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Minutes

Town of Belmont

Select Board

Select Board Meeting Room

Monday, October 21, 2019

7:00pm

Approved by  
the Select Board on:

10/28/19

CALL TO ORDER:

A regular meeting of the Select Board was called to order at 7:03pm by Chair Tom Caputo. Vice Chair Adam Dash and Selectman Roy Epstein were present. Assistant Town Administrator Jon Marshall was present.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Town Hall and Homer Building Halloween Trick-or-Treat event on October 28, 4-6pm.
- Intergenerational costume contest and scary movie, Tuesday October 29 at 4pm at the Beech Street Center. The featured film will be 'The Witches'.

COMMENTS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS:

[There were none]

ACTION BY CONSENT:

**Executive Session – To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigation position of the public body, and the Chair so declares; All Unions**

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

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

**Sign the Special Town Meeting Warrant**

Marshall reviewed the list of articles, highlighting recent changes to the draft that was submitted to the Selectmen in their meeting packets:

- *Article 1:* A standard article for Town Meeting.
- *Article 2:* Second half of appropriation for the fire engine pumper truck in the amount of \$347,400.
- *Article 3:* The General Stabilization Fund (GSF) Balance number had been updated. The article would allow the Select Board to transfer a certain amount of Free Cash into the GSF.
- *Article 4:* Whether to rescind the notice of withdrawal from the Minuteman Regional School network.

- *Article 5:* Amend the General Bylaws regarding roll-call votes.
- *Article 6:* Non-binding citizens petition on health care for Belmont Town employees.

*Motion: To execute the Warrant for the Special Town Meeting 2019, to begin November 13 at Chenery Middle School Auditorium, with articles as outlined. (Vote passed 3-0)*

**Discussion and possible vote on the positions of the Special Town Meeting articles**

- *Article 2:* This was the second half of payment on the fire pumper truck. Dash said Town Counsel had advised that Free Cash was an available source of funds for the appropriation at the present time.
  - o *Motion: To recommend favorable action on Article 2. (Vote passed 3-0)*
- *Article 3:* Floyd Carman (Town Treasurer) joined the meeting. Free Cash had recently been certified at \$8.1m and Carman was recommending to place around \$2m into the GSF in order to replenish it to the previous level of ~\$2.88m.  
 His assessment of the Free Cash number being so high was that it was due to conservative budgeting practices, turn backs from well managed departments, an excellent tax collection rate of 99.6%, and tax pre-payments.  
 The final number to be transferred to the GSF was not currently in the Article, but would be specified in the motion to be voted by the Select Board. The Financial Task Force II (FTFII) would take up discussion of the amount to be transferred at its next meeting; Carman was unable to attend but would provide a written recommendation to the Task Force. The Select Board would defer voting a position on the Article until the number was specified and the FTFII had weighed in.
- *Article 4:* The Select Board decided not to vote on the Article at present, preferring that the Warrant Committee weigh in first; a working group from the Warrant Committee planned to circulate background information/analysis to Town Meeting Members, the deadline for which was tomorrow (October 22). Caputo reported the School Committee had voted unanimously, not on the Warrant Article specifically as written, but to endorse rescinding the notice of withdrawal. Epstein expressed a preference to vote the matter prior to the League of Women Voters Warrant information night.
- *Article 5:* Ellen O'Brien Cushman (Town Clerk) joined the meeting. A recent public forum held last week saw vigorous discussion on the Article, and it was expected that amendments would be proposed. Cushman commented that the portion covering reconsideration was essentially codifying practices already in place as documented in 'Town Meeting Time'. The Board was comfortable endorsing the Article at present – being a joint product of the Select Board, Town Clerk, Town Moderator and Town Administrator – and would take up any amendments as they arose.
  - o *Motion: To recommend favorable action on Article 5. (Vote passed 3-0)*
- *Article 6:* Dash suggested to delay the vote for the time being as negotiations on health plan design were ongoing.

**Vote to approve request from the Belmont Veterans Memorial Committee to conduct a short parade on Saturday, November 2, 2019 at 10:15am from the WWI Memorial to the Belmont Veterans Memorial Park, followed by the Belmont Veterans Memorial Unveiling Ceremony at 11:00am**

*Motion: To approve the request as specified above. (Vote passed 3-0)*

**Discussion and vote to approve support for the Sewer Notification Bill Sign On letter from Mass Rivers Alliance**

Julia Blatt (Executive Director, Massachusetts Rivers Alliance) and Gabby Queenan (Policy Director, Massachusetts Rivers Alliance) were present. Blatt explained the Bill would require public notification whenever there is a discharge of raw sewage into local waterways (e.g. overflow in the case of a storm). Communities would set up a subscriber distribution list of some form and alert subscribers within two hours of discovery of a discharge event; also required to notify local media outlets. Blatt stressed the cost was small compared with the large benefit especially to recreational users of the waterways.

Glenn Clancy (Director, Community Development) joined the meeting and voiced his support for signing onto the Bill. He explained that sewer events in Belmont were rare due to the maintenance of the system; DPW follows strict guidelines in addressing such an issue, including reporting requirements to the DEP and EPA. Clancy did not believe the bill would add any substantial burden on Community Development/DPW.

*Motion: To approve support of H3976, an Act promoting public awareness of sewage in public waters. (Vote passed 3-0)*

**Discussion and possible vote on Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) recommendations**

**Discussion and possible vote for installation of a traffic light at Lexington and Sycamore**

Larry MacDonald (Vice Chair, TAC) and Annis Sengupta (Member, TAC) were present; Clancy also remained to discuss the matters.

1. A public hearing in September saw a request to change parking restrictions from 1 hour to 2 hour in front of businesses located at 161-173 Belmont Street. The nature of the businesses in this stretch were such that 1 hour was not sufficient to service clientele; there was also limited off-street parking options in the vicinity. The public hearing had gone well, no objections to the changes.

*Motion: To change existing parking restrictions in front of businesses located at 161-173 Belmont Street from one hour to two hours. (Vote passed 3-0)*

2. The intersection at Lexington and Sycamore had now been under study for around a year, following the tragic fatality of a pedestrian. The Town's traffic consultant BSC Group had conducted analysis showing the intersection meets the criteria for full signalization. More recently TAC held a hearing with abutters to discuss the design of the traffic lights – those in attendance were largely supportive of installing the signals. Clancy explained how coordination of the signals would not entail traffic back-up towards Waverly, and conversely why a four-way stop was not appropriate for the location. Clancy laid out the timeline for installation: next step was test borings to inform cost estimates; go out to bid in late winter; construction in the spring.

*Motion: To approve installation of traffic lights at the intersection of Lexington Street and Sycamore Street. (Vote passed 3-0)*

**Approval of request from Belmont Gallery of Art for a One Day Liquor License, Wine and Malt Only, for Saturday November 9, 2019 from 5:00pm to 8:00pm for an Art Reception**

*Motion: To approve the One Day Liquor License as specified above. (Vote passed 3-0)*

**Discussion of the Master Plan Charge**

Kevin Dorn (Chair, Vision 21 Implementation Committee (VIC)) joined the meeting. At the last VIC meeting Marshall was in attendance to discuss bringing forth a request to the Board on formation of a Master Plan Refresh Committee. At this stage a draft charge for the Committee was still in the works.

Dorn reported that VIC had finalized a grant application to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council for funds to assist with the refresh – he expected the process to cost ~\$100k with the grant covering \$50k-\$60k if successful. Through the process of preparing the grant, VIC had identified a list of stakeholders with preliminary thoughts towards which stakeholders should comprise the Master Plan Refresh Committee versus those to contribute to the process as non-members. In collaboration with new Planning Board appointee Renee Guo, VIC had begun the process of reaching out to stakeholders to identify anchor documents that would ultimately contribute to the Master Plan.

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS:**

Epstein reported the Community Path Project Committee had met with design firm Nitsch, work continues on design of Phase 1a.

Caputo:

- Warrant Committee discussed draft informational slides on Minuteman that would ultimately be distributed to Town Meeting members.
- High School Traffic Working Group held a public forum last week to discuss recommendations for the School-Goden neighborhood. A proposal to turn a portion of Goden into a one-way street was not well received.
- Belmont Middle and High School Building Committee was a couple weeks away from the 90% estimate, hopefully no further value engineering would be required.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

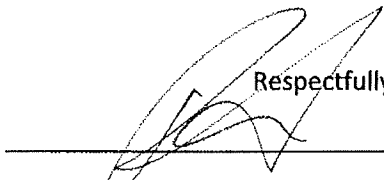
- *September 9, 2019:* Caputo provided a set of minor corrections.

*Motion: To approve the September 9, 2019 minutes, as amended. (Vote passed 3-0)*

**ADJOURNMENT:**

*Motion: To adjourn at 8:29pm. (Vote passed 3-0)*

Respectfully Submitted,

  
PATRICE GARVIN, Town Administrator