

Select Board Regular Meeting
Monday, November 16, 2020 - 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, Supt. Marty O'Shea, Asst. Supt. Finance and Operations Thomas Mazza

Finance Committee: Chair Andrew Lam, Eileen Morin, Armand Wray, William Welch, Donald Griffith, Thomas Dignazio

School Committee: Chair Ryan Kelly, Bronwyn Monahan, Kevin Shea, Gianna Allentuck, Nicole Choiniere, Susan Bell

Interviews: Shawna Gutowski, Erin Koebler, Andre Greco

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.

Update on COVID-19

Chief Dearborn gave the update. There are currently 34 active cases, there have been 48 cases over the last 14 days. There are no long term care cases right now. There were a total of 5 cases in the school community. Chief Dearborn urged all residents to take all precautions to slow the spread of the virus. The COVID team is responding to concerns and complaints. Electronic sign boards as well as small lawn signs have been put up as reminders to wear masks outside per the Governor's order. Chief Dearborn and his team continue to work closely with the School Department. The Town has a robust supply of PPE. More will be ordered with CARES Act and FEMA funds that are available. Ms. Simmons explained there will be a free mask give away in the parking lot of the high school on Saturday, November 21 from noon to 2:00 p.m. Residents are to drive up, have a mask on, and stay in their cars.

Announcements

Historical Commission Vacancies – There are currently two vacancies on the Historical Commission. Interested residents should apply online at www.longmeadow.org.

Board of Health Vacancies – There are several vacancies on the Board of Health. Residents over the age of 18 who have an interest in public health are encouraged to apply online at www.longmeadow.org.

Extended Deadline for Cultural Council Grant Applications – the new deadline to submit applications is December 14, 2020. Online applications are accepted for cultural programming related to the arts, sciences, and humanities. Priority is given to programs held in Longmeadow and with dates and venues already secured.

Applications are accepted online only at www.mass-culture.org. Email Peg Landon at peglandon@comcast.net with questions.

Recycling/Yard Waste Center Fall Hours – Fall hours will run November 7 through the end of December on Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. An annual sticker is required and can be purchased by mailing in the application to the Town Clerk. The application can be found on the town website.

Curbside Leaf Collection – Leaf collection dates are November 21 and December 5, dates are subject to change due to weather. Leaves should be at the curbside by 7:00 a.m.

Resident Comments - none

Joint Meeting with Finance Committee and School Committee

Finance Committee members (Chair Andrew Lam, Eileen Morin, Armand Wray, William Welch, Donald Griffith, and Thomas Dignazio) and School Committee members (Chair Ryan Kelly, Bronwyn Monahan, Kevin Shea, Gianna Allentuck, Nicole Choiniere, and Susan Bell) along with Superintendent Marty O’Shea, and Asst. Supt. of Finance and Operations Tom Mazza joined the Select Board meeting to review and discuss the Fiscal Year 2022 budget assumptions, directives, goals, and calendar provided by Mr. Pasterczyk and Ms. Simmons. The Finance Committee was called to order by Chair Lam, the School Committee was called to order by Chair Kelly earlier in the evening.

Ms. Simmons reviewed the budget calendar. Mr. Pasterczyk reviewed the budget assumptions starting with the Sources. Property taxes are the main source of revenues. The FY21 original target was to not raise taxes by 1.75% of the allowable 2.5%, the target was revised to 1.875%. State aid was estimated at \$84,000, local receipts were estimated to remain flat, new growth was estimated at \$125,000, no reserves were being used, and school special revenue funds were expected to remain level. The Stormwater Enterprise Fund budget will cover 46.25% through stormwater fees.

For Uses, wages were estimated to increase 3% (cost of living and step increases). Other expenses were estimated to increase .50% to cover inflation and ancillary costs. Employee and retiree benefits were increased at various rates for a total increase of \$679,525. Debt Service was estimated to increase \$525,188 (mainly for new DPW and new Adult Center). The OPEB contribution was calculated at \$512,500; the Select Board will be reviewing the current policy. Assumptions now include a \$250,000 appropriation to the Operational Stabilization Fund (this may not happen this year), the Select Board is considering a policy to annually fund this to increase our reserve levels. The Capital contribution was calculated per the Select Board policy = \$1.92 million.

Mr. Pasterczyk added that the Select Board can now meet the goal of utilizing 1.88% of unused levy capacity. The taxable valuation went up 1.4% which pushes off hitting the tax levy ceiling to FY26.

He addressed the couple of questions that were asked and explained that debt exclusion is the amount of debt service that voters, at a general election, voted to exclude from normal proposition 2.5 calculations, above and beyond the Proposition 2.5 increase for the life of the debt. The majority of the debt exclusion includes the high school, the new DPW facility, the new Adult Center, and the Wolf Swamp Field project. The FY22 limit to raise taxes will be 1.75%. The Finance Committee is happy with this. The estimated tax rate will be \$24.74. School Committee Chair Kelly and Finance Committee Chair Lam adjourned their meetings by roll call votes.

Interviews

Audit Committee and Parks and Recreation Commission – Andre Greco, 875 Maple Road is interested in serving the community. He has worked with the Enfield Board of Education and has been involved with several of the Enfield youth sports. He has been part of audit and finance committees. Mr. Greco spoke with Audit Committee Chair Pete Landon and received some information about the committee.

Cable Advisory Committee Position – Graham Jesmer, 97 Homestead Blvd. will interview at the December 7 meeting.

Housing Authority (2 applicants) – Shawna Gutowski, 195 Overbrook Road is a realtor and is fairly new to town. She has a 16-year background in real estate and was a broker for homeowners’ insurance. Ms. Gutowski also has experience with renovating and construction projects. Mr. Gold suggested talking to Housing Authority Chair Ed Kline to understand the issues. This position will only be filled until the June annual elections. Interested residents will have to run for the position at that time.

Erin Koebler, 19 Pleasantview Avenue is a social worker and the former Outreach Coordinator for the Adult Center. Ms. Koebler is now the Director of Community Care at Glenmeadow. She has a feel for housing for the

elderly and disabled and is interested in helping the community in this way. Ms. Koebler did speak with Mr. Kline about Housing Authority issues. Mr. Gold again noted that this will be an elected position in June.

Select Board Comments

1. Mr. Gold wanted to publically acknowledge all of the work Town Clerk Katherine Ingram did with the General Election. There were thousands of mail in ballots to process as well as early voting to oversee and the actual election day voting. Mr. Gold stated that Ms. Ingram did a phenomenal job and wanted to give her a “shout out”.
2. Mr. Lachiusa announced that Firefighter Ben Sloan was selected by his Academy instructors to be the recipient of the Richard N. Bangs Award given to the outstanding student of the Mass Firefighting Academy Recruit Class #S18. Selection is based upon his achievements in both academic exams and practical skills. Congratulations Firefighter Sloan!

Town Manager’s Report

1. Treasurer/Collector, Cheryl Cudnik, has submitted her retirement notice after 23 years with the town and the last 5 years at the Treasurer/Collector, her last day will be December 8.
2. Cares Act – the second round of CARES Act funding in the amount of \$179,376 was received, this covers July 1, 2020 to September 30, 2020. The first round of funding totaled \$411,477. The town had \$1.4 million available to aid in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. The play structure at Greenwood Park was damaged during the August 4 storm. A claim was filed with the town’s insurer and we received funds to repair it, less the \$5,000 deductible. The repair may not be completed until the spring.
4. Longmeadow Street and Converse Street Improvements - Fuss & O’Neil will provide engineering services for the Longmeadow Street and Converse Street corridor improvements final design. The cost is not to exceed \$246,900. This work includes environmental permitting, additional field survey and site investigation, 75% design submission, 100% design submission, right of way plans, preparation of plans, specs and cost estimates, and bid stage services. This project is on the TIP schedule for FY2025. The money to fund this engineering work is from the original MGM surrounding community payment (approx. \$850k).
5. MIIA Safety Grants - two projects were submitted through the MIIA Safety Grant application process. One is for a dash mounted camera for a Police patrol vehicle, we currently have 5 units, if this grant is awarded we would be able to install an additional camera. The second application is for a thermal imaging camera for the DPW to help detect heat loss and avoid future pipe freeze-ups and flooded buildings.
6. MIIA Rewards - the Town has received \$31,683 back on its workers’ compensation and property and casualty insurance costs – applicable toward premium reductions for the next fiscal year—thanks to our participation in an incentive program offered by MIIA. Employees participated in water and sewer maintenance programs as well as trainings on law enforcement and human resources best practices, among other initiatives supported by the MIIA Rewards program.

Old Business

1. Approved Minutes – *Mr. Gold made the motion to approve the meeting minutes from November 2, 2020 as presented. Mr. Marantz seconded the motion.*
Roll Call Vote: Mr. Lachiusa-YES, Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Foster-YES
2. Appointments to: Board of Health, Cultural Council, Local Community Mitigation Advisory Committee
Mr. Gold made the motion to appoint Anastasios Angelides to the Board of Health for a term expiring June 30, 2023. Mr. Foster seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote: Mr. Lachiusa-YES, Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Foster-YES
Mr. Gold made the motion to appoint Evelyn Pratt to the Cultural Council for a term expiring June 30, 2022. Mr. Foster seconded the motion.
Roll Call Vote: Mr. Lachiusa-YES, Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Foster-YES

Mr. Lachiusa made the motion to nominate David Russell as Longmeadow's Local Community Mitigation Advisory Committee representative. Mr. Foster seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Lachiusa-YES, Mr. Strange-NO, Mr. Marantz-NO, Mr. Gold-NO, Mr. Foster-YES
MOTION FAILED

Mr. Marantz made the motion to appoint Louis Kornet as Longmeadow's Local Community Mitigation Advisory Committee representative. Mr. Gold seconded the motion.

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

3. Select Board Policies on Capital and OPEB – draft policies were reviewed at the last meeting.

Capital Improvement Budget Policy – Mr. Pasterczyk reviewed the policy and noted the addition of the 9th bullet regarding premiums.

Mr. Gold made the motion to accept the Capital Improvement Budget Policy as revised. Mr. Strange seconded the motion.

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

Capital Improvements Policy – Mr. Pasterczyk noted the biggest change in this policy was the 5th paragraph regarding due diligence. The wording of this paragraph was questioned and discussed.

Mr. Gold made the motion to change the 5th paragraph of the Capital Improvements Policy to read "Capital improvement of existing or acquired Town assets will not be approved or funded without first identifying and recognizing all environmental liabilities" and to accept the rest of the policy as revised. Mr. Foster seconded the motion.

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

Capital Stabilization Fund Policy – Mr. Pasterczyk reviewed the changes including the 3% floor for capital planning funding sources, 2/3 vote required for transfers in and out of the Stabilization Fund, raising the threshold amount for repairs and purchases from \$10,000 to \$25,000, and setting the criteria for approval of appropriations/transfers. Mr. Gold was concerned that many projects could fall in the \$10,000 - \$25,000 gap and would have to be funded through the departmental budgets; the budgets are not being increased and things may not get done. Ms. Simmons added that she has been working on the FY22 Capital Plan and most department requests are over \$25,000. Things are costing more; she is comfortable with the \$25,000 for now. Mr. Pasterczyk stated that one of three things would happen for capital projects that fell in the gap; a separate warrant article would be done (free cash), there could be a potential for year end funds, or the project falls through the cracks.

Mr. Gold made the motion to accept the Capital Stabilization Fund Policy as revised. Mr. Foster seconded the motion.

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

Other Post-Employment Benefits Funding Policy (OPEB) – Mr. Pasterczyk reviewed the policy and explained that the contribution amount to OPEB (% of property tax) for FY21 was modified down to \$500,000 and will annually increase 2.5% thereafter. Mr. Gold proposed an alternative policy that would clean up the wording in the current policy and increase the contribution (.25%) from \$500,000 (FY21) to \$645,000 (FY22).

Mr. Gold made the motion to accept the version of the Other Post-Employment Benefits Funding Policy that he put forth. 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. Holiday Trash Amnesty – *Mr. Gold made the motion to approve the Holiday Trash Amnesty for December 26, 2020 through January 9, 2021 of one extra bag per household per week. Mr. Foster seconded the motion.*

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

2. Liquor Licensing for 2021 – Section 12 liquor licenses (on premise consumption – restaurants/clubs) had to close for a while due to the Governor's order to slow the spread of COVID-19 and suffered a loss

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of revenue. Section 15 liquor licenses (package stores) were deemed essential and were allowed to remain open.

Mr. Lachiusa made the motion to reduce the 2021 liquor license fee for Section 12 licensees to \$1,500 (from \$2,200). Mr. Foster seconded the motion.

Mr. Gold suggested giving a rebate of \$700 on the 2020 liquor license fees for the Section 12 licenses, to be applied to the 2021 liquor license fees for the Section 12 licenses.

Mr. Lachiusa withdrew his motion.

Mr. Gold made the motion to give the Section 12 (on premise) liquor licensees a rebate on the 2020 liquor license fee of \$700 applicable to the 2021 liquor license fee. Mr. Foster 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 adjourn the meeting at 9:15 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

Documents:

Agenda

Announcement sheet

Interview Schedule and applications

Budget Calendar

Budget Assumptions

Budget Overview

Town Manager's Report 11/16/20

Dept. October Reports

Draft Minutes 11/2/2020

Appointments memo

Amended Policies: Capital Improvement Budget Policy, Capital Improvements Policy, Capital Stabilization Fund Policy, OPEB Funding Policy, Mark Gold's OPEB version

Holiday Trash Amnesty memo

Liquor Licensing notes and town quotas

Correspondence: Comcast Letter 11/2/20