

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 22, 2022 AT 5:30PM
TOWN HALL, SELECT BOARD CONFERENCE ROOM**

CALL TO ORDER/OPENING

Chair Antanavica called the meeting to order at 5:33pm. 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. 5:30pm – Executive Session, MGL 30A, 21(a), Exception 6 – Lease of Real Property (Swan Library)

Motion 022222-1a: A motion was made by Mr. Phillips and seconded Mr. Shocik to enter into executive session at 6:35pm under MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a), Exception 6, to discuss the lease of real property (Swan Library). The Chair declared that to discuss this matter in open session would compromise the position of the Town. Roll call: All Ayes.

b. 6:00pm – Retirement Ceremony & Special Police Officer Appointment – Officer John Caforio

Chief Ken Antanavica congratulated Officer John Caforio on his retirement after over 30 years of service to the Town of Leicester. His last day of work was December 17th but this ceremony was delayed due to the spike in COVID cases. Selectwoman Dianna Provencher congratulated Officer Caforio on behalf of the Select Board.

Motion 022222-1b: A motion was made by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Ms. Provencher to appoint John Caforio as a Special Police Officer. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

c. 6:15pm – Request to Appoint Library Trustees as Special Municipal Employees

Paul Ravina requested that the Library Board of Trustees be designated as Special Municipal employees so they can be involved in other town business that volunteers and employees are typically excluded from. Mr. Ravina stated that under the conflict-of-interest law, unpaid and certain part time positions are eligible to be designated as Special Municipal Employee positions, noting that the Select Board has already designated a number of other boards, committees and positions as such and that every city or town abutting us has designated library trustees as special municipal employees.

Motion 022222-1c: A motion was made by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Shocik to designate all volunteer Library Trustees as Special Municipal Employees and to take the balance of Library Trustees under advisement. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Paul Ravina stated the school oil release should be paid for by State COVID funds since the tents were put up in response to COVID and asked that the State be contacted.

Jan Parke stated that the Recycling Committee members have discussed the conflict-of-interest law but have not yet taken a vote on the potential request that the Board designate the Recycling Committee as special municipal employees. Ms. Parke stated the Recycling Committee needs some additional guidance on this matter.

3. REPORTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Student Liaison Reports

The Student Liaisons discussed 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 taking pictures of buildings at Becker for inventory purposes, the new Castle Cantina, the reopening of the Senior Center, the St. Patrick's Day breakfast at the Senior Center on March 17th, using ARPA funds to give rebates to water and sewer district customers in Town, applying for a One Stop Grant for Moose Hill Reservoir, buying an asphalt hot box for pothole, curbing and manhole repairs, replacing fire hydrants, cleanup of oil tanks at the Becker 1812 House, meeting with Town Counsel regarding town owned facilities and our options, the Friday snow storm, meeting with the WooSox and the July 8th Leicester Day which will benefit Deja New, the Becker Vet Clinic working group will be reviewing an RFP to lease the clinic in March, accepting applications for the Bark Park Committee, upcoming athletic field rules and fee schedules, and the benefits Deja New provides to the community.

4. RESIGNATIONS & APPOINTMENTS

a. Resignation – Benen ElShakhs, Joseph Kuchinski, Sara Seaver & Scott LaFlash – EMT

Motion 022222-4a: A motion was made by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Ms. Provencher to accept the resignations of EMTs Benen ElShakhs, Joseph Kuchinski, Sara Seaver and Scott LaFlash and to send letters of thanks for service. **Motion carries 5:0:0**

b. Resignation – Kimberly Burton – Treasurer/Collector

Motion 022222-4b: A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Shocik to accept the resignation of Kimberly Burton from the position of Treasurer/Collector. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

c. Appointment – Ashley Belanger – Per-Diem Paramedic

Interim EMS Director Brian Kelly stated that Ms. Belanger accepted a permanent shift with the town this week and therefore requested that her appointment be changed from per-diem to part-time non-benefitted paramedic.

Motion 022222-4c: A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Shocik to appoint Ashley Belanger as a part time non-benefitted paramedic. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

d. Appointment – Tom Savage, Christopher Goodney Jr., Antonio Santana – Per-Diem EMT

Mr. Goodney Jr. was not in attendance and was therefore not appointed.

Motion 022222-4d: A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Shocik to appoint Tom Savage and Antonio Santana to the position of per-diem EMTs. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

e. Appointment – Nicholas George – Interim Treasurer/Collector

Mr. Genereux presented a request to appoint Nicholas George as the Interim Treasurer/Collector. Mr. George was ranked second in the recent Treasurer/Collector recruitment process. Based on his track record and the ability to promote from within, Mr. Genereux recommended he remain interim until July 1st with the periodic assistance of former Treasurer/Collector Melanie Jackson at which time he would be appointed as the full Treasurer/Collector and the Town would recruit for an Assistant Treasurer/Collector.

Motion 022222-4e: A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Duggan to appoint Nichols George as the Interim Treasurer/Collector. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

f. **Appointment – FY21 CDBG Environmental Certifying Officer – Alaa Abusalah**

Motion 022222-4f: A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Shocik to appoint Alaa Abusalah as the FY21 CDBG Environmental Certifying Officer. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

5. OTHER BUSINESS

a. **Request to Use Becker Campus for 2022 Leicester Harvest Fair**

Motion 022222-5a: A motion was made by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Ms. Provencher to allow the Leicester Harvest Fair to utilize the Becker campus for the Harvest Fair on September 17th, 2022. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

b. **School Department Audit Request**

Mr. Genereux discussed an email sent to the Select Board requesting an audit of the school department due to lack of maintenance to the school buildings, the sprinkler issue at the high school, the oil leak at the elementary school, and financial management of the school department, among other issues. Mr. Genereux discussed this matter with the Town's audit firm Scanlon & Associates who stated this is considered a forensic audit which is above and beyond typical annual audit activities. Depending upon the amount of time it would take, the cost would be \$30K-\$35K. The timeline is uncertain due to the firm being extremely busy with many cities and towns in the State. The Board discussed the request potentially coming from a fictitious name or account due to potential fear of retaliation, issues the school hiring a public relations firm, possible mismanagement of the school budget, putting the issue to rest by doing the audit, the fact that the auditor audits the school department as part of the annual Town audit, the ongoing Advisory Committee meetings with the School Department which are producing information, and bringing the proposed audit forward to Town Meeting for an appropriations vote.

Motion 022222-5b: A motion was made by Mr. Shocik and seconded by Mr. Phillips to table this item for two weeks and let the Advisory Committee continue their work to get answers from the School Committee. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

c. **Vote to Dissolve Fire Station Building Committee**

Motion 022222-5c: A motion was made by Mr. Duggan and seconded by Mr. Phillips to dissolve the Fire Station Building Committee and to send a letter of thanks. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

The Select Board is handling repairs to the building. The current balance in the Fire Station Building account is \$43,682.15.

d. **Vote to Schedule Use of Town Fields via Recreational Field Officer**

The Becker Athletic Recreation Working Group has created a job description for a person to scheduling all municipal fields and potentially the school fields. This would be a 19 hour a week non-benefitted predominately remote position. The position would require the use of scheduling software and the person would be available during business hours and on the weekends.

Motion 022222-5d: A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Shocik to approve the job description for the Recreational Field Organizer. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

e. **Reconsideration of Swan Library Lease with Massachusetts State Police Museum and Learning Center**

Motion 022222-5e: A motion was made by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Duggan to send the lease for the Swan Library back to the Swan Library working group for reconsideration as the State Police no longer want to lease the field house. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

Motion 022222-5e2: A motion was made by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Shocik to rescind the vote to sign the Swan Library and Field House lease with the State Police Museum and Learning Center until the lease is renegotiated by the Swan Library working group. **Motion carries 5:0:0**

6. MINUTES

a. **February 14, 2022**

Motion 022222-6a: A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Phillips to approve the minutes of February 14, 2022. **Motion carries 5:0:0**

Motion 022222-7: A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Ms. Provencher at 8:25pm. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**