

Select Board Meeting 12/07/2020

Sel. McCaffrey called the meeting to order at 6:30pm

The following persons were present Sel. Jim McCaffrey, Sel. Peter Jurmain, Sel. Erin Underhill, Town Administrator Mike Guzinski, Operations Manager Karen Bouret.

Announcements

Chief Soffayer announced that Officer Opanasets has retired, and the Select Board deemed Monday, November 30th as Officer Opanasets' Day in honor.

Chief Soffayer announced that the Annual Toy Drive is currently going on as a collaborative effort through both Police and Fire. See the website or Facebook for more details - donations of gift cards and toys are welcome.

20-274 Appointment of Reserve Police Officer

Chief Soffayer asked for the Board to appoint Officer Opanasets as a Reserve Police Officer to work details now that he has retired. Mr. Guzinski approved the appointment.

Sel. Jurmain made a motion to confirm the Town Administrator's appointment of Officer Opanasets as a Reserve Police Officer effective December 8th. The motion was seconded by Sel. Underhill. Sel. McCaffery polled the Board, McCaffery – yay, Jurmain – yay, Underhill – yay. The motion passed unanimously.

20-278 Waive Fees for DPW Building Project

Mr. Guzinski asked the Board to support the request from the Permanent Building Committee to waive the building fees for the DPW project and to only pay the inspection fees since this is a Town project.

Sel. Underhill Made a motion to waive the building fees for the DPW Building project but that the project is responsible for paying the inspection fees for the inspectors. The motion was seconded by Sel. Jurmain. Sel. McCaffery polled the Board, McCaffery – yay, Jurmain – yay, Underhill – yay. The motion passed unanimously.

20-275 Finance Director's Report

Carol Johnston, Finance Director, said the Town's financial position is moving in a positive direction for FY21 as of today. (See the 12/7/20 Memo from the FD). The Select Board was very appreciative of the information and details that support the direction the budget is headed this year.

20-276 Renewed Stormwater Hearing - Sparhawk Academy

Sel. McCaffrey made a motion to reopen the hearing for stormwater for the Sparhawk Academy at 7:00pm. The motion was seconded by Sel. Underhill. Sel. McCaffery polled the Board, McCaffery – yay, Jurmain – yay, Underhill – yay. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Merrikin, the engineer for the project, said changes have been made and is requesting a withdrawal of the application.

Sel. McCaffrey made a motion to accept the request for withdrawal and to waive the \$1000 application fee for the refiling. The motion was seconded by Sel. Jurmain. Sel. McCaffery polled the Board, McCaffery – yay, Jurmain – yay, Underhill – yay. The motion passed unanimously.

Sel. McCaffrey made a motion to close the hearing. Sel. Underhill seconded the motion. Sel. McCaffery polled the Board, McCaffery – yay, Jurmain – yay, Underhill – yay. The motion passed unanimously.

20-280 Review and Approval of IT Inter-municipal Agreement and Town IT Update

Mr. Guzinski presented a proposed Inter-municipal Agreement with the Town of Norfolk for a shared IT position in which Millis would be the host community. Mr. Guzinski said Town Counsel and the Board of Selectmen in Norfolk have approved the agreement and Millis does have the funding for the position for FY21. Sel. Jurmain, who has been the Acting IT Director, spoke in favor of the agreement.

Sel. McCaffrey made a motion to approve the recommendation to enter into an Inter-municipal Agreement between the Town of Millis and the Town of Norfolk and to authorize the Chair to execute the agreement on behalf of the Board. The motion was seconded by Sel. Jurmain. Sel. McCaffery polled the Board, McCaffery – yay, Jurmain – yay, Underhill – yay. The motion passed unanimously.

Sel. Jurmain said he has spoken with the Town of Dover, and they may also be interested in working collaboratively with Millis.

20-277 Discuss Roll-Out of Community Electrical Aggregation eMPower.millisma

Robert Weiss, Energy Manager, thanked all involved for the past few years for working to bring this roll-out to fruition. Craig Gibbons, Chair of the Energy Committee, gave a slide presentation about the program and described the program in detail. Mr. Gibbons said the program starts after the first meter reading in January. For those who do not want to be enrolled in the program or those who they should opt out by mailing back card they received in the mail or contact Constellation at the phone number or website provided. Mr. Gibbons said there are four different options (outlined on the slides) which include renewable energy options including a 100% renewables option.

20-279 Stormwater Abatement/Credit Policy Board Review

Chair McCaffrey said the Board recently held FY20 stormwater credit and abatement hearings. The Chair reviewed the history of the stormwater utility development as well as the credit manual adoption. A discussion began about how details of the credit manual and the thresholds established. Sel. Jurmain read through notes and thoughts he had written following the hearings and shared them with the Board. This included simplification of the application process, redefining impervious area, redefining thresholds for credit applications etc.

Sel. Underhill stated that she shares some similar concerns with Sel. Jurmain. Sel. Underhill said the credit manual should have more specific instructions and more clarity.

Sel. McCaffrey said the Board will need to decide how the manual will be restructured, if they choose to do so, and whether it will apply to residents retroactively. Sel. McCaffrey cautioned that if changes are made the Board must find a way to keep the utility at the same funding level which could mean increasing rates for everyone. The Board would like to see more clarity on bills - clearer expectations, change small user credit, Lower standard to give more credits means increasing rates.

20-282 Departmental Staffing Responsibility Discussion

Sel. Jurmain asked Mr. Guzinski to address staffing responsibilities. Mr. Guzinski said as Town Administrator and appointing authority he is responsible for managing staff and recommending hires. Sel. Jurmain noted that boards and committees do not have that authority. Sel. McCaffrey asked the Town Administrator, on behalf of the Board, to amend the Select Board Policies and Procedures Manual to clarify his role.

20-281 Town Hall Operating Hours/COVID Restrictions Continuation

Mr. Guzinski said office hours and staffing levels were restored to FY20 levels effective December 1, 2020. However, the building is still closed to the public due to COVID continuing to worsen at this time. Mr. Guzinski recommended leaving the building closed to the public and reviewing the status by the end of March.

20-283 Holiday Hours Discussion

Mr. Guzinski asked the Board to consider closing the Veterans Memorial Building offices, the Library and the DPW on both December 24th and December 31st as additional leave with pay. **Sel. Underhill made a motion to close the Veterans Memorial Building offices, the Library and the DPW on both December 24th and December 31st as additional leave with pay. The motion was seconded by Sel. Jurmain. Sel. McCaffery polled the Board, McCaffery – yay, Jurmain – yay, Underhill – yay. The motion passed unanimously.**

20-284 Select Board Committee & Board Liaison Update

Sel. Jurmain said he attended both the Energy Committee meeting as well as the Enterprise Funds Advisory Committee.

Sel. Underhill noted that although she hasn't attended a recent School Committee meeting, she mentioned that both the internet and phone service at both schools is currently down and being worked on.

Sel. McCaffrey made a motion to enter executive session at 9:30pm to discuss the consideration of the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real estate (61A Parcel Village Street). Sel. Jurmain seconded the motion. Sel. McCaffery polled the Board, McCaffery – yay, Jurmain – yay, Underhill – yay. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Victoria Schindler