

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2020
TOWN OFFICE BUILDING, SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
240 SPRINGFIELD STREET, WILBRAHAM, MA**

MINUTES

PRESENT: Chair Susan C. Bunnell (presiding); Selectmen Robert J. Boilard, Nick Breault - Town Administrator, and Heather Kmelius - Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

NOT PHYSICALLY PRESENT: Selectmen Robert W. Russell participated by telephone.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Bunnell asked all to join the Selectmen in saying the Pledge of Allegiance. She then stated the following. "In accordance with Mass. General Law Chapter 30(A), section 20, that the Selectmen's meeting was being recorded by the Wilbraham Public Access and the Board of Selectmen's Office." Chair Bunnell asked if there was anyone present in the audience also recording the meeting. No one was recording the meeting.

Chair Bunnell announced that Selectman Russell is participating tonight's meeting by phone in compliance with Gov. Baker's amended Open Meeting Law guidelines in response to COVID-19. There are no changes to the voting rules of the Open Meeting Law according to Town Counsel.

Town Counsel Steve Reilly was also in attendance by phone.

Town Official and employees in attendance include Police Captain Edward Lennon, Public Health Nurse Jill Consolino, WPA Director Anthony Aube, Library Director Karen Demers, Senior Center Building Committee Member Karl Jurgen, HR Coordinator Herta Dane, Health Inspector Lorri McCool, and Finance Committee Chair Carolyn Brennan, as well as the press.

APPOINTMENTS WITH THE BOARD

7:00 p.m. Fire Chief Andrews - COVID-19 Coronavirus Update

Fire Chief Andrews thanked the members of the Town and community for the response to COVID-19 to date. He reported on equipment and supply levels. There are changes in the protocols followed in order to aid in cooperative situations. Chief Andrews has participated in daily conference calls. Central Dispatch is screening calls related to flu like symptoms. He met with local Union leadership regarding possible future quarantines. The Library and Senior Center are closed to the public at this time. He stated that he recommends Town office buildings closing to the public effective tomorrow and that the Town should declare a State of Emergency. Further discussion about tracking finances for possible future reimbursement through FEMA & MEMA took place.

Chair Bunnell noted the amount of people out in public in recent days. PHN Consolino stated that the stores are very busy and asked that people stay home as much as possible. There are no current cases reported in Wilbraham. If you wear gloves, wear washable gloves. Masks are not needed for healthy people. There is an increase in the number of reported cases because there has been expanded testing made available. Chair Bunnell asked for police assistance in enforcing grocery stores amended hours.

Health Inspector Lorri McCool emphasized practicing social distancing and frequent proper hand washing. Please asked that people stay home if they have any illness symptoms. Restaurant and bars must close for dine in business starting tomorrow and only take out service will be available. A plan is being put in place for students who receive reduced / free lunch. Chair Bunnell suggested Spectrum may be offering technology services for students at this time of need.

TA Breault stated that staff will report to work with the closing of the town buildings. Information will be made available online to facilitate business transactions. Other business and services requiring physical attendance will take place as needed. DPW will place signage on Town buildings on March 17, 2020. The building is accessible for town committees to meet and conduct business and have their meetings recorded. TA Breault provided information about how the meetings should be conducted now and clarified that they must be recorded and a quorum must be present. Town Counsel Reilly stated that public hearings are strongly discouraged based on the lack of public participation offered in the meeting structure now. The meetings must be made available at no cost to residents and some without internet service and no access to the Library might challenge this meeting style.

Public Access Director Anthony Aube and Part Time WPA Part Time Production Coordinator Jen Buchanan will be doing all of the Public Access work now as the Senior Tax Workers have been asked not to report on duty at this time.

MOTION (Boilard, Russell): Move to declare a State of Emergency for the Town of Wilbraham and to close all Town buildings to the public effective March 17, 2020 until further notice, and at the discretion of the Town Administrator. Approved (3-0).

Materials Referenced: COVID19 e-file.

7:10 p.m. A. Aube, WPA Director: Technology and Efficiency Fund Request

WPA Director Aube was present to present a Technology and Efficiency Fund Request for a Listening Assist System for the Selectmen's Meeting Room. The installation of this system was prompted by resident requests. This would bring the Town into ADA compliance for those with hearing challenges. The proposed system is compliant for the size of the meeting room. This purchase would include three radio receivers utilized by apps that residents will get on their phones. Director Aube explained the attractive longevity of the system. ADA Compliance signage for this service is included in the purchase. The Wilbraham Police Station Community Room, the MRHS gym, auditorium and cafeteria all have comparable systems. The COD would also appreciate this equipment.

MOTION (Boilard, Russell): Move to recommend the approval of the request of Anthony Aube, WPA Director, for \$1,123.96 from the Technology Efficiency Fund for the purchase of a Listening Assist System or the Board of Selectmen meeting room at Town Hall, and to forward said recommendation for approval to the Finance Committee for final consideration. Approved (3-0).

Materials Referenced: Technology and Efficiency Fund Request application including vendor quote submitted by WPA Director Aube to the Selectmen's Office received on 3.4.2020 (4 pages).

7:15 p.m. K. Demers, Library Director: Library Schedule and Technology and Efficiency Fund Request

Library Director Karen Demers was present to discuss two issues. She reported that the MBLC's library work hour requirements have been relaxed in light of COVID-19 and the "closed to the public" Library buildings in Massachusetts. She is requesting a Monday-Friday 9a-5p work schedule for her staff. Director Demers promoted the Library's online services available to residents and assured patrons that fees are not being incurred for overdue items. The Board agreed to this request by consensus.

Library Director Demers presented a Technology and Efficiency Fund Request for the purchase of cameras and installation wiring. The cameras are being requested based on staff security concerns. Interior camera installation is still being considered. The installation of the exterior building cameras needs further approval from the Library Board of Trustees.

MOTION (Boilard, Russell): Move to recommend the approval of the request of Karen Demers, Library Director, for \$7,081.63 from the Technology Efficiency Fund for the purchase of three cameras and installation wiring (one for the rear parking lot, one for the staff entrance, and one for the front parking lot/driveway), and to forward said recommendation for approval to the Finance Committee for final consideration. Approved (3-0).

Materials Referenced: Technology and Efficiency Fund Request application submitted by Library Director Demers to the Selectmen's Office received on 3.10.2020.

OPEN SESSION (for topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of meeting, such as :)

Town Administrator's Report

TA Breault stated that the Country Club of Wilbraham's liquor license amendment application was "Returned No Action" from the State. The proposed changes were not approved based on the insufficient application and they will have to file a new application. This application was considered by the Board in October 2019. It was confirmed that the existing license is still effectively in place.

TA Breault stated that the Board will meet on March 23, 2020. The Annual Town Meeting date may be affected by current events.

MOTION: Recommendation of the Investigator received from the ABCC by the Selectmen's Office by US Mail on March 11, 2020.

Board of Selectmen Updates

Chair Bunnell attended Dr. Gina Kahn's retirement party and celebrated her accomplishments including bringing over \$10 million to the Town in grant funding since 2003. Chair Bunnell stated that she participated in the MMA Policy Committee on Energy and the Environment meeting by teleconference. They were updated on the status of some of the bills under consideration, including the Bottle Bill. Trash and recycling management issues were discussed. Other discussions about the topic of regional glass crushing and waste reduction took place. The HWRS School Committee participated in the Finance Committee last week. The Finance Committee is working to address the significant budget shortfalls.

Citizens Open Forum

No citizens offered to participate in the citizens open forum.

OLD BUSINESS

FY 2021 Budget Proposal

Carolyn Brennan, Finance Committee Chair was present to discuss the FY21 Budget proposal. Chair Brennan stated the HWRSD presentation was very compelling. She stated that the Finance Committee is wary of accessing funding for the school district that would take away from other departments. The school district is subject to decision deadlines in relation to the timing of Annual Town Meeting, requiring them to base their state support assumptions exclusively on the Governor's budget. Their budget reflects an approximate 32% dependency on State funding. Wilbraham's assessment is increased this year. Selectman Boilard is concerned that there is no way the Town can offset an approximately \$2 million shortfall. Discussion ensued about budget issues.

The funding of the school's requested/proposed budget would result in the increase of residential taxes. Chair Brennan noted that the school budget increases significantly more than the available 2 1/2% increase in funding annually and would like the school district to look at other resources to help alleviate the financial burdens. The school has issued an RFP for janitorial services and they are proposing layoffs. The Student Opportunity Act did not help the district financially as predicted. The Finance Committee plans to meet March 25, 2020 but that may change if the Annual Town Meeting is rescheduled. The district is required to present the budget on March 26 to the school committee.

Selectman Russell referenced the documents just released by the Governor that allow the Annual Town Meeting date to change. There are also provisions for the late approval of the budget. Town Counsel Reilly recommended proceeding with the Annual Town Meeting as planned and he will research the Town's options further. TA Breault will communicate with Hampden's Town Administrator. The Town may be able to have the Annual Town Meeting in June 2020, which is in accordance with the Town's By-Laws. Further discussion about the proposed budget decisions took place with consideration Covid-19 may have impact on any decisions. Hampden is receiving a decrease in the proposed budget, in alignment with the proportioning of the budget based on the number of students from each community in October and as a result of a greater decline in the number of students from Hampden over the decline of students from Wilbraham. The Finance Committee will be invited to next week's Selectmen's meeting for further discussion.

Special Town Meeting

Chair Bunnell stated that both Special Town Meeting Articles were approved March 9, 2020.

Annual Town Meeting: Warrant Articles

The deadline for warrant article submission was last Friday. The Board agreed by consensus to extend the deadline for submission to March 23, 2020 due to the current circumstances.

Town Counsel ended his phone meeting participation at 8:16pm.

Senior Center Building Project

Senior Center Building Committee member Karl Jurgens reported that the committee planned to meet with the architect this week but it has been cancelled due to recent events. The committee will try to plan a meeting abiding by the Governor's relaxed Open Meeting Law order in place now.

Surrender of Liquor License – Michael's Pasta in the Pan, 2133 Boston Road

The Board was made aware that Michael B'Shara of Michaels's Pasta in the Pan has requested a refund on his surrendered liquor license.

MOTION (Boilard, Russell): Move to accept the on premise all alcohol liquor license surrendered to the Selectmen's Office on March 9, 2020 by Michael B'Shara and to notify the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission. Approved (3-0).

Materials Referenced: Surrendered liquor license hand delivered by Michael B'Shara of Michael's Pasta in the Pan received in the Selectmen's Office on March 9, 2020. Copy of MGL Chapter 128, Section 12 for reference.

Financial Policies

This matter was tabled to a future meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Reappointment of Animal Inspector

There was no discussion about this matter.

MOTION (Boilard, Russell): Move to reappoint Ricky Seldomridge as the Animal Inspector for a term beginning May 1, 2020 through April 30, 2021. Approved (3-0).

Materials Referenced: MDAR Nomination of Animal Inspector annual paperwork received by US Mail by the Selectmen's Office on March 9, 2020 (2 pages).

Solid Waste Advisory Committee

Chair Bunnell stated that she and TA Breault, DPW Supervisor Bill Sperrazza and DPW Director Tonya Basch recently met with a former member of this committee. The Board considered appointing new members to this committee. The Board agreed to appoint a committee consisting of seven members. Chair Bunnell expressed interest in being involved with this committee following the end of her term as a Selectman. The Board asked that volunteers submit applications for consideration.

MOTION (Boilard, Russell): Move to appoint the Solid Waste Advisory Committee consisting of seven committee members. Approved (3-0).

Approval of DPW job descriptions – Field Inspector & GIS Coordinator

This matter was tabled to a future meeting.

Authorization to hire seasonal DPW employees

No discussion took place about this matter.

MOTION (Boilard, Russell): Move to authorize the hire of the following seasonal DPW employees: two DPW Seasonal Workers and two DPW Engineering Interns, as presented. Approved (3-0).

Materials Referenced: Two email correspondence chains regarding Seasonal DPW Job Descriptions and clarification of positions available for hire, both dated 3.10.2020.

Election Worker Payroll

No discussion took place about this matter.

MOTION (Boilard, Russell): Move to approve the election worker payroll increases as presented with Tellers at \$12/hr, Clerks at \$13/hr, Wardens at \$14/hr and Registrars at \$15/hr. Approved (3-0).

Materials Referenced: Excel spreadsheet titled "Copy of Election Worker pay increase 3-16-2020-1" provided to the Selectmen's Office from Town Clerk C. Tardif on 3.12.2020.

Blackboard Connect permission request – Town Clerk

TA Breault stated that the Town Clerk would like to use the Blackboard Connect service regarding town matters including dog licenses and census participation. Selectman Boilard stated that he would like to see this request by the Town Clerk approved by TA Breault on a case by case basis and the Board agreed. Messages were advised to be 60-90 seconds in length.

MOTION (Boilard, Russell): Move to grant permission to the Town Clerk for use of the Blackboard Connect system for duties related to the Town Clerk's responsibilities upon being vetted by the Town Administrator. Approved (3-0).

Approval of Town Contract Renewal with Palmer Paving

Chair Bunnell stated that the DPW Director has recommended renewal of the Town's contract with Palmer Paving. This is the last available renewal of this contract.

MOTION (Boilard, Russell): Move to approve the Town of Wilbraham's contract renewal with Palmer Paving as presented. Approved (3-0).

Materials Referenced: Documents provided via email on March 13, 2020 by DPW Director T. Basch for Selectmen's review: 2020 Chap.90 estimate Rev1, Extension Amendment, Final Paving Bid and Palmer Paving Extension Letter.

LICENSING AND OTHER APPROVALS

Application for Permit to Operate a Food Establishment for Change of Ownership – Orchard Valley

This application is for a change of ownership from KRE Husky Wilbraham Licensee LLC to KRE-BSL Wilbraham Operations LLC, licensed operator of Orchard Valley of Wilbraham, 2387 Boston Road with the same food manager in place.

MOTION (Boilard, Russell): Move to grant an Annual Food Establishment Permit to the new licensed operator of Orchard Valley at Wilbraham, KRE-BSL Wilbraham Operations LLC, to prepare food in a food establishment, located at 2387 Boston Road, Wilbraham, Massachusetts; pending the Health Inspector's favorable approval. Approved (3-0).

Materials Referenced: Food Establishment Application packet received from J. Cohen, Regulatory Compliance Assistant of The Nathanson Group received by the Selectmen's office on February 28, 2020.

Request to Place Banners or Signs – Wilbraham Friends of the Library

This application was tabled based on current public health concerns.

Applications for four Section 14 Special Alcohol Service – Wilbraham Nature and Cultural Center Inc.

This application was tabled based on current public health concerns.

Application for an Entertainment License – Rick’s Place

This application was tabled based on current public health concerns.

Application and Notice for Charitable Walking or Running Event – Rick’s Place

This application was tabled based on current public health concerns.

MEETING MINUTES

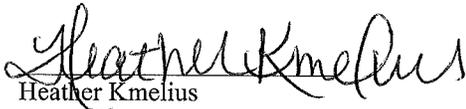
March 9, 2020 – Open Session

MOTION (Boilard, Russell): Move to approve the Open Session Meeting Minutes from March 9, 2020 as presented.

Approved (3-0).

Materials Referenced: Draft of the Open Session Meeting Minutes for March 9, 2020 prepared by Admin Asst. H. Kmelius.

Selectmen Boilard made a motion to adjourn and Selectman Russell seconded the motion. Having no further business, the Board of Selectmen unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:28 PM.


Heather Kmelius

Administrative Assistant to the BOS/TA


Susan C. Bunnell, Chair



Robert W. Russell, Vice Chairman



Robert J. Boilard, Clerk