

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
JUNE 27, 2019
SPECIAL MEETING

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

Absent: David Viera

Town Administrator: Shawn E. Cadime

Chairman Andrade opened the meeting at 7 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence.

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

BOARD AND COMMITTEE OPENINGS UPDATE

Mr. Almeida announced that volunteers are needed on the Capital Improvement Committee (1 Board of Selectmen appointment), Cultural Council (2 BOS), Economic Development Committee (2 BOS), Energy Committee (1 BOS), Historical Commission (2 BOS), Recycling Committee (up to 4 BOS), Taxation Aid Fund Committee (1 BOS).

COMMUNITY SPEAKS – None.

PRIORITY MATTERS

Consider the Appointment of Nicole Bourgeois to the Position of Senior Secretary to the Fire Chief

Mr. Cadime recommended the appointment of Ms. Bourgeois. He said she has done a phenomenal job at the Police Department. She will be an asset and it will be great with the current transition at the Fire Department.

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

VOTED: To appoint Nicole Bourgeois to the position of Senior Secretary to the Fire Chief.

Consider Posting the Position of Executive Administrative Assistant to the Chief of Police

Mr. Cadime requested, Mr. Sullivan motioned, Mr. Zorra seconded, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To authorize the Town Administrator to post the position of Executive Administrative Assistant to the Chief of Police.

Discussion and Consideration of Business Plans and Host Community Agreement Proposals for Retain Marijuana Establishments

Deputy Police Chief David Enos was in attendance.

Mr. Cadime reviewed the criteria established by the Board of Selectmen, as follows:

Knowledge and understanding of licensing procedures

Prior Cannabis procedures

Quality of business plan

Proposed development timeline

Potential for job creation

Community connection and local residency

Financial commitments and other incentives

Parking and traffic management

Geographic diversity in proposed locations.

Solar Therapeutics, Inc., 1400 Brayton Point Road, Somerset, MA

Edward Dow, CEO, and Michael Allen, Chief of Security, presented their proposal.

They had an application of intent. They have an extensive and comprehensive plan.

Mr. Dow spoke about their location in Somerset, MA. They have medical and recreational licenses as well as cultivation, retail, manufacturing and processing licenses. They hope to be a partnership with Seekonk. They want to establish around this area.

Mr. Allen's background is law enforcement. He grew up in Pawtucket, RI. He worked in the Rochester, New Hampshire Police Department, serving as chief for the last five years.

He has been a security consultant for the Cannabis industry.

Mr. Dow distributed their proposal.

They purchased the Supreme Coffee Shop location on Route 6 in Seekonk. He talked to the Seekonk Police Department and rented an additional location for parking. They developed a plan to shuttle patrons. They have a deal in place with the owner of land behind them for 4 1/2 acres. That will happen in the future for ample parking.

That site will employ 20 people. They try to maintain community involvement and offer charitable donations.

Mr. Allen said he developed a security plan and solicited feedback and input from the Police Chief.

They conducted security assessments of local business. They incorporate crime prevention through environmental design.

There are three different levels of access in the building. Level 1 – must go through electrical control door; Level 2 - customers are brought through the facility and educated on products; and Level 3 - storage rooms and back office space and vaults. Level 3 is very limited. It is a very secured facility regulated by the Cannabis Control Commission. Only people age 21 and over get into the facility by showing positive verification. Employees are trained in anti-diversion.

Deliveries are made in an unmarked vehicle. There is adequate lighting in the parking lot and alarm systems and video cameras on the interior and exterior. Mr. Allen said it will be more secure than a bank.

Mr. Dow would like to hire 50% of the staff from Seekonk. They will offer a yearly audit to the town.

Only medical and no employees parking on site. Others have to come in by trolley.

Chairman Andrade asked how to regulate that.

Mr. Dow said with a handicapped placard.

Mr. Allen said there will always be one security person in the vestibule and police details on site. They will do whatever the community wants to makes this safe and secure and minimally impact services in the area. They will work closely with Police and Fire Departments.

Mr. Cadime asked about the quality of life issues. He also asked what the positions would be and the salary range.

Mr. Dow said there won't be any cultivation so there should be no odor. They have to follow protocol. They are not allowed to throw away products. Packages delivered to the facility are pre-sealed.

Mr. Sullivan asked if there will be edible and beverages.

Mr. Dow said they do not have beverage products. They will have topical related projects. Nothing to be ingested.

He said majority of jobs are retail - part time. There will be five managers of some capacity and at least five security staff. Salaries range from \$15 to \$20 per hour. They are trying to hire employees right now.

Mr. Dow said security individuals will not be armed.

Mr. Allen said the ideal candidate is a retired police officer or someone with a background in law enforcement.

Mr. Almeida referred to page 26 of the proposal. There is a decrease in three-year projections.

Mr. Dow explained the market will not be so strong and competition will increase. Although sales may increase, profit margins will not stay the way they are now.

Mr. Almeida noted that Seekonk has a sign by-law.

Mr. Dow said they might have to have security people working as parking attendants at first.

Mr. Allen said they can use the website to direct customers where to park.

Mr. Andrade requested that Mr. Cadime check with legal about including a restriction on the license that there has to be a detailed officer on hand until additional parking lot is secured.

Mr. Dow agreed to that. He felt they should get the lot within six months.

There was discussion about having cameras to capture cars entering and exiting. The Police Department will have access to the camera system.

Mr. Sullivan asked about the retail model.

Mr. Dow said they need to have a range of products. They are trying to keep prices reasonable and high quality products.

His firm is allowed three recreational and three medical licenses. This facility will supply other dispensaries as well.

Chairman Andrade said Mr. Dow has a significant investment in that facility. It is not a fly by night establishment.

Mr. Dow said he invested \$11M in the Somerset, MA facility.

Mr. Almeida questioned whether there is a plan in place to deal with traffic from the Seekonk Speedway.

Mr. Dow said they would have to mitigate that. He noted the hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Chairman Andrade felt it would not be a problem with the additional lot.

Mr. Allen said they want to work in partnership with the town.

Mr. Zorra inquired about security in the additional lot. He would like to see cameras on the shuttle.

Mr. Dow said they need to get insurance on the lot

Chairman Andrade suggested that Board members who haven't toured the facility in Somerset should do so within the next two weeks. There will be further discussion at the July 24, 2019 meeting. Mr. Dow will attend.

Mr. Chris Pelletier inquired about the financial commitment to the town.

Mr. Cadime suggested the applicants go through the proposal to make sure there is no sensitive information in order to put proposals on the website.

Mr. Sullivan emphasized this is a preliminary stage.

Metro Harvest

President Steve LaBelle, Thomas Gosselin, and consultant, were in attendance.

Mr. LaBelle stated that they purchased property at 1903 Fall River Avenue. The property consists of two buildings – one will be demolished and the other used to make a dispensary.

Mr. LaBelle advised that the consultant, Northeast Alternatives, provides the product and training for employees.

Northeast Alternatives runs the Fall River facility. They have been operating in Massachusetts a little over year. They have knowledge of all aspects of the business.

Metro Harvest is negotiating with two other communities.

Chairman Andrade asked how many employees and how many will be Seekonk residents.

Mr. LaBelle said approximately 50 employees – 65% would be town residents, if possible. Hopefully, retired police officers and military will apply. The starting salary is \$17 per hour at this facility. The hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. and 12 noon to 10 p.m. on Sunday.

Mr. Almeida noted Route 6 is a busy road and the Speedway generates a lot of traffic. It looks like all parking will be at the facility.

Mr. LaBelle said there will be about 70 parking spots.

Mr. Gosselin said deliveries will be made in the back.

Mr. LaBelle has no objection to detail officers but they have their own security 24 hours per day. A full security plan was included in the packet distributed to the Board. He will hire a director of security.

Mr. Almeida said this town is on well water.

Mr. LaBelle said they would be off the grid. He said, if they do cultivation, they would add onto the facility. The town would benefit from retail.

Mr. Almeida mentioned the Town's very strict sign by-law.

Mr. LaBelle said the site plan is in development.

Mr., Gosselin said it will be a really safe site. They will be a friendly neighbor. There will be cameras everywhere.

Chairman Andrade suggested that Board members should tour the building.

Mr. Sullivan asked who they are targeting in the retail plan.

Mr. LaBelle said it is a new market so it will be trial and error to see what products will sell. It is a diverse clientele.

He noted they have been accepted in New Bedford and will meet with the mayor on Monday.

They have made a commitment with the property in Seekonk.

Mr. Zorra asked about monitoring by Seekonk Police.

Deputy Chief Enos said the deputy fire chief and he can tour the facility and discuss it at the next meeting.

Mr. Cadime noted the town can issue two licenses. They will be in the same vicinity.

Mr. LaBelle said that is not a problem.

Mr. Cadime said the impact is 3% over five years. Solar offered to provide additional donations.

Mr. LaBelle said they would donate \$50,000 for the Police Department K-9s or whatever the Board wants to do.

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Chairman Andrade suggested they attend the Board meeting of July 24 for further discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

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

VOTED: To adjourn at 8:51 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

David Viera, Clerk

Prepared by:

Patricia Gamer, Secretary