



## BOARD OF SELECTMEN REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**Monday, Aug. 30, 2021**

Members Present: Shana M. Shufelt, Chair  
Steven J. Ouellette, Vice Chair  
Richard W. Brewer, Clerk  
Ann E. Boxler  
Brian Valcourt

Also Present: Timothy King, Town Administrator

### **6:00 p.m. Call To Order & Pledge of Allegiance**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with above members present. The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance. The Chair announced that under provisions of Mass. General Laws, the meeting was being recorded.

### **1. Acknowledgments & Recognitions**

Mr. Ouellette noted that the COW group of volunteers has set Sept. 18 as the date for the next community clean-up event. Resident Martin Costa is again coordinating the effort. The Chair noted that there are many other community events taking place in coming weeks, including the Board of Health's planned household hazardous waste collection day on Oct. 2; the WRWA's fall beach clean-up day at Cherry & Webb Beach on Oct. 9 and dune hike on Oct. 13; and the BOH's planned electronics recycling day, set for Oct. 20.

Resident Wayne Sunderland commended the Board for their wise deliberations on choosing a new town administrator; he also acknowledged Mr. King's outstanding service during his term of service. The Chair indicated that Mr. King's last day would be Sept. 10; Mr. Hartnett will assume the post on Sept. 13. Ms. Shufelt also presented Mr. King with a gift from the Board in appreciation of his service, and paused the meeting so the Board could gather for a souvenir photograph of the occasion.

### **2. Covid Update**

Director of Public Health Matthew Armendo was not present, but sent an update which was read by the Chair. The town has seen 140 new cases reported between Aug. 1 and Aug. 29, compared to 30 cases in July. Of the 14 new cases reported over the weekend, nine were children under 12 who have not been vaccinated. 65 percent of the population has been partly or fully vaccinated. The Board of Health is recommending all residents get vaccinated as soon as possible to help curb the spread of the virus, and wear masks in public spaces, and practice social distancing. Unvaccinated people in Mass. are 30 times more likely to get Covid-19, and four times more likely to die if contracting the disease, when compared to vaccinated residents. It was noted that the BOH and Westport Apothecary are collaborating on a daily lottery drawing, with residents getting vaccinated eligible to win the \$100 daily prize. The Chair noted that there is a face mask requirement for all town buildings, and a BOH recommendation that masks be worn in other indoor settings where six feet of social distancing cannot be maintained.

6:05 pm

### **3. Licenses/Permits.**

#### **Public Hearings**

Pole Permit Application, Eversource – White Oak Run: There was no public input on the pole permit application.

**MOTION** by Mr. Valcourt to approve the Pole Permit Application from Eversource. Seconded by Mr. Ouellette. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

#### **No Public Hearing**

Use of Town Property Permit – Town Farm on Sept. 23, 2021 - Newton Millham. It was noted that the request is for noon to 1 p.m., for a brief memorial service honoring the late longtime Town Farm supporter Geraldine Millham.

**MOTION** by Mr. Valcourt to approve the Use of Town Property permit. Seconded by Mr. Ouellette. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

Road Use Permit – Buzzards Bay Coalition – Watershed Ride on Sunday, Oct. 3, 2021. Mr. King recommended approval with conditions suggested in the Police Department review of the application.

**MOTION** by Mr. Valcourt to approve the Road Use Permit, with conditions recommended by the Police Department. Seconded by Mr. Ouellette. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

Road Use Permit – Max Performance Triathlon at Horseneck Beach – Sept. 19, 2021. Mr. King recommended approval with conditions suggested in the Police Department review.

**MOTION** by Mr. Brewer to approve the Road Use Permit, with conditions recommended by the Police Department. Seconded by Mr. Ouellette. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

### **4. Appointments and Resignations**

a. Appointments to the Energy Committee (1-Yr. Terms): Charles H. Baron (FinCom rep); Walter Barnes; A. Max Kohlenberg.

**MOTION** by Mr. Valcourt to appoint Charles Baron, Walter Barnes, and A. Max Kohlenberg to the Energy Committee for one-year terms. Seconded by Mr. Brewer. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

b. Appointment of Stacy Silva-Boutwell to the Recreation Committee.

**MOTION** by Mr. Valcourt to appoint Stacy Silva-Boutwell to the Recreation Committee. Seconded by Mr. Ouellette. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

c. Appointment of Maurice May to the Economic Development Committee.

**MOTION** by Mr. Ouellette to appoint Maurice May to the Economic Development Committee. Seconded by Mr. Valcourt. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

### **5. Discussion**

a. Long Term Building Committee

Chair Don Davidson was present to discuss the future activities of the committee. The Chair noted that the disposition of the old high school will be an important decision for the Board in the coming year. She suggested that a member of the Finance Committee and a member of the Select Board be appointed to that committee; Mr. Valcourt volunteered to be the Board's delegate, and suggested that the Town

Administrator not be appointed because of other pressing duties. David Cole, Chair of the Master Plan Update Committee, recommended that a Planning Board representative also be appointed to the committee. Community Preservation Committee Chair Betty Slade noted that the town needs at least 20 acres of additional cemetery space, and the high school grounds should be considered for that purpose.

**MOTION** by Mr. Ouellette to re-establish the Long Term Building Committee, with representatives of the Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee, and Planning Board to be appointed at a later date. Seconded by Ms. Boxler, the vote was 5-0 in favor.

b. Paul Cuffe Recognition – Planning Board

Planning Board member John Bullard was present with Chair James Whitin to advocate for public recognition of Capt. Paul Cuffe for his well-publicized role as a leading citizen of the town. He noted that Capt. Cuffe died in 1817, and has never been honored by the town for founding the first integrated school in Westport; for his donations to the construction of the Village Quaker Meeting House; or his abolitionist activities. Mr. Bullard recommended that residents be invited to make recommendations for a way to suitably honor Capt. Cuffe, and a committee be established to review those recommendations. Mr. Ouellette noted that a 2017 proclamation established a day in Cuffe's honor, and previous attempts to name a public building in his honor had met with some resistance.

Betty Slade spoke in support of the recognition effort, and relayed details of a 2019 effort to convince the School Committee to rename the Westport Elementary School in Cuffe's honor. She noted the proponents were told to build community support for the request, but the effort had been derailed by the pandemic. David Cole indicated that Cuffe family descendants still own property in Westport. There was general support for the Chair's suggestion that residents send ideas for honoring Cuffe to the Select Board, which will consider setting up a review committee to study the recommendations.

**6. Action Items**

a. Approve Solar PILOT – Westport Rt. 88 Solar – Sullivan Drive

Mr. King indicated that the PILOT contains the same terms as other solar farm PILOTS, giving the town \$13,000 per year per megawatt produced, with a 2.5 percent escalator clause taking effect each year, and a one-time \$5,000 payment upon signing of the agreement. He noted the estimated revenue for the town will be \$65,000 the first year of the 20-year agreement, and \$104,000 in the 20<sup>th</sup> year.

**MOTION** by Mr. Valcourt to approve the Solar PILOT agreement with Westport Rt. 88 Solar.

Seconded by Mr. Brewer. The vote was 4-0-1 in favor, with Mr. Ouellette abstaining because he and his family are property owners or abutters to the Sullivan Drive site.

b. Approve Town Administrator Employment Agreement

The Chair noted that Mr. Hartnett had agreed to all the changes in the agreement recommended by town counsel, and had requested that the three-year contract end on Sept. 12, 2024 instead of the June 30, 2024 date originally set forth.

**MOTION** by Mr. Valcourt to approve the Town Administrator Employment Agreement for three years, with the contract expiring Sept. 12, 2024. Seconded by Mr. Ouellette. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

c. Approve Engineering Contract for MS4 Services with Kleinfelder Northeast Inc.

Mr. King indicated this contract was an extension of the current agreement for services related to the MS4 permit for another year. Mr. Hartnett said the contract called for a reduced scope of services, including annual reporting and related additional planning and permitting.

**MOTION** by Mr. Valcourt to approve the contract for \$20,000 for MS4 consulting services. Seconded by Mr. Ouellette. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

d. Approve Change Orders for 2020 Chapter 90 Roadway Improvements – Highway Surveyor

Mr. King indicated the change orders were for work on Drift Road, Hix Bridge Road, East Beach Road and other scheduled roadways.

**MOTION** by Mr. Valcourt to approve the Change Orders for 2020 Chapter 90 Roadway Improvements as submitted. Seconded by Mr. Ouellette. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

e. Approve Memorandum of Agreement with Labor Advantage for Workers (LAW)

Mr. King reported that the agreement calls for 2.0 percent raises for each of three years, with an added step in the third year.

**MOTION** by Ms. Boxler to approved the Memorandum of Agreement with LAW. Seconded by Mr. Valcourt. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

f. Accept Westport Food Pantry Donations – Irene & Norman Buck, \$50.

**MOTION** by Mr. Valcourt to accept the Westport Food Pantry Donation of \$50 from Irene & Norman Buck. Seconded by Mr. Brewer. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

**7. Town Administrator Report**

Mr. King provided updates on Mr. Sullivan’s conversations with the Army Corps of Engineers on the removal of material around Hix Bridge; and the construction budget for the Diman addition and the FY2022 budget amendment. He noted receipt of a study report on opportunities for increased collaboration between the town and the school department, a topic Mr. Valcourt suggested as a future agenda item; and provided an update from the Police Department on Hurricane Henri.

**8. Approve Minutes** August 16, 2021.

**MOTION** by Mr. Brewer to approve the minutes of the Aug. 16, 2021 minutes as presented. Seconded by Mr. Valcourt. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

**9. Report on Bill Warrant**

Ms. Boxler noted a small warrant, with nothing of note to report.

**10. Selectmen Liaison Committee Reports & Suggestions for Future Agenda Discussion / Action**

Mr. Valcourt noted a School Committee representative still needs to be appointed to the Campground Committee; he reported lots of good input at the recent Watuppa Pond Task Force meeting, with Bay Coast Bank donating \$100,000 to the collaborative effort to find remedies to the problem. Mr. Ouellette reported another meeting with SRPEDD to discuss planned improvements to Route 6; public workshops on proposed improvements are the next steps. Mr. Brewer suggested Sept. 13 as the meeting date with the auditor and Audit Committee. He noted Westport’s allocation of federal pandemic aid held by Bristol County commission was likely to be \$2.7 to \$3 million; project applications must be submitted and approved by the county before any funds will be disbursed. The application deadline is October 2024, and funds must be spent by October 2026. Ms. Shufelt indicated that the School Building Committee was still on track for a September opening of the new school, with frantic activity on site to make that possible.

**11. Boards/Committees/Commissions Vacancy List**

The Chair noted the numerous vacancies on town boards and commissions.

**12. Topics not reasonably anticipated forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting.**

The Chair reported that the Police Chief had reported the sudden resignation of a 911 Dispatcher and requested the appointment of a reserve police officer to fill the vacancy. As there was no stated emergency, the Chair suggested the appointment request be passed over.

**13. Comments and Statements**

Resident Don Davidson noted that the VFW will be hosting a Veterans Appreciation Day event starting at noon on Sept. 12. There is no charge for veterans, and a token \$5 charge for spouses and guests.

**14. Executive Session** – pursuant to the provisions of MGL c 30A section 21(a), Chair declares an open meeting will have a detrimental effect to:

- a. Discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Westport Police Association
- e. Approve Executive Session Minutes – August 16, 2021

**MOTION** by Mr. Ouellette at 7:12 p.m. to enter into Executive Session to discuss the items listed in the Chair's declaration. Seconded by Mr. Brewer. The motion passed on a 4-0 roll call vote: Brewer, aye; Ouellette, aye; Shufelt, aye; Valcourt, aye; Boxler, aye.

**Adjournment**

**MOTION** to adjourn at 7:25 by Mr. Ouelette, seconded by Mr. Brewer. Unanimous approval, 5-0.

Respectfully submitted, Robert Barboza, Recording Clerk

**APPROVED:** \_\_\_\_\_ Richard Brewer, Clerk, Select Board Member