

Minutes
Board of Selectmen
June 10, 2024
Cotter Room
6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Kevin Donovan, Chair, Suzanne Djusberg, Roger Woods, Paul Bunker, Scott Lambiase, Town Manager

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moment of Silence: Amelian “Skinny” Pastuszak, passed away on May 22, 2024, at the tender age of 103. He was a marine who fought in World War II and was a life-long resident of Abington. He served on the Abington Housing Authority and was one of the organizers of the Abington Midget Football League. Back in January, Skinny was awarded the Boston Post Cane which is symbolic of being the oldest resident of the town. The Board asked that he be remembered for all the good work that he did for the Town of Abington.

The Town of Abington was incorporated on June 10, 1712, so this is the 312th anniversary of the Town which was then comprised of Whitman and Rockland. In 1874 Rockland split off. Rockland is celebrating their 150th anniversary this year. In 1875 Whitman incorporated on their own. Abington Celebrates Founders’ Day events took place this past weekend and the Board thanked the Committee and everyone involved for the fireworks and all their efforts.

1. Motion by Mr. Woods to approve May 20, 2024, minutes, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous.
2. Request for appointment to Southfield Redevelopment Authority – R. Andrew Burbine. Once Mr. Woods became a Selectmen, he submitted his resignation as required. This is for the unexpired term of one year. Mr. Burbine meets the statutory qualifications. Motion by Mr. Woods to appoint Mr. Burbine, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, unanimous.

3. Request for appointment to Conservation Commission – Justin VanNest, Joshua Swasey. One position is vacant due to the resignation of Alex Leary. Mr. Bunker stated both associate members were excellent candidates. Motion by Mr. Bunker to appoint Joshua Swasey for the unexpired term to 2025, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, 3 ayes, 1 abstention (Mr. Woods). Motion by Mr. Bunker to appoint Justin VanNest to the three year term effective July 1st that he will be vacating, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, 3 ayes, 1 abstention (Mr. Woods).

6:35 p.m. Request for All Alcohol Common Victualer and Entertainment licenses for Alex Good Taste Restaurant Inc., 1501 Bedford Street, Unit #5, Jimmy Armond, Manager, Alexandra Armond, owner. Motion by Mr. Woods to open the hearing, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, unanimous. Ms. Armond – this will be a function hall for events. They are requesting the hours of Monday-Friday 11 a.m.-1 a.m., Saturday 11 a.m. – 2 p.m., Sunday 11a.m. – 1 a.m. Mr. Donovan explained the Board does not approve closings later than 1 a.m. There were no questions from the Board or the public.

Motion by Mr. Woods to close the hearing, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, unanimous. Motion by Mr. Woods to approve the application with closings no later than 1 a.m., seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous.

4. Vote to approve the use of the Reilly Field and Nisby Bandstand by Abington Copes on September 19, 2024, from 4:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., in conjunction with Rockland Cares to hold a vigil. Mr. Woods – Abington Copes does a great job and made a motion to approve, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, unanimous.
5. Vote on annual appointments/reappointments, effective July 1, 2024. Motion to approve the attached list made by Mr. Woods with the exception of Conservation, seconded by Mr. Bunker, 3 ayes, 1 abstention (Mr. Woods). Motion to approve Conservation made by Ms. Djusberg, seconded by Mr. Bunker, 3 ayes, 1 abstention (Mr. Woods).
6. Discussion and Vote on Proposed Policy Directives. Mr. Donovan – the Selectmen per the Charter are to be involved in the operation of the Town. Departments should be adhering to their policies and updating them. He wanted the Board's feedback.

It shall be the policy of the Board of Selectmen that the Town Manager shall conduct a review of all departmental policies with each respective department head to ensure that said policies are current and being carried out in the manner as prescribed and report back to the Board of Selectmen at its meeting on September 9, 2024, reporting on his review of the same.

Mr. Woods felt this was a good idea, especially with the Police Department's inability to get recertified. Ms. Djusberg agreed. Mr. Woods made the motion to accept the policy, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, unanimous.

The next policy relates to employees being allowed to take vehicles home. There needs to be a listing of who is being allowed and a justification. Employees who need it for emergency response is suitable. The Town Manager should have a meeting of department heads and provide a listing of all vehicles that are allowed to be taken home by employees, review the list and necessity and submit a recommendation to the Board for its next meeting on June 24th for final determination as to what vehicles the Board would allow as a matter of public policy to be taken home.

Mr. Woods – this has come up for years and pre-dates the Town Manager. It needs to be tightened up. Motion by Mr. Woods to approve, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, unanimous.

The next three policies are to keep the Board informed.

It shall be the Policy of the Town of Abington that the Town Manager shall develop and report on a weekly basis to the Board of Selectmen all persons hired, promoted or separated from service within the Town Government under his care and control. The report shall be in the form of electronic communication to the Board of Selectmen for the purpose of keeping the Selectmen informed of the personnel functions that have been authorized by the Town Manager.

Motion by Mr. Woods to approve, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, unanimous.

It shall be the Policy of the Town of Abington that all Department and Division Heads under the organizational structure of the Town Manager shall report to him any and all public functions that may pertain to the respective Departments as soon as has been made known to them. The Town Manager, in turn, shall notify the Board of Selectmen in the event the Selectmen wish to attend the same.

Motion by Mr. Woods to approve, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous.

It shall be the Policy of the Town of Abington that all Department and Division Heads under the organizational structure of the Town Manager shall report to him any immediate and important public activities or emergencies that required the response or attention of the respective department, board of commission. The Town Manager shall in turn notify the Board of Selectmen of the same for the purposes of keeping the chief elected officials informed as to the involvement of any departments under its jurisdiction.

Motion by Mr. Woods to approve, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, unanimous.

7. CDBG – Payoff forgiveness request for FY12 Case #W-093. This grant program was initiated in 2012 for home projects for 15 years interest free. Mr. John Carabello came before the Board and requested forgiveness of \$8,500. The house is under agreement for sale for \$479,000. After reviewing, Mr. Woods made motion not to waive the \$8,500, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, unanimous.
8. Vote to designate the following positions with Special Municipal Employee Status – Flood Plain Manager, Conservation Agent. Granting this status takes away conflict. Motion by Mr. Woods to approve, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous.
9. Town Manager update, Selection Process and Timelines for the appointment of the next Chief of Police. The Town Manager makes the appointment, but the Selectmen have a role in that. The Selectmen should have representative(s) in the selection process. Mr. Woods made a motion that the Chair and Vice Chair sit in on the Assessment Process and sit in on final interviews with the understanding that they don't participate, they only observe, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous.

Town Manager – the posting has been out for four weeks and closed this past Friday. He received twelve applications, some internal. After reviewing applications, questionnaires will be sent out to the applicants as sort of an essay portion of the test. When they come back, they will be reviewed. There will be some oral interviews. They are hoping for an Assessment Center for probably 4-5 candidates the week of August 12th. It will then be narrowed down and conduct a final interview. That selection will be presented to this Board in August. He estimated the announcement to this Board would be made at the September meeting. There will

be 3-4 assessors, all chiefs. We hired a public safety consultant who works with us. It is owned by Chief Russ Stevens and Chief Wayne Samson, both retired Chiefs.

10. Town Manager update, \$100,000 earmark for economic development for North Abington Center. We received this a while ago. We have a consultant to help us with this. They do work on planning and economic development. They will be reaching out to business owners in that area and find out what the issues and problems are. The funds can be used in two ways – if they invest in their facades or buildings there is money that can help offset those expenses and match them to a certain percentage. There is also money that we will develop our own street scapes and public scape and see what is necessary to brighten up the area to attract people and make it a nicer area. We will have Liz Shea come in September and talk a little more about it.

11. Vote by Mr. Woods to enter into executive session in accordance with MGL c.30A, Sec. 21 to discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public body and the chairman so declares. The meeting will not reconvene in open session. Mr. Bunker seconded motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Bunker, yes; Mr. Woods, yes; Ms. Djusberg, yes; Mr. Donovan, yes. (7:11 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Hurst