

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 3, 2022 AT 6:00PM
TOWN HALL, SELECT BOARD CONFERENCE ROOM**

CALL TO ORDER/OPENING

Chair Antanavica called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Chair Rick Antanavica, Vice-Chair John Shocik, Second Vice-Chair Herb Duggan Jr., Selectman Dianna Provencher, Selectman Allen Phillips, Town Administrator David Genereux and Assistant Town Administrator Kristen Forsberg were in attendance.

1. SCHEDULED ITEMS

- a. **6:00pm – Officer John A. Caforio, Jr. – Recognition of service to the Town of Leicester**

This item was passed over

- b. **6:10pm - Common Victualler License Transfer of Ownership – Cheoy Lee III, 1205 Main St.**

Motion 010322-1b: A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Shocik to approve the transfer of ownership for Cheoy Lee III located at 1205 Main Street. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

- c. **6:15pm – Common Victualler License Change of Business Name- Las Cocinas Mexicanas- 1673 Main St.**

Motion 010322-1c: A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Shocik to approve the name change and 2022 common victualler renewal for Las Cocinas Mexicanas. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

- d. **6:20pm – Covid-19 Safety Precautions – Town Buildings**

Helen Ganas, Public Health Nurse, stated the total case count in Leicester as of this morning is 2,002. Last week the Town had 119 new cases and the week before there were 66 new cases. Ms. Ganas stated this is likely due to the Christmas holiday and the new omicron variant that is 2-3 times more transmissible among both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals. Up to 60-70% of new cases are due to the new variant. Leicester vaccination rates are slightly below State average at 65% fully vaccinated and 24% having received the booster.

Health Agent Francis Dagle stated that the State has reduced their quarantine guidelines for asymptomatic exposure from 10 days to 5 days as individuals infected are most contagious during the first 5 days. However, as the virus can still be transmitted during the 10-day period, some workplaces have decided to stick with 10-day quarantines. Mr. Dagle recommended the Town stay with the 10-day quarantine period as we have a small Town Hall and COVID could take out entire departments. Mr. Dagle also recommended the Board consider closing the Town Hall and the Senior Center based on the 119 cases last week and the projected surge for January. The necessity of the closure would be evaluated weekly. Mr. Genereux stated nearly every department in Town Hall has been affected by an outside COVID related incident to date, adding he is not looking to close Town operations but to require appointments be made and services be provided remotely whenever possible.

The Board discussed Becker working group meeting logistics. Emergency Management Director Jason Main stated that data is showing social distancing six feet apart for less than 15 minutes may not prevent transmission of this new variant. Mr. Main recommended holding meetings virtually over the next month as much as possible and wearing N95 (not KN95) masks. Mr. Genereux recommended holding Becker working group meetings spaced out in the Town Hall gym with masks required.

Motion 010322-1d1: A motion was made by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Duggan to adopt the recommendations put forth by Health Agent Francis Dagle to keep the 10-day quarantine policy, close the Town Hall and the Senior Center for next 30 days then reevaluate conditions, and hold meetings remotely whenever possible. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

Motion 010322-1d2: A motion was made by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Ms. Provencher to include the library in the previous closure vote. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No members of the public provided comment.

3. REPORTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Student Liaison Reports

The Student Liaisons provided updates from the Leicester Public Schools.

b. Report of the Town Administrator's Office

The Town Administrator presented highlights from the written report of the office.

c. Select Board Reports

The Select Board discussed various topics including happy new year, stay safe, potential 40B project on Willow Hill Drive, best of luck in the coming year, upcoming Becker working group meetings, thanks to neighbor on Waite Street who picked up two bags of trash at Community Field, we have a lot on our plate with the Becker acquisition and need to maximize the opportunity to get the most out of it for the Town to avoid an override or having to sell the property, get the maximum money for leases and sale of Becker buildings, add two additional members to the Becker Education Working Group, thanks to Captain Morris and Chief Dupuis on finding the new used pumper as it is a very impressive piece of equipment.

4. RESIGNATIONS & APPOINTMENTS

a. Appointment – Ryan Winslow – Commission on Disabilities

Motion 010322-4a: A motion was made by Mr. Duggan and seconded by Ms. Provencher to appoint Ryan Winslow to the Commission on Disabilities. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

b. Appointment – Joe Fontaine – Campus Security

c. Appointment – Gregory Gaumond – Campus Security

Mr. Genereux stated that security is needed for the Becker Campus check buildings to ensure they are not broken into and/or damaged. Both positions would be temporary in nature. Mr. Fontaine would be a hourly employee submitting a timesheet every two weeks and would be paid out of the \$350K raised at Town Meeting for Becker incidental expenses. Mr. Gamond currently resides in the caretaker appt of Hampshire dorm and performs nightly building checks. Mr. Gamond would continue to do nightly checks and will pay the Town \$300 in rent to continue to live on campus. Mr. Genereux stated these are not police officer type positions. Any issues noticed would be reported to the police to be handled. The positions would report to the Town Administrator. Mr. Fontaine would be responsible for submitting incident report to the Town Admin office.

Motion 010322-4b&c: A motion was made by Mr. Duggan and seconded by Ms. Provencher to appoint Joe Fontaine and Gregory Gaumond to the position of Campus Security for Becker. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

5. OTHER BUSINESS

a. Amended Contract Health Director – Francis Dagle

Mr. Genereux presented a proposed amended contract for Health Agent Francis Dagle. The amendment promotes Mr. Dagle to Health Director for the Town as he is the Health Director for the Leicester Regional Public Health Coalition and provides an additional \$10,000 grant funded stipend. The contract also states that Mr. Dagle would move up \$10,000 on the Town's classification and compensation plan should the grant expire, and

the Town would be responsible for paying the difference. He is currently paid \$65,000 through the general fund operating budget.

Motion 010322-5a: A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Duggan to approve the amended contract for Health Director Francis Dagle. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

b. Recruitment Policy – Review and approval

Mr. Phillips requested that a Select Board member sit on interview panels for all new hires on a rotating basis. Mr. Genereux stated interviews need to be conducted as soon as possible for a Treasurer Collector and an Epidemiologist. He expressed concern regarding placing Board members on interview panels, as the Board serves as an impartial third party in case of ties/disputes and makes the appointment as a group. Mr. Phillips felt that the remaining four Board members remained impartial and stated it is important for the Select Board to obtain information from the interview process. Mr. Antanavica disagreed, stating the Board sets policy and the Town Administrator carries it out and if that doesn't work then changes get made. The Board discussed forming an interview panel with one representative from Town Administrator's office, a department head and a Select Board member.

Motion 010322-5b: A motion was made by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Ms. Provencher to accept the recruitment policy, adding that the interview panel must contain one Select Board member on a rotating basis and that only one member of the Town Administrator's office serves on the panel. Under discussion, Mr. Genereux pointed out that all recently hires except for one were unanimously recommended by their interview panels and sometimes there is not a perfect candidate due to low applications which is why there is a probationary period. **Motion carries 4:0:1 (Ms. Provencher opposed).**

Mr. Genereux asked if he is permitted to make the financial part of the offer and ask a few questions in a second-round interview and the Board agreed.

c. FY 2022 Updated Classification and Compensation Plan Rates – Review and Approval

Mr. Genereux presented a proposed revised classification and compensation plan which expands the schedule from five to thirteen steps to allow for more growth opportunity. The minimum step which existed on old schedule has been removed. Step 2 is now the minimum step. The benchmark on the old schedule is now minimum plus 1. Mr. Genereux noted that most nonunion staff are at the current benchmark rate and would revert to minimum plus 1 on the proposed new schedule. An employee would move a step forward upon the recommendation of their supervisor based on exemplary performance and true improvement, as generally all employees will get a 2% cola every year.

Motion 010322-5c: A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Phillips to approve the FY22 Updated Classification and Compensation Plan Rates. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

d. Acceptance of quitclaim deed – Becker College; Review and Approve

Mr. Genereux explained that the acceptance of the quitclaim deed is the final piece of the Becker acquisition that needs to be signed and recorded now that the property is owned by the Town.

Motion 010322-5d: A motion was made by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Ms. Provencher to execute the Acceptance of the Quitclaim Deed with Becker College. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

6. MINUTES

a. December 20, 2021

Motion 010322-6a: A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Phillips to approve the minutes of December 20, 2021. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

Motion 010322-7: A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Duggan and seconded by Mr. Phillips at 8:01pm. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**