

Select Board Meeting Minutes
August 18, 2021

Present: Mr. Neil Rhein, Chairman; Mr. Michael Trowbridge, Vice-Chair; Mr. Frank DelVecchio, Clerk; Mr. Jess Aptowitz. Mr. Kevin Dumas, Town Manager and Mr. Barry LaCasse, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director were also present in meeting room 3A/B at Town Hall.

Not Present: Mr. Steve Schoonveld

Guests: Joel Brandwine, Mansfield Airport Commission. KiranKumar Gundavarapu, Lodging House Licensee.

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

Mr. Neil Rhein, Chairman called the meeting to order at 5:30PM. He then asked those present to state the Pledge of Allegiance. He reminded everyone that the meeting was being broadcast live and taped for future broadcast on Mansfield Cable. Chairman Rhein then asked for a moment of silence to recognize Mr. James Manning an employee at Mansfield Green who passed away recently.

2. Town Manager's Report

- Budget/Finance Update
- Economic Development
- Miscellaneous Items:

Mr. Dumas stated that due to numbers of COVID rising masks are going to be worn by employees beginning on Monday, August 23rd and noted that a memo will be going out to all employees. He stated that masks are encouraged for anyone entering Town Hall. Mr. Dumas then stated that CIP will be updated and are due on August 27th by Department heads and that CIP will meet on September 9th for an initial review. Mr. Dumas then updated the Board on the MSBA project submissions and the North Main Street Fire Street testing that has occurred. Mr. Dumas also provided an Economic Development update on the Discover Mansfield website and noted that Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn accounts have been created. He also has had meetings with businesses who are considering Mansfield for their business location and his work with Margaret Laforest from the Massachusetts Office of Business Development was successful this past week. Mr. Dumas stated that he expects reLeaf to open soon and when the store opens it will be by appointment only. Lastly, Mr. Dumas stated that median sales prices of homes as of the end of July is up 16.2 percent over last year and condominiums are down 10.1 percent.

Select Board Questions and Comments on Town Manager's Report

Mr. DelVecchio asked about masks at Town hall and asked if that includes the public. Mr. Dumas responded that we can not mandate that the public wear a mask, but recommend that they do when in public spaces in Town Hall like the meeting rooms. Mr. Trowbridge asked about the average home price and stated that he saw a comment online about reducing the tax split and noted that it makes it difficult when these residential values keep increasing and the commercial properties are not. He asked Mr. Dumas to explain what happens to residential taxes if the Board were to reduce the split. Mr. Dumas stated that the purpose of the split is to watch the trends between the values, but if the residential rates go significantly higher than you want to have the flexibility to go between the two sectors and have an equal burden on the tax levy. Mr. DelVecchio added that all the work Mr. Dumas is doing with Penta Communications on Economic Development is hopefully going to increase the commercial tax base. Mr. Dumas agreed anything the Town can do to fill space in a new way or a higher use it brings new growth. Mr. Rhein thanked Mr. Dumas for the Choose Mansfield website because it looks great and came together quickly. He also noted that LinkedIn and Twitter and having all social media channels working together is great. Mr. Rhein asked about reLeaf opening with appointment only and if that was only temporary and Mr. Dumas stated eventually it would become walk in.

3. Resident Questions and Comments

Mr. Peter Wiggins was in Mansfield today and walked around and can not wait to try Providence Bagel.

4. Update from the Airport Commission

Airport Commission Chairman, Joel Brandwine was present to give the Select Board an update including the run way project expansion, the easements for the Bike trail to Norton, the restaurant at the airport, Hanger 12 and grant opportunities and processes. The Select Board asked a few questions and thanked Mr. Brandwine for a great informative update.

5. Consideration of a Transfer Lodging House License for Park Pond Homes, LLC

Mr. KiranKumar Gundavarapu came before the Select Board to request a transfer of a Lodging House License. Mr. Gundavarapu stated that he was a real estate broker and has been a landlord for eight other properties. Mr. Rhein asked what a lodging house was and he answered that people rent rooms and there are common places and typically rented on a weekly basis.

Motion: To approve Lodging House License for Park Pond Homes, LLC pending routing through Town Departments. (DelVecchio/Trowbridge) **Passes 4:0**

6. Discussion and Consideration of Job Descriptions for Economic Development Director, Senior Executive Assistant, and Administrative Assistant

Mr. Dumas read a memo that he sent to the Board. In summary he was asking for the board's approval of three job descriptions, the first was an Economic Development Director, Senior Executive Assistant and Administrative Assistant. He also noted that in the future he will be coming before the Board to ask approval for an additional staff member for the HR Department which would focus on diversity, equity and inclusion as well as other areas that the department would like to focus on but are unable to at this point with 1,000 employees that they serve. He stated that Nancy Griffin would be the Senior Executive Assistant and the Administrative Assistant is a new position to help with the work load in the office and manage the phones, scheduling and department accounting.

Mr. Trowbridge stated that he supported all three of the positions and that the Board has been talking about an Economic Development position for awhile and asked if the job description included helping retain existing businesses that are in Town and Mr. Rhein commented that the word retain could be added to the last line. Mr. DelVecchio stated that this was exciting and serious consideration was taken and it was not rushed. He stated that now that we know what we are doing with Economic Development it makes sense to hire for this position and he stated that it is great to see the results of the work with Penta Communications. Ms. Deborah Penta was present and stated that it was exciting to see Mansfield at this point of considering this position. She stated that phase two has been moving well and with the Economic Development position coming it is important to have measurable outcomes and want to make sure the person has accountable objectives like the number of outreach calls per month, how many meetings and reporting on those meetings. Mr. Rhein suggested some minor edits to the Economic Development job description by including Downtown businesses and that the update to the IDC bullet point should also include an update to the Select Board. Mr. Rhein then asked if the position would take over any of the work that Penta Communications is doing and Mr. Dumas stated that Penta Communications would continue to be a resource and not as extensive as what it is today. Mr. DelVecchio noted that things in the Town Managers office has changed drastically. Mr. Dumas noted that having the support is necessary and lots of time was spent considering how to realign the office to meet the needs and make it better and help us meet the goals and in implementing the masterplan. Mr. Rhein then stated that the Board does not take adding employees lightly and careful consideration is taken and he knows that the office is busy and that he supports adding a new person to help others do their job better. Mr. Rhein asked if the new admin would be at the same grade as the Select Board admin and Mr. Dumas stated that it was.

Motion: To approve the job descriptions for Economic Development Director, Senior Executive Assistant and Administrative Assistant. (DelVecchio/Trowbridge) **Passes 4:0**

7. Consideration to Refer the Signs By-law Zoning Amendment to the Planning Board, with a copy of this vote to be transmitted to the Town Clerk

Mr. Rhein stated that it was an item that didn't occur before Town Meeting and Mr. LaCasse confirmed that this is so the Planning Board can hold a public hearing prior to Fall Special Town Meeting. Mr. Trowbridge asked when the warrant is opening and Mr. Dumas responded that it would be open on September 29th and close it on October 6th.

Motion: To approve referral of the signs by-law Zoning Amendment to the Planning Board with a copy of this vote to be transmitted to the Town Clerk. (DelVecchio/Trowbridge) **Passes 4:0**

8. Continued discussion of 50 West Street Property

Mr. Rhein provided a brief update stating that a meeting was held on August 4th with members of the State Delegation and members of Boards and Committees and Town Staff and the consensus was to move forward with the property being used for a COA. The OneStop Grant was applied for which will determine if the building is torn down and built new or if it will be a remodel. The notification of the grant would not be until the October/November timeframe. Mr. Rhein asked about the potential for a shovel ready plan and Mr. LaCasse responded that there may be an item at Special Town Meeting to provide a funding mechanism for the initial design work of the project and move us closer to a shovel ready plan. Mr. Trowbridge agreed that he wants the Board to keep the ball rolling.

9. Resident Questions and Comments

There were no resident questions or comments.

10. 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) Vote to Approve Meeting Minutes:

- August 4, 2021

b) Vote to Approve Warrants:

- Town Vendor Warrant No. 22006T in the amount of \$957,064.84
- School Vendor Warrant No. 22006S in the amount of \$2000.00
- Town Vendor Warrant No. 22007T in the amount of \$1,026,981.45
- Electric Vendor Warrant No. 22007E in the amount of \$2,865,798.64
- School Vendor Warrant No. 22007S in the amount of \$45,167.87

c) Permits and Licenses:

- Consideration of Specials Event Application from the Mansfield Women of Today for the Touch-A-Truck event on September 18, 2021
- Consideration of Special Events Application for September Fest on September 12, 2021
- Consideration of Banner Request for Scouts BSA Troop 51 for August 30th to September 13th

d) Consideration of Consideration of Proclamations:

Motion: To approve the consent agenda. (DelVecchio/Trowbridge) **Passes 4:0**

11. Consideration and Approval of Town Payroll Warrants:

- **Town Payroll/Town Medicaid Payroll 22006PT in the amount of \$421,674.91**

Motion: To approve Town Payroll/Town Medicaid Payroll 22006PT in the amount of \$421,674.91. (DelVecchio/Trowbridge) **Passes 4:0**

- **Town Deductions Vendor Payroll 22006TV in the amount of \$130,123.22**

Motion: To approve Town Deductions Vendor Payroll 22006TV in the amount of \$130,123.22. (DelVecchio/Trowbridge) **Passes 4:0**

- **Town FY21 Retro Payroll in the amount of \$191,119.28**

Motion: To approve Town FY21 Retro Payroll in the amount of \$191,119.28. (DelVecchio/ Trowbridge) **Passes 4:0**

- **Town Deductions Vendor Payroll 22006TVR in the amount of \$60,386.10**

Motion: To approve Town Deductions Vendor Payroll 22006TVR in the amount of \$60,386.10. (DelVecchio/ Trowbridge) **Passes 4:0**

- **Town Payroll/Town Medicaid Payroll 22007PT in the amount of \$446,162.18**

Motion: To approve Town Payroll/Town Medicaid Payroll 22007PT in the amount of \$446,162.18. (DelVecchio/ Trowbridge) **Passes 4:0**

- **Town Deductions Vendor Payroll 22007TV in the amount of \$148,780.38**

Motion: To approve Town Deductions Vendor Payroll 22007TV in the amount of \$148,780.38. (DelVecchio/ Trowbridge) **Passes 4:0**

- **School Payroll/School Medicaid Payroll 22007PS in the amount of \$1,480,766.46**

Motion: To approve School Payroll/School Medicaid Payroll 22007PS in the amount of \$1,480,766.46. (DelVecchio/ Trowbridge) **Passes 3:1** (Trowbridge Abstain, Delvecchio Aye as rule of necessity)

- **School Deductions Vendor Payroll 22007SV in the amount of \$440,217.66**

Motion: To approve School Deductions Vendor Payroll 22007SV in the amount of \$440,217.66. (DelVecchio/ Trowbridge) **Passes 4:0**

12. Correspondence

There were no correspondence items.

13. Select Board Member's Comments and Questions

Mr. Aptowitz had no questions or comments.

Mr. Trowbridge asked about the status of a tax title auction and next steps. Mr. LaCasse answered that until a new Treasurer/Collector is hired the item is on hold and now that an official policy is created an ad hoc committee will be established to decide which properties are included at an auction. Mr. LaCasse also stated that he would like it to be completed by an auction company similar to what was done in Seekonk that worked well. Mr. Trowbridge stated that he would like to have the ad hoc committee set a meeting date so the item is not forgotten about.

Mr. DelVecchio stated that he was excited about the progress made at the meeting with Economic Development.

Mr. Rhein stated that he wanted to give a shout out to their friends at Mansfield Electric for their quick turnaround on the outage. Mr. Rhein stated that in his neighborhood trees are growing over the sidewalk, making it impassable for anyone to walk on the sidewalk. He was wondering if the Town could put out a public announcement to encourage people to take care of pruning their trees. Mr. Dumas responded that he would look into this with DPW. Mr. Rhein stated that he knew a Master Plan Implementation workshop was discussed and Ms. Champagne noted it was scheduled for September 29th but Mr. Rhein was not available so another date will need to be established.

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

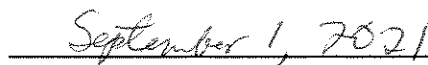
There were no items.

15. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the August 18, 2021 Select Board Meeting at 7:34PM. (DelVecchio/Trowbridge) **Passes 4:0**



Signature



Date

Minutes prepared by Carrie Champagne