Minutes

Town of Belmont

Select Board

Virtual Meeting on Zoom

Wednesday, September 17th, 2020

9:15am

CALL TO ORDER

The Select Board meeting was called to order by Chair Roy Epstein at 9:16am. Vice Chair Tom Caputo and Select Board Member Adam Dash were present. Town Administrator Patrice Garvin and Chief of Police James MacIsaac were also present.

ACTION BY CONSENT

Review Presentation for Special Town Meeting

Epstein reported on the Warrant Committee meeting that was held the night before. After Epstein's presentation on Article 10, 15 members of the Warrant Committee voted in favor of Article 10, with one abstention. Epstein said that the arguments for Article 10 were well received by the Warrant Committee members, and that the slide deck seemed persuasive. Epstein suggested that the Select Board proceed with their recommendation of a favorable vote on Article 10 to Town Meeting.

Epstein noted that he had been invited to a public meeting on September 20 that would specifically discuss Article 10, with representatives from the Wellesley Fire Department and Belmont's Fire and Police unions on the panel. Epstein was not sure if he would be able to attend and said former Belmont Fire Chief David Frizzell might be able to attend in his place to report back to the Select Board.

The Select Board agreed that as soon as needed edits were added, the presentation slides could be sent out to Town Meeting members. Epstein and Garvin reviewed the questions that were asked at the Warrant Committee meeting. Caputo suggested including more examples from other municipalities around leaving Civil Service.

Epstein suggested that he make the presentation to Town Meeting to keep continuity. Dash and Caputo agreed, and expressed support for Chiefs MacIsaac and Healey to make additional comments on Article 10 at the end of the presentation.

Epstein and Garvin asked for remaining feedback for the slide deck. Caputo made minor suggestions for slides 9 and 10. The Select Board members and Garvin agreed that making the financial analysis spreadsheet available and specifically summarizing the costs and savings on the slides would be best. Frizzell noted that the model was conservative and that the Select Board could highlight that police and fire costs would not exceed their current costs going forward if the Town left Civil Service.

Caputo suggested including the Warrant Committee's 2019 recommendation that the Town Administrator and Town Counsel explore the option of leaving Civil Service. Dash suggested adding the current diversity breakdown within the Fire and Police Departments to the presentation. Chief MacIsaac brought up that Boston was experiencing similar problems diversifying their Police Department with Civil Service. Epstein agreed that it would be worth adding information on diversity within the Fire and Police Departments and pointed out as well that many Massachusetts communities had never adopted Civil Service.

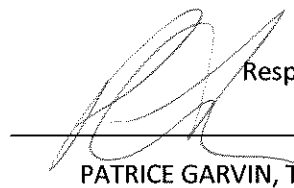**Discussion and Vote on Adoption of the Structural Change Committee Charge**

Caputo recalled the positive consensus among the Select Board members on the charge at their Monday meeting. Dash affirmed that he was pleased with the charge, and that his initial worries about the size of the

committee had been quelled by Caputo's explanation on Monday. Epstein said he was still concerned about the size but was happy with the charge otherwise. Caputo noted that he had received interest from residents, and that he was optimistic about filling the committee. Epstein suggested approving the charge to so that the committee could be filled and get ready to start work. Epstein said that if the committee appointments were not all filled, the Select Board could vote to make the committee smaller later on.

Motion: To accept the Structural Change Impact Group Charge as presented. (Vote 3-0)

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:58am. (Vote passed 3-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

PATRICE GARVIN, Town Administrator