

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: May 5, 2020

TIME: 2:04 PM

**Minutes
Town of Belmont
Select Board**

**APPROVED
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**
12/2/19

Faculty Dining Room, Chenery Middle School

Wednesday, November 13, 2019

5:30pm

CALL TO ORDER:

A meeting of the Select Board in advance of Special Town Meeting. The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm by Chair Tom Caputo. Vice Chair Adam Dash and Select Board member Roy Epstein were present. Town Administrator Patrice Garvin was present.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS:

[None, due to time constraints.]

COMMENTS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS:

[There were none.]

ACTION BY CONSENT:

Discussion, vote, and positions taken on Special Town Meeting Warrant articles and amendments thereto

- Article 3: Floyd Carman (Town Treasurer) joined the meeting. Carman reviewed that he had initially recommended transferring \$2.5m of Free Cash into the General Stabilization Fund (GSF; this was the number currently in the motion for Article 3). The logic behind such a transfer was to demonstrate prudent fiscal management to ratings agencies, planning for the possibility that an override is not approved by voters.

Caputo elaborated that work on the FY21 budget had commenced early this year, and efforts were being made to reduce the estimated \$5-6m deficit to a more manageable number. This would potentially allow for covering the expected deficit with reserve funds, thereby delaying an override vote to November of 2020. There had been discussions among the Select Board, Financial Task Force II and Warrant Committee on whether \$2.5m was an appropriate number, i.e. would it leave sufficient funds in Free Cash to cover the deficit.

After further discussions with Garvin, as well as additional work to prepare a so-called 'belt-tightening' FY21 budget on both the Town and School side, Carman was now suggesting to transfer \$1.5m from Free Cash to the GSF at the present time. An additional \$1m could be transferred, if desired, at Annual Town Meeting in the spring of 2020, at which point there would be more certainty on the FY21 budget deficit.

The Board was ultimately in agreement to proceed as outlined by Carman, including to transfer \$1.5m from Free Cash to the GSF at the present time. There was additional discussion on revisiting the Free Cash guidelines with the Warrant Committee.

Motion: To recommend favorable action on Article 3, with the amendment that the amount of \$2.5m be changed to \$1.5m. (Vote passed 3-0)

- Article 5: Michael Widmer (Town Moderator) gave an overview of the amendments to Article 5 and explained how they would be taken up at Town Meeting.

Jill Clark (Town Meeting Member, P7) and Donald Mercier (Town Meeting Member, P8) were present to give explanations of their amendments.

Dash questioned whether the Board should take a position on Article 5 or any of its amendments, arguing that they were essentially operational rules for the legislative branch and the executive branch should not interfere – Town Meeting did not weigh in on the Select Board's operational rules. Caputo noted the Board was part of the group that had put together the initial proposal; Epstein saw this as merely a way to facilitate the process and agreed with Dash that the Board should weigh in only in the capacity as individual Town Meeting members.

The Board had previously voted favorable action on Article 5 with the expectation that amendments would be addressed subsequently, hence a motion to reconsider was introduced.

Motion: To reconsider the Select Board's prior vote of favorable action on Article 5. (Vote passed 3-0)

Motion: That the Select Board not take a position on Article 5 or any amendments thereto. (Vote passed 3-0)

[Paused discussion on Articles for Town Meeting to go into Executive Session, which was germane to Article 6.]

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 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)

[Resumed discussion on Town Meeting Articles.]

- Article 6:

Motion (Epstein): To strongly recommend unfavorable action on Article 6. (Vote passed 3-0)

- Article 4: Each Board member summarized their position and rationale on Article 4, concerning whether the Town should rescind its notice of withdrawal from the Minuteman (MM) Regional School Network.

- o *Epstein:* A close issue, but recommend continuing on the current path to withdraw. Have come to the understanding the Town is not legally obligated to provide vocational education. Looking at the Town as a whole, there are cutbacks being made in every area and MM should not be the only thing exempted from budget considerations – it actually has an outsized financial impact. Likely that students will still be able to attend MM as a non-member if desired, and the cost discrepancy between members and non-members is still an issue – MM is much higher cost than other vocational programs. Continuing with withdrawal will allow for addressing other needs of the Town.

- *Dash*: Have gone back and forth on the issue; was originally supporter of leaving in 2016. Troubled by the lack of alternatives for vocational education. The cost gap between members and non-members has been reduced. A funding source had been identified to cover the \$472k in deferred capital expenses required to rejoin MM. Felt it was definitely worth bringing the question to Town Meeting. Not strongly in favor of voting to rescind, but leaning that way given that a decision needs to be made.
- *Caputo*: A tough call, originally an advocate for leaving the network. Acknowledge MM is the best vocational opportunity for students. Ultimately question comes down to enrolment - believe there will still be opportunities for students to attend and at a lower cost in the long-run. Should continue with plan to withdraw.

Motion (Epstein): To recommend unfavorable action on Article 4. (Vote passed 2-1; Caputo and Epstein voted yes; Dash voted no)

Vote to approve request from The Society of Master Beercierge, 85 Leonard Street, for a One Day Liquor License (Malt & Wine only) for the purpose of a Meet and Greet for the Evergreen School Board of Trustees on November 14, 2019 from 6:30-9:30pm

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

Vote to appoint members to the Board of Registrars

It had been discovered that members of the Board of Registrars are restricted from serving on other town boards/committees. This forced the resignation of Joe Zarro, who was also serving on the Housing Trust.

Paul Minor and Stephen Shestakofsky were present as candidates for appointment; they gave their backgrounds and motivations for applying to the Board of Registrars.

The Select Board thought both candidates were extremely qualified to serve, no substantial basis to choose one over the other. Ultimately, the Board decided to appoint Shestakofsky as he had been recommended by the local Democratic committee, and was replacing Zarro who had previously been the Democratic representative.

Motion: To appoint Stephen Shestakofsky to the Board of Registrar of Voters. (Vote passed 3-0)

Vote to appoint member to the Youth Commission

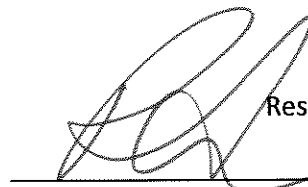
[Item not taken up due to time.]

Update on Rink Request for Proposal (RFP) and lease

[Item not taken up due to time.]

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: To adjourn to Town Meeting. (Vote passed 3-0)

 Respectfully Submitted,

PATRICE GARVIN, Town Administrator

