

Select Board Regular Meeting
Monday, March 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 in Webinar format.

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, DPW Director Mario Mazza, Thomas King, Ralph Santaniello (Posto), Planning Board Chair Donald Holland, Evelyn Humphries

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 – Town Manager Lyn Simmons gave the COVID update. There are currently 15 active cases as of today. We are on a positive trend. Our vaccine clinic is only receiving the 2nd dose. This may change with the announcement of the third vaccine supplier being approved.

Announcements

The Select Board will hold a special budget review meeting on March 9 and a public forum on the FY22 budget on March 10. Zoom links to join the meetings will be posted on the town's website.

LHS student Evelyn Humphries was recently recognized by Business West as the "Inaugural People's Choice Young Woman of Impact" for her compassionate service to the community. Ms. Humphries was nominated for her service with Girls Inc. of the Valley, Rachel's Table, and Ronald McDonald House. Chair Lachiusa presented (virtually) Ms. Humphries with a Certificate of Achievement.

The annual census was mailed out to residents in January. Residents were asked to sign and return the form to the Town Clerk's office as soon as possible.

Annual dog licenses are due by March 31st per MGL Chapter 140, Section 137. A current rabies certificate is always required to license as well as proof of spaying/neutering upon licensing for the first time. See the Town website for more information or contact the Town Clerk at 413-565-4103.

Annual recycling stickers are available through the Town Clerks Office. Stickers can be purchased online or by submitting an application to the Town Clerk. The fees are \$45.00 or \$35.00 for residents age 65 and over, and additional or replacement stickers are \$15.00 each. The registration or vehicle plate number for the vehicle that will be used must be presented when purchasing a pass.

Nomination papers are available until March 12 through the Town Clerk's office. The deadline to submit them is March 16.

Resident Comments

Andrea Chasen, 236 Crestview Circle is the co-chair of Longmeadow Earth Day and attended the meeting to announce a clean-up Longmeadow event that will happen on April 11 from 1pm – 4pm. The rain date will be May 2. The group is looking for volunteers to clean up the town parks and conservation areas. COVID restrictions will be in place (masking, distancing). Many LHS students will be volunteering along with some

students from the Climate Change Club. Ms. Chasen invited the Select Board to participate. Sign up can be done through longmeadow.org/earth day.

Interviews

Audit Committee – Joseph Santaniello did not attend the meeting.

Historical Commission – Thomas King, 73 Birchwood Avenue applied for a position on the Historical Commission. He is interested in serving on this commission and is aware of the other groups (Historic District Commission and Historical Society).

Select Board Comments

Mr. Gold updated the Rules of Procedures manual with all of the comments received. This will be reviewed at a future meeting.

Mr. Gold has been working on the sewer rate issues with Mr. Foster. Mr. Gold is working on potential scenarios and will have a document of options ready for the next Select Board meeting. He suggested holding a public forum before the Select Board makes changes to the sewer fee structure.

Mr. Strange thanked Administrative Assistant Debbie House for her service to the town and wished her the best of luck in her new endeavors.

Mr. Foster asked that the Select Board consider a special review of the sewer rate structure proposal to allow enough time for explanation and review.

Hearing on Fuel Storage at 170 Dwight Road (new DPW)

Mr. Marantz made the motion to open the hearing at 7:30 p.m. for a fuel storage license for 170 Dwight Road.

Mr. Strange seconded the motion.

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

DPW Director Mario Mazza attended the hearing. Fire Prevention Lt. Carl Viera submitted all paperwork for this hearing. The Fire Department supplies the permit while the Select Board issues the license, which goes with the land. The fuel (gasoline and diesel) will be stored at the new DPW facility at 170 Dwight Road and will be used to fuel DPW, Fire and Police equipment.

Mr. Foster made the motion to close the hearing. Mr. Gold seconded the motion.

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

Mr. Marantz made the motion to accept the application and issue a license for the fuel storage at 170 Dwight Road. Mr. Foster seconded the motion.

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

Town Manager's Report

DPW Director

DPW Director Mario Mazza has submitted a letter of resignation. Mario was selected as the new DPW Director for the Town of Agawam. His last day with Longmeadow will be March 19. We wish Mario the best in this new opportunity. The job description is being reviewed and will be posted as soon as possible.

Shared Streets Grant

DPW Engineering has submitted the Lynnwood Drive sidewalk project to MassDOT's Shared Winter Streets & Spaces Grant Program for another try to be awarded.

Open Space and Recreation Plan

The final plan was approved by the State. We had previously received conditional approval while we worked through some items that the Division of Conservation Services wanted refined. That work has since been completed, a big thank you to Tim Keane, Town Engineer and Al Laakso, Chair of the Conservation Commission for completing these last tasks.

Administrative Assistant to the Select Board and Town Manager

The Select Board/Town Manager Administrative Assistant, Debbie House, has submitted a resignation letter. Debbie will be joining the Town of East Longmeadow as Administrative Assistant to the Town Manager. We wish Debbie the best and thank her for all her years of service. The job has been posted and will remain open

until March 15. While we work to secure a permanent replacement, I will be trying to obtain a temporary person to fulfill the most critical tasks.

Treasurer/Collector

A Treasurer/Collector was appointed and has since left for another opportunity. The position will be advertised again.

Old Business

1. Approved Minutes – *Mr. Gold made the motion to approve the meeting minutes from February 16, 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
2. Zone Change Discussion with Planning Board Chair – Chair Don Holland attended the meeting. The Planning Board will hold a public hearing on April 7, 2021 on the proposed zone change for the church property on Williams Street owned by the Colvest Group. The Planning Board will also hold a regular meeting the same night with a vote to be taken whether to endorse the change or not. The article can move forward to Town Meeting. If the Planning Board does not endorse the zone change, and it does not pass at Town Meeting, the applicant would have to wait 2 years before it could be brought forward again.
3. Budget Revenue Update with FY22 State Aid Numbers – Mr. Pasterczyk gave a brief update. The state did not set their fiscal year budget until late December. The general net state aid money jumped slightly by \$64,000. This is a minor increase coming back to the General Fund. In the past, Legislators have normally increased the Governor's numbers.

New Business

1. Appoint Tax Title Custodian – not done. Position to be advertised again.
2. Requests for Extension of Liquor License Premise – Max Burger and Posto
Both restaurants, Posto and Max Burger, requested extensions of premise for their liquor licenses to include the parking lot tents they would like to set up again beginning in April (weather permitting). This was allowed last fall. The tents came down just before the snow. The Governor's orders allows the town's to approve this through up to 60 days past the end of the state of emergency. There was some discussion of the practice of piling snow on the west end of the parking lot which would take up parking spaces. The plaza owner should take care of the snow.
Mr. Strange made the motion to approve the requests for liquor license extension of premise to the parking lot tents for Posto and Max Burger starting April 1, 2021 through up to 60 days after the state of emergency. Mr. Marantz seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote: Mr. Lachiusa-YES, Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Foster-YES
3. Request for Liquor License Extended Hours – Posto
Posto submitted a request to extend their hours. Posto currently stops serving alcohol at 11:00 p.m. The request is to extend the hours to serve to 12:00 a.m. Sunday through Thursday, and to 12:30 a.m. on Friday and Saturday. Mr. Gold noted that most of the restaurants stop serving at 11:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 11:30 p.m. on Saturdays and he is not in favor a later times. Mr. Lachiusa would not support later closings.
Mr. Gold made the motion to deny the request for extended hours for Posto. Mr. Foster seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote: Mr. Lachiusa-YES, Mr. Strange-NO, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Foster-YES
4. Quarterly Investment Report – Mr. Pasterczyk gave the quarterly report which goes through October 2020 to December 2020. Interest rates have been declining. Relationship Rewards have been earned on the Peoples Bank Premium Money Market account in the amount of \$1,546.64 in addition to interest. A new account was opened at Westfield Bank at the end of November with an initial deposit of \$4,700,000 and has earned \$2,022.63 already this quarter. The new lockbox service with Century Bank has processed \$3,195,378.72 in revenue for this quarter, this is an increase of \$411,260.72 over last quarter.

The investment income earned this quarter on the OPEB Pension Reserves Investment Fund was \$334,476.28. The Town's return on its investments for calendar year 2020 was 12.53% (gross of fees). Since inception, the Town made three deposits to the State Retiree Benefits Trust Fund (SRBTF) totaling \$3,086,500.72; the December 31, 2020 balance in the SRBTF is \$3,792,546.07 a gain of \$706,045.35 in earnings since the initial startup in December 2018. The Town will be making a deposit of nearly \$518K at the end of February.

5. Town Manager's FY22 Budget Presentation

Ms. Simmons presented a power point of her FY2022 Budget. The budget recommendation is balanced without the use of reserves, uses 1.75% of the allowable 2.5%, and funds the capital plan recommendations. The budget will be reviewed at the Select Board Department Budget Hearing on March 9 and the public forum and joint meeting with the Finance Committee on March 10. The Town Manager's power point and supporting documents are posted on longmeadow.org/budget.

6. Review Draft 2021 Annual Town Meeting Warrant

The draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant was reviewed article by article. Article 5-HR funds and Article 8-stormwater assessment may be deleted. Ms. Simmons is applying for a MVP grant for the stormwater assessment. Articles 16-19 will be reworded with language from bond counsel. Walter Gunn from the Planning Board joined the meeting to discuss the zoning amendment articles. He noted that the Planning Board had not seen Article 37-renting rooms yet. The Select Board will send this article to the Planning Board for the Planning Board's Wednesday meeting. Article 39-commercial vehicle definition is not what the Planning Board held the hearing on, changes were made. The Planning Board voted on GVW limits. Ms. Simmons is fine with using the original article.

Mr. Gold made the motion to use the definition of commercial vehicle that was approved in the November 2020 "not held" Fall Town Meeting Warrant. Mr. Marantz seconded the motion.

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

7. Hampden County Regional Retirement System Audit

An Audit Report was done on the HCRRS for the timeframe of 1/1/14-12/31/17 which produced unfavorable reports. PERAC sent the report to all of the HCRRS participants and it was well reported in the newspapers. Participating towns have been meeting to discuss the audit and make sure the funds are managed correctly. The question came up "what's been going on since 2017? And why is this just coming out now? Mr. Gold and Mr. Pasterczyk have been attending virtual meetings of the HCRRB. PERAC did the audit and is working on more recent audits now. Regionally Town Managers are discussing this and will all be attending a special HCRRB meeting on Wednesday. The audit report was also sent to the AGO and the Ethics Commission for review.

8. Town Manager Evaluation

Mr. Lachiusa would like to get the Town Manager Evaluation process started. The eval form will be sent to the Select Board members. Mr. Gold would like Ms. Simmons to fill one out on herself. Mr. Lachiusa likes the department heads to fill out an eval sheet on the Town Manager, Mr. Gold, Mr. Strange and Mr. Foster do not like this idea. Mr. Marantz feels the department heads' opinions should not be ignored. Evaluations should be finalized by the first June meeting.

Mr. Gold made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 p.m. Mr. Marantz 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

Documents:

Agenda

Announcement sheet

Certificate for Evelyn Humphries

03/01/2021 Regular Meeting

03/15/2021 Approved

Interview schedule

Applications – J. Santaniello, T. King

Fuel Storage Hearing Documents

Town Managers Report

Draft Minutes 2/16/2021

Requests for Extension of Liquor License Premise – Max Burger and Posto

Request for Extended Hours – Posto

Quarterly Investment Report

Town Manager's FY22 Budget Presentation

Draft 2021 Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Hampden County Regional Retirement System Audit

Correspondence:

Comcast Letter 2/10/21

School Dept. Letter 2/9/21