

**HOLDEN BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
September 7, 2021**

7:00PM

Memorial Hall

Present: Robert Lavigne, Richard Bates (Participating Remotely), Chiara Barnes, Anthony Renzoni

Not Present: Geri Herlihy

Others Present: Peter Lukes, Town Manager
 Stephanie King, Assistant Town Manager
 Stephen Madaus, Town Counsel
 Liz Fotos, Town Recorder

Chairman Barnes called the meeting to order. The Board stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman Barnes stated that Sel. Bates was participating remotely; she confirmed that Sel. Bates was able to hear her.

1. Appointments, Licenses, Permits

Sel. Renzoni suggested tabling the appointment for the Tenant Seat in Holden Housing Authority.

Motion by Sel. Renzoni, seconded by Sel. Lavigne, it was **VOTED TO REAPPOINT THOMAS O'SHEA TO A THREE YEAR TERM TO THE AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING 7/16/24 BY A UNANIMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE.** (Lavigne: yes; Renzoni: yes; Barnes: yes; Bates: yes).

2. Citizen Address

Lee Hill, 19 Baskin Parkway, was present at the meeting. She stated that she has been to a meeting before and she has neighborhood problems with Seven Saws. She stated that the live music and noise was too much plus tables slamming, kids yelling and more. She stated that before they opened she had come in front of this room to hear what they were going to say. She stated initially they were impressed by what they said, the back door wouldn't be open, there would be no parking issues, and to call if there was a noise issue and they would rectify it. She stated that is not the case. She stated there are people there late, yelling with doors slamming. She stated it was inconsiderate, rude, and disrespectful and that they want the neighborhood back. She stated that she can not sit on her deck or fall asleep. She stated that she has already called the police and she appreciates anything the board can do.

Jane Dye, 39 Lovell Road, was present at the meeting. She stated that she was a citizen interested in sustainable affordable energy alternatives. She stated that she wanted to bring this information to the Board and to HMLD regarding the Peabody Plant. See handed out, *Assessment of Potential Energy Storage Alternatives for project 2015A In Peabody, MA* (attached). She stated that this was no longer considered reliable or affordable.

Sel. Bates left the meeting at 7:11PM.

Dennis Mahon, 56 Fox Hill Drive was present at the meeting. He came to speak out about the Peabody Project. He stated that there were concerns with the location being within 1 mile of an elementary school and that there were many issues about negative health for those in the Peabody area. He stated that this project also assumes 30 years of useful life and that this will be obsolete and a wasted investment. He stated that legislation put a 30 day hold on this and ultimately decided to move forward with the project but that an independent firm was contracted and that once again battery storage was found to be cheaper and cleaner then the plan. He requested the Board as light commissioners use battery storage and not support building the plant.

3. Recreation Director Introduction

Mr. Lukes stated that Nichole Hallett took over as Recreation Director about three weeks ago. He stated that he knows that Recreation is a priority for this Board so he wanted them to meet her. He stated that a lot of his goals surround the building of Recreation in town and he was working towards that and looked forward to having a roadmap to the Board in the coming weeks.

Ms. Hallett stated that she has worked in recreation for 14 years at Teamworks and she has a lot of ideas. She stated that she loves to work with the community to help prioritize what the community wants and to get everyone involved. She stated some things on her radar are expanding the pool, dance lessons, cooking classes, trail groups, and more.

Sel. Bates returned to the meeting at 7:22PM.

The Board welcomed Ms. Hallett and told her they were looking forward to working with her and seeing her ideas get implemented in Town. The Board told her they were interested in making Recreation bigger and better in town so no idea was too big to discuss.

4. DPW Building Committee Update

Dan Nason, DPW Chair, was present at the meeting along with Gary Kaczmarek, Project Manager, and a few members of the Committee. He stated that there were a few delays but the building was taking shape. He stated that the budget was in line with the \$18.55 million. He asked if the Board had any questions.

Sel. Renzoni thanked the Committee and said that it is looking great. He asked if the project was on time.

Mr. Nason replied that he was not sure if it was on time but that the steel was onsite and that it should not affect the budget. He stated that the original timeline may shift slightly with the original deadline of February and now it was looking closer to April.

Sel. Renzoni stated that there was some talk about Federal Grants coming in that could potentially shift money. He stated that for the record he was opposed to spending additional money. He stated that whoever shows up to Town Meeting gets to represent the community and that there are other great opportunities in town.

Mr. Nason stated that there was some favorable timing with the bid that worked well for the town. He stated that they were able to include add ons in the bid and he thinks that they are doing well.

Mr. Lukes stated that we have been very fortunate. He stated that if there are some delays he would not be surprised but that the project has moved forward exceptionally well.

Sel. Renzoni stated that it was more important to be done right then on time as these things are not in our control.

5. Foundation Presentation

Karen Rianni, 40 Anderson Way, was present at the meeting. She stated that many may have seen her home lifted as they needed to have the foundation lifted and poured due to the crumbling foundation. She stated that the cost of this was \$280K and that home owners insurance walked away from it. She stated that she is working to coordinate with Senator Chandler and there is growing concern about another query that has MA homes being impacted. She stated that since her home tested positive, three more towns have been highlighted, Grafton, Barre, and Rutland which increase the total to 25 towns in MA that have this issue.

Ms. Rianni stated that she was at the meeting to ask the Board to support the Bill 548 about Crumbling Foundations which will help enable insurance companies to act in these matters.

Sel. Lavigne stated that this was something that he had spoken to Representative Ferguson about and he would support sending a letter. He suggested having this as an agenda item for the next meeting.

Sel. Bates left the meeting.

6. Discolored Water Update

Ryan Mouradian, Water /Sewer Superintendent, and John Woodsmall, Director of DPW, were present at the meeting.

Mr. Mouradian stated that the Water/Sewer Committee met twice since last July. He stated that it was very productive and great to speak with other communities to see how they have worked through issues. He stated that the next meeting would be on September 15th and that at the suggestion of the Board they would be doing a field sampling plan to see the impacted areas. He stated this would run for 3 months and they were going to test 9 different locations for iron manganese and other things to track where they are going. Mr. Mouradian stated that tomorrow was the first of three hydrant flushes starting at 75 gallons / minutes and then being done at the two week mark and four week mark. He stated that they will look to see how the iron levels are and then they will repeat the test at a different flow rate to see if that makes a difference. He stated this will go through December and that it is already mapped and they can provide the Board with dates.

Mr. Mouradian stated that they also looked into using camera technology but that with the cost it did not seem worth it. He stated that they will be excavating in front of two locations, one on Main Street and one on Quinapoxet. He stated that they have notified residents and they were going to dig down and take a look and if they don't like what they see they will correct it.

Mr. Mouradian stated that they did speak about a treatment plant with MA DEP and it could cost between \$2 -\$3 Million up to \$8 Million. He stated that they assured the Town that it was not at a level that they needed to treat for and that they could do some future treatment if necessary at a lower cost.

Mr. Mouradian stated that in 2012 MA DEP did an evaluation of the Spring Street well. He stated that they were going to evaluate the cost of turning the well off and using Worcester water to see if that was worth it but this was sent out to a consultant to be reviewed.

Mr. Mouradian stated that they have also done water modeling and they were ready to run scenarios. He stated he would be able to see it real time.

Sel. Lavigne asked about the digging.

Mr. Mouradian replied that they will see how it goes tomorrow and it will be cause and effect. He stated that if they see an issue they will fix it but they won't know until they dig.

Sel. Renzoni stated that he appreciated the communication and the emails explaining what was occurring. He stated that he has received a lot of phone calls, texts, and social media about brown water but that the issues need to be reported to the town in order to collect data and work for answers.

Mr. Mouradian stated that last Friday there was a water main break on Lovell Road. He stated that section pulls water through the connection and stirred things up on Quinapoxet Street. He stated they then got a call from Princeton Street about discolored water and they responded and flushed that line. He stated while that was happening they found a separate break on Salisbury Street and it was found that it was not communicating on Salisbury Street. He stated the tanks drained down to about 2 feet but not low enough to trigger an alarm. He stated that when they caught it; it took all night to fill back up. He stated that all happened over the weekend so it wasn't all random but there were two hits in a row.

Sel. Renzoni asked about a temporary filter program.

Mr. Lukes replied that it could be possible but he was not sure it was a good solution. He stated that the problem becomes what they do with the filters and how to determine a policy. He stated that he is not sure it is feasible but it can be evaluated.

Sel. Renzoni stated that this problem already has dragged on and that he thinks residents need a temporary solution. He stated that he thinks we owe our residents better water and while we are working on fixes that could take months, maybe there is a way to explore some options for temporary filters. He stated he wants to look at options that they can do physically and legally, he can't accept that we can't do anything.

Sel. Lavigne agreed.

Mr. Lukes stated that it was vetting through legal but it can be reevaluated. He stated that it was always an option and he is not opposed to it when we run out of other potential solutions.

Sel. Lavigne stated that this was truly a band aid. He stated that he knew that they were working hard and that it was a lot of trial and error.

Sel. Renzoni stated that if no one takes advantage of it fine but that at least it would be there to offer. He stated that he thought it was a modest cost.

Chairman Barnes stated the intriguing part was the excavations.

Mr. Mouradian replied that he does not think that it can be removed completely but some people are impacted more. He stated the only way that DPW can know what is happening is if incidents are reported.

Sel. Lavigne stated that they may want to let the district and Rutland know if they were planning on blocking traffic on Main Street.

Mr. Mouradian replied that it was exploratory and would not take up that much space or time.

The Board thanked them for the update.

7. WRSD Audit Advisory Board- 3 Year Term

Mr. Lukes stated that the district had not been able to get in touch with Chris Hynes at this point in over two weeks. He stated that the Board could appoint someone else or reach out to see if this individual was still interested.

Sel. Lavigne suggested having someone that has experience in audit work, he asked for the Town Manager to post this and see if they could get some interest.

8. WRSD Regional Agreement

Sel. Lavigne stated that they received an email and he reached out to Ken Mills but that he wanted to see if the Manager had an update because the process seemed stalled.

Mr. Lukes replied that they were waiting for more input but that he was not directly involved in this. He stated that he could check in with them but that he did not have any other information then what the Board had seen.

Sel. Lavigne stated that they largely were getting feedback that many towns wanted to reduce the committee size but that the committee did not want that.

Sel. Renzoni stated that this is one of the issues with the School Committee. He stated that the five towns want to discuss the regional agreement but that the Committee self regulates. He stated the Committee exists because of the five towns but there is no way to change the agreement without doing something drastic. He stated five towns create the district and five towns fund it. He stated the District has out of control spending and that he thinks they need to discuss the next fiscal year as it relates to the budget.

Sel. Lavigne asked Mr. Lukes for the highlights prior to reaching out to Mr. Mills. He suggested one member of each Board and his subcommittee work to figure this out.

9. Town Manager Update

See attached

10. Town Mask Mandate Discussion

Sel. Renzoni stated that he asked to put this on the agenda. He said that he had been asked by a lot of different people and that in order to clear the air he wanted to have a meeting and have a mask optional community.

Sel. Lavigne stated that he had heard from numerous residents and business owners and they want it to be left up to them. He stated that the vaccine does not protect you 100%

and it should be left to adults to be adults and it is not the Boards job to tell people what to do. He stated that people can do what they like and if a business owner wants to require it that is fine too.

The Board discussed if a vote was required on this matter or if declaring it in public meeting was enough.

Mr. Lukes stated that the Board would need to abide by the state and the state has been hands off so the town has followed suit.

Motion by Sel. Lavigne, seconded by Sel. Renzoni, it was **VOTED TO TAKE THE POSITION THAT THE TOWN OF HOLDN WAS NOT GOING TO MANDATE MASKS BY A UNANIMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE.** Renzoni: yes; Lavigne: yes; Barnes: yes).

11. Follow Up to Citizens Address

Sel. Renzoni stated that he will look into this.

Sel. Lavigne stated that there are time restrictions.

Mr. Lukes stated that he does not know if it is business related or if it is people loitering.

Mr. Lukes stated that with regards to the 2015 Power Plant Project the HMLD Manager has significant data that she can forward to the Board. He stated that this is state wide activism that is on going. He stated he could forward counter points to the points made this evening as well if the Board wished to have that information.

12. Selectmen Minutes

The Board passed over the minutes.

13. Selectmen Miscellaneous

None

14. Selectmen Subcommittee

Sel. Lavigne stated that the Friends of Eagle Lake were having a clean up this Saturday and anyone interested in helping could head down.

Sel. Renzoni asked about the water quality.

Mr. Lukes replied that he was not sure but that it had failed at various times over the year.

Motion by Sel. Lavigne, seconded by Sel. Renzoni, it was **VOTED TO ADJOURN THE SEPTEMBER 7, 2021 BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING AT 8:53 BY A UNANIMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE.** (Renzoni: yes; Lavigne: yes; Barnes: yes).

APPROVED: 4/11/22