

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MAY 18, 2020 at 6:30pm
VIRTUAL MEETING

CALL TO ORDER/OPENING

Chairwoman Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:32pm. Chair Sandra Wilson, Vice-Chair Harry Brooks, 2nd Vice-Chair Rick Antanavica, 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.

1. SCHEDULED ITEMS

a. 6:30pm – Pole Hearing – Mulberry & Chapel Streets

The Chair read the public notice aloud. A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Antanavica to open the public hearing to discuss a petition for joint or identical pole locations on Mulberry/Chapel Streets from National Grid. Roll call: 5:0:0. Diego Villarreal with Ngrid discussed the petition to relocate pole 7 on Chapel Street to use for a solar farm interconnection. A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Antanavica to go out of the public hearing. Roll call: 5:0:0. A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Shocik to approve the petition. Roll call: 5:0:0.

b. 6:35pm – Senator Michael Moore and Representative David LeBoeuf – COVID19 and the Economy

Senator Michael Moore noted that Governor Baker has reopened some parts of the economy today and is using a phased approach. Construction, manufacturing and houses of worship are now allowed to open and additional businesses can open May 25th including salons, pet groomers and curbside retail. The State has a \$500M deficit for FY20 and an estimated \$4.4-6B deficit for FY21 unless federal aid comes through. The State's rainy day fund is \$3.5B. The State is currently facing larger revenue shortfalls than during the recession. The Senator noted the home rule petition for Lieutenant Paul Doray to work past 65 was passed by the House last week and is currently in the Senate. The transportation bond bill that contains Chapter 90 funding should be out within the next week.

Representative David LeBoeuf noted the House budget is traditionally complete by mid-April but the House is still working with Ways and Means on priorities. The House budget should be done in July and might be a 1/12 budget. Rep LeBoeuf noted that the house reps are in agreement that local aid and chapter 70 funds are top priorities. The IT bond bill will be out next week. The Representative also provided an update on staff testing at the Meadows and the bill to extend the COVID19 moratorium on water and sewer shutoffs to semi-private districts.

The legislators will look into expanding liquor licenses to allow for liquor to be served outdoors and if the City of Worcester intends to raise water and sewer rates in the coming fiscal year.

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. Select Board Reports

The Select Board discussed a variety of topics including the dedications of the soldiers squares which took place yesterday, flags placed on telephone poles on Main Street in Cherry Valley, donation box in Rochdale Park is full,

sending the legislators a letter regarding allowing outdoor liquor license sales at no cost, practice social distancing during the Memorial Day parade, the cleanup of weeds at Veterans Square, having board of health police the donation boxes, the reopening of parks, Route 9 paving project – intersection turning off Pleasant Street is still not smooth (should be no discernable change) and the Town Administrator performance evaluation.

c. Town Administrator Report

The Town Administrator presented highlights from his written report.

4. RESIGNATIONS & APPOINTMENTS

a. Appointment – Per Diem/On Call EMT – Ryan Murphy

A motion was made by Mr. Brooks and seconded by Ms. Provencher to appoint Ryan Murphy as a per-diem/on-call EMT. Roll call: 5:0:0.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

a. Recycling Center Donation - \$500 – Leicester Food Pantry

A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Brooks to accept a \$500 donation to the recycling center from the Leicester Food Pantry. Roll call: 5:0:0.

b. 2020 Memorial Day Parade Discussion

Mr. Shocik noted that there will be only vehicles in the parade which begins at 10:30am at Memorial School on Memorial Day followed by a short, solemn ceremony on the common with no gatherings or speakers. Anyone with questions should contact Bruce Swett at 508-892-9238. A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Antanavica to allow the Memorial Day Parade to proceed as outlined. Roll call: 5:0:0.

c. Request to Fly Flags Half Staff in Memory of Ron Tarentino – May 22, 2020

A motion was made by Mr. Antanavica and seconded by Mr. Shocik to allow flags to fly at half-staff in Town on May 22, 2020, the anniversary of the murder of Officer Ron Tarentino. Roll call: 5:0:0.

d. Request to Place Banner Thanking First Responders in the Center of Town

A motion was made by Mr. Shocik and seconded by Ms. Provencher to allow the Tarentino Foundation to place a banner in the center of town thanking first responders for their efforts during COVID-19. Roll call: 5:0:0.

e. Discuss/Change June 2, 2020 Annual Town Meeting Date, Time and Location

A motion was made by Mr. Antanavica and seconded by Ms. Provencher to move the annual town meeting on June 2, 2020 to the High School Gym at 174 Paxton Street. Roll call: 5:0:0.

f. FY21 Budget Discussion and/or Vote

Mr. Genereux discussed the potential impacts on the FY21 budget if state aid returns to 2009-2011 recession levels. During these years, Chapter 70 aid dropped by \$765,674, or 7.73%, and unrestricted general government aid dropped by \$798,558, or 36.95%. If these percentages were to be applied to FY20 aid levels, the results would be a drop of \$757,733 in Chapter 70 aid, and \$681,260 in unrestricted general government aid for a total drop; of \$1,438,993 in State aid. Mr. Genereux stated that this potential loss to the budget can only be described as devastating. The School budget loss will likely consist entirely of salaries and may drop the department below its minimum spending requirements. On the municipal side, there would be staff reductions, no funded or signed union contracts, loss of two full time police officers, loss of both Senior Center bus drivers and the elimination of several department budgets, including parks, historical commission and memorial day. Mr. Genereux noted that while he is not recommending passing this budget, the potential impacts of State aid reductions must be kept in mind.

g. Annual Town Meeting Warrant Discussion and/or Votes

A motion was made by Mr. Shocik and seconded by Ms. Provencher to vote to recommend passing over Article 23, Hillcrest Study. Roll call: 2:3 (motion fails, Ms. Wilson, Mr. Antanavica and Mr. Brooks were opposed).

h. Sign Annual Town Meeting Warrant

A motion was made by Mr. Antanavica and seconded by Mr. Shocik to sign the Annual Town Meeting warrant. Roll call: 5:0:0.

i. Confirm Selection of Firm for Engineering Second Opinion – Proposed New School Construction Site

Architect Finegold Alexander has agreed to fund a third-party engineering opinion regarding water concerns on the proposed new school site. Mr. Genereux solicited proposals from three engineering firms, interviewed all three firms and received two responses back. Finegold Alexander agreed to pay \$2,500 for this study and the bids came in at \$12,000 and \$18,500. Mr. Genereux noted the town may need to share the cost of the study with the architect. The Board asked the Town Administrator to keep the cost under \$18,000.

j. Vote to Authorize Town Administrator to sign COVID funds contract and Submit Reimbursement Forms

A motion was made by Mr. Brooks and seconded by Ms. Provencher to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the COVID-19 funds contract with the State and to submit reimbursement request forms. Roll call: 5:0:0.

k. Authorize Chair to Sign School Building Project Scope and Budget

A motion was made by Mr. Antanavica and seconded by Mr. Brooks to authorize the Chair to sign the school building project scope and budget. Roll call: 5:0:0.

6. MINUTES

a. May 4, 2020

b. May 6, 2020

A motion was made by Mr. Antanavica and seconded by Ms. Provencher to approve the minutes of May 4, 2020 and May 6, 2020. Roll call: 5:0:0.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Brooks and seconded by Ms. Provencher at 9:44pm. Roll call: 5:0:0.