

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
AUGUST 07, 2023 AT 6:00PM  
LEICESTER TOWN HALL, LEICESTER, MASSACHUSETTS 01524**

Chair Rick Antanavica, Vice Chair Dianna Provencher, Selectman Kevin Menard, Town Administrator David Genereux, and Assistant to the Town Administrator, Maria Cataloni were in attendance.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Rick Antanavica	Present
Dianna Provencher	Present
Kevin Menard	Present
Allen R. Phillips, Sr.	Absent
John Bujak	Absent

Administration

David Genereux Town Administrator	Present
Maria Cataloni Assistant to the TA	Present

Chair Antanavica opened the meeting at 6:02 PM.

**08072023 1a Wine/Beer License Transfer, Crossroads Marketplace 1060 Main Street**

packet. The Attorney for Crossroads, John Mooradian, introduced the new owners, explaining that they were TIPS Certified. The business would be owned by the newly formed Chamunda Corporation, which is jointly owned by Amit Barot, and Bhagvat Brahmbhatt, who would serve as manager of record. There would also be several other TIPS certified employees, and that they would use a license scanner to combat the purchase of alcohol by minors. Attorney Mooradian stated that the business would be open 6:00 am to 11:00 PM, with alcohol sales from 8:00 AM to 11:00 PM Monday through Saturday, with alcohol sales from 10:00 am to 11:00 pm on Sunday. Ms. Provencher asked about the change of hours.

A motion to approve was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Menard.

Mr. Antanavica asked that the TIPS certification for the employees be given to the Town. Motion carried 3-0-0.

**08072023 1b Permission for Town roads to be used for the Midstate Massive Ultra Trail Road Race (October 7-8)**

Mr. Genereux stated that there was a runners handbook and map in the Board packet. The race starts on Moose Hill Road, crosses Route 9 and ends at Sibley Farm, so the use of town roads is minimal.

Ms. Provencher made a motion to approve the use of Town roads for the road race. Seconded by Mr. Menard, the motion carried 3-0-0. Mr. Genereux stated that we also had their certificate of insurance.

**080723 1c EMS Management position**

Mr. Genereux explained that Brian Kelley, Interim EMS Director would be leaving in December and that the Town needs to make a decision as to how to fill the upcoming vacancy. As contained in the packet, one option detailed a combined Fire/EMS position, and the other continued the current stand alone EMS Management position. Mr. Genereux stated that there was a single recommendation to be presented and introduced Fire Chief Mike Dupuis. Chief Dupuis explained that the original options were rushed, but upon reflection decided

that it would make sense to recommend a sole EMS Director. He decided that it made more sense to keep the department separate.

Ms. Provencher made a motion to approve the use of Town advertising for a separate EMS Director position. Seconded by Mr. Menard, the motion carried 3-0-0.

**08072023-2a To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel; pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(2) – DIS Director, Town Planner, Town Accountant**

At 6:15 PM, Mr. Menard made a motion to go into Executive Session. Seconded by Ms. Provencher, the motion carried 3-0-0 on a roll call vote.

The Board reconvened in open session on 6:47 pm.

**08072023 – 4c Appointment – Steve Paretti – Conservation Commission**

Mr. Genereux explained that Mr. Paretti was gracious enough to come back to the Conservation Commission for a six-month period through December. Ms. Provencher thanked Mr. Paretti for returning and made a motion to approve. Seconded by Mr. Menard, the motion carried 3-0-0.

**08072023 – 3 DIS DEPARTMENT REORGANIZATION – Passed over**

**08072023 – 4a Appointment & Contract - Town Planner – Passed over**

**08072023 – 4b Appointment & Contract - DIS Director – Passed over**

**08072023 – 4d Resignation – Brian Kelly – Interim EMS Director**

Mr. Genereux stated that Mr. Kelley was moving to a full-time position in Holliston. Mr. Genereux read Mr. Kelley's resignation letter to the Board which would be effective on Monday, January 1, 2024. Motion was made by Ms. Provencher to accept the resignation. Seconded by Mr. Menard, the motion carried 3-0-0.

**08072023 – 5 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Jeffrey Fisher commented on the date and time of Town Meeting. He stated that the 2 ½ override issue was very difficult and that the Town has bent over backwards to fund the School budget. Mr. Fisher stated the ARPA was voted by the Board, but other funds need to be raised, appropriated or transferred at Town Meeting. Mr. Fisher stated that this would leave a problem in FY2025, and that there is a guaranteed Proposition 2 ½ override vote for 2025, and if that is the goal of the Select Board, it should be discussed openly and publicly. He stated the override passed at Town Meeting because it was stacked by parents, but it lost at the ballot, causing a rift in the Town.

Mr. Fisher inquired about the status of Mr. Phillips select board position. He asked if there was a vacancy and if so, would there be a special election. Mr. Antanavica stated that he would not support a special election, due to the cost, and that the person who won that election would have a ten month advantage over any other candidate.

Ryan Plante, of the Fire union asked if the ARPA funding was going to be discussed this evening. Mr. Antanavica stated it would.

Mr. Antanavica announced the remaining Concerts on the Common:

**08072023 – 6a Concerts on the Common**

**August 9 – Changes in Latitude (Jimmy Buffet Tribute Band)**

**August 16 – Backyard Swagger (Country)**

**August 23 – The Otters (Rock n Roll)**

He also referenced the September 30, 2023 town-wide yard sale.

**08072023 - 7a Town Buildings Report**

Mr. Genereux discussed the Town buildings Reports, including the railing project at Borger which was reduced to 12 ft. The pads for the other entrances at Borger were done. The first floor Borger bathroom was on schedule. The Fire alarm system at Borger is nearly complete, leaving the only item to be replaced is the first-floor water fountain. Mr. Genereux stated that everything looks good as we approach the fall school opening. Next summer, the elevator and sprinkler system will be placed in Borger, and that a location had been found.

The five Victorians will go on sale on Wednesday September 20 at 1:00 PM. Quotes have been obtained for the dual sewer line. The furniture and other items have been emptied.

Barrett is nearly filled to capacity with incoming families. There have been no issues or complaints. Congressman McGovern would be visiting the following Thursday. Mr. Genereux stated that the discussion centered Hampshire/Berkshire has internet, railings and kitchen plumbing. New doors are being installed as well. All appliances are inside the building.

Mr. Genereux stated that while he had not recently heard from the State police regarding future use of the Winslow Avenue School for training purposes, he had been in Touch with the Worcester Community Action Counsel. They are interested in using a portion of the building to establish a Head Start class. Mr. Genereux stated that there may be advantages to use the building for social services and related programs.

**08072023 - 7b Town Administrators Report/ Grant Report**

Mr. Genereux read from the written report. Bids on permitting software are due 8/30/23. Fee upgrades will need to be presented to the board in order to fund the software. Code violations will be discussed at upcoming meeting.

ARPA funding will be in the motion for the overall transfer at Town Meeting. It will keep the school budget accurate over the year from a historical perspective, which is preferred by the Department of Revenue. The remaining funding will be coming from the lease funding of the shelter project. Mr. Genereux stated that the School Administration is are cutting costs wherever they can.

Mr. Genereux stated that he had fully integrated fourteen years of police Memorandums of Understanding into one contract.

**08072023 – 7b Town Administrators Report/ Grant Report**

Mr. Genereux discussed a \$328,000 culvert grant, and a \$50,000 Police grant. Mr. Genereux read from the written grant report and reported that the Town had obtained funding to get a speed trailer and

signage for Marshall Street, as part of a new state program for roads with documented incidents. The Town is also looking at a MassDEP grant, a sensor grant, and a Stanton K9 Grant. Mr. Genereux also stated that the Town Grants Manager was on the SARPA Grant Review Committee.

#### **08072023 - 7c Select Board Reports**

Ms. Provencher and Mr. Menard stated that they had nothing to report. Mr. Antanavica read a resignation of Select Board member Mr. Allen Phillips, who resigned effective this evening, as he is moving out of Town.

#### **08072023 – 8a ARPA funding for first responders**

Mr. Genereux stated that we have talked about various programs and how to do it. It was a matter of how best to calculate. The Covid-19 period from the state – March 10<sup>th</sup> 2020 – June 15<sup>th</sup> 2021. Total 66 weeks. After figuring out maximum stipend of \$2500 for FT employees working 2640 hours. Works out to .947 per hour. Public safety staff would be recipients – we are administering a federal grant. Police, Fire, EMS. Minimum payment for anyone working at that time and who is still here, would get \$100. Employees working less than 100 hours would get \$100. Employees working beyond 105 hours during the emergency period would get their actual hours worked multiplied by .947 cents. Mr. Genereux stated that this affects 65 employees. Ask the vote of the board to approve transfer, not the specific amount.

Ryan Plante stated that he emailed the board regarding concerns with this. Mr. Plante said the first responders didn't ask for a payout, because they knew the town was in tough shape. Fire/EMS were there when they are needed, and they are available 24/7. He stated that during the early days of COVID, people were scared. Police officers stopped going on calls. Firefighters were going on ambulance calls wondering if they were going to get sick. He said that their hours are when we are called to duty. He stated that he believes the thank you would have been better as a hot dog roast. Mr. Plante stated that the Board should be embarrassed to offer a Firefighter \$145.00. The employees knew that they were taking risks and they went. He further stated that there are a half-dozen people no longer with Leicester who should receive something.

Patrick Alstrom stated that when the police were told not to go to calls, Fire and EMS workers were locking themselves in the ambulance with sick people and reusing personal protective gear. He stated that nobody knew if it was going to bring it home to family members. Everybody had elderly family members. Mr. Alstrom stated that while he didn't do a lot of hours, but he stepped up. He said that he missed time at his regular job because he did get Covid.

Mr. Genereux stated the current options before the Board are to vote the proposal as it stands now, or to reconvene in a future Executive Session to discuss further adjustments. Ms. Provencher asked Mr. Plante if every single firefighter went on these calls. Mr. Plante stated not all, and some went to more than others. He said when duty called, we did what was needed.

Mr. Menard made a motion to table the current recommendation and discuss it at a future meeting. Seconded by Ms. Provencher, the motion passed 3-0-0.

#### **08072023 – 8b Town Accountant contract**

Mr. Genereux stated there is no real change to the Town Accountant's contract, with the exception of the addition of a 4<sup>th</sup> week of vacation. Ms. Provencher made a motion to approve the contract as written. Seconded by Mr. Menard, the motion carried 3-0-0.

**08072023 - 8c Set date/time & location for Fall Town Meeting – October 24, 2023 @ 7:00 PM (Town Hall Gym)**

Mr. Genereux stated that the meeting needed to be called to finish the FY 2025 budget, among other items. Ms. Provencher made a motion to call the Fall Town Meeting for October 24, 2023 @ 7:00 PM in the Town Hall Gym. Seconded by Mr. Menard, the motion carried 3-0-0.

**08072023 - 8d Set warrant close date for Fall Town Meeting - September 7, 2023 @ 5:00 PM**

Mr. Genereux stated that Town bylaws require the warrant to be closed 45 days before the meeting date of the Fall Town Meeting, which requires a vote of the Board. Ms. Provencher made a motion to close the Town Warrant on Thursday September 7, 2023 at 5:00. Seconded by Mr. Menard, the motion carried 3-0-0.

**ADJOURN**

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Antanavica. Seconded by Ms. Provencher, the motion carried 3-0-0, and the meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.