

Select Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 25, 2022
Stow Town Building & Zoom

Present in the Warren Room: Megan Birch-McMichael, Ellen Sturgis, Cortni Frecha, Ingeborg Hegemann Clark, and Town Administrator Denise Dembkoski

Absent: Hector Constantzos

Chair Birch-McMichael called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and noted that the meeting is being recorded. Participants via Zoom are to use the “hands up” function for Public Comment, which is limited to items not on the agenda.

Public Comment

Town Clerk Linda Hathaway was present via Zoom. She said that they have received 1,986 requests for vote by mail ballots, all have been mailed out, and they have received 680 back. Also, 49 people have come in for early voting. If you have not received a red Information for Voters pamphlet from the state, there is a link on the Town’s webpage to the information and to the Question 4 supplement.

Board Member Comments - none

Town Administrator (TA) Report

- As of October 20, there are 11 COVID-19 cases in Town, which is a 4.96% positivity rate.
- The TA thanked the members of the Board of Health (BOH) and Cyndie Colosi for a well-run flu clinic. The TA thanked, on behalf of the BOH, Ron Eld and Geoff Beharrell for their assistance with setting up the technology and the facility for the clinic.
- Regarding the “Dunkin’ Desert” story, our PR firm has software that tracked the mentions of the Town and the Dunkin’ topic. There were 43 individual clips of the story covered by radio, online, in newsprint, and on television including the Today Show. Between all sources, the estimated audience total was more than 90 million people.
- The TA thanked Stow Daisy Troop 64182 for visiting last week. She thanked Linda Hathaway for conducting a vote for the “best ice cream flavor” and Joyce Sampson for creating the fun ballots, Brad Brightman who taught them about taxes, and Jacquie Goring who showed them lots of interesting conservation items.
- The contract with the Owner’s Project Manager for the library project is almost finalized, and the RFQ for the full architect and design services will be published tomorrow.

Appointments

Fire Department Appointments

Chief JP Benoit was present in the Warren Room. He said that Christopher Mailloux was a member of the Stow Fire Department in 2003. Mr. Mailloux was a fulltime firefighter/paramedic in Dennis and is moving back to this area.

Board member Sturgis moved to appoint Christopher Mailloux as a Call Firefighter/EMT for the Stow Fire Department, for a term expiring June 30, 2023.

Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Chief Benoit introduced the seven candidates for the positions of Apprentice Call Firefighter. Captain Barry Evers was present in the Warren Room and said that the candidates, once appointed, will begin the 13-week training period tonight; training is on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

Board member Sturgis moved to appoint Evan Greer, Thomas Fitzsimmons, Johnathan McDowell, Paul May, Juan Duran, Darwin Fajardo, and David Frost as Apprentice Call Firefighters for the Stow Fire Department, for terms expiring June 30, 2023.

Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Randall Library Exterior Design Committee

Melissa Rollins was present via Zoom, and said she is excited to be a part of the project.

Board member Sturgis moved to appoint Melissa Rollins to the Randall Library Exterior Design Committee to serve until the exterior design of the building has been approved by the Randall Library Building Committee 2.0. Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Holly Craft Fair Event Permit

Rita DiStefano-French was present via Zoom. The Holly Craft Fair is the Friends (Stow Friends of the Council on Aging) annual event which is named after Betty Holly, who was a very active member.

Board member Sturgis moved to grant a permit to the Stow Friends of the Council on Aging (SFCOA) for a Holly Craft Fair on Saturday, November 5, 2022 from 9 AM until 4 PM at the Pompositticut Community Center, pending Town Administrator approval that all documents have been received.

Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Second Chance Annual Holiday Sale Event Permit

Rita DiStefano-French was present via Zoom. The Second Chance Holiday Sale gets great support from the community with their donations for this event.

Board member Sturgis moved to grant a permit to the Stow Friends of the Council on Aging (SFCOA) for the Second Chance Annual Holiday Sale on Saturday, December 3, 2022 from 9 AM until 4 PM at the Pompositticut Community Center, pending Town Administrator approval that all documents have been received. Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The Stow Gobbler 5K Event Permit

Brooke Ball was present via Zoom. This is a significant fundraiser for the Stow Community Chest. It was virtual for the past two years, and there are 200 people registered for this year's in-person event. For anyone with questions, or who wants to volunteer, please email gobbler@stowcommunitychest.org.

Board member Sturgis moved to approve the use of Town public ways for the Annual Stow Gobbler 5K Road Race sponsored by the Stow Community Chest on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 24, 2022, pending Town Administrator approval that all necessary documents have been received.

Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Randall Library Friends Association Event Permit

Lisa Lavina was present in the Warren Room. The Friends hope to alleviate the “Dunkin’ Desert” for three hours on November 12. Dunkin’ will provide coffee, hot chocolate, and donuts for free. The Friends will talk about the library renovation project, and people can go in and see the library’s current situation. The goal of the event is to share information, but donations will be accepted.

Board member Sturgis moved to approve the use of Town land for the Friends of Randall Library fundraiser with the Dunkin’ truck, on Saturday, November 12, 2022, from 10 AM until 1 PM, pending Town Administrator approval that all documents have been received.

Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Nashoba Regional High School Building Committee Status Report

Nashoba Regional High School Building Committee members present in the Warren Room: Joseph Gleason, Building Committee Chair and NRSD School Committee representative from Lancaster, Leah Vivirito, Building Committee Vice-Chair and NRSD School Committee Chair from Stow, and Kirk Downing, NRSD Superintendent.

The MSBA (MA School Building Authority) has a module framework for school projects. They are at the end of Module 3, which is submission of a preferred schematic report. This is also the point at which the committee will be coming to the Towns, mid to late next year, seeking funding for the project.

Mr. Gleason said the committee voted for a new build on the western portion of the property which will preserve the current athletic field. Mr. Downing said the design is based on “learning communities” which came out of a process that began with visioning sessions with 14 high school students, school district employees, and 12 members of the community (parents and non-parents). Learning communities are interdisciplinary pods that can also include specialized services if required and an administrator and guidance counselor, as opposed to the current system of each area of study having its own department area.

Mr. Downing spoke about the options that had been proposed, and the differences in the reimbursement structure. The reimbursement process with MSBA is very complex. A reimbursement rate of 49% does not mean that 49% of the project will be reimbursed, it means 49% of the *reimbursable costs* of the project. There are many costs that are not reimbursable. Ms. Vivirito said that the design to bring the building to code and make it environmentally safe is \$130 million, and none of that is reimbursable. The layout would remain inefficient and the building would look the same. Mr. Gleason said there is an immense amount of information on the district’s website.

Charter Changes Proposed by the Select Board

At the previous meeting, Chair Birch-McMichael asked Board members to send their proposed Charter changes to the Town Administrator. The Board reviewed and discussed these proposed changes, which will be voted on at the November 15 meeting and submitted to the Charter Review Committee (CRC) as recommendations from the Select Board. Board members can also submit changes as a citizen. Ms. Demboski said submissions to the CRC must be done on their form which requires the Charter section numbers so they can sort by that data.

Discussion ensued about Section 7-7 (c), the membership and appointing authority of the Master Plan Committee, and changing the name of 'master plan' to 'comprehensive plan' throughout the Charter. They also discussed the inconsistency of appointing authorities, with the Chair pointing out that some of it could be based on MGL. The Board questioned the need to appoint certain staff positions in Town and the hiring authority of the Town Administrator, the membership of the Board of Assessors, and Article 3-1 (d). The Board also discussed articles 7-8 and article 7-9, in particular, the referencing of "the town bulletin board". They discussed changing "Board of Selectmen" to "Select Board" throughout the Charter. Ms. Dembkoski will consolidate the information regarding the Select Board recommendations for the next meeting.

License Fees for 2023 – Liquor, Common Victualer, Class II

During the pandemic the fees for on-premises alcohol licenses were reduced by 50%. Ms. Dembkoski recommended that these fees be returned to pre-pandemic levels, and all other fees remain the same as last year.

Board member Sturgis moved that liquor license fees for 2023 be established at:

Restaurants – All Alcohol - \$2,200

Restaurants – Wine & Malt - \$880

Package Stores – All Alcohol - \$2,000

Package Stores – Wine & Malt - \$880

Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Board member Sturgis moved that Common Victualer license fees for 2023 remain the same rate as charged in 2022 (\$25). Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Board member Sturgis moved that Class II/used auto sales license fees for 2023 remain the same rate as charged in 2022 (\$100). Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Meeting Minutes

Board member Sturgis moved to accept the meeting minutes of the October 11, 2022 meeting as presented. Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Correspondence

The Chair said the Board will have another meeting with the Stow representatives of the Nashoba School Committee due to another vacancy. There has been one application to date.

The Board briefly discussed attendance at the Randall Library Trustees' Trivia Night.

Adjournment

At 9:14 p.m. Board member Sturgis moved to adjourn. Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Sampson, Executive Assistant

Documents used at this meeting:

Documents can be found in the Select Board's Office in the meeting folder.