

Select Board Meeting Minutes

March 4, 2020

Present: Mr. Jess Aptowitz, Chairman; Mr. Michael Trowbridge, Vice-Chair; Mr. Neil Rhein, Clerk; Mr. Frank DeVecchio and Mr. Steve Schoonveld. Mr. Kevin Dumas, Town Manager and Mr. Barry LaCasee, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director were also present.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERKS OFFICE

2020 JUN 24 A 10:16

MANSFIELD
MASSACHUSETTS

1. Call To Order Select Board Meeting - Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Aptowitz called the meeting to order at 6:30PM. He reminded everyone that the meeting was being broadcast live and taped for future broadcast on Mansfield Cable. He asked if there were any members of the audience recording, to which there was no response. He then invited the Girls Scouts to come forward and lead the pledge of allegiance.

2. Presentation of Proclamation for Girl Scout Week

Mr. Rhein read the proclamation for Girl Scout Week for the record. The Scouts then came forward to receive the proclamation. Mrs. Mary Dalton came forward and thanked the Board for the honor. She stated that those in attendance were representative of all the troops within the Town. She added that Mansfield has almost twenty troops and two hundred girls in the program as well as one hundred thirty adult volunteers. The Board members then thanked them for all the support they give to the community and the many projects they are involved in.

3. Discussion and Consideration to Abate Ambulance Receivables

Chief Boldrighini and Chief Desrosiers were present and came forward. Chairman Aptowitz started the discussion noting that it would be Chief Boldrighini's last day tomorrow and he thanked him for his years of service. The entire Board offered thanks and wished him a happy retirement. Chief Boldrighini read the memo that was addressed to the Board for the record in regards to the ambulance receivables. In summary the Town Auditors recommended the Town adopt a policy to abate receivables that were deemed uncollectable. This policy was adopted by the Select Board in June of 2017. On April 17, 2019 the Board voted to abate \$568,570.12, which was several years of uncollectable receivables and much of which should not have been billed initially. He was present tonight to ask the Board to abate ambulance receivables from Comstar which covers all the outstanding receivables through June 30, 2019 as the Fire Department now is working with ProEMS. ProEMS will not carry the outstanding receivables from Comstar. He then stated that it is expected that future abatements will be much less as ProEMS does not bill over the allowed rate for Medicare and Medicaid.

Motion: To abate the ambulance receivables in the amount of \$400,830.40 from Comstar which covers all outstanding receivables through June 30, 2019. (Rhein/Schoonveld) **Passes 5:0**

4. Consideration of Revised Taxi Regulations from the Mansfield Police Department

Mr. Dumas stated that this recommendation to revise the taxi regulations came from the Police Department. The first area that was amended was to add language to the current policy that hackney carriage drivers are to not leave vehicles unattended in the public way and that drivers are not allowed to let passengers exit the vehicle in the public way or while stopped in traffic. Also language was added to Section 11 that the driving and criminal histories are subject to review and should be free of any traffic related instances for the last five years. Any traffic infractions within the last five years are subject to the review by police and town manager to approve or deny the hackney license. Mr. Rhein asked if these rules apply to Uber and Lyft and Mr. Dumas responded that the State regulates Uber and Lyft and is looking at amended those regulations.

Motion: To approve the revised taxi regulations as presented. (Rhein/DelVecchio) **Passes 5:0**

5. Consideration of Revised Commercial Parking Lot Regulations

Mr. Dumas stated that there is only one amendment being suggested this year and that was to include the following language: "All private parking lots licensed in the Town of Mansfield must conspicuously display, in large letters that meet or exceed the letter size of the advertised name of the lot, that it is "Paid Parking" or "Free Parking" lot. The

price of admission shall also be advertised in the same manner. The spirit of this requirement is that the advertisement is large enough and clear enough to alert a driver at an appropriate distance to make an informed decision to either enter the lot, or to safely remain in traffic without disrupting the flow thereby creating an unsafe road condition."Mr. Rhein asked that this would avoid confusion but should also be done at the public parking lots and Mr. DelVecchio noted there is signage at the public lots, but that may not be as clear as it could be.

Motion: To approve the revised commercial parking lot regulations as presented. (Rhein/Trowbridge) **Passes 5:0**

6. Presentation by Community Gardens for Marijuana Cultivation

Mr. Steve Chorney, CEO and Mr. Douglas Rhodes, President of Community Gardens came forward and introduced themselves. Mr. Rhodes began the presentation to the Select Board on the Community Gardens project and their plans to build a 78,000 square foot marijuana cultivation and manufacturing facility on School Street. The company would be selling wholesale as well as a kitchen for manufacturing edible products. Mr. Rhodes noted the economic impact it would have on the Town as well as the fifty jobs it would bring to Mansfield. He stated the company has a strong commitment to the communities they build in. He stated that give back one percent of profits to local charities. He reviewed a summary of the security plan and then the business plan. Mr. Rhodes then introduced the founding partners. Mr. Dumas then stated that he has had several meetings with Community Gardens and Town staff to review the proposal and plans for the facility. He stated their application has been submitted to the Planning Board and a draft of a Community Host Agreement has been started. The Select Board asked several questions.

7. Discussion and Consideration of OPEB Funding Policy and Review of the OPEB Task Force Recommendation for the FY2021 Budget

Mr. Schoonveld began the discussion stating that it is two parts, first a proposed OPEB funding strategy and second a calculation of the use of the Employee Health Care Stabilization fund in the FY2021 budget. Mr. Schoonveld stated that it is not mandated that the Town fund the OPEB liability, but that it was good practice to do so. Mr. LaCasse read the draft policy noting a lot of the work was done by Mr. Stanbrook. The policy read "The General Fund's OPEB Liabilities will continue to be funded at its current level (\$400,000.00), but with the goal of reaching the Town & School finance statement expense amount. In extreme circumstances, the above goals can be temporarily suspended with a majority vote of the Finance Committee, Select Board, and School Committee." The Board had some comments and made some edits. Mr. LaCasse reviewed the four edits to be sure everyone was in agreement and the Board confirmed. Mr. Dumas asked that the revisions happen and this is added to the next Board meeting so that it is completed by the next Bond rating that is scheduled for the end of March.

Mr. Schoonveld stated that the second part of the discussion was focused on the funds in the Employee Health Care Stabilization fund and what is the best use of that fund. The OPEB Task Force was recommending that \$258,000 of that Fund be utilized in the FY21 budget to offset the health care cost subsidy of the pre-65 retiree population and recommended that the Town seek to increase the pre-65 retiree contribution to 30% of the monthly premium which is consistent with the active employees. In conclusion the Board was in agreement of these recommendations.

8. Discussion of North Main Street Fire Station and West Street Police Station Use

There was no update.

9. Budget Update

This was completed as part of the Town Managers report.

10. Resident Questions and Comments

There were no resident questions or comments.

11. Review and Approve Consent Agenda

All items on the Consent Agenda may be adopted with a single motion. Any member of the Select Board may request that an item be withdrawn from the Consent Agenda for separate consideration in which case that item will

be voted on separately from the remainder of the Consent Agenda. All licenses have been routed through Town Hall Departments and any conditions have been noted below.

a) Approval of Select Board Meeting Minutes for:

b) Vote To Approve Warrants:

- Town Vendor Warrant No. 20035T in the amount of \$440,071.26
- Electric Vendor Warrant No. 20035E in the amount of \$556,058.86
- Town Vendor Warrant No. 20036T in the amount of \$28,137.14

c) Permits and License:

- Consideration of 2020 Water Installers License for Brunelle Contracting LLC
- Consideration of 2020 Water Installers License for J Harding Co. Inc.
- Consideration of Banner Request for The Garden Club of Mansfield
- Consideration of Banner Request for Mansfield Band Parents
- Consideration of Banner Request for Keep Mansfield Beautiful
- Consideration of Celebration of Animals Event on September 12, 2020
- Consideration of Banner and Sign Request for the Celebration of Animals Event
- Consideration of 2nd Annual Egg Hunt for Mansfield Recreation

d) Proclamations:

Motion: To approve the consent agenda. (Rhein/Schoonveld) **Passes 5:0**

12. Consideration and Approval of Town Payroll Warrants:

- Town Payroll/Town Medicaid Payroll 20035PT in the amount of \$397,272.78

Motion: To approve Town Payroll/Town Medicaid Payroll 20035PT in the amount of \$397,272.78. (Rhein/DelVecchio) **Passes 4:0:1** (Aptowitz Abstained)

- Town Deductions Vendor Payroll 20035TV in the amount of \$124,258.91

Motion: To approve Town Deductions Vendor Payroll 20035TV in the amount of \$124,258.91. (Rhein/DelVecchio) **Passes 5:0**

- Town Payroll/Town Medicaid Payroll 20036PT in the amount of \$384,087.68

Motion: To approve Town Payroll/Town Medicaid Payroll 20036PT in the amount of \$384,087.68. (Rhein/DelVecchio) **Passes 4:0:1** (Aptowitz Abstained)

- Town Deductions Vendor Payroll 20036TV in the amount of \$118,647.67

Motion: To approve Town Deductions Vendor Payroll 20036TV in the amount of \$118,647.67. (Rhein/DelVecchio) **Passes 5:0**

- School Payroll/School Medicaid Payroll 20036PS in the amount of \$1,634,372.70

Motion: To approve School Payroll/School Medicaid Payroll 20036PS in the amount of \$1,634,372.70. (Rhein/Schoonveld) **Passes 3:0:2** (Trowbridge and DelVecchio Abstained)

- School Deductions Vendor Payroll 20036SV in the amount of \$531,114.92

Motion: To approve School Deductions Vendor Payroll 20036SV in the amount of \$531,114.92. (Rhein/Trowbridge) **Passes 5:0**

13. Correspondence

There were no correspondence items.

14. Town Manager's Report

Mr. Dumas provided a budget update, stating that the budget is balanced and a public hearing will be scheduled to have several departments come in for an update, including Police, Fire, DPW and School on April 15th. He stated the Town is closely watching COVID-19 and as of right now the risk is low here in Massachusetts and the Health Agent and Fire Chief are following the situation closely. He then provided the status on the following the Assessors position, SEMRECC Ground Breaking Ceremony, economic development, and the scheduled upcoming parking study workshop. He then stated that there was an \$84,000 positive remaining balance for snow and ice, \$739,102 will be received in Chapter 90 funding and the news that Columbia Gas was purchased by Eversource Energy. He

then noted that Mansfield ranked 65 out of 351 cities as the safest in Massachusetts and ranked 288 in the United States.

15. Select Board Member's Questions and Comments

Mr. Rhein thanked Mr. Dumas for the meeting with MASS DOT in regards to Keep Mansfield Beautiful's involvement with the entrance into Town off Route 95 onto Route 140 to clean it up and make it nice. He then thanked the Triad group for inviting him to present at the COA on trash and recycling.

Mr. Schoonveld thanked Mr. Dumas for the update on economic development and he noted articles in Sun Chronicle on a biotech facility coming to Plainville and stated these are the businesses we would like in Mansfield. He then stated that he attended Tri-Town Chamber Economic Development breakfast and were discussing the Norton Industrial Park and how does our zoning compared. Mr. Burke has compared Cabot Park to Norton and believes there are some small changes that Mansfield can make and the Planning Board is considering those at their meeting that would then be on the Town Meeting Warrant. This article would address better opportunities for height and then the open space requirement from the street to the building could be narrowed. He then noted that Attleboro received a grant to help fill downtown business storefronts by waiving the permit and inspection fees. Mr. Dumas noted that the IDC is looking to develop a recoverable grant program for Downtown businesses.

Mr. Trowbridge asked about the MBTA mini platforms opening. Mr. Dumas answered that he had a meeting with the MBTA and they stated that there was damage done to the new mini platform on the outbound side by the freight train. They are hoping for the end of March to open the outbound side and by the end of April for the inbound side. Mr. Trowbridge then asked about parcels for disposition and Mr. Dumas stated that after Town Meeting this would be an item looked at.

Mr. DeVecchio asked if there was anything further the Board could do to get the MBTA project expedited, but believed there wasn't as it is all under the State's control. He then commended the Town Clerk and Election staff on the election and noted how smoothly it went. He also hoped that many people would come out for the local election in May.

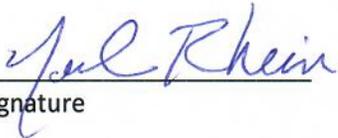
Chairman Aptowitz proposed for future agendas he would like to see one board or committee come in to each Select Board meeting to give a brief update. Mr. Trowbridge recommended Zoning and Planning Board come together so it can be discussed how they can help each other since they have overlapping roles. Mr. Rhein stated that there should be expectations given to each so they are prepared. Mr. Schoonveld recommended that each of the Select Board members have an assignment to specific Board or Committees and occasionally go to the meeting and have conversation with each of those Chairs regularly. Chairman Aptowitz asked for this to be a future agenda item.

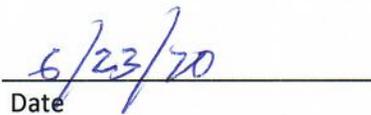
16. Any items not anticipated by the Chair 48 hours prior to this meeting

There were no items.

17. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the Select Board Meeting of March 4, 2020 at 9:12PM. (Trowbridge/Schoonveld) **Passes 5:0**


Signature


Date

Minutes prepared by Carrie Champagne