

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**JANUARY 6, 2020 at 6:30pm**  
**TOWN HALL, SELECT BOARD CONFERENCE ROOM**

**CALL TO ORDER/OPENING**

Chairwoman Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:34pm. Chair Sandra Wilson, Vice-Chair Harry Brooks, Selectwoman Dianna Provencher, Selectman John Shocik, Student Liaisons Katheryn Stapel and Jacob Stolberg, Town Administrator David Genereux and Assistant to the Town Administrator Kristen Forsberg were in attendance. Second Vice Chair Rick Antanavica arrived at 7:14pm.

**1. SCHEDULED ITEMS**

**a. 6:30pm – Motor Vehicle Repair License Noncompliance Hearing – Joe’s Auto Repair – 81 Huntoon Hwy**

This item was passed over

**b. 6:30pm – School Snow Plowing Discussion with School Committee**

Mr. Genereux discussed the possibility of the Highway Department taking over school winter maintenance for the balance of FY20 going forward, and the possibility of adding in summer maintenance in FY21. Two employees would be hired for winter maintenance immediately upon approval and a third employee would be hired in the spring for summer maintenance. The cost for winter balance for the balance of FY20 would be approximately \$60,000. The total annual cost for all season maintenance would be approximately \$150,000. Highway would need to confirm that the available school equipment can meet the needs of all-season maintenance. Maintenance would not include lining and fertilization; these tasks would still be done by a contractor. The School Committee and School Administration expressed their support for this plan.

A motion was made by Mr. Brooks and seconded by Ms. Provencher to hire three employees for the Highway Department to perform all season maintenance at the schools. The motion carried 4:0:0 (Mr. Antanavica was absent).

A motion was made by Ms. Richards and seconded by Mr. Lauder to hire three employees for the Highway Department to perform all season maintenance at the schools. The motion carried 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 School.

**b. Select Board Reports**

Select Board members discussed a variety of topics including the importance of putting your house number on your mailboxes, thanking the highway department for keeping the roads safe this winter, the upcoming MMA, CMRPC and Worcester County Selectmen’s Association meetings, happy new year, contact the senior center if you need house numbers put up for free by the Worcester County Sheriff’s Office and be careful on the ice.

**c. Town Administrator Report**

The Town Administrator presented highlights from his written report.

#### **4. RESIGNATIONS & APPOINTMENTS**

##### **a. Appointment –Environmental Certifying Officer – Michelle Buck**

A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Brooks to appoint Michelle Buck as the Environmental Certifying Officer for the Town of Leicester. The motion carried 5:0:0.

##### **b. Appointment – Police Officer – Paul Pepin**

A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Brooks to appoint Paul Pepin as a Police Officer for the Town of Leicester. Under discussion, Chief Antanavica confirmed there is sufficient funding in the police budget for the academy and training and this hire would bring the total number of officers to 20. The motion carried 4:0:0.

#### **5. OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **a. Swan Tavern (1 Paxton Street) \$1000 Donation – Leicester Historical Society**

A motion was made by Mr. Brooks and seconded by Ms. Provencher to accept \$1,000 in donations from the Leicester Historical Society for the Swan Tavern. The motion carried 5:0:0.

##### **b. Senior Center \$1000 Donation – Camosse Foundation**

A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Brooks to accept a \$1,000 donation from the Camosse family for the Senior Center. The motion carried 5:0:0.

##### **c. Discussion and/or Vote on Tax Lien Sales**

Mr. Genereux noted that all delinquent properties have been put into tax title through FY19 and liens have been issued. The Town has \$1.2M in outstanding taxes, including interest and fees. Mr. Genereux stated that the process of selling these liens is much faster than going to land court for tax title takings. The third-party investor who purchases the liens does not own the property and would need to go to land court if they choose to foreclose with the same notification requirements. The homeowner has the option to pay off the lien to the third party and the third party has the right to charge up to 16% interest on the lien. Mr. Genereux noted that approximately 97% of all taxes are collected; the remaining 3% goes into tax title and measures must be taken to collect these funds. By law, newspaper advertisement and notifications via mail are required for tax lien sales. The Town will make payment plans and take payments up until the auction. Mr. Genereux noted the opening bid at an auction would be the balance owed. Outstanding taxes affect the Town's ability to provide services to its residents.

A motion was made by Mr. Antanavica and seconded by Mr. Shocik to move forward with the tax lien sales. The motion carried 3:2:0 (Mr. Brooks and Ms. Provencher opposed).

##### **d. FY21 Budget Discussion**

Mr. Genereux discussed the opening budget figures as detailed below:

##### Increased Revenue

- FY21 tax levy: \$15,292,785: (Increase of \$676,820)
- Increase allowed by Proposition 2 ½: \$382,320 (Increase of \$16,921)
- New growth: \$125,000 (Decrease of \$186,421)
- Debt exclusions: \$1,149,035 (Decrease of \$39,974)
- State revenue: \$12,225,747 (Level Funded)
- Local receipts: \$2,570,508 (Decrease of \$107,149)
- Free cash: \$203,000 (Increase of \$53,000)
- Ambulance receipts: \$371,192 (Level funded)

- Other transfers: \$9,991 (Decrease of \$13,835)

*Total anticipated revenue: \$32,329,578 – Increase of \$399,362, or 1.25%*

Forecasted intergovernmental expenses

- Debt principal: \$1,155,327 (increase of \$15,530 or 1.36%)
- Debt interest: \$369,949 (decrease of \$36,195 or 8.91%)
- Temporary loan interest \$14,655 (decrease of \$18,600 or 55.93%)
- Worcester Regional Retirement: \$1,525,168 (increase of \$210,368, or 16.00%)
- Worker compensation: \$206,248 (increase of \$18,750, or 10%)
- Unemployment compensation: \$141,650 (level funded)
- Employee benefits (health insurance): \$3,161,180 (decrease of \$127,105 or 3.87%)
- Bonding & insurance (Property/Casualty insurance): \$176,750 (Increase of \$16,068 or 10.00%)

*Total new intergovernmental expenses: \$6,750,927; (An increase of \$78,816 or 1.19% over FY20)*

Under the current 75/25 split, the School Department FY21 budget increases by \$330,096, or 1.91%. The Municipal departments' overall FY21 budgets increase by \$113,373 or 1.94%. The total FY21 general fund budget (excluding vocational school tuition and CMRPC assessment) is currently forecast at \$30,101,143, an increase of \$522,285 or 1.77%.

**e. Fire & EMS Headquarters Radios Discussion and/or Vote**

Ms. Wilson noted that emergency operation system radios are needed for public safety reasons at the Fire & EMS Headquarters, especially in light of two recent incidents where communications went down. The cost is anticipated to be between \$20,000-\$25,000. Mr. Genereux spoke with the Chief who stated he is not ready to move forward at this time. The Town is working to determine the cost to address drainage issues on the site.

**f. Memorandum of Understanding – CMRPC – FY20 CDBG Grant Application Preparation**

A motion was made by Mr. Antanavica and seconded by Mr. Brooks to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Central Mass Regional Planning Commission for the FY20 CDBG grant application preparation. The motion carried 4:0:1 (Ms. Provencher abstained).

**6. MINUTES**

**a. December 16, 2019**

A motion was made by Mr. Brooks and seconded by Ms. Provencher to approve the minutes of December 16, 2019. The motion carried 5:0:0.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Brooks and seconded by Mr. Shocik at 8:50pm. The motion carried 5:0:0.