

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
REMOTE MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2022**

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

Select Board Chair Shana Shufelt, called the remote meeting to order at 6:00PM.

**6:00PM Pledge of Allegiance**

**Chair's Announcement** – Under MGL Chapter 30A, section 20(f) – Meeting being recorded. Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the *Westport Board of Selectmen* is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. A reminder that persons who would like to listen to or view this meeting while in progress may do so by following the remote links listed on the posting on line. An audio recording of this meeting will be posted on the town's website as soon as we are able.

**1. Acknowledgments & Recognitions**

**2. Covid Update**

Ms. Shufelt summarized the Covid update, there were 95 cases February 1 – 25, and positivity rate is 6.47%. Free Covid rapid test kits are available from the Town Nurse during regular business hours. Must show proof of residency.

**3. Public Hearings**

**4. Licenses/Permits**

**5. Appointments and Resignations**

- a. Request from Richard Ziomek to serve on the Internet Advisory Committee  
Ms. Shufelt reached out to Mr. Ziomek as to why he was interested, he wants to be sure the Affordable Housing Units are represented.

**MOTION** by Mr. Ouellette to appoint Richard Ziomek to serve on the Internet Advisory Committee, seconded by Mr. Valcourt. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call vote, Boxler aye, Brewer aye, Ouellette aye, Valcourt aye, and Ms. Shufelt aye.

## **6. Discussion**

- a. Discuss request from Finance Committee for joint meeting

Ms. Raus posed her concerns with the Budget Shortfall for FY 23, and what it will mean for the FY 24 budget, and is requesting a joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen, School Committee and Finance Committee, sooner rather than later. There are a lot of fiscal needs in front of us at this time and the taxpayers need to be informed.

Lengthy discussion took place and included the format of the proposed meeting, the number of participants, the space and location of the meeting, time constraints and the selection of a date and time. Ms. Shufelt will coordinate with Ms. Raus including the compiling of materials for the meeting.

## **7. Action Items**

- a. Consider questions to be placed on the Ballot for the April 12, 2022 Election, relating to the question of whether a number of earlier items should be considered for debt exclusions. They include:

- Diman Regional Vocational High School
- Westport Camping Ground Acquisition
- Police Station Construction
- Middle School Remediation

Dr. Elvio Ferreira outlined the Diman School project describing the start in the spring of 2023 and the cost to the Town of Westport of \$445,000 per year when the project is in full swing. Discussion centered around the timing of ballot vote and whether Town Meeting approval was required. After clarification, it was concluded that the vote can come after Town Meeting in May although a vote at Town Meeting is not required. This is because it is the Diman School District and not the Town who will be borrowing. However, the importance of this project being financed by excluded debt was recognized.

Regarding the other three measures, lengthy discussion led to a conclusion that they should not be placed on the April ballot. There was consensus that the importance of an override should be given high priority, as well as the ballot question regarding Diman School. The result was consensus that these items should not be placed on the April Election ballot.

- b. Request from the Council on Aging to accept the following donations from Robert Wood -In Memory of Kathleen Vincent, \$40; Ed & Elizabeth LeClair-In Memory of Kathleen Vincent, \$50; Misc Donation for Outreach. \$5 Totaling \$95.

**MOTION** by Mr. Ouellette to accept the donations, seconded by Mr. Brewer. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call vote, Boxler aye, Brewer aye, Ouellette aye, Valcourt aye, and Ms. Shufelt aye.

**8. Town Administrator Report**

**Diman Regional School Building Project**

On February 10, 2022, the Diman School Committee voted to rescind their vote from December 16, 2021, allowing member communities additional time to express disapproval of the debt authorization needed for the new school. Westport would have to vote at a Town meeting within sixty (60) days of the March 22, 2022 date. The Annual Town Meeting would fall within this time period. (Diman Letter in File)

**Route 177 Roundabout**

As requested by Mass Highway, Pare Engineering will be performing an alternatives analysis of the project intersection. In addition to the roundabout, alternatives to be considered include maintaining the two-way stop control with conversion to an overhead flashing signal, an all-way stop and full signalization. The intent is to identify the improvement that will provide the greatest safety. Level of service and life cycle cost analysis (construction and maintenance) will also be considered.

Mr. Valcourt spoke to the importance of this project.

**Water Meter Replacement - Reminder**

Mass Installation Inc. has been awarded the contract to replace the water meters for approximately 160 users in the Route 6, Davis Road area. Residents will be notified shortly to schedule appointments for the meter replacements. It is anticipated that this work will take 4-8 weeks.

**Hix Bridge Landing**

The Town of Westport received a Grant from the Seaport Economic Council in the amount of \$76,000, for design, engineering and permitting of the Hix Bridge Landing. Credit to Jeff Bull for putting this competitive grant application together and his presentation at the Seaport Economic Council. Mr. Bull also worked with Representative Paul Schmidt to secure a \$50,000 earmark to cover the Town's match and provide additional funding for the project.

**9. Approve Minutes**

**a. February 14, 2022**

**MOTION** by Mr. Brewer to approve the February 14, 2022 Minutes, seconded by Mr. Ouellette. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call vote, Boxler aye, Brewer aye, Ouellette aye and Shufelt aye. Mr. Valcourt abstained.

**10. Report on Bill Warrant**



Ms. Boxler stated the warrant was small, only one voided check, it was in order and signed.

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

Ms. Shufelt – School Building Project moving along, Climate Resiliency met; appointed John Bullard; Chair and Shana Shufelt; Vice Chair, formed sub-committees focusing on infrastructure and health Concerns. Internet Advisory met; good overview of current Fiber Contract. ARPA; narrow focus on infrastructure.

**12. Comments and Statements**

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

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

Request from Denis Bouchard, Selectmen's Secretary to appoint a member of the Board to sign bills in Jim Hartnett's Absence, Mr. Brewer volunteered.

**MOTION** by Mr. Ouellette to appoint Mr. Brewer to sign the bills, seconded by Mr. Valcourt. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call vote, Boxler aye, Brewer aye, Ouellette aye, Valcourt aye, and Ms. Shufelt aye.

**Adjournment**

**MOTION** by Mr. Valcourt to adjourn at 7:14 p.m., seconded by Mr. Ouellette. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call vote, Boxler aye, Brewer aye, Ouellette aye, Valcourt aye, and Ms. Shufelt aye.

**Boards/Committees/Commissions Vacancy List**

**\*\*Committee members with terms that end in June should advise if they wish to continue\*\***

ADA Transition Plan Committee – 1 vacancy (COD Rep).

Agricultural/Open Space Preservation Trust Fund Council – 1 vacancy (CIPC Rep)

Agricultural Commission Alternate – 2 Vacancies.

Bike / Walking Path Committee - 2 vacancies.

Energy Committee – 3 vacancies.

Fence Viewers – 1 vacancy.

Personnel Board – 2 vacancies.

Recreation Commission – 3 vacancies.

Safety Regulation Board - 1 vacancy.

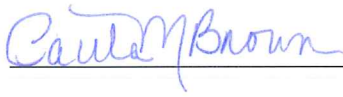
Tax Incentive Program Committee (1 vacancy –Westport Economic Development Task Force Rep).

Westport Citizen's Betterment Committee – 1 vacancy.

Westport Cultural Council – 1 vacancy

**\*\* Committees are kindly requested to advise who serves as chair, vice chair and clerk \*\***

Respectfully submitted,



Paula M. Brown  
Administrative Assistant

Approved: 

Richard Brewer, Clerk  
Select Board Member

Files:

2 BOH Covid Update  
5a Ziomek Request - Internet Advisory Committee  
6a FinCom joint meeting request  
7a Letter to Town Clerk - Possible Ballot Questions  
7b COA Donations  
8 02282022 Ta Report  
8TA 1 Diman  
8TA 2 Route 177 Alts Analysis Approach  
9a 02142022 Minutes