

**TOWN OF WINCHESTER  
SELECT BOARD MEETING  
Monday, January 11, 2021  
Record**

**OPENING**

Chair Michael Bettencourt called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM via Zoom remote participation due to the State of Emergency COVID-19. Present were Select Board members Vice Chair Susan Verdicchio, Jacqueline A. Welch, Amy Shapiro, and Mariano Goluboff. Also present was Town Manager Lisa Wong. (Note - due to the remote participation all Select Board votes are roll call votes.)

\*Motion: That the Select Board adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing matters related to MGL Ch. 30 §21(a) 6 - To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the governmental body.

Verdicchio - Welch

Roll Call: Verdicchio, Welch, Shapiro, Goluboff, Bettencourt VOTED

\*Motion: That the Select Board adjourn from Executive Session to Public Session, not to return to Executive Session.

Verdicchio - Welch

Roll Call: Verdicchio, Welch, Shapiro, Goluboff, Bettencourt VOTED

**NOTIFICATION OF MEETINGS AND HEARINGS**

1. Monday, January 25, 2021 - Regular Session

**ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS**

\*Motion That the Select Board accept, with gratitude, donations in the amount of \$2,800 from the Johnston Family, VFW Aberjona Post #3719, and Jayne Rutherford to be deposited into the Police Department Gift Account.

Verdicchio - Welch

Roll Call: Verdicchio, Welch, Shapiro, Goluboff, Bettencourt VOTED

\*Motion That the Select Board accept, with gratitude, donations in the amount of \$350 from the MacDonnell Family to be deposited into the Police Department Gift Account to be used towards future supplies.

Verdicchio - Welch

Roll Call: Verdicchio, Welch, Shapiro, Goluboff, Bettencourt VOTED

**TOWN MANAGER REPORT AND COMMENTS**

1. Ms. Wong announced the following promotional and conditional appointments in accordance with section 4-2b of the Town Charter, and she respectfully requested that the Select Board vote to waive the fifteen (15) day appointment period for: **DPW Promotional Appointment: Working Foreman - Steven Bolduc; Assistant Town Treasurer/Collector Conditional Appointment - Ann Gill.**

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\*Motion: That the Select Board waive the customary fifteen (15) day appointment effective waiting period to allow Steven Bolduc and Ann Gill to begin their employment.

Verdicchio - Welch

Roll Call: Verdicchio, Welch, Shapiro, Goluboff, Bettencourt

VOTED

2. Town Manager's Updates:

Our public safety staff are enrolling to receive their vaccinations. Go to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html> to get the latest COVID vaccine information.

**Budget:** The Governor has until January 27th to submit his FY22 budget. That will give municipalities a better sense of what to expect for State Aid. The Town will hold some budget meetings with the School Committee and the Finance Committee in late January and early February prior to the submission of the budget by the Town Manager on 2/15.

**COVID Testing:** The Town has held its latest CARES funded clinic on 1/7, testing almost 400 people. There are currently no more CARES funds allocated to testing, but the town has about \$50k approved by the Finance Committee through a reserve fund transfer to provide clinics that charge a fee to cover the costs. These clinics have not been set up yet.

**COVID Vaccines:** Registration is open for Public Safety personnel to receive their first dose of vaccines at locations around the state starting 1/11. The Town would like the state to allow local Boards of Health to be involved in vaccination to help speed up the process. Local BOHs have experience with annual flu shots and also administering vaccines for H1N1.

**MBTA:** The Town asked the MBTA for periodic inspections of the station given the condition. They have agreed to this and we will meet on 1/12 to go over more details, including getting a schedule and being notified of any findings. Senator Lewis was able to get an amendment in to the state's FY21 budget requiring that the MBTA spend any new COVID relief revenues to reverse significant changes in schedule/access and resume any halted capital projects.

**UPDATE:** Yesterday the MBTA General Manager gave the green light for the renovations of the Winchester Center train station.

**Personnel:** We welcomed a new Assistant Town Engineer last week and have finished interviews for candidates for the open Assistant Treasurer/Collector position.

**Public Safety:** The candidates for Police Chief have completed their assessment center and currently in an appeal period where they can challenge an exercise in the assessment center. The Town Manager will be able to choose from the top 3 scoring candidates and appoint a Police Chief in February. Lt. Dan O'Connell has been promoted to Acting Chief.

**Waterfield Lot:** The MOU has been executed and the Town is in the process of drafting a Land Disposition Agreement to discuss with the Developer and then send to Spring Town Meeting for approval.

**Winning Farm Lottery:** The deadline to apply is January 21, 2021 (or postmarked by 1/18 if mailed) for the two affordable 3-bedroom units. Details are on the town's website at [www.Winchester.us](http://www.Winchester.us)

**Mental Health:** The Town's reopening committee (comprised of nonprofit, business, town and public health leaders) recommended that the town increase its focus on the mental health issues exacerbated by the pandemic at their meeting in December 2020. Since then, the group

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has helped draft a statement with the intent of having town committees and officials sign on and support the statement. The group continues to reach out to get input.

## MATTERS FROM THE AUDIENCE

### COMPTROLLER 'S REPORT

The Select Board acknowledged the receipt of the Comptroller's FY21 Financial Report as of November 30, 2020.

## HEARINGS

### BUSINESS

- 1. Toole Design Projects Update** - Beth Rudolph, Town Engineer, updated the Board about the traffic projects completed in 2020 including the McCall School Traffic Calming Improvements. The on-going projects, Highland Ave Median Islands, Vinson-Owen MassDot Safe Routes to School and the Town Center traffic master plan, are moving along. There are some design challenges at the Church & Waterfield intersection such as drainage, additional grading and needing an ADA variance for the crosswalk. Erica Guidoboni and Karen Fitzgerald from Toole Design, explained to the Board that these issues were identified during the design process and have increased the design and expected construction costs. An additional \$23,500 is needed to complete the design and preliminary construction estimates are now at \$400,000 to \$425,000. Staff is recommending that the Board approve the \$23,500 to complete the design.

\*Motion That the Select Board approve spending the \$23,500 from the appropriation of \$55,000 for the design and permitting of this intersection.

Verdicchio - Goluboff

Roll Call: Verdicchio, Welch, Shapiro, Goluboff, Bettencourt

VOTED

- 2. Muraco Culvert & School Repairs** - Senator Jason Lewis attended the meeting to address the flood mitigation in Winchester, especially the Muraco Culvert. Beth Rudolph, Town Engineer followed with a brief history of the flooding in Winchester. Of the 12 Flood Mitigation Program In-Town projects the Swanton Street Bridge (Bids are in for 2021 spring construction) and the Muraco Culvert are the last two remaining projects. Fall Town Meeting appropriated \$410,000 for the design and permitting, which is expected to take 18 to 24 months. Staff recommends moving ahead with the design as soon as possible and the Board approved hiring VHB to do the Muraco Culvert design.

\*Motion That the Select Board authorize the Town to go ahead and retain VHB to do the design and permitting and use the \$410,000 appropriated for this project.

Verdicchio - Goluboff

Roll Call: Verdicchio, Welch, Shapiro, Goluboff, Bettencourt

VOTED

Ms. Welch left the meeting.

- 3. Senior Property Tax** - Ms. Wong informed the Select Board that the Governor signed the act authorizing Winchester to establish a Senior Property Tax exemption. The Winchester Senior Property Tax Relief will give senior residents on fixed incomes some property tax relief.
- 4. Budget Outlook** - Ms. Wong told the Board that she is still working on the budget and waiting for the Governor to release the state budget, expected to be January 27<sup>th</sup>, to know what will be our state aid. Chair Bettencourt stated that we have just started our budgetary meetings and

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are dependent on the state's budget numbers. Ms. Wong is also hopeful there will be quick action from the Federal Government regarding COVID relief after the new administration comes in as the last round did not include aid to cities and towns.

5. **Strategic Plan** - Chair Bettencourt would like the Board to start planning for all of the big projects that are coming up, especially in regards to an override. The consensus of the Board is to develop a plan that gives a timeline history of each of the big projects.

6. **Committees & Commissions** - The Select Board continued the interview of Gouri Banerjee for the Cultural Council position to the next meeting and appointed/reappointed the following:

\*Motion That the Select Board appoint Betsy Sands to the Affordable Housing Trust Committee for a term to expire April 30, 2021.

Verdicchio - Goluboff

Roll Call: Verdicchio, Shapiro, Goluboff, Bettencourt VOTED

\*Motion That the Select Board reappoint Shukong Ou to the Cultural Council for a term to expire July 31, 2023.

Verdicchio - Goluboff

Roll Call: Verdicchio, Shapiro, Goluboff, Bettencourt VOTED

\*Motion That the Select Board reappoint Eileen Rustin to the Disability Access Committee for a term to expire August 31, 2023.

Verdicchio - Goluboff

Roll Call: Verdicchio, Shapiro, Goluboff, Bettencourt VOTED

\*Motion That the Select Board appoint Helen Waldron to full member to the Disability Access Committee for a term to expire August 31, 2023.

Verdicchio - Goluboff

Roll Call: Verdicchio, Shapiro, Goluboff, Bettencourt VOTED

\*Motion That the Select Board reappoint Allen Eyden to the Wildwood Cemetery Advisory Committee for a term to expire May 31, 2023.

Verdicchio - Goluboff

Roll Call: Verdicchio, Shapiro, Goluboff, Bettencourt VOTED

7. **IECC Building Code** - Mr. Goluboff brought to the Board's attention that the International Code Council (ICC) is proposing to update the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) to include switching the IECC to the ICC standards process. Presently the IECC allows local officials to be a part of developing building codes to produce more energy-efficient buildings that benefits our community in areas such as greenhouse gas emissions reduction, building operational costs, and public health outcomes. The new ICC proposal will take that away and Mr. Goluboff is requesting that the Select Board support the letter to the ICC Board informing them of Winchester's disapproval.

\*Motion That the Select Board support the letter to the International Code Council and authorize Chair Bettencourt to sign the letter on behalf of the Select Board and send it in.

Verdicchio - Goluboff

Roll Call: Verdicchio, Shapiro, Goluboff, Bettencourt VOTED

8. **Covid Pooled Testing** - Chair Bettencourt stated that the State had proposed last Friday, through DESE, pooled testing at the schools. He informed the Board that the advisory group

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that met with the schools last fall recommended testing and set aside \$500,000 in the reserve fund so that we could appropriate money through the Finance Committee if there was an opportunity like this. Chair Bettencourt asked the Board members if they want to vote to support this and let the School Committee know that we would work with them.

\*Motion            That the Select Board support the concept of pooled testing as proposed by the state and also support assisting the schools with requesting a reserve fund transfer from the Finance Committee if necessary, after the state funding runs out.

Verdicchio - Goluboff

Roll Call: Verdicchio, Shapiro, Goluboff, Bettencourt

VOTED

**EQUITY AND ANTI-RACISM TASK FORCE**

**CONSENT AGE NDA**

\*Motion            That the Select Board approve the minutes for December 7 & 14, 2020.

Verdicchio - Goluboff

Roll Call: Verdicchio, Shapiro, Goluboff, Bettencourt

VOTED

**ADJOURNMENT : 9:35 PM**

\*Motion:            That the Select Board adjourn for the evening.

Verdicchio - Shapiro

Roll Call: Verdicchio, Shapiro, Goluboff, Bettencourt

VOTED

Respectfully submitted, Lisa Wong, Town Manager