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Minutes

Town of Belmont

Select Board

Select Board Meeting Room

Monday, February 3, 2020

7:00pm

Approved by
the Select Board on:

3/2/2020

CALL TO ORDER:

A regular meeting of the Select Board was called to order at 7:02pm by Chair Tom Caputo. Vice Chair Adam Dash and Select Board member Roy Epstein were present. Town Administrator Patrice Garvin was present.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- State Senator Will Brownsberger is holding a transportation policy discussion, Thursday February 6 at the Belmont Library.
- A message from Veteran's Services Officer Bob Upton: The book 'Vietnam War 50th Anniversary: A Time to Honor' is available at no cost to veterans - contact Bob Upton to request a copy.
- Select Board Vice Chair Dash holding office hours February 4 in the Flett Room at the Belmont Library, 6:30-8:00pm.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS:

[There were none.]

ACTION BY CONSENT:

Proclamation to honor the 84th year of the Belmont League of Women Voters

Maryann Scali, Penny Schafer, Amy Grossman and Ann Goldberg (Belmont League of Women Voters) were present. Scali explained the League is dedicated to promoting participation in local government and helping residents make informed voting decisions.

Caputo read aloud the proclamation.

Vote to call the Presidential Primary Election on March 3, 2020

Ellen O'Brien Cushman (Town Clerk) joined the meeting, requesting the Board sign the Warrant to allow the Presidential Primary election to take place, as required by law. The election would be held on March 3, 2020, with four parties involved: Democratic, Republican, Libertarian, and Green Rainbow. There would also be elections for State committees as well as Democratic and Republican Town committees.

The State Legislature had called for five days of early voting (February 24-28), which would take place at Town Hall; voting on election day would be held at the usual eight polling stations, one in each precinct. Absentee voting is available as of now. February 12 is the deadline for making changes to party affiliation.

Motion: To approve the Warrant for the Presidential Primary Election to be held March 3, 2020 in Belmont. (Vote passed 3-0)

O'Brien Cushman also noted that April 7, 2020 would be the date for the Annual Town Election – nominations for Town-wide offices and Town Meeting Members were due by 4pm on February 18.

Executive Session: To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with non-union personnel; Town Administrator

Motion: To enter executive session as described above. (Vote passed 3-0; Roll-call vote: Tom Caputo, Adam Dash, Roy Epstein)

Motion: To leave executive session. (Vote passed 3-0; Roll-call vote: Tom Caputo, Adam Dash, Roy Epstein)

Tentative vote to ratify Town Administrator's contract

This item was delayed as negotiations were not yet finalized.

Financial Task Force II update

The Task Force had committed to providing regularly scheduled updates about its work at both Select Board and School Committee meetings. Garvin read aloud a memo prepared by School Superintendent Phelan:

"The Financial Task Force 2 is the follow up committee to the Financial Task Force 1. The Financial Task Force 1 Committee met from 2013 to 2014 to outline the financial planning strategies for the Town of Belmont. This included forecasting a five year plan that outlined the revenue and expenses that make up the Town's budget. This work was the backbone of the 2014 operating override that the Town has benefited from over the last five years.

Similar to the FFT1, the FTF2 Committee is made up of elected officials from the Select Board and School Committee, members of the Warrant Committee and Capital Committee as well as our Town Treasurer and members of the School Department and Town Hall.

The first meeting of the FTF2 Committee was on December 10, 2018. The group has been meeting consistently for over a year to:

- 1. Review the FTF1 report and work completed*
- 2. Review the Financial Assessment conducted by the Collins Center who was hired by the Town (with a grant) to provide feedback on Belmont's financial planning process.*
- 3. The FTF2 group took those recommendations from the Collins Center and customized the tools to blend in with the Town's planning process.*

The FTF 2 Committee supported the work of the schools and Town on the FY 21 Budget process and will continue to meet to discuss the strategy for a five year Town/ school budget plan.

In order for the Town and community to be more informed, the School Committee and the Select Board will be updating the work of the Financial Task Force 2 Committee over the next few months."

Caputo added that over the next month or so, the Task Force was working to finalize a five year forecast model. The model would be used to estimate the costs of different scenarios for a potential override. The Town Administrator's office had worked with department heads on a matrix that identified the top five priorities for each department, and resources required to address those priorities; these would feed into the five year forecast. Ultimately, the Task Force would use the model to inform a decision on a recommended amount for the override request.

Limebike update

Limebike is changing its business model to focus on e-scooters, hence the bike sharing program would no longer be available in Belmont. Epstein asked about the possibility of switching to Blue Bike, a program offered in Cambridge and Boston; Garvin said the program in Boston was sponsored by Blue Cross, and that in general, certain details would need to be worked out (who pays, docking stations, etc.). Dash was in favor of continuing to work with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to implement a new bike sharing program. (The MAPC had originally coordinated the regional implementation of the Limebike program.) Garvin would follow-up on potential options for a bike sharing program in Belmont going forward.

Recreation Commission update

Anthony Ferrante (Chair, Recreation Commission) and Jon Marshall (Recreation Director) presented an update on two items:

- 1) Tennis courts at Winn Brook: The Recreation Commission had voted its support for exploring the possibility of adding up to two courts at Winn Brook, which would allow the courts to be utilized by the High School tennis team for practices and hosting tournaments. Ferrante stressed that the process was multi-staged: a preliminary assessment was necessary to determine whether it was even feasible to add more courts, and how many; contingent on feasibility, the expectation was for the project to follow two Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding cycles - first design, then construction - as was typical of other similar CPA projects.

Caputo suggested to investigate whether the CPA process could be shortened, e.g. combine design and construction in one step – it should be a relatively straightforward project, and it would be preferable to resolve the outstanding issue of finding a home for the tennis team as soon as possible.

Marshall would work together with Superintendent Phelan and DPW Director Marcotte to put together an application for the next CPA funding cycle.

- 2) Enterprise fund: Progress had been made on an Enterprise Fund for the Recreation Department, and the plan was to bring an article to Annual Town Meeting to establish the Fund. However, it would not be funded initially, and it was expected to take several years for the Department to become self-sufficient.

Marshall highlighted that one of the current challenges was finding sufficient space to run programs at the numbers required to make them cost effective. During High School construction this problem was particularly acute, as the Pool and Fieldhouse were key spaces not available. Garvin explained that a planned initiative to add space in the future involved purchasing the trailers currently in use for the Police Station renovation.

Epstein thought that more consideration should be given as to whether the Enterprise Fund should operate at the level of self-sustainability, or whether some level of subsidization from the operating budget was acceptable/preferable.

Discussion on Clafflin Street Parking Passes

The Town Treasurer had requested to increase the number of available monthly parking passes from 76 to 80. The Board was supportive, as the sense was that there were unutilized spaces and therefore the increase would have minimal impact on shoppers and the Farmer's Market. The Board requested Gavin contact the Belmont Center Business Association and Locatelli Properties to confirm the proposed change was not an issue.

Accept resignation of Youth Commission Member, Laura Panos

Motion: To accept the resignation of Laura Panos from the Youth Commission. (Vote passed 3-0)

Committee appointments

Long Term Capital Planning Committee:

There had only been one application received for the general resident slot. The Board had previously expressed a desire to interview candidates for this committee, therefore the applications were left open and this appointment was deferred to a later date.

The other slots on the Committee were designated representatives from other committees, as well as the Town Treasurer. Thus far the School Committee and Capital Budget Committee had submitted recommendations; still waiting on the Warrant Committee, Community Preservation Committee and Energy Committee.

Motion: To appoint the following individuals to the Long Term Capital Planning Committee: Adam Dash as the Select Board representative to a one year term; Michael Crowley as the School Committee representative to a two year term; Jennifer Fallon as a Capital Budget Committee representative to a two year term, and Anne Marie Mahoney as a Capital Budget Committee representative to a three year term; Floyd Carman as Town Treasurer to a three year term. (Vote passed 3-0)

Economic Development Committee:

A number of applications had been received for the general resident slots, however none had yet been received for the slots allocated to business owners in each of the three main districts (Cushing, Belmont Center, and Waverly). It was decided to defer making appointments until the full slate of candidates could be considered at one time.

Age Friendly Advisory Committee:

Motion: To appoint Judy Singler as the Housing Trust representative to the Age Friendly Advisory Committee. (Vote passed 3-0)

Discussion on Town Administrator recommended capital

Assistant Town Administrator Marshall had taken the lead in preparing the recommended capital plan, which represented the views of the Town Administrator's office on how to allocate discretionary capital

spending for FY21. The plan had been submitted to the Capital Budget Committee for its consideration as it prepares the annual Capital Budget, as well as presented to the Warrant Committee two meetings ago.

Garvin noted she had recently met with Board of Library Trustees Chair Kathy Keohane, who had expressed concerns about two items that had not been recommended for funding. The decision not to recommend these items was made in light of plans for a new building, however Garvin stressed that if the debt exclusion were to fail there would be significant capital needs to address at the Library.

Marshall highlighted a particular recommendation for partial funding of replacement of the fuel tanks at DPW – this request had been deferred in previous years and the tanks could no longer be insured going forward. Replacement was a two-stage process and the hope was to find the remainder of the funding to undertake the project in FY22.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Garvin reviewed the Town Administrator's Report:

- Work at the McLean Barn on Mill Street (a CPA funded project) was complete. The next step was to determine a future use for the Barn.
- The School Department has informed the Town that going forward, all newly hired non-union employees would contribute to their health insurance plan at a rate of 25% (up from 20%). This was in line with the contributions made by Town employees.
- A process and pre-screening form had been finalized for applications of adult-use marijuana facilities. Currently, two candidates had secured potential locations and contacted the Town, though no formal applications have yet been submitted.
- Recent workshop for the Municipal Vulnerability Program (MVP) was heavily attended. This was part of a requirement for the Town to become MVP certified, which would allow it to apply for State / Federal grants for projects related to climate-change preparedness.
- Garvin requested the Board consider making Assistant Town Administrator Marshall to be Acting Town Administrator by default, in instances where Garvin was away on short notice and could not request a formal vote of the Board. The Board suggested to draft a formal policy for its review and approval.

SELECT BOARD COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS:

Dash:

- Board of Assessors gave a presentation at Warrant Committee explaining how tax bills and assessments are calculated.
- Capital Budget Committee has scheduled meetings with department heads to review capital requests – first meeting is February 6 with Fire and Police Chiefs.
- Permanent Audit Committee will follow-up on recommendations for changes to internal controls stemming from a recent audit.

Epstein:

- DPW building still not in service, however a walk-through of the new building was planned in the coming weeks.

- Community Preservation Committee had voted this year's list of projects to recommend to Town Meeting.
- No news on an anticipated public meeting with the engineering firm for the Community Path; the engineer had encountered difficulty scheduling necessary meetings with MBTA officials.

Caputo:

- Belmont Middle and High School Building Committee had received a large number of bids; bids would be opened at a meeting this week, at which point it would be possible to assess the status of the project with respect to the budget.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

- *October 11, 2019 executive session:*

Motion: To approve the October 11, 2019 executive session minutes. (Vote passed 3-0)

- *December 2, 2019 regular session:* Minor corrections to the discussion on the handicapped parking space on Belmont Street; also, the vote to approve the handicapped space should clarify how each Board member voted.

Motion: To approve the December 2, 2019 regular session minutes, as amended. (Vote passed 3-0)

- *December 9, 2019 regular session:* All three Board member had comments/edits on the set of minutes, therefore approval was delayed.

- *December 16, 2019 regular session:*

Motion: To approve the December 16, 2019 regular session minutes. (Vote passed 3-0)

- *December 16, 2019 executive session:*

Motion: To approve the December 16, 2019 executive session minutes. (Vote passed 3-0)

- *December 18, 2019 executive session:*

Motion: To approve the December 18, 2019 executive session minutes. (Vote passed 3-0)

- *January 7, 2020 regular session:* Dash had several minor corrections.

Motion: To approve the January 7, 2020 regular session minutes, as amended. (Vote passed 3-0)

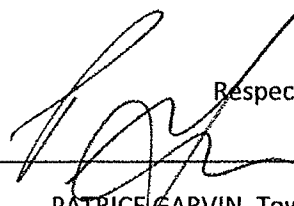
- *January 7, 2020 executive sessions #1 and #2:* Epstein had corrections, which could not be discussed in an open meeting - therefore approval was delayed.

- *January 13, 2020 regular session:* Epstein requested addition of a comment he made requesting the Assessors to provide input on the potential McLean project; he would follow-up with proposed language. Approval was deferred to the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: To adjourn at 9:01pm. (Vote passed 3-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrice Garvin', written over a horizontal line.

PATRICE GARVIN, Town Administrator