



Select Board

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Select Board Meeting Minutes

August 12, 2020

21 State Line Road, Town Hall

Open Meeting

Quorum present: Roger Kavanagh, Select Board Chair, Kathleen Keresey, Select Board Member, Eric Shimelonis, Select Board Member, Marie Ryan, Town Administrator

Also present:

DPW Director Curt Wilton

Police Chief Marc Portieri

Acting Fire Chief Steve Traver

Review and sign warrants (payroll and vendor)

Sign Election Warrant for State Primary Election for Sept. 1, 2020

Approved Meeting Minutes from meetings on:

July 22, 2020

July 27, 2020

July 30, 2020

Roger opened the meeting at 6:01 PM. He reviewed the agenda, noting that the Board had reviewed and signed warrants (payroll and vendor) before the meeting. Eric then made a motion to approve the above noted minutes, Kathleen seconded and all were in favor.

Queensboro Package Store Parking Spots:

At the June 30 Board meeting, informal approval was granted to Queensboro Package store to reserve 2 parking spots in front of the store on nights when Center Street is closed for outdoor dining. Kathleen proposed giving the same authorization to all merchants on Main Street.

Eric made a motion to allow all Main Street merchants that are still open during the hours that Center Street is closed for outdoor dining to mark two parking spots in front of their businesses as "reserved". Kathleen seconded and all were in favor.

Cost / Benefit of additional Police Patrol when Center Street closed:

Per the Board's request, Marie asked Amy Brentano, owner of the Foundry and Maggie Merrell, owner of Rouge restaurant to provide feedback on the extra downtown police patrol on the weekend of Jul 30 – Aug 1 and the next weekend when there was no extra patrol. Amy said she

didn't see a difference, positive or negative. Maggie said she thought the police patrol made her patrons uneasy.

Chief Portieri reported some negative feedback from people who walk downtown about the street closure but there was generally positive feedback from people in the area on both nights. He added that there were no incidents / issues either weekend.

There was a brief discussion about Rouge's plan to start closing Center Street on Thursday nights and the need to ensure that Rouge is coordinating the closure with the Farmer's Market which operates on Thursdays until 6PM. Marie will follow up with both parties.

The Board concluded and the Chief agreed that going forward he would make decisions about the need for extra downtown patrols and manage that as part of normal operations.

Management of the Public Restroom facility:

Since several issues had surfaced in the past two weeks about the management of the public restrooms, the Board wanted to find out who has the overall responsibility for the day-to-day operation of this facility.

Curt Wilton provided the history of the facility and the challenges numerous Boards have faced trying to come up with a permanent solution for its day-to-day operations. He then offered a solution that will meet the needs of the Town for this summer and suggested that a more permanent solution will be presented during the development of the FY22 Town budget.

His near term solution was:

- Wayne Cooper will open and clean the restrooms on Monday-Friday.
- The recently hired cleaning company will clean and open on Saturday and Sunday.
- The Police will lock them every evening

Curt will serve as the emergency contact for issues that come up after 3PM and will provide signage at the facility with emergency contact numbers.

False Fire Alarms Fees:

The current West Stockbridge bylaws refer to fines that can be levied for repeated false fire alarm incidents, but the bylaw did not specify when the fine would be levied and how much the fine would be.

Fire Chief Traver suggested that the Board consider adopting the fees charged for repeated false fire alarms in Richmond and outlined what they are. After Board discussion, Eric made a motion to set the fines for false alarms as follows:

- A fine of \$100 will be levied for the 3rd false alarm in a calendar year.
- After the 3rd false alarm in a calendar year, a fine of \$300 will be levied for all subsequent false alarms

Kathleen seconded and all were in favor.

GB Transportation Advisory Committee:

Tate Coleman, a member of the Great Barrington Transportation Advisory Committee, told the Board that the committee is looking for a West Stockbridge representative to participate in their ongoing effort to coordinate and help increase public transportation in south county. The person would need to devote 1-2 hours per month to this effort and would provide the Select Board with updates on committee activities. Kathleen said that Bill Barth, one of the members of the Vision Committee, is very interested in public transportation and would be an ideal candidate for this position. She asked Joe Roy to contact Bill and get back to Marie with his answer.

Bike Share Feasibility Study Advisory Committee:

Since two of the Board members did not get the information needed to discuss this item, it was tabled for discussion at the next meeting.

Strategy for hiring Fire Chief:

Since the Board has received questions from residents about who the Fire Chief is currently, Roger stated that Steve Traver, who has been Acting Fire Chief since March 2020, is the Fire Chief. He added that while the term of Steve's appointment was not specified back in March, the Richmond Select Board Chair and Chief Traver have both assured him that this appointment will be ongoing as needed.

Steve said he has some ideas about the leadership of the Fire Department that he would like to share with both the Richmond and West Stockbridge Select Boards in a joint meeting. Marie will set that meeting up with the Richmond Town Administrator.

Steve provided a brief update on the state of the WSFD:

- Every member has completed first responder class.
- Run sheets have been updated and members were trained on how to fill them out correctly and completely.
- Foam that meets current environmental guidelines has been loaded on the trucks.
- The department now has 25 members.
- There has been a lot of training done to date, including EMT training.
- Helmets have been replaced
- CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) checks are now required for everyone before they can join the department.
- Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) are being updated

He added that budget for training and updated equipment is an issue. He said that the Town approved \$6,000 at the Annual Town Meeting to purchase gear racks for the Fire Department but these racks are not needed. He will be asking for a change in that appropriation at a future Town meeting so that those funds can be used for equipment that is really needed.

Town Equipment and Zoom Account for meetings:

Since Zoom meetings have become a standard approach to conducting Select Board and other committee meetings due to COVID-19, Roger proposed that the Town get its own unlimited Zoom account and put together a set of specifications for other equipment (laptop computer, microphones, etc.) needed to conduct Zoom meetings.

Marie will get an account set up and work with Eric (who has been enabling our Zoom meetings with his business account and equipment) to put together an estimate of the costs to purchase the required equipment and bring that to the Board for review.

Moving Meetings to Monday nights:

The Board and Marie discussed moving Select Board meetings to Monday versus Wednesday nights, which would make it easier for members to plan business travel and other commitments. No one had a conflict with Monday nights so it was agreed to move Board meetings to Monday, starting Sept 21, 2020. Marie will update the calendar on the Town website.

List of Agenda Items:

Roger proposed that each Board member and Marie put together a list of items he or she would like to see on future Board agendas, in order of preference if possible, and all agreed. Marie will create a combined list to be reviewed at a future meeting.

Extra Truck Traffic on Great Barrington Road:

At the July 30 meeting there was a discussion about a substantial increase in heavy truck traffic on Great Barrington Road (Route 41). Based on information from the Director of Public Works and the Police Chief, the Board learned that the increased truck traffic is associated with Formel Auto Salvage in Housatonic, which has changed hands in the recent past and has apparently now become a major hub for recycling wrecked cars.

The Board discussed sending a letter to Formel, notifying them of resident concerns and asking for a meeting to discuss the changes in their business model and the potential long-term impact of the increased truck traffic. Roger and Marie will craft a letter to send to them.

Kathleen also asked if the Board could write a letter to trucking companies, including Irish Trucking, Daley Trucking, and Gary O'Brien that addressed the quality of life issues their trucks are creating in West Stockbridge, particularly related to trucks going over the speed limit and the excessive noise caused by J-braking down the hills as they enter town from all arteries. The Board agreed. Roger and Marie will draft a letter.

Other Business:

Police Chief Marc Portieri told the Board that he was bringing on Matthew Sutton as a new part-time police officer. Matt is a veteran officer with all the necessary training and has worked for West Stockbridge in the past. The Board told agreed with this appointment.

Select Board Speak:

Eric spoke about people not putting their trash and recycling in the proper containers at the Transfer station and that better signage would help ease the burden this creates for Wayne Cooper, the Transfer Station attendant. Curt Wilton reported that new signs have been ordered.

Steve Traver asked to add one more item to his verbal update about the Fire Dept. He wanted the Board to know that the Fire Department and the DPW are working together on the hydrants serving Main Street to inventory, inspect and clean them over the next few weeks.

Citizen Speak:

Joe Roy mentioned that the Vision Committee had looked into "NO J braking" signs and the possibility of a noise ordinance bylaw to include the noise that those trucks make. He said he would be willing to have the Vision Committee work on that if the Board wants to pursue this.

Frank Landsberger suggested that the Board might want to look into self-cleaning toilets as an answer to the public restroom management problems. Eric said there have been discussions in the past about looking for grants that might make something like this possible. Kathleen asked Frank if he had information on costs and, if he does, would he send it to the Board.

With no other citizens wishing to speak, Eric made a motion to adjourn. Kathleen seconded. All were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marie V. Ryan

Town Administrator