

Select Board Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, November 22, 2022  
Stow Town Building & Zoom

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

Chair Birch-McMichael called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and noted that the meeting is being recorded.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Board Member Comments**

Chair Birch-McMichael spoke of the passing of former school committee member Steve Rubenstein.

Mr. Constantzos asked if there was an update on the Girl Scouts Hometown Heroes project. Ms. Dembkoski said that Hudson Light & Power rejected their request. The Girl Scouts are going to decide if this is something they want to pursue or if they want to look at other opportunities. Mr. Constantzos offered to help in any way and join in a conversation with HL&P if needed.

**Town Administrator (TA) Report**

- Covid cases have remained the same at 13 positive cases.
- The Third annual wreath laying ceremony will take place Sunday, December 18 at 12 noon at Brookside Cemetery. Donations of plain wreaths are appreciated and can be left on the bench in the driveway of 453 Great Road, and residents are encouraged to join in the ceremony and help lay the wreaths.

**Appointment**

Ms. Liang was present in the Warren Room and said she would be honored to serve the community as a Call EMT. She has been doing this for the past 2-3 years and enjoys doing it and serving the Town.

*Board member Constantzos moved to appoint Olivia Liang as a Call EMT for the Stow Fire Department, for a term expiring June 30, 2023. Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

**Proclamation Request for Native American Heritage Month**

NASJA<sup>1</sup> members Anna-Celestrya Carr and Abby Morgan were present in the Warren Room. Ms. Carr said as an indigenous person living in this town and raising her children here she said it is important to acknowledge and honor all the people who came here before us and who are here now working together to see the community of Stow thrive. At the invitation of Chair Birch-McMichael, Ms. Carr read the proclamation (attached).

*Board member Constantzos moved to approve and sign the proclamation presented by the Nashoba Area Social Justice Alliance (NASJA), declaring November 2022 as Native American Heritage Month in the Town of Stow. Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

<sup>1</sup> NASJA = Nashoba Area Social Justice Alliance

## Correspondence

Ms. Sturgis asked that the issue of emails for Town boards be a future topic at a Select Board meeting.

Ms. Frecha mentioned the letter from the owner of 15 Crescent Street, which is the flower shop. Ms. Frecha asked if there might be funding available for creating parking across the street from the Library. This might be added as a future topic at a Select Board meeting.

## 7:15 p.m. Tax Classification Public Hearing

Chair Birch-McMichael read the public hearing notice:

*The Select Board will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, November 22, 2022 at 7:15 p.m. in the Town Building, 380 Great Road, Stow, MA on the issue of tax classification. The purpose of the hearing is to allow taxpayers the opportunity to present their views on whether or not Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Open Space, and Personal Property should be taxed with one rate for all property classes, or to use different tax rates for different property classes.*

*The hearing will include a presentation by the Board of Assessors outlining the options available under Chapter 40, Section 56 of the Massachusetts General Laws. At the conclusion of the public hearing the Select Board shall determine whether or not tax classification shall be applied for the Fiscal Year 2023 tax rate. Currently the Town taxes at a single tax rate for all property classes. All concerned taxpayers are encouraged to attend, either in person or via Zoom, to present their views orally or submit them in writing to the office.*

*Published in the Stow Independent, November 2, 2022 issue.*

*Board member Constantzos moved that the Select Board enter the public hearing.*

*Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed by a roll call vote.*

Principal Assessor Kristin Fox was present via Zoom, and Chair Birch-McMichael invited Ms. Fox to give her presentation. Ms. Fox reminded everyone that any and all tax rates discussed are subject to approval by the Department of Revenue. Selecting a minimum residential factor of less than 1 would shift the tax burden to the commercial classes of property, which includes farming and golf courses.

Chair Birch-McMichael asked for questions from the Select Board, and then from the public.

Len Golder, member of the Board of Assessors, added that in terms of the impact of what people pay in taxes, it is mostly from what the Town spends.

Ms. Hegemann appreciated Ms. Fox's explanation that commercial use includes agriculture as we need to do everything to ensure that our agricultural community stays healthy, and she supports the single tax rate. Ms. Frecha agreed and said she would like other businesses in town to thrive as well.

*Board member Constantzos moved, based on information from the Board of Assessors, that the Town of Stow adopt a minimum residential factor of 1, to keep a single tax rate for fiscal year 2023, taxing all property classes at one rate. Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously by roll call vote.*

*Board member Constantzos moved to close the public hearing. Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously by a roll call vote.*

### **2023 Common Victualer Renewals**

Mr. Constantzos asked about the CORI<sup>2</sup> check for the license holders, and asked that he be sent the reference to the MA General Law that states a CORI is required for all licenses.

*Board member Constantzos moved to renew the Town's Common Victualer Licenses for the following businesses for 2023, provided all taxes have been paid and all necessary documents received:*

*Stow Brook Gulf, DBA Mug & Muffin, 626 Great Road;*

*Delta Epsilon, Inc., DBA Stow House of Pizza, 156 Great Road;*

*Honey Pot Hill Orchard, 137 Sudbury Road;*

*29 Culinary LLC, DBA Nan's Market, 271 Great Road*

*Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

### **2023 Class II License Renewals**

*Board member Constantzos moved to renew the Town's Class II Licenses for the following businesses for 2023, provided all taxes have been paid and all necessary documents received:*

*Patterson Auto Body, Inc., 18 Great Road;*

*BGL Automotive Corp, DBA Hudson Road Auto, Inc., 383 Hudson Road*

*Dover Speed Shop LLC, 370 Hudson Road;*

*Car Lot Express, 92 Great Road, Units 1 & 3;*

*YOLO MOTO CO. 92 Great Road, Unit 2*

*Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

### **Adjournment**

*At 7:40 p.m. Board member Constantzos 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.*

<sup>2</sup>CORI = Criminal Offender Record Information