

Select Board Regular Meeting  
Monday, March 2, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.  
Longmeadow High School, Room A15, 535 Bliss Road, Longmeadow, MA

**Present:** Vice-Chair Richard Foster, Marc Strange, and Mark Gold.

**Also Present:** Town Manager Lyn Simmons, Paul Pasterczyk, Finance committee members Maury Garret, Andrew Lam-Ed Clark, Eileen Morin and William Welch.

**Absent:** Chair Marie Angelides, Thomas Lachiusa,

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Select Board Vice-Chair Richard Foster.

**Announcements:** Town manager Simmons announced that 923 residents voted in the early presidential primary voting the prior week. The polls for the primary election would open tomorrow, March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7AM and remain open through 8 PM.

Ms. Simmons also noted that the 2020 national census would begin March 12<sup>th</sup> for on-line responses. This is the national decennial census and is different from the annual town census. Town residents are encouraged to go on-line and complete this US national census.

Mr. Foster reported that the Police Department would be holding the next series of RAD self-defense training for women. The training programs would be two consecutive Mondays and Wednesdays (April 6th, 8th 13th, and 15<sup>th</sup>). For more details, visit the town website.

**Committee Interviews:** Mr. Michael Smith (39 Converse St.) appeared before the Select Board as the requirement for his application to the Longmeadow Historical Commission. Mr. Smith noted he moved to Longmeadow two years ago and was interested in participating in the community. There were no questions of Mr. Smith. Mr. Strange and Mr. Foster thanked him for volunteering to serve on this committee.

There were no resident comments or Select Board member comments.

**Town Manager's Report – Lyn Simmons:**

Ms. Simmons reviewed her written report (a copy of which was distributed with the meeting documents). Highlights include the appointment of Captain Fontaine as Interim Police Chief effective March 1<sup>st</sup>. Town counsel Doherty, Wallace, Pillsbury & Murphy, has requested a review of their retainer fee. A multidisciplinary task force has been formed to monitor and make recommendations to the town leadership on the COVID-19 virus. The Town of Monson has been accepted into the WESTCOM regional dispatch group, and East Longmeadow has expressed interest in joining. Finally, discussions continue on the sharing of health services with East Longmeadow.

**Approval of Minutes:** Mr. Gold moved that the minutes of the February 18<sup>th</sup> regular Select Board meeting be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Strange and approved by a vote of 3-0. Mr. Gold moved that the minutes of the February 24<sup>th</sup> special Select Board meeting be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Strange and approved by a vote of 3-0.

**Budget Presentation:** Town Manager Lyn Simmons:

The Select board was joined by the Finance Committee for the presentation of the Town Manager's budget.

Ms. Simmons reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on the FY 2021 budget with the Select Board. The PowerPoint identified several adjustments to the budget compared to Select Board goals, specifically the reduction of capital spending from a goal of 3.25% of revenue to 3.125% of revenue, which is still higher than the 3.0% level in FY2020. The proposed budget uses 1.875% of the 2.5% property tax increase allowed under proposition 2-1/2. Two new positions were added to the general government; a DPW laborer for field maintenance and a janitor for the new Adult Center building. Two additional EMT firefighters were also added to the budget to address the chronic high overtime expenditures in that department.

Ms. Simmons reviewed revenue assumptions (lower than hoped for state aid) and the status of the town's stabilization, retained earnings, and reserve funds. As this meeting was intended to be a "first overview" of the budget, the chair limited the depth of questioning until after the town-wide budget forum.

Mr. Garrett noted that the anticipated tax increase of 1.84% fell within the guidelines of the Finance Committee's request.

There was discussion about the capital budget, specifically whether the total recommendations of \$1,954,770 included funds in the Capital stabilization funds that had remained in the fund from previously approved projects that did not spend the fully appropriated amounts. Mr. Pasterczyk noted that of the \$59,000 in the Capital stabilization funds, only \$5,000 would be requested for appropriation at the May annual town meeting to supplement the FY2021 new funds. Mr. Gold expressed concern that we could raise and appropriate \$54,000 less and still fund the full capital plan. In response to a question from Mr. Strange about potential appropriation of capital stabilization funds later in the fiscal year (after the Annual Town Meeting), Mr. Pasterczyk said that a fall round of capital funding had been discussed in the past. There was no decision on the use of capital, but this topic will be revisited during the final budget review. Mr. Strange asked about the added DPW grounds crew member – noting that contracting (outsourcing) field maintenance personnel should be considered as an alternative to hiring additional staff as part of the budget review. Mr. Gold supported these comments and asked about contracting janitorial services at the Adult center as well. Mr. Gold asked questions about the following line items:

- The Hampden County Regional Retirement board assessment going up 9.05%: Answer, it's based on our actual employment.
- The intent to hire an intern at the DPW: Answer: This action is intended to partially mitigate the lack of a town engineer.
- The lack of any funding in the FY 2021 budget that reflects the opening of the new DPW facility.

The public budget forum will be held on Wednesday, March 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM in the Longmeadow High School meeting room A15.

**Proposed amendments to the Zoning By-laws:** Town Manager Simmons reviewed proposed changes to zoning by-laws that have been suggested by the Building Department. These proposals were developed to alleviate uncertainty regarding the ability to rebuild a non-conforming structure for owners AND funding financial institutions that experience major loss such as from a fire. These proposed by-law changes are being directed to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals for public forums prior to the annual town meeting.

#### **Review of draft Town Warrant:**

Ms. Simmons and Mr. Pasterczyk introduced the draft town warrant and asked the Select Board members for questions about the warrant articles. Mr. Gold had previously submitted questions to Mr. Pasterczyk that will be answered prior to the next revision of the warrant being submitted to the Select Board. The warrant needs to be approved by March 16<sup>th</sup> to meet the timeline for distribution prior to the Annual Town Meeting. A question did arise about draft warrant article 20 which requested funds to purchase a new ambulance. Mr. Pasterczyk indicated that this would replace Medic 3, a 2005 model vehicle with 131K miles on the odometer. Mr. Foster noted that this ambulance was "retired" more than a year ago when the last ambulance was authorized and it appeared that Article 20 would result in a third ambulance in the fire/EMT organization.

#### **Crumbling Foundations Final Report – R. Foster**

Mr. Foster reviewed the highlights of the final report of the state-wide study group on crumbling foundations that result from pyrrhotite contamination of concrete used in those foundations. There will be a review of this issue and its impact on Western Massachusetts communities at the Granite Valley Middle School in Monson on April 14<sup>th</sup> from 10AM to Noon.

Mr. Gold made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 PM. Mr. Strange seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 3-0. The next meeting of the Select Board will be Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Gold – Acting as Secretary for Debbie House who was out on "new grandmother duty". Congratulations Debbie!

**Documents:** Agenda, Town Manager Report, Draft Town Warrant, Draft minutes from February meetings, FY 2021 budget overview and Town Manager's budget proposal, zoning by-law amendments, Crumbling Foundations final report from state study group