

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
APRIL 28, 2021
REGULAR SESSION

Members Present: Justin Sullivan, Chris Zorra, Adam Petronio,
Michael Healy

David Andrade was on via conference call.

Town Administrator: Shawn E. Cadime

Asst. Town Administrator/
Director of Human Resources: Carol-Ann Days

The meeting was held at the Seekonk Senior Center, 540 Arcade Avenue.

Chairman Sullivan opened the meeting at 6 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence.

He announced that, per Governor Baker's Order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 20, it is necessary to limit the number of attendees allowed to physically access the Board of Selectmen meeting to 25. The public could submit questions and comments to the Board in advance by completing the Google Form prior to the meeting by Tuesday, April 27, 2021, at 4:30 p.m. The meeting will be broadcast live via Seekonk TV9 and streamed live on TV9's Facebook.

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 20(f), any person recording must notify the Chairman at the beginning of the meeting.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Zorra announced that volunteers are needed on the 540 Arcade Avenue Building Committee (1 Moderator appointment), Capital Improvement Committee (2 Board of Selectmen appointments), Commission on Disability (5-13 BOS), Economic Development Committee (5 BOS), Energy Committee (1 BOS), Historical Commission (3 BOS), Parks & Recreation (1 BOS), Recycling Committee (3 BOS), South End Fire Station Building Committee (1 Moderator), Veterans' Council (2 BOS), Zoning Board of Appeals (2 Alternates).

COMMUNITY SPEAKS – None.

Chairman Sullivan took a moment to wish his son a Happy 7th Birthday.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Consider the Appointment of Richard Dalpe to the Board of Registrars

Mr. Cadime recommended the appointment. He noted that Mr. Dalpe has been assisting the Town Clerk during elections.

A motion was made by Mr. Petronio, seconded by Mr. Healy, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Richard Dalpe to the Board of Registrars.

The vote: Mr. Healy – Aye; Mr. Petronio – Aye; Mr. Zorra – Aye; Mr. Andrade- Aye; Chairman Sullivan – Aye.

Consider Accepting the Donation from Ocean State Job Lot for Personal Protective Equipment

Mr. Cadime recommended the Board accept the equipment and send a letter of appreciation to Ocean State Job Lot.

A motion was made by Mr. Zorra, seconded by Mr. Petronio, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept the donation of personal protective equipment from Ocean State Job Lot and send a letter of appreciation.

The vote: Mr. Healy – Aye; Mr. Petronio – Aye; Mr. Zorra – Aye; Mr. Andrade- Aye; Chairman Sullivan – Aye.

Consider Accepting the Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services (DFS) FY'21 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant Program in the Amount of \$14,835 for Vehicle Stabilization Kits and Gear Dryer

Chief David Rave explained the stabilization kits will be for Engine 1 and Engine 2. The gear dryer will work quicker than air dry. Hopefully, they can purchase another one in the future.

A motion was made by Mr. Zorra, seconded by Mr. Healy, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept the grant from the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services (DFS) in the amount of \$14,835.

Mr. Healy commended Chief Rave and the guys.

Consider Accepting the Grant from FM Global Fire Prevention in the Amount of \$2,499 to Purchase Smoke Detectors

Chief Rave mentioned the grant was written by Lt. Alex Schlageter who has since left the department to accept a job at CVS Health Care. The Town received the grant in the amount of \$2,499. The money will be used to purchase additional smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors.

A motion was made by Mr. Petronio, seconded by Mr. Healy, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept the grant from FM Global Fire Prevention in the amount of \$2,499.

The vote: Mr. Healy – Aye; Mr. Petronio – Aye; Mr. Zorra – Aye; Mr. Andrade – Aye; Chairman Sullivan – Aye.

Chief Rave thanked members of the Fire Department that applied and received grants. In the past year, the Fire Department has received \$88,459 in grants.

LICENSE HEARING – Consider the Request for a Change of Manager to Brian Ahlquist for Blazing’ Wings, Inc., d/b/a Buffalo Wild Wings, located at 120 Highland Avenue

General Manager Brian Ahlquist was in attendance.

A motion was made by Mr. Zorra, seconded by Mr. Petronio, and it was

VOTED: 4 Ayes; 1 Abstention: To approve the request for change of manager to Brian Ahlquist with clarification on the need for the Corporation Clerk’s signature on the Corporate Vote.

The vote: Mr. Healy – Aye; Mr. Petronio – Aye; Mr. Zorra – Aye; Mr. Andrade – Abstained; Chairman Sullivan – Aye.

LICENSE HEARING – Consider the Request from FirstAG, Inc. to Transfer a Class II Motor Vehicle License to First Auto Group, LLC., located at 18 Highland Avenue

Mr. Brian Sadler, President of FirstAG, Inc., was in attendance.

Chairman Sullivan clarified that FirstAG, Inc. is selling the Class I license to Grieco Enterprises Mr. Sadler needs a 30-day extension on the Class I license to help facilitate the transaction.

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A motion was made by Chairman Sullivan, seconded by Mr. Petronio, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the transfer of a Class II motor vehicle license from FirstAG, Inc. to First Auto Group, LLC and extend the Class I motor vehicle license for 90 days from today (April 28, 2021) to be turned in once the transaction is completed.

The vote: Mr. Healy – Aye; Mr. Petronio – Aye; Mr. Zorra – Aye; Mr. Andrade – Aye; Chairman Sullivan – Aye.

Mr. Andrade wanted to make sure the license states that there will be no more than 150 vehicles at either address.

LICENSE HEARING – Consider the Request for a Class I Motor Vehicle License for Grieco Enterprises, LLC, d/b/a/ Grieco Acura, to be located at 16 Highland Avenue

A representative from Grieco was in attendance.

A motion was made by Mr. Petronio, seconded by Mr. Healy, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the Class I motor vehicle license for Grieco Enterprises, L.L.C. d/b/a Grieco Acura, located at 16 Highland Avenue, effective on the date this transaction closes.

The vote: Mr. Healy – Aye; Mr. Petronio – Aye; Mr. Zorra – Aye; Mr. Andrade – Aye; Chairman Sullivan – Aye.

Mr. Andrade repeated his comment about the number of vehicles allowed.

The order of business moved to:

Consider of Requests for Cannabis Licenses:

Cannaverse, LLC. Proposed Marijuana Cultivator and Product Manufacturing Licenses to be located at 32 Hollister Road

Queens Bridge Inc. Proposed Cannabis Cultivation, Manufacturing, Transportation and Possibly Research Laboratory Licenses to be located at 1853 Fall River Avenue

Atty. Eric Brainsky (Cannaverse) and Ms. Leah Isom (Queens Bridge, Inc) were in attendance.

Chairman Sullivan explained the purpose tonight is to discuss and make a recommendation.

Mr. Andrade and Mr. Zorra recused themselves (Mr. Andrade went off line and Mr. Zorra left the room).

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Mr. Healy thanked both groups for allowing him ample time to research and review the documents. He never understood the process but has a better idea of it now. He is prepared to vote.

Mr. Petronio agreed. He said it was a lot of information to absorb. He knows more about cannabis than he ever wanted to know. It was difficult to make a decision. He is prepared to vote. He extended best wishes to the successful one.

Chairman Sullivan agreed that it was a difficult decision.

Mr. Petronio felt Cannaverse LLC offers the most benefit to Seekonk. They had the best presentation. He proposed to award two licenses – one for manufacturing and one for production.

Mr. Healy also went with Cannaverse.

Chairman Sullivan agreed to go forward with Cannaverse. He thanked both applicants.

A motion was made by Mr. Petronio, seconded by Mr. Healy, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To enter into negotiations for an ATA with Cannaverse L.L.C. for cannabis cultivation and manufacturing licenses to be located at 32 Hollister Road.

The vote: Mr. Healy – Aye; Mr. Petronio – Aye; Chairman Sullivan – Aye.

Atty. Brainsky thanked Board members and the other applicant on behalf of Cannaverse. He said either would be a very good choice for the town.

Ms. Isom asked if there is an appeals process. She inquired about transportation license.

Chairman Sullivan felt that transportation should be tabled for now. It would require another proposal for transportation.

Mr. Petronio encouraged her to apply. He is looking forward to seeing their plan.

Third Quarter Budget Update

Mr. Cadime had a slide presentation. The budget balanced with no major issues identified. Salaries and expenditures are trending below budget forecast. Overall revenues tracking ahead of budget projects. Unrestricted General Government Aid and Chapter 70 finalized – UGGA by \$40,809 and Chapter 70 by \$135,612. Free Cash certified – General Fund \$2,456,178 and Enterprise Fund \$457,054.

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Borrowing is anticipated in FY'22 for the Senior Center Phase II and the South End Fire Station. Tax collection was normal despite Town Hall closure. He commended the staff in that office for working with residents over the phone.

The real estate collection rate is on target at 76.7% as is personal property at 73.6% and motor vehicle excise at 89.8% is above target. Real Estate collection equals \$32,365,242, Personal Property at \$2,666,133, and Motor Vehicle Excise at \$2,333,512. Meals tax receipts is \$378,195 with collection rate of 79.6% (above target) and Hotel Tax at \$384,252 (62% and below target).

Thirty-six parcels will be auctioned on June 8, 2021.

There are several unfilled positions. Salaries are below budget projections by \$882,183.

Chairman Sullivan commended Mr. Cadime and department heads.

Mr. Cadime noted that Mrs. Days and Mr. Alexander have been talking with department heads.

Mr. Petronio asked if projected borrowing would be for the full amount. He asked about debt runoff.

Mr. Cadime said it is for full amount for the senior center and design and OPM for fire station. He will send Mr. Petronio the debt runoff.

Mr. Petronio asked about warrant articles approved at Spring Town Meeting.

Mr. Cadime said no impact this year.

Mr. Healy said it is good to see things coming in as projected or above.

In response to Mr. Petronio's previous question, Mr. Cadime advised the debt runoff in 2021 is \$1.8M, \$2.1M, to \$2.9M in 2023, and declining in 2024 to \$2.5M, \$2.4M, \$1.6M, and \$1.4M.

Mr. Petronio clarified that is without consideration of what will be added from Spring Town Meeting.

Consider Recommendation of the Turf Field Proposal

Mr. Chris Huntress of Huntress Sports returned to response to questions from the Board. Members of the Turf Field & Renovation Building Committee were in attendance.

Mr. Huntress distributed a breakdown of the field maintenance. A synthetic field is less than natural grass. It is about \$7,500 per year, much of which is in labor. The two pieces of equipment needed will be tied to a tractor. He has never seen that equipment wear out.

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The turf manufacturer will be here for the first two years doing the maintenance and teaching the town crews how to do it.

Mr. Zorra asked about the winter.

Mr. Huntress said it is better to have it plowed by a third party. He suggested to wait until snow melts if it is less than six inches. He did not recommend town plows on the field.

In response to Chairman Sullivan's question, Mr. Huntress said the system has a stone base with a 25-year warranty. The synthetic turf has a warranty of 8 years with a life of 8 to 10 years, depending on use. Turf replacement is \$4.50 sq. ft. including turf. He suggested a budget of \$450,000 for removal along with new turf.

With respect to lighting, Mr. Huntress said it includes new LED lights. There will be five fixtures on each pole. Electric use will drop by about 40%.

Chairman Sullivan inquired about incentives from National Grid.

Mr. Huntress said he has not seen that at a town level.

He said there will be three levels of light.

Chairman Sullivan asked about the new press box and updated sound system.

Mr. Huntress said the current press box does not comply with ADA. They need to talk about what they need for audio and video, etc.

He said the grandstands are good. The field will include five sports.

He explained the steps involved in the assessment.

Mr. Prew said they wanted to make sure useability and safety were high and it was cost effective.

Another member shared that the same bleaches will be used, saving about \$500,000 and also the existing track.

Since it will be used as a community-based field, Mr. Healy suggested the Board should have discussion with the School Committee about a pay to play. There should be a fund set aside to use those funds for replacement or repairs in the future.

He wanted to make sure the track will not be on East Providence land.

Mr. Petronio asked about a fee schedule. He would like to see the Parks & Recreation Director John Pozzi have input.

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Mr. Prew responded to Mr. Zorra's question, that they would like to sell bricks to be placed at the entrance.

A motion was made by Mr. Zorra, seconded by Mr. Petronio, and it was

VOTED: 4 Ayes; To recommend the turf field proposal at Town Meeting.

The vote: Mr. Healy – Aye; Mr. Petronio – Aye; Mr. Zorra – Aye; Chairman Sullivan – Aye.

Mr. Andrade was not in attendance at the time of the vote.

Consider Accepting the Regular Session Minutes of March 17, 2021

A motion was made by Mr. Petronio, seconded by Mr. Zorra, and it was

VOTED: 3 Ayes; 1 Abstention; To accept the regular session minutes of March 17, 2021.

The vote: Mr. Healy – Abstained; Mr. Petronio – Aye; Mr. Zorra – Aye; Chairman Sullivan – Aye. Mr. Andrade was not in attendance at the time of the vote.

COMMUNITY SPEAKS – None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Sullivan received an e mail this afternoon that National Grid would be in the area next Tuesday, May 4, 2021, and would like to donate and plant two trees.

Mr. Cadime said this is a follow up to the trees that National Grid had cut down. One will go near the animal shelter.

A motion was made by Mr. Petronio, seconded by Mr. Healy, and it was

VOTED: 4 Ayes; To accept the donation of two trees from National Grid.

The vote: Mr. Healy – Aye; Mr. Petronio – Aye; Mr. Zorra – Aye; Chairman Sullivan – Aye. Mr. Andrade not in attendance at this time.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – None.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN LIAISON REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Bristol County Advisory Board – Nothing to report.

AITKEN SCHOOL EXPANSION BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Zorra reported the trailers were removed from the property. Concrete and landscaping is being done and finishing the playground area. An open house will take place during the summer.

Veterans' Council

Mr. Petronio advised they could not meet due to lack of a quorum. Two new members will be appointed on May 12.

A Memorial Day ceremony will be held at the Veterans Memorial Park on Saturday, May 29, 2021, at 11:30 a.m. Capacity is about 150 people. It will be broadcast on TV9.

The Veterans' Council is planning a vehicle parade.

Mr. Petronio inquired about fixing the lights at the Memorial.

Mr. Cadime said he will have Mr. Cabral check. There was a wiring issue.

Mr. Zorra inquired about the light on Water Lane.

Mr. Cadime said they are waiting for National Grid.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:37 p.m., Mr. Petronio motioned, seconded by Mr. Healy, to go into Executive Session to:

- A. Consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(6) as having the discussion in open session would be detrimental to the negotiating position of the town (472 Taunton Avenue);
- B. Conduct strategy sessions with respect to Seekonk Public Library Employee Association, MLSA, AFT Massachusetts, AFL-CIO per M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) as having the discussion in open session would be detrimental to the litigation or bargaining position of the town;
- C. Conduct strategy sessions with respect to negotiations with the United Steelworkers of America Clerical Unit Local 9517-10 per M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) as having the discussion in open session would be detrimental to the litigation or bargaining position of the town;
- D. Conduct strategy sessions with respect to negotiations with the Assistant Superintendent of Public Works, per M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(2) as having the discussion in open session would be detrimental to the litigation or bargaining position of the town;
- E. Act under Authority of the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L Chapter 30A, Section 22(f) and Section 22(g) and review and approve the Executive Session minutes of March 10, 2021

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and March 17, 2021 pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(7); not to return to open session.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Petronio, Clerk

Prepared by:

Patricia Gamer, Secretary

Items Distributed at the Board of Selectmen Meeting of April 28, 2021

Talent Bank Form for Richard Dalpe to the Board of Registrars

Fire Dept. Capt. Sandra Lowery re: donation from Ocean State Job Lot

Gov. Charles Baker – Executive Office of Public Safety and Security and the Dept. of Fire Services award of \$14,835 grant

FM Global Fire Prevention – Grant in the amount of \$2,499 to purchase smoke detectors.

Documents from Blazing Wings, Inc. for change of manager

Documents for new Class II Motor Vehicle License for First Auto Group, LLC

Documents for new Class I Motor Vehicle License for Grieco Enterprises, LLC

