

**Minutes
Town of Belmont
Select Board
Virtual Meeting on Zoom
Monday, October 5, 2020
7:00pm**

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: November 20, 2020
TIME: 9:07 AM

CALL TO ORDER:

A meeting of the Select Board was called to order at 7:00pm by Chair Roy Epstein. Vice Chair Tom Caputo and Select Board member Adam Dash were present. Town Administrator Patrice Garvin and Assistant Town Administrator, Jon Marshall, were also present.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- The Beech Street Center and Mount Auburn Hospital are hosting a “Better Balance with Fall Prevention Strategies” presentation on Wednesday, October 7th from 3:00-4:00pm via Zoom.
- The Beech Street Center is hosting “Scary Movies with Dana” on Friday, October 9th and October 30th at 1pm via Zoom. Please contact Dana Leavitt at (617) 993-2977 or Dleavitt@belmont-ma.gov for more details.
- The Beech Street Center is hosting new additions of Cooks Corner on October 15th and 29th at 10am. Please call the new registration line at (617) 993-2976 and leave your name and number to register.
- The Beech Street Center is also hosting a Special Cooks Corner with Belmont Firefighter and EMT Ross Vona for Fire Prevention Week. Please call the new registration line at (617) 993-2976 and leave your name and number to register.
- Proclamation in recognition of Public Power Week, October 4-12, 2020. Caputo read the proclamation in its entirety and the members agreed to issue the proclamation.

Motion: To issue the proclamation (Vote passed 3-0)

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

- a. June 26, 2020 – Regular Meeting
- b. August 24, 2020 – Regular Meeting

Motion: To approve the June 26, 2020 and August 24, 2020 minutes under the combined revisions (Vote passed 3-0)

- c. September 17, 2020 – Regular Meeting

Motion: To approve the September 17, 2020 minutes under the revisions (Vote passed 3-0)

ACTION BY CONSENT:

Public Hearing continued from September 14, 2020, for new Liquor License Application (Section 15 Off Premises) submitted by Gajanand, Inc., DBA Belmont Convenience Store, 62 Concord Avenue, Belmont MA

The application had been completed for an off-premises wine and beer license. There had been some negative reaction to the license application from abutters. Epstein noted that he was in favor of the application. The applicant’s attorney joined the call and said that his client, Mukesh Patel, would be present at the store most of the time, and that he had previously operated an establishment with a similar license and expected no problems with maintaining the license.

[Open public comment]

- *Suzanne Cronin*: Cronin asked Patel's attorney to elaborate on the supervision of the site.
 - o The attorney again stated that his client would be present 70-80 hours per week and that he held other liquor licenses and that he had never received any complaints.
 - o Cronin expressed further concerns about the site's proximity to the high school.
 - o Epstein noted that the penalties for selling to underage customers were severe. Garvin confirmed that spot inspections were done by the ABCC to monitor sales.
 - o Cronin reiterated that she was disappointed and concerned.
- *David Jones*: Jones asked Patel's attorney to confirm that the applicant was normally at the store during open hours. After confirmation, he said that he had never seen more than one person working at the store at a time, even though the store already sold items that required identification.
 - o Patel's attorney answered that there was not a legal requirement for more than one employee to be present at a time, and that his client complied with the law.
 - o Jones said that he was not convinced by the answer and was still concerned.
 - o Epstein noted that it was more important to focus on enforcement, rather than the number of employees present.
- *Gina Donaldson*: Donaldson said she was not concerned about high schoolers attempting to buy alcohol. Donaldson said she did not think there was a reason to grant the license, as there were large commercial liquor stores in close proximity. She also noted that the store was near two child-related stores, and that she felt that adding liquor to the block added nothing to the neighborhood.
- *Suzanne Cronin*: Cronin echoed Donaldson's comments, particularly the close proximity to other liquor stores and that it would not beautify the community.
- *Arlene Cronin*: Cronin said she felt that adding liquor brought down the value of the area. She also said that high schoolers would visit the store for food and drinks and that they would see the liquor in the store and that it could easily become a source.

[Close public comment]

Dash expressed support for issuing the license and said he was especially supportive of it, as Patel was a current liquor license holder and a minority owned business. Dash also noted that the Town took violations very seriously, and that the license would be revoked if any violations did take place.

Caputo asked Patel and his attorney to confirm that Patel had no previous liquor license violations. Patel said he has never had violations or any enforcement by ABCC. Caputo asked Garvin to confirm that the license was non-transferrable, which Garvin confirmed. Caputo said he approved of the issuance of the license

Motion: To issue the Section 15 Off-Premises wine and beer liquor license, non-transferrable to Gajanand, Inc., DBA Belmont Convenience Store, 62 Concord Avenue, Belmont MA. (Vote passed 3-0)

Epstein noted to the abutters that, as with all licensed establishments in Belmont, if any violations were identified, the license could be revoked or not renewed.

Public Hearing for Propane Storage Tank License over 2,000 Gallons submitted by Eastern Propane of Danvers, MA for the purpose of winter condition heating for the Belmont High School

Garvin said that an Eastern Propane representative, Mr. Shaevitz, and Acting Fire Chief Wayne Haley were present to speak on the matter. Shaevitz joined the call and explained that as construction on the new Belmont High School continued, and there was a plan to install four heaters.

Eastern Propane would provide propane for those heaters. For each heater, they would provide two 1,000-gallon tanks with satellite tank monitors, so usage could be remotely monitored.

Epstein asked if 9,000 gallons was unusually large and Shaevitz said that it was not. He also said that the entire plan for installation and storage had been reviewed with the Fire Department. Acting Fire Chief Wayne Haley joined the call and said that he approved the entire plan and that monitoring and inspection of the process and storage would take place.

[Open public comment]

None.

[Close public comment]

Caputo noted that he was happy with the progress of the high school and that the tanks were necessary to keep the construction going through the winter.

Dash noted that per the Ethics Commission's ruling, he had to recuse himself from that decision.

Motion: To approve a Propane Storage Tank License over 2,000 Gallons submitted by Eastern Propane of Danvers, MA for the purpose of winter condition heating for the Belmont High School construction project. (Vote passed 2-0, with Dash recused)

Public Hearing continued from October 28, 2019, for a Small Cell License Application received from Extenet Systems, Inc. for 19 Moore Street

Epstein explained that the application involved the installation of a new lamp pole at 19 Moore Street. Extenet Systems, Inc. was proposing to put a 4G apparatus on the pole to fill gaps in cell phone service in the area. The pole had been approved by the Belmont Historic Commission and would be ultimately owned by Belmont Light.

Craig Spinale joined the call and explained that Belmont Light had met with the Historic Commission and Extenet multiple times and came to the agreement of the current proposal. Tracy Marquis of the Historic Commission joined the call and agreed that the groups had worked together for the best possible solution. Lauren Meier, also of the Historic Commission, echoed Marquis's comments.

Caputo asked if the company would be able to upgrade the apparatus to a 5G, and if so, if the request would have to come back before the Select Board. Town Counsel George Hall joined the call and said that an upgrade to 5G would be fine and probably would not have to come back before the Select Board.

Colin Robinson of Extenet clarified that they would install a 4G apparatus and thanked Belmont Light and the Historic Commission for the collaboration.

Epstein asked Robinson about the timeline for the pole. Robinson and Dash explained that it would be in the next few months, based on approval from the Select Board and Belmont Light.

Further discussion ensued, with the members agreeing to approve the application.

Motion: To issue a grant of location on the Small Cell License Application for 4G equipment received from Extenet Systems, Inc. for 19 Moore Street, conditioned upon the approval of The Belmont Municipal Light Board. (Vote passed 3-0)

Discussion and possible vote on Amendment to the Economic Development Committee Charge

Epstein explained that the amendment to the charge addressed the balance of the Committee. A new sentence would be added, saying "every effort will be made to have a member from each district. In the event that there are no suitable applicants from a district, a business owner from another district may be appointed to that seat".

Dash noted that it had been difficult to consistently fill all of the seats. Emma Thurston of the Economic Development Committee reported that the Committee had voted to recommend the change at their last meeting.

Motion: To approve the change to the charge of the Economic Development Committee as provided. (Vote passed 3-0)

Discussion and possible vote on request from Belmont Veterans Memorial Committee to hold a ceremony to honor Brigadier William Keville on Veterans Day, November 11, 2020

Robert Upton joined the call and spoke about Brigadier William Keville's life. He explained that the Veterans Memorial Committee will hold a rededication ceremony in honor of Brigadier Keville on Veterans Day, November 11th, 2020 at 11:00am at Waverley Square.

Epstein asked for further information on observance of the event based on COVID-19. Upton explained that they would follow Town protocols, as they had at their most recent events.

Dash noted that he would like to get approval from Wesley Chin before moving forward. Chin joined the call and said he had no objections to the proposal, and that the Purple Hearts Ceremony had been COVID-19 safe.

Motion: To allow the Belmont Veterans Memorial Committee to hold a ceremony to honor Brigadier William Keville on Veterans Day, November 11, 2020 in Waverly Square, subject to compliance with the Health Department guidelines. (Vote passed 3-0)

COVID-19 Update

Belmont Health Department Director Wesley Chin discussed common COVID-19 questions related to local case trends and Halloween. Chin explained that the Massachusetts daily case counts had increased over the last week and detailed some of the most recent local cases, which were predominantly identified in members of the community over the age of 51.

For Halloween, Chin explained that Halloween was not a locally sanctioned event, so the Health Department would not recommend cancelling Halloween, but there were guidelines to participate safely. Chin said wearing a mask, practicing good hygiene, avoiding touching faces, and restricting handing candy. Chin said that a better option was to leave out pre-packaged candy on a small table, instead of a bowl or giving out candy by hand. Chin reported that the Health Department had met with Police Chief MacIsaac to come up with recommendations for those who did not want to participate in Halloween. They recommended turning off porch lights, placing a kind note on the door, and not answering the door. Chin said he hoped to have a summary of the recommendations within the following week.

Discussion and Possible Vote on Structural Change Impact Group Committee Appointments

There was a short discussion between Garvin, Marshall, and the Select Board about updates to the Structural Change Impact Group Committee seats. Marshall explained that the Capital Budget Committee Chair Anne Marie Mahoney, had suggested eliminating the Capital Budget Committee's seat on the Structural Change Impact Group Committee. Mahoney had noted that the Capital Budget Committee would be available to the new group, but that it would be challenging to fill the seat with such an already active group of members. Caputo agreed. Further discussion ensued about the size of the committee and the state of applications for the group.

Motion: To amend the Structural Change Impact Group's charge to remove the Capital Budget Committee's seat, for a total of 11 members of the committee. (Vote passed 3-0)

Dash volunteered to be the Select Board member of the Structural Change Impact Group.

Motion: To nominate Adam Dash as the Select Board member on the Structural Change Impact Group. (Vote passed 3-0)

Update on Fire Chief Search

Garvin reported that the Fire Chief Search Committee had begun meeting the previous week with the recruiter. The Committee was still looking at internal and external candidates.

HR Director Jess Porter joined the call and reported that applications were due October 16th, 2020 and the group was on track with the schedule. Garvin added that MRI predicted a successful candidate by December.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Capital Requests

Garvin described the capital requests form that had gone out to departments. She also said that the Town was preparing for a public forum facilitated by the Collins Center and that she had begun to meet with Superintendent John Phelan.

The Select Board members agreed that public forums would be crucial, and that an outside facilitator would be helpful. Caputo added that finding a way to present what budget cuts could like to the public would be important.

Human Resources Update

HR Director Jess Porter had announced that she was moving on to another job opportunity. Garvin said that she was considering restructuring the department. The Select Board members thanked Porter for her work.

SELECT BOARD COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS

There were none.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session: To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining session or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel;

Motion: To enter executive session to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining session or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel at 8:40pm.

Next Meeting:

- October 19, 2020 at 7PM