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Minutes

Town of Belmont

Board of Selectmen

Selectmen's Meeting Room

Monday, January 7, 2019

7:00pm

APPROVED
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
DATE: 3/18/2019

CALL TO ORDER:

A regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 7:07pm by Chair Adam Dash. Vice Chair Mark Paolillo and Selectmen Tom Caputo were present. Town Administrator Patrice Garvin was present.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Winter scam awareness conversation with Middlesex District Attorney Marion Ryan will be held Tuesday January 8 @ 1:15pm at the Beech Street Center.
- Watertown is holding a Hazard Mitigation Plan public meeting Tuesday January 8 @ 7pm at the Richard E. Mastrangelo Council Chamber, 149 Main Street, Watertown.
- The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community breakfast will be held on Monday January 21 @ 8:45am at the Belmont High School Cafeteria.
- Belmont Community Blood Drive sponsored by the Beech Street Center is January 8 from 2-7pm.

COMMENTS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS:

[There were none]

ACTION BY CONSENT:

Discussion of "We Are Still In" Commitment from the Town of Belmont, presented by Belmont Light Electric Department

Chris Roy (GM, Belmont Light), Becca Keane (Belmont Light) and Travis Franck (Energy Committee/LBAC) joined the meeting. The "We Are Still In" movement signified continued commitment to the Paris Climate Accord among municipalities, small/large businesses, faith communities etc. Together, the institutions that have signed onto the movement represented over half of Americans.

B. Keane provided examples of initiatives already undertaken by the Town including the Electric Vehicle Program, increased energy efficiency via Green Communities, commitment to purchasing renewable energy sources. T. Franck explained that signing on would not obligate the Town to specific commitments, but it was an opportunity to package and brand what is already being done.

C. Roy confirmed that the reporting requirements would require minimal effort/resources, and that to get started he would need to be nominated as the designee for Belmont.

Motion: That the Board of Selectmen, on behalf of the Town of Belmont, sign on the 'We Are Still In' pledge, and designate Chris Roy as signatory. (Vote passed 3-0)

11/03/2024
11/03/2024 TO 09A
Trash and Recycling Update from DPW Director

Jay Marcotte (Director, DPW) joined the meeting to discuss complaints resulting from the high demand at a recent cardboard recycling event. P. Garvin stated that residents of the neighborhood near the DPW facility had concerns about traffic backing up onto Waverly St. There were also a small number of residents who had requested additional recycling capacity for their homes.

J. Marcotte apologized for the long wait and traffic at the recent event, and thanked Mike Santoro for his efforts to facilitate and speed-up the process. J. Marcotte was discussing with Waste Management about the possibility of getting a permanent cardboard compactor. DPW could then hold regular drop-off hours, which would help alleviate the pressure on recycling due to cardboard, and negate the need for special drop-off events. He would pursue this potential option and apprise the Town Administrator of the resulting decision.

LimeBike Update and Discussion on Scooters

Spencer Gober (Planning Board) and Scott Mullen (LimeBike) joined the meeting. It had been roughly six months since the LimeBikes were launched in Belmont. S. Gober explained that prior to the one year mark, the Town would enter into discussions with MAPC on whether to renew the program. He was therefore seeking feedback from the Board.

In total there had been 2,800 rides in Belmont, averaging around 20 rides per day, with 1,100 unique riders. The maximum number of bikes allowed in Belmont was 34, and there had been 22 on average. S. Gober and S. Mullen noted this was the smallest number of bikes allowed relative to the other communities; ridership is generally correlated with the number of bikes, hence there was likely potential for even higher ridership numbers. S. Gober noted a concentration of rides to Alewife station, as well as Waverly Square and Belmont Center, which was suggestive of commuters using the bikes to connect to other transit.

A. Dash noted there had been a few complaints early on in the program, but these had resolved and LimeBike had been good about fixing the initial problems.

S. Gober and S. Mullen discussed the prospect of adding electric scooters. MAPC was working with Boston/Somerville/Cambridge to change the current State legislation, which banned use of scooters without a license, lumping them in with gas-powered versions. S. Mullen described a pilot program in Portland, OR, where they found that 40% of scooter riders had never used one of their bikes. I.e., adding scooters could tap into a different market and have the potential to further reduce the number of cars on the road.

[Open discussion to the public.]

- *Cate Bowen (Town Meeting Member P4):* Supported the idea in principle, but in practice had concerns with bikes blocking sidewalk access. Asked that the Town/LimeBike look into providing more parking spaces for the bikes that would not impede pedestrian access. She also asked the Board to consider the financial benefits to the Town and to be mindful of the other bike related businesses in Town that could be impacted.
 - o S. Gober said that data collected from the bikes would help determine where the bikes tended to concentrate, and parking options could be put in place going forward.

- *Jessie Bennet (Town Meeting Member P1):* She had used and appreciated having the bikes in her neighborhood and looked forward to trying scooters if they were available.

S. Gober would discuss with LimeBike further regarding the potential fee charged by the Town, following the one year mark in late July, and update the Board. The Board expressed support for the program and its positive impact on reducing traffic congestion.

Discussion and Possible Appointments to the Youth Commission and Meeting with New Youth Coordinator

Wes Chin (Director, Health Department) joined the meeting and introduced Marisa Melanson, who had recently been hired for the Youth Coordinator position.

With the Youth Coordinator position filled, the Board could now move forward with appointments to the Youth Commission. After discussion, it was decided to cap the number of appointments (at the current time) to nine. The Board reviewed twelve applications, five of which were from teenagers.

Motion: To appoint Victoria Lesser, Zachary Gillette, and Alyssa Gould to the Youth Commission for one year terms. (Vote passed 3-0)

Motion: To appoint David Alper, Laura Panos, and Jeffery Speller to the Youth Commission for three year terms. (Vote passed 3-0)

Motion: To appoint Suzanne Morris, Gavin Farrell, and Robin Ohringer to the Youth Commission for two year terms. (Vote passed 3-0)

[Public Comment.]

- *Jessie Bennet (Town Meeting Member P1):* Advocated for the appointment of all five teenagers to the Youth Commission; if not, the Board should reach out to the students who were not appointed to encourage their participation in other ways. Was excited to see the Youth Commission come back.

Discussion and Possible Vote on Talk of the Town Sponsorship

Lisa Scudder (Chair, Meet Belmont Planning Committee) described the event and requested the Board provide \$800 in sponsorship towards public safety, marketing, and gifts for speakers. This was the same amount provided for last year. The Talk of the Town would be held on March 19, 2019, from 7-9pm.

Motion: To sponsor the Talk of the Town event, March 19, 2019, in the amount of \$800. (Vote passed 3-0).

Acceptance of \$15,000 Gift of Solar Panels for the Chenery Middle School from an Anonymous Donor

P. Garvin had recently met with Chris Roy and John Phelan to discuss the installation, and would lay out a timeline/plan in the coming week. Phil Thayer (Town Meeting Member P6) confirmed that Direct Energy Solar Company had previously given a cheque for \$28k towards installation of solar on a municipal building; together with the gift and Belmont Light's participation in the Smart Program, there should be

no cost incurred by the Town for installing the panels. Superintendent John Phelan would be bringing the matter to the next School Committee meeting for their approval.

Motion: To accept the gift of \$15,000 for solar panels for the Chenery Middle School. (Vote passed 3-0)

High School Bond Approval

Floyd Carman (Town Treasurer) joined the meeting. The purpose of the vote was for the Board to authorize the issuance of bonds in the amount of \$212,764,911, as voted by the residents on November 6, 2018, and by Town Meeting on November 13, 2018. The vote is part of compliance with Bond Counsel.

A. Dash noted that his recusal for matters pertaining to the High School project did not extend to financing, and therefore he would be participating in the vote.

Motion: That the Board of Selectmen hereby determine in accordance with General Laws Chapter 70B, that the amount of the cost of the Belmont High School project authorized by a vote of the Town passed on Nov 13, 2018, Article 2, excluded for the limitation of Proposition 2.5, so-called, on November 6, 2018, Question 4, not being paid by the School Facilities Grant is \$212,764,911, and we hereby approve of the issuance of notes and bonds in such an amount under said General Laws Chapter 70B. (Vote passed 3-0)

Motion: That each member of the Board of Selectmen, the Town Clerk, and the Town Treasurer be, and are hereby are, authorized to take any and all such actions in executing and delivering such certificates, receipts, or other documents, as may be determined by any of them to be necessary or convenient to carry into effect the provisions of the foregoing vote. (Vote passed 3-0)

[The Executive Session and Discussion and Possible Ratification of Fire Chief's Contract items were deferred to a later date.]

Rink Discussion

Glenn Clancy (Director, Community Development) joined the meeting. P. Garvin explained that the School Committee had voted prior to the holidays to pursue an RFP process that would consider the High School campus as a potential site for the rink. A follow-up meeting to discuss the crafting of the RFP was held; currently, Community Development and P. Garvin were waiting on feedback from the School Committee before moving forward.

T. Caputo indicated that the next step would be to set a date for a public forum to get feedback from residents regarding the potential site, as well as aspects of the RFP. The letter from Bruce Haskell (Langdon Environmental) had raised several challenges for the rink being at the incinerator site, including a 3-4 year timeframe before construction could begin.

Incinerator Discussion

A. Dash reviewed the five remaining potential uses. While the Board would not be voting tonight, he reiterated the need to make a decision soon. The feasibility study for the Anaerobic Digester (AD) would be completed prior to the January 28th meeting, which was the final key missing piece of information that was necessary to make an informed decision. Therefore, the January 28th meeting would serve to kick-off the decision process, and he envisioned that a final decision would be made at latest by end of Q1. He noted the Board had received a petition against the AD, and it took the concerns from the neighborhood seriously.

[Open discussion to the public.]

- *Lucy Avilla (Town Meeting Member P5)*: Questioned the legitimacy of an AD being a 'municipal use', and asked whether there was any precedent for an AD facility being designated as such.
 - o A. Dash said the feasibility study would potentially shed light on this, and also that DCAMM would ultimately need to approve any of the potential uses as being municipal.
- *Phil Thayer (Town Meeting Member P6)*: Inquired whether multiple uses could be accommodated at the site; in particular, would the AD allow space for any other uses.
- *John Sullivan (Hough Rd.)*: Expressed concerns about the AD and asked about the timing of the decision on the final use, specifically how the public process would play out following the January 28 meeting.
 - o A. Dash reiterated the Board's intention to make a decision this quarter. With respect to the digester, it would depend heavily on the results of the feasibility study. If the report indicates that such a facility is not feasible then it could be taken off the table; if not, then the discussion would likely continue.
- *Maeve Giangregorio (Marsh St.)*: Asked for clarification on what the decision process would look like if the AD was determined to be feasible. A. Dash explained that the report would establish the facts and clarify details that would allow the Board to weigh the pros/cons, for example, with respect to potential smells, financial benefits to the Town, etc. M. Giangregorio asked when the information would be shared with the public; the feasibility study would be published on the Town website as soon as it was received. A. Dash further indicated that the Board would undertake the necessary discussions to work through the results of the study in a public setting.

Discussion of New Short Term Rental Laws

Charles Clark (Planning Board) and Jeffery Wheeler (Senior Town Planner) joined the meeting. A. Dash had requested that the Planning Board look into possible regulations of short term rentals such as AirBnB.

C. Clark stated that the State had recently passed legislation that provided the opportunity for taxation and regulation by local governments. In addition, operators of short term rentals were required to register with the State, and towns could publish a list of addresses.

J. Wheeler explained that, currently, there were already regulations governing Bed and Breakfast establishments that applied to short term rentals as well. Under these regulations, a special permit was required, which allowed neighbors to hear the proposal and express concerns, and allowed the Zoning Board to place specific restrictions, e.g. on parking. He considered this to be a valuable process. G. Clancy expressed concern that these regulations, as applied to short term rentals, were difficult to enforce in part because it was not always clear whether the owner lived on-site, which was required under 'accessory use'. The new State legislation was helpful in that it provided a point of contact for enforcement purposes.

G. Clancy noted that a common complaint about short term rentals was the transient nature of visitors.

For Spring Town Meeting, the Board could place an article on the warrant addressing taxation - the options were to apply a 6% local excise, a 3% community fee, or both. C. Clark stated the Planning Board would conduct further work on how best to regulate short term rentals, but this would not be ready until Fall Town Meeting.

[Open discussion to public.]

- *Libby Boss (Resident Precinct 6):* Was currently renting out the other half of her two family unit on a monthly basis through AirBnB. She had initially considered doing short term rentals, but expressed concern over the special permit process; to her knowledge only one had ever been granted and she was nervous to apply. Requested that the Planning Board look into regulations in place in Boston/Cambridge, which allowed for owner occupants to rent out their units on a short term basis.
 - o C. Clark encouraged L. Boss to participate in the upcoming public process to develop the short term rental regulations.

Vote to Approve New Business License

Motion: To approve the new business license for Lisa's Family Pizzeria (Antonio Pereira), 368 Trapelo Rd. (Vote passed 3-0)

TOWN ADMINISTRATORS REPORT:

P. Garvin reviewed the Town Administrator's Report:

- FY20 budget season has begun, and department heads are to submit a draft budget by January 4. The meeting schedule for budget review was attached.
- The Town has become the 316th AARP age friendly community. The program encourages towns to prepare for rapid aging of the population. Next step is for Board to endorse an advisory council; working with Council on Aging to put this together.
 - o Submitting an application with Council on Aging for a regional grant with to fund a social worker for the Town.
- Requesting support to apply for a grant through the Community Compact to fund the creation of a comprehensive capital improvement plan.
- Community Development had conducted further testing with regards to complaints about a speed table on Cross St. discussed at a recent meeting. The testing confirmed vibrations and the speed table would be removed.

M. Paolillo requested a presentation reviewing quarterly financials at an upcoming meeting.

T. Caputo asked for an update on the Town-wide traffic study; P. Garvin would follow up with G. Clancy to get an ETA on the final report.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS:

A. Dash expressed a desire to discuss the Community Path route an upcoming meeting. P. Garvin had been in touch with John Ray (Assistant GM, MBTA Commuter Rail and Ferry) and would invite him to attend.

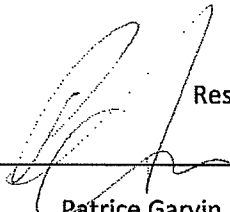
APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

- *November 19, 2018, Regular Session:* A. Dash proposed 3 minor changes.

Motion: To approve the November 19, 2018 regular session minutes, as amended. (Vote passed 3-0)

ADJOURNMENT:

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


Respectfully Submitted,

Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator