

**MINUTES  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING  
MARCH 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2017 at 6:30PM  
TOWN HALL, SELECTMEN'S CONFERENCE ROOM**

**CALL TO ORDER/OPENING**

Chairman Belanger called the meeting to order at 6:33pm. Chairman Douglas Belanger, Vice Chair Harry Brooks, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair Thomas E. Buckley, III, Selectwoman Dianna Provencher, Selectman Michael Shivick, Town Administrator Kevin Mizikar, Assistant to the Town Administrator Kristen Forsberg and Student Liaisons Jaymi-Lyn Souza and Robert Kemp were in attendance.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

No members of the public provided comment

**1. SCHEDULED**

**a. 6:30pm - Pole Hearing – Stafford Street**

This item was continued to the March 20, 2017 meeting.

**b. 6:30pm – One Day Beer & Wine Permit – Becker College – March 15, 2017**

A motion was made by Mr. Brooks and seconded by Mr. Shivick to approve a one day beer and wine permit for Becker College on March 15, 2017 for the Leicester Business Association annual meeting and to waive the fee. The motion carried 4:1 with Ms. Provencher abstaining.

Mr. Buckley requested Becker update their paperwork from Quality and Atlas Beverages for their next application.

**2. CORRESPONDENCE**

**a. Student Liaison Reports**

The Student Liaisons presented highlights from their written report.

**b. Senior Center Donations**

A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Buckley to accept the list of donations in memory of Raymond Berzniak totaling \$382.00 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**c. Police Department Donation**

A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Buckley to accept the Leicester Senior Citizens Club donation to the Police Department in the amount of \$100.00. The motion carried unanimously.

**3. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Resignations**

None

**b. Appointments**

**i. Sergeant Promotion**

Mr. Mizikar stated there is an open Sergeant position in the Police Department as Sergeant Tebo retired last fall. Chief Hurley was in attendance and reported there is a current civil service promotion list in effect. Two officers from the top three on the list have been promoted. At the top of the list is Officer Craig Guertin. Officer Guertin

came on board in 2006 as a part time officer and was promoted to a full-time officer in April of 2007. Officer Guertin served our country in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Mr. Mizikar noted that in keeping with the Chief of Police's leadership and style, both the Town Administrator and the Chief met with all other sitting sergeants and discussed this matter and they were in agreement.

A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Buckley to appoint Officer Craig Guertin to the position of Sergeant. The motion carried unanimously.

**c. Employment Agreement – Suzanne Hall – Library Director**

Mr. Mizikar presented a 3.5-year employment agreement with the Library Director which would be retroactive to January 1, 2017 if approved. The Library Director's current contract is set to expire June 30, 2017. The proposed new contract includes a compensation increase as part of the Board's commitment to having fair compensation for employees but the rest of the terms remain the same.

A motion was made by Mr. Brooks and seconded by Mr. Buckley to approve a 3.5-year employment agreement with Suzanne Hall, Library Director. The motion carried unanimously.

**d. Town Hall Programmatic Accommodations Policy**

Ms. Forsberg presented a draft accommodations policy for the Town Hall. The policy addresses what to do in case someone comes to an inaccessible part of Town Hall, discusses signage that is to be posted and makes the Town Clerk's office the point of contact in case of accessibility issues. This policy will come back to the Board at their next meeting for a vote.

**4. DISCUSSION/OLD BUSINESS**

**a. Halloween**

The Board discussed various options for trick or treating including a change in hours and moving trick or treating to the last Saturday of October. Mr. Brooks asked for this to be looked into because of residents concerned with having trick or treaters on the road during rush hour under the current 5-7pm schedule. Chief Hurley noted that the Town can't legally stop individuals from going out trick or treating on Halloween itself so moving the date becomes problematic for the Police Department as they would have to put extra patrols on. Chief Hurley added that he was opposed to moving the hours only from 6-8pm because he has been approached by seniors who are concerned about people coming to their doors that late. Mr. Brooks noted the Lions Club had mixed feelings about moving trick or treating to Saturday but feel they could still have their party the Sunday before Halloween with this change. Over 70% of respondents to our Facebook poll were in favor of keeping trick or treating on Halloween. Mr. Buckley noted the Fire Chief would prefer trick or treating be kept on Halloween but would be in favor of the Town doing a trial for 2-3 years if the Board wants to try it.

A motion was made by Mr. Brooks and seconded by Ms. Provencher to change trick or treating hours to 6-8pm on Halloween.

Under discussion, Chief Hurley noted that the department can staff 6-8pm if the Board wants this as he can see the point that some parents don't get out of work until 5pm.

The motion passed 4:1 with Mr. Belanger casting the opposing vote.

Mr. Mizikar noted that some residents were flat out rude to Town staff and made inappropriate comments on social media. He asked the community to consider what they are putting out in a public forum and be considerate.

**b. Overlay Policy**

Mr. Mizikar noted this is the second meeting the Board has looked at the draft Overlay Policy which sets the amount of money and procedures for the amount of money the Town holds on an annual basis for abatements and taxes that may go unpaid including what funds can be made available for use in the operating budget. This policy formalizes the practice that is already in place.

A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Buckley to approve the Overlay Policy. The motion carried unanimously.

**c. Stabilization Policy**

Mr. Mizikar noted the Town has several other financial policies and it is our goal to formalize the practices that are in place. This Stabilization Policy sets the annual percentage of revenue that should be allocated to reserve funds. The policy recognizes the existing free cash policy and the procedure that 10% of free cash should be placed in stabilization annually. The policy does not deviate from the Board's current practice of putting funding into stabilization. This item will be reviewed again at the next Board meeting.

**d. FY'18 Capital Plan**

Mr. Mizikar presented the final FY'18 Capital Plan which includes 9 projects for a total cost of \$377,697 and has two changes:

- 1) Includes a financing plan for the Highway backhoe. Based on quotes received, the price can be reduced to \$41,000
- 2) Free cash is proposed to be used for all items

A motion was made by Mr. Buckley and seconded by Ms. Provencher to approve the FY'18 Capital Plan as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**e. FY'18 Budget**

Mr. Mizikar presented the draft FY'18 budget in depth. Key points included:

- The Town's AA bond rating was confirmed earlier in the fiscal year and is really the best rating a Town the size of Leicester can receive.
- Roughly 66% of the FY'17 budget has been expended. Adjustments will have to be made at Annual Town Meeting but there should be no need to request additional funds and no reserve funds have been used.
- In terms of stabilization, the Town is in a much stronger financial position. The total change in stabilization from FY'14 to the current year is 192.89%
- The FY'18 budget as proposed has an increase of 3.05% in revenues and is balanced with a little over \$2,000 unappropriated. No free cash is proposed to be used.
- Gross State Aid increase is 0.67% which constrains our ability to grow services for the Town. None of the options like adding a full time children's librarian, a parks and rec director or a consultant to work on Economic Development are on the table anymore.
- Expenditures are increasing at roughly the same percentage across all major categories for an average of 3.05%. Vocational tuition is the largest single category increase at 12.17%
- \$35,000 was moved out the Board of Selectmen budget and into a new "general government" category for costs shared across departments.
- The Police Department budget is set to increase 4% due to increased staffing to meet the staffing plan the Board committed to.
- The Street Lights budget is decreasing by 19% due to our solar power purchase agreement
- Veterans Services have decreased in demand so that budget is going down by 11%

- Health insurance is projected to increase by 11%; liability and workers comp insurance is projected to increase by 6% each.
- The overall budget is 3.04% greater than FY'17 and the Town is relying heavily on property tax as we continue to see State aid decrease. This is a level services budget with the exception of PD staffing and the Fire & EMS Headquarters operating costs.

A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Buckley to support the FY'18 budget as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**f. Adopt a Tree Program**

Ms. Forsberg presented the Adopt a Tree program, which asks for residents' assistance in taking care of newly planted trees. The Town received a grant from the Department of Conservation in the amount of \$6500 to help offset the trees which were removed by National Grid as part of their Hazardous Mitigation program by planting new trees. The Highway Department would plant and monitor the trees but residents would be asked to help with things like watering, mulching and picking up trash.

**5. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

The Town Administrator presented highlights from his written report.

**6. MINUTES**

**a. February 13, 2017**

A motion was made by Mr. Brooks and seconded by Mr. Shivick to approve the minutes of February 13, 2017. The motion carried unanimously.

**7. BOARD OF SELECTMEN REPORTS**

Mr. Shivick noted he is working with individuals to put together a Towtaid Park subcommittee and a cleanup will occur there at 9am-12pm on April 8th (rain date April 9<sup>th</sup>) which would count towards community service at the high school for those interested. Mr. Shivick requested water issues public hearings be added to the next agenda.

Ms. Provencher noted the Agricultural Commission met Tuesday and are getting a sign that says "Leicester is a farming community" and also discussed helping farmers find resources for fencing. Ms. Provencher also attended the Worcester Regional Airport Meeting with Mr. Belanger at which the new one stop flights to JFK were announced. Ms. Provencher stated she has been asked by several people in Town if she is running for re-election to the Board and she stated that she is.

Mr. Buckley thanked the incredible volunteers at the recycling center who work out in the frigid weather and are very dedicated. The recycling center will be collecting luggage for foster children through April 15<sup>th</sup> as they normally move their possessions in garbage bags. Anyone with two or more bags of Styrofoam must be \$3/bag. Mr. Buckley stated he will not be running again but it has been an honor to serve on the Board.

Mr. Brooks thanked Senator Moore for getting the sign on Route 9 fixed and noted tomorrow is community reading day at the Primary School and he would be reading a book about potato chips and bullying to a first grade class. April 23<sup>rd</sup> is early day cleanup starting at Becker College with bags and gloves provided by Home Depot. The Mothers Club will meet at 7pm tomorrow where Superintendent Paolucci will discuss the potential new middle school.

Mr. Belanger recommended flying out of Worcester Airport even if it costs a bit more for the parking and convenience to support the local economy. Once the JFK flights come online you will be able to connect to anywhere in the world from Worcester. Mr. Belanger noted the Worcester Regional Transit Authority has been in the paper lately in regards to small reductions in services and some increases in fares. There are no direct cuts to Leicester as service to Town has been consolidated in the past.

#### **8. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

No executive session was held.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Brooks and seconded by Ms. Provencher at 8:25pm. The motion carried unanimously.