



**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
Via zoom
May 19, 2020**

Members present: Tom Alonzo, Chairman; Phyllis Luck, Vice Chairman; Damon McQuaid, Clerk; Katey Adams

Member not present: Michael-Ray Jeffreys

Also Present: Heather Lemieux, Town Manager; Tim Murphy, Town Moderator; Adam Costa, Town Counsel; Patrick Sullivan, Fire Chief; Jim Marino, Police Chief, Jim Garreffi, Nashoba District Sanitarian

Chairman Alonzo called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and announced in accordance with the requirements of the Open Meeting Law, please be advised that this meeting is being recorded and broadcast over YouTube Live.

Mr. Alonzo read the remote meeting information and everyone was present and could be heard.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ms. Adams wished everyone a happy Memorial Day. Carl Luck, 50 Sunset Lane, hoped the Board would consider postponing Town Meeting and implementing a 1/12 budget until the town understands better the ramifications of the impact of the pandemic.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Alonzo reminded all of the virtual Memorial Day ceremony on Monday, May 25th at 10:00 am on public access television.

The Farmers' Market is continuing to hold the market on Sundays on the Ritter Building lawn during these times. Opening Day is May 31st at 10:00 a.m.

I. OLD BUSINESS

1. Skateboard Park Tollbooth Request. The Lunenburg Skate park group would like to move their tollbooth fundraiser out to September 26th.

Motion: K. Adams

2nd: D. McQuaid

To authorize the change of date to September 26th

Vote: Ms. Adams- aye, Mr. McQuaid-aye, Ms. Luck- aye, Mr. Alonzo- aye

2. **FY 2021 Budget**

Ms. Luck questioned Ms. Lemieux's decision to proceed with hiring a Principal Assessor during the hiring freeze. Ms. Lemieux reported this position would be an allocation of existing funds effective July 1st. She considered this an essential service for the Town.

Ms. Lemieux reported one change to the budget, a prior year's bill of \$476.20 to be paid out of free cash, increasing our surplus to \$1,066,425.

Ms. Luck requested Ms. Lemieux address a recent email from Senator Tran regarding reduction of local aid. Ms. Lemieux noted there was no guidance from the state leadership in that email only Senator Tran's opinion. Discussion ensued about future economic uncertainty.

II. CURRENT BUSINESS

1. **Saliba Property: Vote to Declare Purchase of 994 Northfield Road a Unique Acquisition, Vote to Execute Purchase of Property and Designate Member of Board to Sign Documents**

Motion: D. McQuaid

2nd: P. Luck

I move to declare the purchase of the Saliba property a unique acquisition, said property described in deed recorded at Worcester North Registry of Deeds Bk 4630 Pg 224, w/ 259.31 acres± at 994 Northfield Rd R, Lunenburg Assessor Parcel ID 037-0015-00, Fitchburg Assessor Parcel ID S31-12-A and D, being the greater part of Lot 1 on plan recorded at Plan Bk 382 Pl 1, including "Parcel A" on plan recorded at Plan Bk 514 Pl 14, and 58.75 ac ± at 961 Northfield Rd S, Lunenburg Assessor Parcel ID 037-0009-00, being Lot 3 on plan recorded at Plan Bk 512 Pl 8, including "Parcel B" on said plan. The Board determines that advertising by soliciting proposals for the acquisition of real property will not benefit its interest as regards the acquisition of the property because of the unique qualities and location of that property including that this property meets five of the six defined criteria set forth in the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan and is contiguous to other open space parcels. The parties that have a beneficial interest in the property are current owners John Saliba and David Saliba. The property will be purchased for \$775,000, with \$500,000 coming from state PARC and LAND grant funds and the remaining \$275,000 from the Town of Lunenburg, as was previously authorized at the November 12, 2019 Special Town Meeting.

Vote: Ms. Adams- aye, Mr. McQuaid- aye, Ms. Luck- aye, Mr. Alonzo- aye

Motion: D. McQuaid

2nd: P. Luck

I move to proceed with the execution of the purchase of the Saliba property at 994 Northfield Road as voted at the November 12, 2019 Special Town Meeting and to authorize Chairman Tom Alonzo to sign the necessary documents on behalf of the Town.

Vote: Ms. Adams- aye, Mr. McQuaid- aye, Ms. Luck- aye, Mr. Alonzo- aye

2. Discussion on Plan for Safety Precautions for the Annual Town Meeting

Mr. Alonzo acknowledged Mr. Murphy, Attorney Costa, Fire Chief Sullivan, Police Chief Marino and Sanitarian Jim Garreffo for the discussion. Ms. Luck asked why not delay the Town meeting? Discussion ensued about the pandemic and future conditions. The group moved on to safety precautions.

Mr. Garreffo suggested that public education about the procedure for town meeting and personnel safety be addressed. Logistics of microphone(s) placement and seating were discussed.

Mr. Alonzo noted the Town Clerk was invited to this discussion since the meeting falls under her purview, yet did not respond to the email.

Attorney Costa stated he has not heard anything that concerns him that runs afoul of constitutional rights. Mr. Murphy stated he would prefer to have all participants in one room in order to conduct the meeting. He encouraged an early check-in system so everyone is not trying to line up for the meeting right before it. Other details such as food and drink being allowed and how handouts would be addressed were discussed.

1. Warrant/Minutes/Action Items/Committee Reports

Mr. Alonzo announced he had signed the following warrants:

- A/P Warrant #57 20 \$2,373,539.94
- A/P Deduction Warrant #58 20 \$563,255.75
- Payroll Warrant #23P20M \$11,810.88
- Payroll Warrant #23P20 \$810,224.45

Ms. Luck asked Town Manager to ensure all town tires are free of water to prevent mosquito breeding.

Ms. Adams repeated her request for the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of meetings. She also asked to discuss different actions with animal control at a meeting. She also wanted to advertise how to run for an elected position. She requested an update on the intersection of Electric Ave and Mass Ave.

Town Manager Report

Announcement on Existing Vacancies:

The following is a list of vacancies on the following committees:

- Agricultural Commission (2 alternate vacancies)
- Americans with Disabilities Act Commission (1 vacancy)
- Architectural Preservation District Commission (1 design professional; craftsman or building contractor familiar with historic renovation)
- Finance Committee (1 position appointed by the Finance Committee Appointing Committee)
- Open Space Committee (1 vacancy-citizen at large)
- Planning Board (2 positions appointed by the remaining members of the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen until the next Annual Town Election in May)
- Zoning Board of Appeals (2 Associate vacancies)

Talent bank forms can be obtained on the Town Website and forwarded to the Board of Selectmen's Office.

CARES Act Funding: As I reported last week, the Town has begun to receive some relief funds from the CARES Act Relief Fund; we received \$7,035.89 from the Department of Health and Human Services Emergency Relief Fund and the Department of Secondary and Elementary Education informed the Superintendent that we would receive \$198,000 specifically for the Schools. I participated in a call on May 14th set up jointly by the Massachusetts Municipal Association and the Division of Local Services and the Executive Office for Administration and Finance providing guidance to cities and towns on what we can anticipate for CARES Act Relief funding, what is eligible at this point, and when we will be able to submit for reimbursement for COVID-19 related costs. The State also provided the total amount that each town is eligible to receive and Lunenburg's total eligible amount for FY20 and FY21 is \$1,027,771. At this point lost revenues are not eligible costs but Congress is currently discussing changing the restrictions on the use of these funds to include lost revenues. I had a meeting yesterday with the Finance Director and the Police and Fire Public Safety Coordinators to discuss spending against the \$7,000 CARES Act money we have already received, FEMA eligible costs, and CARES Act eligible costs. It was confirmed late today by the Secretary of the Executive Office of Administration and Finance, after conferring with the federal government, that the CARES Act funds can be used as the 25% match to the FEMA funds, which only reimburse 75% of eligible costs. The Police and Fire Public Safety Coordinators are tracking FEMA eligible expenses and the Finance Director is tracking all other eligible costs that will be posted to the Emergency Expenditure account. The first round of submitting for CARES Act funding for FY20, both already spent and anticipated for remainder of FY20, is June 5th. If we do not submit all eligible FY20 costs by June 5th, there will be another opportunity to submit but the goal will be to submit all anticipated expenses so this will wipe out any deficit going forward into FY21.

17 & 23 West Street Property: We received three bids in response to the Request for Proposals for the West Street property, with a high bid of \$35,000. The high bidder met the conditions of the Request for Proposals. I am looking for agreement from the Board on moving forward with the award of the bid to the highest bidder.

Memorial Day Ceremony and Gold Lights at Gazebo: The Chairman of the Board previously announced that there will be a virtual Memorial Day video that will be aired on Monday, May 25th at 10 a.m. on Channels 8 and 9 and will be aired again throughout next week. Also, the Veterans Agent asked if we could participate in a State effort to light town buildings, memorials or flags in gold over Memorial Day in honor of the Gold Star Families of the Commonwealth. Gold Star Families are spouses, children, parents, siblings or others whose loved one died in service to our nation. Dave MacDonald has graciously taken this on and the Town Gazebo will be lit from Friday evening until Tuesday morning in Gold.

Farmer's Market:

The Agricultural Commission Chairman Matt Allison reached out about the opening of the Farmers Market on May 31st and as Farmers Markets were deemed essential by the Governor in March, after conferring with our

Board of Health Agent, I asked them to submit a plan that would comply with the Governor's Orders. The Market Co-Manager Yanina Burns was very responsive and submitted a detailed plan that addresses the protocols and procedures in alignment with the Governor's and follows the guidance as set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture. Participating vendors will need to sign off on the rules and regulations that address everything from maintaining social distancing, crowd control, booth setup, signage, wearing of gloves and masks, and a number of other items. These documents were submitted by the Market Managers to Nashoba Associated Boards of Health.

Meetings, Events and Other Announcements:

- Town Counsel office hours in May will be on May 20th 12-4 p.m.
- The School Committee is meeting Wednesday, May 20th and I will be attending the Executive Session portion of their meeting.
- The Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Workshop is on Thursday, May 21st from 8:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.

COVID-19 Update

COVID-19 IN Lunenburg and Board of Health Notices:

The Board of Health issued their weekly update dated May 15th and it has been put on the COVID-19 Information Center page on the town website under News and Announcements on the homepage. As of May 18th there are 54 confirmed positive cases in Lunenburg, 22 of which are recovered and one death.

Re-Opening Task Force

The reopening Task Force will be meeting tomorrow May 20th to discuss yesterday's guidance from the Baker-Polito administration and the creation of our Control Plan to comply with these requirements. The Facilities Director and Town Manager's Executive Assistant have been working on getting our stock of masks, gloves, cleaning supplies, sanitizer and wipes to a level suitable for employees to start returning to the workplace and will continue to monitor our supplies to sufficient levels. Our control plan will include ensuring we can maintain social distancing, adhere to proper hygiene protocols, employee certification measures that they are in good health in the workplace, return to work protocols, ensure proper cleaning/disinfecting of workspaces and provide training and posters for employees and eventually visitors to town facilities. Our reopening will be a slow, phased approach that will be determined by having the necessary protocols, supplies and protections in place to do so safely. More information on the released, comprehensive plan from the Baker-Polito administration is included in this report under updates from the state and federal government.

UPDATES RECEIVED FROM THE STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

COVID-19 in Massachusetts (as of 5/18/20):

As of May 18th there are 87,052 COVID-19 cases and 5,862 deaths 460,826 patients have been tested to date by the MA State Public Health Laboratory, hospitals and commercial laboratories.

Safer at Home Advisory:

Effective May 18th, the Department of Public Health also updated the Stay at Home Advisory, replacing it with a new, "Safer at Home" Advisory. The new Safer at Home Advisory instructs everyone to stay home unless they are headed to a newly opened facility or activity. It also advises those over the age of 65 and those with underlying health conditions to stay home with the exception of trips required for health care, groceries, or that are otherwise absolutely necessary. All residents must continue to wear a face covering in public when social distancing is not possible, and individuals are advised to wash their hands frequently and be vigilant in monitoring for symptoms. Restrictions on gatherings of more than 10 people remain in effect.

Governor Baker's May 18th Release of the "Reopening Massachusetts":

The Baker-Polito Administration released Reopening Massachusetts, the Reopening Advisory Board's report, which

details a four-phased strategy to responsibly reopen businesses and activities while continuing to fight COVID-19. The Administration also released a new "Safer At Home" Advisory, which instructs residents to stay at home unless engaging with newly opened activities, as a way to continue limiting the spread of COVID- 19. Starting today, based on current public health data and trends, Massachusetts will begin Phase 1 of a cautious reopening, and workplaces that are permitted to open are required to follow new safety protocols and guidance.

Learn more about the reopening process: www.mass.gov/reopening

Detailed in Reopening Massachusetts, each phase of the reopening will be guided by public health data and key indicators that will be continually monitored for progress and will be used to determine advancement to future phases. Industries, sectors, and activities that present less risk will open in earlier phases. Those that present more risk will open in later phases. There are Mandatory Safety Standards for Workplaces which apply for all workplaces and the Reopening Advisory Board has issued Sector Specific Safety Protocols and Best Practices that detail how particular industries should operate upon reopening.

Mr. Alonzo stated the next meeting was on June 2nd.

Discussion ensued about a draft safety plan for Town Meeting as well as the Annual Election. Mr. Alonzo reminded all that the Town Clerk is an elected official and has purview over the election.

Public Comment:

Chief Marino stated he was sure the Town Manager would be consulting with the department heads for a plan but these are fluid situations and will most likely involve department heads and there will be contingency plans. The key is to have enough supplies and help on hand to handle situations.

Motion: D. McQuaid

2nd: P. Luck

To adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Vote: Ms. Adams- aye, Mr. McQuaid- aye, Ms. Luck-aye, Mr. Alonzo- aye

Respectfully submitted,



Elaine M. Peterson

Executive Assistant to the Town Manager