



# Select Board

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## Select Board Special Meeting Minutes Meeting via Zoom May 11, 2021

### Open Meeting

**Quorum present:** Roger Kavanagh, Select Board Chair, Eric Shimelonis and Kathleen Keresey, Select Board Members, and Marie Ryan, Town Administrator.

**Others in Attendance:** Town Librarian Rachel Alter and Library Trustee Gail Garrick

Roger called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

Eric made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 15, 2021 meeting, seconded by Roger.

Roll call vote:

Eric, Yes Roger, Yes Kathleen, Yes  
Motion Passed.

Select Board Minutes from April 12, 2021 will be approved at the next meeting.

### Town Administrator Update:

The Town, up until now, has received mail through a number of paid post offices boxes – one for each department. Marie will be closing all of these boxes in the coming months, which will save the town \$1000 annually. Marie will be acquiring a commercial mailbox for the Town Hall, and the Postmaster will transition all mail deliveries to this box.

The article on Town debt at Town Meeting which Bill Biggs stated had an incorrect total actually was correct but the number for the West Center Road project was in the wrong

column. This has been corrected in the warrant wording used for the final minutes. Also, the revenue source for the Cemetery Commissioners has been corrected with the addition of the words "Perpetual Care".

Marie asked the Board to approve the creation of a Beautification Committee. This Committee would work with Lisa Parker and Curt on the annual Town Beautification program. The Board approved. Kathleen will contact possible members to be appointed.

The Sewer & Water Department is going to go over their FY21 budget due to several costly repairs. This will necessitate holding a special Town meeting in June to transfer funds to cover expenses through the end of the fiscal year.

The Select Board confirmed they will meet in person at the next meeting at Town Hall on May 24<sup>th</sup>. One of the residents on the agenda cannot be there by zoom. The meeting will also still be available by Zoom.

Marie will be on vacation Thursday, May 14 and Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Re-Organization of the Board:**

Roger made a motion and Kathleen seconded, to appoint Eric as the new Chair.

Roll Call vote:

Roger, Yes Kathleen, Yes Eric, Yes

Motion Passed.

Roger made a motion and Eric seconded, to appoint Kathleen as the Secretary.

Roll Call vote:

Roger, Yes Kathleen, Yes Eric, Yes

Motion Passed.

Eric made a motion and Kathleen seconded, to appoint Roger as the Clerk.

Roll Call vote:

Roger, Yes Kathleen, Yes Eric, Yes

Motion Passed.

#### **Discussion of New Signage:**

Eric stated that new signage has been the subject of discussion in the past, and that the Library especially has been asking for more effective signage. He revisited his concept for new signs that are modular and include the Town Seal. This included a new sign for the Town Hall, as well as directional signs throughout the town – all of which would use the same design and aesthetics. The preliminary designs were shown using screen sharing. Roger and Kathleen liked modular concept. Kathleen suggested that other Boards such as the Vision Committee and Master Plan Committee should be able to weigh in on the design. Eric favors having such input, and proposed getting a professional rendering that more faithfully illustrates the concept that could be brought to the other Boards for additional ideas. A final design will be rendered and brought back to the Select Board for final approval.

Library Trustee Gail Garrick discussed areas in town where the Library would like to see the signs placed and asked if they would be the same design. Eric stated that he would like to have uniform signage throughout the Town.

There was a discussion about the Town Sign Bylaw. Joe Roy reminded the Board that they are the granting authority for Signs in Town, and they can review all currently hanging signs and decide if any need to be removed or replaced to comply with the bylaw.

**Issue at Town Meeting in regard to Town Reports:**

Regarding the allegation made at the Annual Town Meeting about it not being a “legal” meeting because the report was not available 7 days before, Marie stated that publication of the Town Report has nothing to do with the meeting’s legality. The legal requirement is that the Annual Town Meeting warrant must be posted 7 days prior to the meeting. Marie said that the warrant had been posted 21 days prior to the meeting in all the required locations in town, as well as at the on the Town Hall bulletin board and website. She concluded by stating that the Annual Town Meeting was, therefore, a legal meeting and that the current Annual Town Meeting Warrant is not required to be included in the Town Report, but this has been done traditionally as a convenience to residents.

A discussion about mailing the Town Reports ensued. Kathleen was in favor of doing that as a tradition, and as a benefit for residents that do not use a computer and rely on receiving communications from the Town by mail. The Board will discuss whether or not to have the reports mailed at a future meeting.

In regard to the Board issuing a letter to the Local Yokel in response to the allegation by the voter that the Town Meeting was not a legal meeting, Eric said, after reconsidering the idea of a public letter, he felt that the Board should simply let the meeting minutes of the discussion clarify the issue. Roger said the idea of a letter from the Board to affirm that the Town meeting was indeed a legal meeting is still a good idea. Kathleen suggested a simple short note would be appropriate to clarify the issue. Marie will use the draft letters from Roger and Eric to create a letter for the Board to review at the next meeting.

**Select Board Speak:**

Roger stated that now that he is not Chair he will continue to work on several issues he is interested in:

1. Continue to work with Marie on how to best use the funds allocated in the FY22 budget for Human Resource consulting services.
2. To review the FY22 Budget process and develop proposals to make the FY23 budget process more transparent and consistent across budgeting entities.
3. Engage with selected committees, commissions and boards (Vision Committee, Finance Committee, Sewer & Water Commission) and bring information back to the Select Board about what he has learned.

Kathleen thanked Roger for his leadership as the Chair this past year and congratulated Eric on being the new Chair, looking forward to his perspective on the role. She also stated she feels that getting more involved with other committees and boards is a great idea. She said her interest areas are the Vision Committee and the Master Plan Committee. The Beautification Committee will also be an interest to her, as she looks forward to working with this committee and how it interacts with Lisa and Curt. The concern she has for this committee is funding. She would like to see more money invested and asked for any ideas or options in the future. Eric suggested that in the future the Community Preservation Committee may be able to appropriate funds for their projects.

Eric thanked the Board for their support and is honored to be the new Chair. He plans on getting other committees and boards included in the Select Board meetings by inviting them to come for a dialogue on news and issues in their committee. Eric will also be working on the Green Communities program with ongoing grants and projects throughout the Town buildings.

Eric identified long-term institutional knowledge as a weakness for our town government, as there has been valuable work done in decades past that current boards and town officers are unaware of. He would like to try to assemble a guidebook of sorts to include all the policies that the Boards have voted on in the past, as well as a more comprehensive archive and database of town documents.

Eric announced that he has been working with Earl and Curt to have the public restrooms opened. Curt has hired someone to clean the restrooms on the weekends and Wayne will clean them during the week. Curt reports that they should be open by the end of this week.

There will be a Memorial Day parade and ceremony this year. Eric is working with Cait Graham and the American Legion to nail down all of the details. Once they are finalized, he will give the information to Marie to be posted on the website. He invited the Board to participate in the parade, and the ceremony.

#### **Citizen Speak:**

Joe Roy said he was in favor of the Board writing a letter to respond to the allegations of the Town Meeting being an illegal meeting. He feels that when someone lectures the Board about something like this issue, they should make that person prove their statement with evidence.

He is a Vision Committee representative when he attends the Select Board meetings and thinks the Select Board members visiting other committee and board meetings is a great idea.

Roger made a motion to adjourn at 7:14 PM, Kathleen seconded.

Roll call vote:

**Eric, Yes    Roger, Yes    Kathleen, Yes**

Motion Passed.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*Marie U. Ryan*

Town Administrator

Documents:

Annual Report Bylaw, Chapter 45, Article 1, Section 45-5  
of the Town of West Stockbridge Town Code