

**Minutes  
Board of Selectmen Meeting  
Stow Town Building & Zoom  
September 22, 2020**

Physically present at this meeting in the Warren Room were Thomas Ryan, Chair, Cortni Frecha, Megan Birch-McMichael, James Salvie and Ellen Sturgis.

Also present physically were Town Administrator Denise Dembkoski and Executive Assistant Maureen McKeon. Mr. Ryan called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

**Public input:** No comment from the public was offered.

**Chairman's Comments:** Mr. Ryan announced that there would be a drive-through Flu Clinic on Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Hale Middle School and that interested parties should contact the Stow Board of Health to pre-register. He noted the passing of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

**Correspondence:** No comment on correspondence.

**Minutes:** *Ms. Frecha moved to accept the meeting minutes of the September 8, 2020 meeting as amended. Mr. Salvie seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously. Roll call vote: Ms. Sturgis, aye, Ms. Birch-McMichael, aye, Mr. Salvie, aye, Ms. Frecha, aye and Mr. Ryan, aye.*

**Town Administrator's Report**

Ms. Dembkoski reported that it did not appear that there would be a Special Town Meeting during the fall months of 2020. She explained that a discussion regarding the costs and a viable location for a potential Town Meeting had been discussed at a meeting earlier in the month. She stated that until such time a Town Meeting were deemed necessary, no further planning would take place. She reported that Stow would host the next Tri-Town Meeting on Wednesday, October 14<sup>th</sup>. She reported on the CDC's guidance regarding Trick-or-Treating this year had been released and said that she will continue to research this topic and plans to report back at the next Selectmen's meeting. She mentioned that the Department of Public Health (DPH) would be releasing updates regarding revised COVID guidelines for restaurants and convenience stores. These guidelines would go into effect on Monday, September 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Public Hearing for Pole Installation and Pole Relocation on Gleasondale Road at Rock Bottom Road**

At 7:20 p.m. Mr. Ryan announced and opened the public hearing by reading the public hearing notice and the abutters list. Chris Monsini of Hudson Light & Power was present from the beginning and a representative from Verizon joined the hearing at a later point during the proceedings. They explained they would need to add one pole to the area and relocate one pole due to the upcoming Gleasondale Bridge improvement work. There was a lengthy discussion with the Selectmen regarding the plans and after some time, they concluded that the plans and project were acceptable.

Several abutters weighed in including Steve Laurel and Jen Cohen who verified that the plan *did* take their disability requirements into consideration. The Board voted unanimously to approve the plans presented.

*Mr. Salvie moved that the public hearing for installation of a pole and relocation of a pole on Gleasondale Road be closed. Ms. Frecha seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously. Roll call vote: Ms. Sturgis, aye, Ms. Birch-McMichael, aye, Mr. Salvie, aye, Ms. Frecha, aye and Mr. Ryan, aye.*

*Ms. Sturgis moved that the Board approve and sign the application by Hudson Light & Power to install a new pole and relocate a pole on Gleasondale Road as indicated in the Order for Joint Pole Location received by the Selectmen's office August 24, 2020. Mr. Salvie seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously. Roll call vote: Ms. Sturgis, aye, Ms. Birch-McMichael, aye, Mr. Salvie, aye, Ms. Frecha, aye and Mr. Ryan, aye.*

#### **New Police policy "Interactions with Transgender Individuals"**

Acting Police Chief Michael Sallese was in attendance via Zoom and presented a new policy relating to Interactions with Transgender Individuals which the board unanimously agreed to adopt with minor language amendments recommended by Mr. Salvie. Ms. Birch-McMichael suggested a training session should perhaps go along with the implementation of the policy. The Board thanked Acting Chief Sallese for bringing this policy forward.

*Mr. Salvie moved that the Selectmen vote to approve the addition of a Police policy as amended , "Interactions with Transgender Individuals" presented by Acting Chief Michael Sallese with minor amendments. Ms. Frecha seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously. Roll call vote: Ms. Sturgis, aye, Ms. Birch-McMichael, aye, Mr. Salvie, aye, Ms. Frecha, aye and Mr. Ryan, aye.*

#### **Apple Picking Season Safety Plan**

Acting Police Chief Michael Sallese remained at the meeting to update the Board on safety during Stow's apple-picking season, and to discuss the current safety plan in place. He stated that this year's traffic has been managed well and there have been no major problems or incidents. He mentioned how the use of the Waze application has been helpful in controlling traffic routes.

#### **Hiring Per Diem Tree Worker and Plow Driver for Highway Department**

Superintendent of Streets Steve Nadeau was present and recommended the hire of Tim Gray to serve as a Per Diem Tree Worker and Plow Driver. The Board understood that Mr. Gray would only work on an as-needed basis and they agreed with the recommendation and voted unanimously to appoint Mr. Gray.

*On the recommendation of the Highway Superintendent, Ms. Sturgis moved to authorize the Town Administrator to hire Tim Gray as a Per Diem Tree Worker and Plow Driver for the Town of Stow Highway Department. Ms. Frecha seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously. Roll call vote: Ms. Sturgis, aye, Ms. Birch-McMichael, aye, Mr. Salvie, aye, Ms. Frecha, aye and Mr. Ryan, aye.*

#### **Appointment of Associate Member to Zoning Board of Appeals**

David Hartnagel was present via Zoom and expressed his interest in serving on the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). The ZBA had sent a letter of recommendation to the Selectmen regarding the appointment of Mr. Hartnagel. The Board agreed unanimously to appoint Mr. Hartnagel and thanked him for volunteering. Ms. Sturgis used this opportunity to remind the public that very few women have served on the ZBA over the years and encouraged interested women to apply for a position on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

*On the recommendation of the Zoning Board of Appeals, Ms. Frecha moved to appoint David Hartnagel as a Zoning Board of Appeals Associate, to fulfill the remainder of a five-year term expiring June 30, 2022. Mr. Salvie seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously. Roll call vote: Ms. Sturgis, aye, Ms. Birch-McMichael, aye, Mr. Salvie, aye, Ms. Frecha, aye and Mr. Ryan, aye.*

#### **Honey Pot Hill Orchards Liquor Licensing**

Chelcie Martin from Honey Pot Hill Orchard was present to request a series of one-day liquor licenses or permission to offer samples of distilled (hard) cider at their farm. Their current license

from the State does not allow for this. Before that discussion began, The Board requested updates on other issues at Honey Pot including the construction of a structure without a building permit and a large, controlled burn that took place on the property. Ms. Birch-McMichael said that she supported Honey Pot offering tastings as long as there were restrictions on amounts served, etc. Most of the Board stated that they felt that permissions could safely be issued for this purpose. Mr. Salvie stated that he would have hoped that Honey Pot would have applied for their pour license much earlier in the year, as recommended by the Board at last year's meeting. He told Ms. Martin for that reason he would not be inclined to issue a series of one-day licenses again. Ms. Frecha mentioned that there most likely were other Board members who supported Ms. Martin's plan to provide samplings of cider on their premises. A vote was taken and Honey Pot Hill Orchard was granted permission to offer sampling of their cider during the 2020 fall season.

*Ms. Sturgis moved that the Board support Honey Pot Hill Orchard's desire to provide sampling of their own hard cider following the guidelines as presented to us in a memo dated September 22, 2020. Ms. Birch-McMichael seconded the motion and it was passed 4:1:0. Ms. Sturgis, aye, Ms. Frecha, aye, Ms. Birch-McMichael, aye, Mr. Ryan, aye and Mr. Salvie, nay.*

### **Appoint American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator**

After the realization that there are ADA grants issued to municipalities, the Building Department applied for one of these grant to be used to bring the Town Hall into ADA compliance during their restoration process. One requirement is that each town appoint an ADA Coordinator. Building Inspector Craig Martin agreed to accept the responsibility and serve as the ADA Coordinator if the Board chose to appoint him. Ms. Sturgis expressed her concern that the Town had not had addressed ADA issues and concerns until this point. Ms. Dembkoski said that she would be bringing ADA compliance policies to the Board in the near future.

*On the recommendation of the Town Hall Restoration Committee, Mr. Salvie moved to authorize the Town Administrator to draft a grievance process policy and to appoint Building Commissioner Craig Martin as ADA Compliance Officer for the duration of the Town Hall Restoration Project. Ms. Sturgis seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously. Roll call vote: Ms. Sturgis, aye, Ms. Birch-McMichael, aye, Mr. Salvie, aye, Ms. Frecha, aye and Mr. Ryan, aye.*

### **Liaison reports**

Ms. Sturgis said that the Council on Aging would be holding their annual picnic as a drive thru this year. She talked fondly about the many services and people the COA is helping. She stated that the large number of volunteers make this possible. She stated that the Recreation Commission would meet on Thursday. She said she was not able to attend the Cemetery Commission meeting the prior week. She reported that she had met with State Senator Jamie Eldridge to talk about the State's budget. She reported that she had attended the Town Meeting Planning Meeting at Town Building the prior week and felt that the group made progress and came to a consensus on good options for holding Town Meeting, if necessary.

Ms. Birch-McMichael said that Planning Board was meeting tonight and that they have been working with the Town Administrator regarding the Outdoor Dining Permits. She reported that the Town Building Restoration Committee had met and Jonathan Daisy from Stow TV came to the meeting and mentioned Stow TV's interest in the lower level space at Town Hall once it's been completed. She said that the Historical Commission is also hoping to be given space in that building as well at the completion of the project. The possibility was mentioned of granting them space on the third floor of Town Building if Stow TV were to vacate their office at that location. She said that the Committee had met with the architect and is trying to determine their plan for the building. She added that the architect has been chosen but a contract had not yet been signed. She reported that school had started last week and everything seems to be going well. She announced that Tri-Town, hosted by Stow, would take place October 14<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Frecha added that she felt the Town Hall Restoration project was going well and that the architect had given them a great way to present the project and that they are specialists in restoration and she has faith in their skill. She said that Stow TV coming forward and expressing interest has changed consideration somewhat for how the building would be used. It could become a multi-purpose space with a recording studio etc.

Mr. Salvie mentioned that the Randall Library Trustees had met this morning and the Finance Committee would be meeting this evening. He said that StowTV had expressed interest in space at Town Hall once the restoration is complete and that they are in the ascertainment section of their negotiations with the cable company. He added that Stow TV is planning for upgrades to the technology in the Warren Room and that there has been discussions regarding all meetings of town boards and committees' meetings being aired publicly.

Mr. Ryan said he is considering moving *Minutes* and *Correspondence* to the end of Selectmen's agendas going forward and welcomes input from Board members regarding this idea. He brought to the Board's attention that the second meeting in November (11/24/20) is scheduled for two days before Thanksgiving and asked that Board members inform the Selectmen's Office if they believe they will *not* be able to attend that meeting. Similarly he added that the second meeting in December (12/22/20) is usually *not* held. He said he would be on vacation that week. Mr. Ryan said that the establishment of the Police Chief Search Committee is moving forward and that the Board would be choosing the Member At Large at the Board's their next meeting on October 13<sup>th</sup>. He said there are less than six meetings before the end of the year. He added that, because it worked out so well with the Town Administrator interviews, the Police Chief Search Committee might plan on conducting Police Chief interviews on a Saturday, once the field has been narrowed down to 3-5 finalists. He said he's hoping to have the process finished and a new Chief hired by the end of the year.

Mr. Salvie asked if the Board was going to discuss a work plan for the new Town Administrator and whether that might be discussed before the end of the year. There was brief discussion about a possible retreat for the Selectmen and Town Administrator, and Ms. Dembkoski said that might be the platform to discuss a work plan, tie in the budget process, goal setting for the Board, Town Administrator and Town, etc.. The retreat would be planned in a way that would be in keeping within Open Meeting Law requirements.

### **Adjournment**

*Ms. Sturgis moved to adjourn at 9:02 p.m.. Ms. Frecha seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously. Roll call vote: Ms. Sturgis, aye, Ms. Frecha, aye, Mr. Ryan, aye, Ms. Birch-McMichael, aye, and Mr. Salvie, aye.*

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen McKeon, Executive Assistant

YouTube link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OKDV-xy4Ejk>

**Documents used at this meeting.** Items can be found in the Selectmen's Office filed with meeting folder:

"Interactions with Transgender Individuals

Pole Installation and Pole Relocation

Apple Picking Season Safety Plan