

**SELECT BOARD AFTER-ACTION MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 5, 2022, AT 5:30 PM
TOWN HALL, SELECT BOARD CONFERENCE ROOM**

CALL TO ORDER/OPENING

Chair Allen Phillips called the meeting to order at 5:30PM. Chair Allen Phillips, Vice Chair Rick Antanavica, Second Vice Chair Dianna Provencher, Selectman Herb Duggan Jr, Selectman John Bujak, Town Administrator David Genereux, and Assistant Town Administrator Chris Vitale were in attendance, along with representatives of the School Committee and Administration.

1. SCHEDULED ITEMS

a. 5:30PM –Elementary School Oil Leak

Chair Phillips began the discussion by stating he hopes to answer five key questions:

What happened?

What was supposed to happen?

What went right?

What went wrong?

What should be changed to prevent future events like this from happening?

Mr. Phillips stated this exercise is not to blame any parties and does not need to be a long discussion. This meeting is a mechanism to handle incidents. Mr. Genereux stated this is the first time the town has done something like this. Mr. Phillips stated we will answer questions along the way to create a plan. Mr. Phillips stated the incident occurred March 31st, 2021, during regular business hours. The leak was detected/identified April 16th, 2021. In total, 750 gallons of oil leaked. The cost of the incident was \$1.18M. The school closed April 26th, 2021. Mr. Phillips asked why the tent was there in the first place. Mr. Genereux stated there were still COVID-19 restrictions at the time. Mr. Phillips asked how notifications happened and why dig safe was not notified. Mr. Genereux stated the information the town has is from the Director of Finance and Operations memo from the school. The information from that memo was used for insurance purposes. Dig Safe was on site and marked all schools on March 17th, 2021. 20x40 tent permits were required was they were received.

Mr. Phillips asked for more information on the location where the stakes were driven in. Mr. Genereux stated 40-inch stakes were driven into the ground and punctured an oil feed pipe. Insurance did an investigation and did not have an issue with paying it. Insurance opted not to litigate with the tent company because they did not know where the line was. Dig safe only does public utilities not private utilities. Nobody to blame or hold responsible. It was an accident. Mr. Phillips stated we can move on from why it happened and discuss procedure.

Mr. Genereux stated he can't speak to notification because it was internal to the School District. However, the district's report states an odor was reported April 14th. On April 15th, 2021, the Facilities Manager dug test pit. On April 16th, 2021, the discovered the oil leak and the Superintendent of Schools went to the site to investigate. Mr. Phillips asked what the town's notification procedures are. Mr. Genereux stated they are in flux because the town recently took over facilities maintenance from the schools. Mr. Genereux communicates with the Facilities Director daily. If an incident is reported,

notifications would go out to the Select Board and School Committee if applicable. Mr. Phillips asked what the town would do if we smelled oil. Mr. Genereux stated EMS, Police, Fire, and Facilities would be notified and investigate. Mr. Genereux stated in this incident, it looks like everyone was notified so it could be dealt with as efficiently as possible. Mr. Phillips stated the Town should tighten up notification procedures and asked if the Fire Department was notified. Fire Chief Dupuis stated they took a call from the School District on April 16th, 2021. The Fire Chief gave an overview of their response to the incident and their walkthrough of the school. The Fire Chief said there's nothing they could have done to mitigate it at that point. The Fire Department recommended to the Town Administrator to hire private cleanup company. Mr. Phillips asked when the Town Administrator's Office was notified. Mr. Genereux stated shortly after the leak was discovered. Mr. Phillips stated a public notice was sent out April 21st, 2021.

Mr. Phillips asked what can we do to prevent this incident going forward? Mr. Genereux stated going forward, the town needs to know where the gas lines are. Mr. Bujak asked if there was anyone facilities-oriented onsite when tents went up. Mr. Genereux did not know. Mr. Bujak stated someone should be there. Mr. Genereux stated this is a textbook example of trying to keep people in place. If you look in report, everyone in this report is gone. The Town needs a policy to deal with these specific issues and keep institutional knowledge.

Mr. Antanavica stated the town needs updated site plans and drawings. He stated it is time consuming but necessary. Mr. Phillips stated the town needs a policy in place before any more permits like this are issued. Ms. Beth Auger of the School District created a draft crisis plan and provided an overview. Which includes notification protocols, vendor protocols, and activity logs. Ms. Auger stated she can provide the Select Board and School Committee members paper copies of the rough draft. Ms. Auger emphasized it is a working document.

Mr. Phillips asked if Mr. Genereux could put together an after-action report and policy to circulate. Superintendent Kustigian thanked the Select Board for putting together this meeting. The school will follow up and have its own after-action meeting. Mr. Kustigian joked he was happy the school district handed over maintenance of buildings to the town. Mr. Kustigian stated the schools will stay in constant communication going forward. Ms. Provencher stated she was glad the town had this meeting, and it is important there is follow through. School Committee Chair Donna McCance stated she did not know a full investigation was completed. She looks forward to seeing the final after-action report and will turn over efforts to the Select Board. Mr. Phillips stated the town will compile all the information and push it out to applicable parties, including the conservation commission once revisions to draft are completed.

Motion 120522AA-1: A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Bujak and seconded by Mr. Duggan. **Motion carries 5-0-0.**

ADJOURN