

Select Board Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, April 26, 2022 – 6 p.m.  
Stow Town Building & Zoom

Present in the Warren Room: Chair Ellen Sturgis, Cortni Frecha, James Salvie, and Town Administrator Denise Dembkoski

Present via Zoom: Megan Birch-McMichael

At 6 p.m. Chair Sturgis called the meeting to order.

Chair Sturgis said that the Select Board decided to waive its right to an executive session and will hold negotiations with Masters Academy, Inc. (MAI) in open session. Peter Masters was present via Zoom.

The Board reviewed the draft Development Agreement Proposal for the Masters Academy:

- 1) “By choosing the for profit alternative, MAI will insure the community that in addition to keeping the existing facility on the town’s tax role, and paying the present taxes as the MAI facility is being constructed, MAI will also make a commitment to pay real estate taxes on additional buildings planned for the campus. MAI’s preliminary estimate of the future improvements indicate that 35-40 million dollars of additional improvements will result in significant increased revenue to the Town.
- 2) MAI, will make a commitment that for so long as it owns and operates the facility, it will (i) remain a for profit entity; or (ii) in the unlikely event MAI decided to convert to a nonprofit entity then MAI would agree to execute a PILOT agreement with the town.
- 3) MAI is requesting to use and at its sole cost and expense maintain the Town’s existing fields and tennis courts abutting the MAI campus. In this situation, MAI would request the option of improving the fields with a synthetic turf surface and possibly installing a dome over the tennis courts. Also, MAI would expect to have a “preferred user” schedule with the Town’s recreation department wherein MAI could use the fields for purposes related to its programs when the fields are not otherwise scheduled for use by the Town’s recreation department.
- 4) MAI will agree to make the suggested improvements on Harvest Drive sidewalks, Old Bolton Road Sidewalks and install a flashing pedestrian signal at Harvest Drive. To the extent that the Town deems the funds MAI has determined are necessary to complete the improvements could be better used for another public works project, then MAI will provide the Town with those funds.
- 5) MAI is committed to providing a full day tuition scholarship on a revolving basis to a resident of Stow. (MAI and Town of Stow to collaborate on recipient).

- 6) MAI is committed to providing 5 Stow resident campers, one free week of summer day sports camps for Stow residents (Town of Stow to determine recipients).
- 7) MAI is committed to providing access to its campus for the residents of Stow to use same for passive recreation.
- 8) MAI will grant access, by way of a recorded easement to the Town for the purpose of providing an emergency access to the proposed residential development abutting MAI's campus. Included in the easement will be the right for the Town (or the developer) to install and maintain a so called "breakaway" gate thereby insuring that public safety vehicles have an alternate way of accessing the residential new housing development.
- 9) MAI is committed to hosting two fund raisers for the Town of Stow a year with access to our cafeteria and meeting rooms. MAI provide food service and staffing at MAI's expense."

Board members made several comments on the draft. Board member Salvie asked for clarification on item 2, that if MAI converts to a non-profit they will execute a PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) agreement with the Town. Regarding item 3, Board member Salvie asked that MAI add that they would not turf the field for a specific number of years, and not within the first year.

Ted Meekma, a consultant for the project, was present via Zoom and said that there are benefits to having turf fields; they are now safer and healthier and shouldn't be controversial.

The Town Administrator noted that those fields are under the care, control, and custody of the Recreation Committee and this Board could tentatively agree pending a final discussion with that committee. Board member Frecha clarified that the Town's Recreation Department's schedule would have priority over the Masters Academy for use of those fields. Chair Sturgis asked about item 7, which allows for passive recreation by residents, and if there will be time limitations. She commended them for the scholarship programs and for offering a location for fundraisers.

The Town Administrator recommends the agreement pending town counsel review. The Board felt they were ready to have town counsel review the draft and prepare it to be signed.

*Board Member Salvie moved that the Select Board agree to the tentative 9-point concept draft agreement presented by Masters Academy, after discussion and upon recommendation by the Town Administrator. Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously on a roll call vote: Salvie -aye, Frecha -aye, Birch-McMichael -aye, Sturgis -aye.*

*Board member Salvie moved to adjourn at 6:17 p.m. Board member Frecha seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

*Joyce Sampson*

Executive Assistant