

Select Board Regular Meeting
Monday, February 1, 2021 - 7:00 p.m.
REMOTE

Arrangements for remote participation by Select Board members and members of the public were made in accordance with Governor Baker's Emergency Order Modifying the State's Open Meeting Law. Participation in this meeting was done remotely via Zoom.

Select Board Members Present via Zoom: Chair Thomas Lachiusa, Marc Strange, Steven Marantz, Mark Gold, and Richard Foster

Also Present via Zoom: Town Manager Lyn Simmons, CFO Paul Pasterczyk, Debbie House, Chief John Dearborn, Moderator Rebecca Townsend

This meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Lachiusa. Due to COVID-19 concerns, and the Governor's executive order, and changes to Open Meeting Law remote participation, this meeting was held remotely with residents having the option of calling in or sending in their comments. All votes were taken by roll call. LCTV was also utilized to broadcast and record the meeting.

Chair Lachiusa confirmed that all members and persons anticipated on the agenda were present and could hear and be heard throughout the meeting. Ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law. This meeting allowed for public comment.

COVID-19 Update – Chief Dearborn gave the COVID update. There are currently 42 active cases in town. Longmeadow is now in the yellow category. The percent positivity is up a little, this is based on testing. Chief Dearborn encouraged the continuation of preventive strategies. Cases are being tracked in the town and schools. The schools are on a hybrid model right now. First responders have received their first round of vaccinations. The town is supposed to receive 100 doses of vaccine per week through February. The first batch is due tomorrow. The first ones to be vaccinated through the town clinic are the volunteer force working at the clinic and individuals 75 years and older. Assistance is being given in making online appointments at the regional vaccination site at Eastfield Mall in Springfield. Big Y in town may possibly be starting to offer vaccinations. The town clinic is ready to go with over 300 volunteers, 66 of which are already fully or partially vaccinated.

Announcements

- Governor Baker announced that Phase 2 of the State's vaccination schedule would begin on February 1. Individuals aged 75 years and older will be prioritized first in Phase 2 followed by individuals 65 years and older, and individuals with 2+ comorbidities. Individuals 75 years and older can now begin making appointments for the State's mass vaccination site in Springfield at the Eastfield Mall, appointments will be for February 1 and later. To make an appointment and for more information on the State's vaccination clinics visit www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine.
- Nomination papers are available by appointment only, contact the Town Clerk at 565-4103. The Annual Town Election will be on June 22, 2021. The deadline to obtain nomination papers is 5:00 pm on March 12, 2021, the deadline to submit nomination papers is 5:00 pm on March 16, 2021. Certified signatures of 50 registered voters are required to be included on the ballot.
- The Annual Census has been mailed out to residents. Please return the signed form to Town Hall as soon as possible. The information obtained from the census is used to prepare the annual street list, jurors list, school list and provides proof of residence for veterans' benefits as well as senior citizens programs. This does not register you to vote, it does keep your current voter registration active.
- The Town Clerk and Town Treasurer/Collector's satellite offices in the Community House are open on Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and Fridays from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

- The MassDOT virtual public hearing for the Longmeadow/Converse Streets project was prerecorded and is available on mass.gov. Email comments/questions to dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us January 28 through February 11.
- The document, Select Board Rules and Procedures, presented by Ms. Simmons will be reviewed at tonight's meeting.
- Ms. Simmons is researching a Select Board public records/correspondence policy to be reviewed at a future meeting.
- A parking ban is in effect until tomorrow at 8:00 p.m. During a snow emergency parking ban, there is NO PARKING at any time on any streets except by Fire, Police, Public Works, other Public Safety vehicles, and public utility repair vehicles. Any vehicle in violation shall be subject to ticketing and towing at the owner's expense.
- Curbside trash collection was not completed today (Monday) due to the weather. Trash pickup has been cancelled for tomorrow (Tuesday). Trash collection will resume on Wednesday.

Resident Comments - none

Select Board Comments

- Mr. Gold noted that he called Peter Landon and apologized for interrupting him at the last Select Board meeting. Mr. Gold also explained that he voted "present" on a motion at the last meeting because he was following the procedure of not voting on an issue the first time it is presented to the Board.

Town Manager's Report

- Finance Director Paul Pasterczyk announced his plans to retire in June 2021. Mr. Pasterczyk has been with the town for 34 years and is well respected. He has been the Finance Director for the past 15 years.
- The town has filed a complaint in Hampden Superior Court to recover the costs associated with the cleanup of the 170 Dwight Road site, including future costs and attorney's fees.
- Hill Engineering will be conducting a feasibility study for the possibility of relocating Town Hall and Community House offices to Greenwood, which is ADA accessible.
- MassDOT's virtual Design Public Hearing for the Longmeadow and Converse Streets improvements was pre-recorded. A link is available at longmeadow.org and mass.gov. Comments on the project can be submitted to MassDOT January 28 – February 11.
- An Express of Interest form has been submitted to MVP to gauge their interest in energy resiliency projects for solar and storage at the Adult Center, DPW, High School and Town Hall Campus. If MVP does not look positively on this project, we have a list of other items we are pursuing.
- The Bliss and Laurel Parks working group has been meeting to talk about where to go from here. Two meetings have been held and a few items have been identified as priorities.
- The Wolf Swamp Field renovations are moving along. The lack of snow and mild weather has allowed work to continue.
- Interviews have been scheduled for the Town Treasurer/Collector position. A second round of interviews will be scheduled if needed.
- The Mass Municipal Association annual meeting was held virtually last week. Ms. Simmons attended several of the online workshops.

Old Business

1. Approved Minutes – *Mr. Gold made the motion to approve the meeting minutes from January 19, 2021 as presented. Mr. Foster seconded the motion.*
Roll Call Vote: Mr. Lachiusa-YES, Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Foster-YES

New Business

1. Annual Town Meeting Date Change – the Annual Town Meeting is currently scheduled for the second Tuesday in May (5/11/21), per the town bylaws. Moderator Rebecca Townsend believes there will be an issue with lighting if we hold a town meeting outside at 7:00 p.m. on May 11. The warrant will be lengthy due to the lack of a special town meeting; the articles have been carried forward to the annual town meeting. Ms. Townsend is recommending holding the annual town meeting on Sunday, June 6, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. Mr. Gold question a rain date and noted that the next fiscal year would start July 1 which doesn't leave a lot of time to hold a town meeting. Ms. Townsend noted that with the use of consent agendas, we could accomplish it in one afternoon. The setup, cost, organization, and all of the work that goes into holding a town meeting would be doubled if we held a 2 day meeting. The Select Board will vote on this at their next regular meeting.
2. Update on the FY21 Revenue/Expenditure Budget and the FY22 Revenue Projections
Finance Director Paul Pasterczyk gave the financial update. Overall, the financial picture is stable and could turn slightly either positively or negatively.
FY21 Revenues are adequate. The FY 2021 revenues are ok for year end results, their current levels have a negative trickle effect on the FY 2022 projections. Concerns are the motor vehicle excise commitment and the ambulance revenue. Some MVET dollars that would normally have been collected in FY 2020 where delayed because of the pandemic and were collected at the beginning of FY 2021. The Ambulance revenue, a victim of the pandemic, is a major revenue source that is falling behind in FY 2021. A few other operating budget accounts will need supplemental funding: Human Resources salaries, legal expenses, forestry, property insurance premiums for new DPW and Adult Center, and retirement assessment.
Mr. Pasterczyk is predicting that at least \$1.25 million of free cash will be able to go into the Operational Stabilization Fund. Our FY 2021 Free Cash current total of \$2.458 million was greatly enhanced by FY 2020 appropriation turn backs. A large portion of the turn backs were the result of the slowdown / shutdown of activities because of Covid-19.
The CARES Act grant in the amount of \$1.4 million was received from the state to address expenditures that were related to the pandemic. We are trying to fully utilize the grant funding but there remains a potential that some expenditures that have been charged to the grant may be denied and that a Free Cash supplemental appropriation maybe needed to fund those denied expenditures.
The FY22 budget started with a projected deficit of \$881K in the fall of 2020. FY 2022 departmental budget requests pushed that shortfall to over \$1.8 million, though not all requests will be granted. Given the slowdown in the FY 2021 local receipts and the minor negative impact of the Governor's FY 2022 local aid proposals (\$20K less than the fall 2020 projection), it is going to be nearly impossible to meet all the goals established without major service cuts to the FY22 budget. One positive outcome is that our FY 2022 retirement assessment was slightly reduced as opposed to the projected 8% / \$294K increase. Scantic Valley Regional Health Trust will be setting the Health Insurance rates for FY 2022 on February 9. The percent increase could be much less than the projected 6% / \$240K increase.
3. Select Board Rules and Procedures – Ms. Simmons created this document for review and comment by the Select Board. Mr. Gold submitted his comments, Mr. Lachiusa, and Mr. Marantz voiced some of their comments. Select Board members were asked to review the document and submit any language they would like to see in the document to the Administrative Assistant so that all comments can be incorporated into the document for review and possible vote at the next regular meeting.

Mr. Gold made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 p.m. Mr. Foster seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Lachiusa-YES, Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Foster-YES

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie House

02/01/2021 Regular Meeting
02/16/2021 Approved

Documents:

Agenda

Announcement sheet

Town Managers Report

Draft Minutes 1/19/2021

Memo-FY21 Financial Update and FY22 Budget Projection Update

FY21 Estimated Receipts Report

General Reserve Balances Policy

Select Board Rules and Procedures Draft

Correspondence:

Comcast letter 1/13/21

Email Patrick Dawes 1/22/21

Email Tom Shea 1/27/21

Eversource letter 1/8/21 vegetation management

PVPC letter 1/15/21 TIP 2022-2026 process