will be increased from \$9.7M to \$10.5M to include every capital improvement item for Aitken School. There should be no further items for the Aitken School for about ten years when some of the roof will need replacement.

Mr. Greg Smalley, Architect, and OPM Michael Quinlan were in attendance.

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Mr. Smalley had drawings to show the plan. They have developed a site plan. They are looking to bring all educational and recreational activities within the circular area for safety. The parent drop-off area will be separated from the bus drop-offs.

The Health Department had a statement verifying that the septic system has the capacity for the expansion of the school. The Planning Board needs to have an advisory review on that. They will need a variance for a lot coverage. The road at the back of the school will be widened to allow fire apparatus to pass. Conservation raised an issue regarding a perennial stream.

The plan calls for six kindergarten and pre-kindergarten rooms. Each has a bathroom sized for little ones. There are three rooms for special education. There is a project-based learning space. The electricity will be upgraded and boilers replaced. Sinks and countertops will be replaced. Security features on the back will be upgraded. The Building Commissioner is on board with the plan at this point.

The increase from the \$9.7 to \$10.5 includes projects that were moved from the Capital Improvement Plan.

Mr. Smalley talked about a new slight butterfly approach to the roof.

He explained by narrowing and shortening the windows the price went down between 8 and 9 percent on the glass. It is a hurricane rated glass. At the request of the principal, a secondary egress path will be put in to get outside without using the corridor.

They will use modular units for cooling which will go on the roof, will not be visible from Newman Avenue, and are much quieter.

Mr. Quinlan explained different scenarios on funding. The Building Committee accepted the preliminary estimates to include the base project with the sinks and unit ventilators at \$10.5M. He cautioned that this is an estimate. It has not been bid. Contingencies were built in. The project will be bid in late summer and awarded in early fall. They also built in contingencies for owner for possible unseen conditions, change orders, and project soft costs. The Building Committee voted on the two warrant articles.

A special election is scheduled for June 10. The Town meeting is on May 13, 2019, at 7 p.m. If all goes well, the project will be bid in late July and the contract awarded in early September.

Mr. Viera suggested using Lexan glass.

Mr. Smalley said glass has to have ability to withstand impact which Lexan has but lacks the thermal efficiency. It is the best glass that would fit into the budget.

Mr. Almeida asked for a completion date.

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Mr. Smalley estimated September 2020 at the start of the school year.

Mr. Sullivan asked about the soils.

Mr. Smalley said there is clean soils but not structural fill. They will work with DPW to see if they have a place to store it for other uses.

Mr. Zorra said the univents have to be replaced because parts are not available.

A motion was made by Mr. Viera seconded by Mr. Sullivan, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the ballot question for Article 22.

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the ballot question for Article 23.

Mr. Tom Benoit of 80 Ferncliffe Road asked about the \$1M.

Mr. Cadime said the \$1M is not included in the debt exclusion.

Mr. Viera said there is a lot of criticism about the air conditioning.

Mr. Smalley explained that, in bringing the older buildings up to code, the requirement is to bring in outside air and put in ventilation and better heating systems. The school year has also been extended, starting prior to Labor Day and ending in late June.

Chairman Andrade said it also extends the life of the building.

Mr. Viera felt it is a good idea to inform the public prior to Town Meeting.

Supt. of Schools Dr. Rich Drolet stated that \$30,000 is added into the School Department budget for air conditioning. It will take many years to implement this. It will start with the second floor at the high school.

Mr. Almeida asked if additional staffing will be needed with the addition at Aitken School.

Dr. Drolet said additional special education staff will be hired for the Martin School.

Consider Setting the Date for a Special Election

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To hold the special election on Monday, June 10, 2019.

Consider the Proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Seekonk and Southeastern Regional Planning and Economics Development District (SRPEDD)

Town Planner John Aubin III explained the MOU relates to the Green Communities designation.

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Southeastern Regional Planning and Economics Development District for the implementation of the Department of Energy and Resources' Regional Energy Planning Assistance Grant.

Discussion of Proposed Playground to be located at Town Hall Grounds at 100 Peck Street

Recreation and Parks Director John Pozzi explained why the Town Hall grounds were selected as the site for the playground. The Town owns the land, the picnic area and trails are there and it is centrally located. It will be a designation park. Public Safety is in the area and it is off the roadway. The surface being put in requires little or no maintenance.

Mr. Cadime noted the trail leads to the YMCA and the senior center as well.

Mr. Viera questioned why the amount from CPC is \$300,000 but the cost of the playground is at \$385,000.

Mr. Cadime said the entire package was submitted to the CPC. They came back with the \$300,000. There are grants available. There might be surplus funds from Parks & Recreation and other DPW projects. It was his intention not to have the playground on this warrant; but, it was the Board's decision.

He noted the initial plan for this area was to have all town buildings in one place.

Mr. Olobri said DPW would do some of the work. The Town invested about \$363,000 on the trails.

Chairman Andrade said there should be a full presentation to bring to Town Meeting. He supports the playground but he felt it should not be presented to Town Meeting at this time. He doesn't want to see it fail.

There was discussion about the location of bathrooms. Currently, bathrooms are not included in the dollar amount.

Mr. Sullivan noted originally he was against it. He said not all questions have been answered. A lot of people are questioning \$300,000 of taxpayer dollars.

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Mr. Viera concurred with Chairman Andrade.

Chairman Andrade felt they would be in a better position for Fall Town Meeting. Any grants might be in place.

Mr. Zorra suggested a meeting prior to Town Meeting.

Mr. Almeida asked about liability insurance.

Mr. Cadime said the Town has general liability insurance.

Mr. Almeida asked about a warranty on the playground.

Mr. Jay Cook, the playground provider, said any steel components would have a lifetime warranty. Moving parts have a five-year guarantee.

Mr. Almeida asked if the price would change if the playground is moved to the Fall Town Meeting.

Mr. Cook said no change.

Mr. Almeida stated he researched and found that pocket playgrounds are about \$100,000. He felt the \$385,000 is reasonable. He thanked Mr. Cook for allowing DPW to do some of the work.

Chairman Andrade felt a cost comparison would be beneficial toward selling the project to residents.

Mr. Viera asked Mr. Olobri if he would have a plan if this doesn't pass at Town Meeting.

Mr. Olobri said expanding on the site and a four to five year plan for the future.

Discuss and Assign Committee and Board Updates

Chairman Andrade explained all committees are given tasks when formed. Some are liaisons of the Board.

Mr. Viera felt it is a burden on the entire committee to come before the Board.

Chairman Andrade said he is referring to the Chair. Ms. Testa will reach out to them and schedule a date.

Consider Accepting the Donation of \$500 from Linda Roy for the Animal Shelter

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept the \$500 donation from Linda Roy to the Animal Shelter.

Consider Accepting Donations Totaling \$2,237 from Various Donors for the Animal Shelter

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Zorra, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept donations totaling \$2,237 from various donors for the animal shelter.

Board members extended their appreciation for the above donations.

Consider Adopting an “Employee Appearance/Dress Code” Policy
Consider Replacing Administrative Policy #32 “Use of Meeting Rooms Policy” with the “Policy and Regulations for Use of Town of Seekonk Meeting Rooms”
Consider Replacing Administrative Policy #12 “Computer and Internet Use Policy” with the “Access and Use of Telecommunications Systems Policy”
Consider Adopting the “Personal Social Networking Policy”
Consider Adopting the “Attendance/Punctuality Policy”

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To table the above items.

Consider the Approval of Regular Session Minutes of April 3, 2019 and April 10, 2019

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Almeida and it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept the Regular Sessions minutes of April 3, 2019 and April 10, 2019, as presented.

COMMUNITY SPEAKS

Mr. Tom Benoit asked about pulling the playground from the warrant.

Chairman Andrade said at Town Meeting.

Mr. Benoit said the main issue is the location. People don't want the playground near the trails. He suggested Howland Street.

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Chairman Andrade said the land belongs to Mr. Tapalian.

Mr. Benoit asked about an approved parking plan for the playground area.

Chairman Andrade said that would be in the presentation.

Mr. Benoit asked if DPW is overstaffed.

Chairman Andrade said he leans toward “thank you for what you do for the Town.” It is an in house evaluation that needs to be had.

OTHER BUSINESS

Discuss Other Topics not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chairman 48 Hours before the Meeting – None.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT – None.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN LIAISON REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Bristol County Advisory Board – None.

Aitken School Expansion Building Committee Report- None.

540 Arcade Avenue Building Committee Report

Mr. Viera stated that, with the exception of a few offices on the second floor, the rest of the building will be renovated for use by the senior center.

Chairman Andrade suggested the committee needs to come before the Board with any recommendations. He said the Superintendent of Schools and School Committee Chair expressed interest in using that building.

Mr. Viera said a member of that committee who is also on the School Committee said it was a good idea but not high on that person’s priority list.

Mr. Cadime said new information has been brought forward. It should be discussed further at the next meeting.

Mr. Viera said it is not fair to the building committee.

Mr. Cadime said it is a lack of communications.

Supt. Drolet said he would be happy to present two possible options to the building committee.

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Mr. Viera inquired about the Memorandum of Understanding between the Library and the Veterans Council.

He noted the name should be changed to the Veterans Council.

Mr. Zorra asked for an update on the Cole Street field lights. He suggested putting down turf.

Mr. Cadime said they need to know the cost of lights. Also, residents might complain about how long the lights will stay on.

Mr. Zorra said the fields are in very high demand.

Mr. Almeida said he attended the Save-A-Pet Auction. They made almost \$20,000. He thanked all those involved.

He announced the Spring Town Meeting is on Monday, May 13, 2019 at 7 p.m. at the high school. The budget is \$57M.

Chairman Andrade added there are other items of interest on the warrant. He urged residents to attend Town Meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Almeida, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To take a 5-minute recess at 9:51 p.m.

The vote: Mr. Almeida – Aye; Mr. Sullivan – Aye; Mr. Viera – Aye; Mr. Zorra – Aye; Chairman Andrade – Aye.

The meeting reconvened at 10 p.m.

Appointment of Brian DiCristoforo to the Position of Full-Time Police Officer Patrolman 3rd Class

In order to be consistent with other appointments, Mr. Cadime requested the Board formally vote to appoint Officer DiCristoforo.

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Brian DiCristoforo to the position of full-time Police Officer Patrolman 3rd Class.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 10:07 p.m., Mr. Viera motioned, seconded by Mr. Zorra, to go into Executive Session to conduct strategy sessions with respect to negotiations with the Parks and Recreation Director, per M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(2), to conduct strategy sessions with respect to negotiations with Fraternal Order of Police MASSCOP Local 215 per M.G.L. Chapter 30A, 21(a)(3), to conduct strategy sessions with respect to negotiations with the Seekonk Public Library Employee Association per M.G.L. Chapter 30A Section 21(a)(3) as having discussion in open session would be detrimental to the litigation or bargaining position of the Town and to consider the approval of Executive Session minutes of April 3, 2019; not to return to Open Session.

The vote: Mr. Viera – Aye; Mr. Zorra – Aye; Mr. Almeida – Aye; Mr. Sullivan – Aye; Chairman Andrade - Aye.

Respectfully submitted,

David Viera, Clerk

Prepared by:

Patricia Gamer, Secretary

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Items Distributed at the May 1, 2019 Board of Selectmen Meeting

Deputy Chief of Police David F. Enos, Jr. – re: Ceremonial Induction of Brian DiCristoforo as full time police officer Patrolman 3rd Class

Talent Bank form for Melissa Miller Emerson for Taxation Aid Fund Committee

Resume and application for Ingrid Gustafson - DPW Secretary

Information on Iron Dog Competition Special Event

Documents for change of manager – Longhorn Steakhouse

Memorandum of Understanding with SRPEDD – Regional Energy Planning Assistance Grant

Linda Roy - \$500 check for animal shelter

Various donations for animal shelter

Employee Appearance/Dress Code Policy

Use of Meeting Rooms Policy

Computer and Internet Use Policy

Personal Social Networking Policy

Attendance/Punctuality Policy

Minutes of April 3 and April 10, 2019