

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

October 21, 2019

Meeting held at Town Hall, 139 Main Street, Rowley, MA
10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Cliff Pierce; Vice Chairman Joseph Perry; Clerk Robert Snow; David Petersen, Deana M.P. Ziev (Town Administrator Deborah Eagan, Assistant Town Administrator Natalie Lovett)

PUBLIC ATTENDEES: Bernie Cullen – 283 Wethersfield Street; Sharon Emery – 11 Warehouse Lane; David Sedgwick – RPD; Sheri David – RPD; Matthew Ziev – RPD; Stephen Levesque – RPD; Erin Niedbala; Kathleen Levesque; Lynn Merry – RPD; Nicole Thornton

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Pierce called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. He said the meeting is being video recorded and televised live by Rowley Community Media.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

10:00 a.m. Police Chief Scott Dumas to present Stephen Levesque for appointment as a full-time police officer

Police Chief Scott Dumas said that the position of full-time police officer opened up when one employee accepted a position in another municipality. Chief Dumas said they had 1 external, who later withdrew, and 3 internal candidates apply for the position of full-time police officer. He said that all of the internal candidates performed very well, but Levesque rose above the rest. Dumas said that Levesque has served as a reserve officer for the Rowley Police Department since 2017 and has also worked in the dispatch center. He said that Levesque has graduated from MLETA Intermittent Police Officer's Academy, has a Bachelor of Arts from Merrimack College, and has begun course work for a Master's degree. Chief Dumas said that he recommends the Board of Selectmen vote to appoint Stephen Levesque as a full-time police officer.

Bob Snow made a motion to appoint Stephen Levesque as a full-time police officer, Joe Perry second, all in favor – aye (4-0). Deana Ziev – ABSTAINED.

Town Clerk Susan Hazen then swore in Stephen Levesque. His girlfriend, Erin Niedbala, and mother, Kathleen Levesque, participated in the unpinning and pinning ceremony.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Review Road Opening Permit Applications from National Grid to open the following streets:
 - 904 Haverhill Street
 - 789 Haverhill Street

There were no comments.

2. Review Road Opening Permit Applications from F.M. Bridges to open the following streets:
 - 610 Wethersfield Street
 - 590 Wethersfield Street
 - 600 Wethersfield Street

There were no comments.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discuss snow plowing at the Pine Grove School and the purchase of a snow blower for the Pine Grove School

Joe Perry made a motion to table this item until the November 4 Board of Selectmen's meeting, Dave Petersen second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

7:10 to 7:15 p.m. PUBLIC COMMENT

Bernie Cullen said that when he attended the last School Committee meeting, it was clear that they were beginning the process of contract negotiations with the teachers union. Cullen said that Paul Lees is the Chair of the Negotiations sub-committee and Neil Harrington is the appointed liaison between the Towns and sub-committee. Cullen suggested that the Board of Selectmen schedule a meeting as soon as possible with Lees and Harrington in order to discuss the Town's general financial parameters for the negotiations and to create a mechanism for ongoing communication between Rowley and the sub-committee.

NEW BUSINESS

2. Discuss Town Hall flag pole replacement and location

Chairman Pierce read the following:

We have received the attached quote for \$2,650 to remove the existing 32 foot high flagpole in front of Town Hall, and replace it with a standard 30 foot high fiberglass flagpole. The new flagpole comes with a lifetime warranty.

The representative suggested moving the location of the pole since in its' current location, a flag would get caught in the trees nearby. Dave Petersen suggested moving it to the right of the monument on the right hand side lawn as you are facing Town Hall.

He said this location would allow the flag to also be viewed from the Star Garden in the Cemetery.

Dave Petersen said that part of his suggestion of moving the flag pole includes trimming the trees in that area. He said the Cemetery Commission is looking to improve the Star Garden by adding six smaller flagpoles with a POW flag and a flag for each of the five military branches. He said if the American Flag is moved to the right hand side of Town Hall it will also be able to be viewed from the Star Garden. Petersen added that he is planning to speak with Town Administrator Debbie Eagan to see if the Cemetery Commission can collect donations for the Star Garden flagpoles and flags.

Deana Ziev made a motion to approve the location and purchase of the new flagpole for Town Hall, Bob Snow second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

3. Discuss Retiree health insurance renewal

Chairman Pierce read the following letter from Town Administrator Debbie Eagan:

I have received the MIIA Retiree Health Insurance Renewal for CY 2020. The monthly premium is decreasing by 1.03 percent. I will need you to vote to authorize me to renew the policy at the October 21 meeting.

Joe Perry made a motion to authorize Debbie Eagan to renew the MIIA Retiree Health Insurance Renewal policy, Deana Ziev second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

4. Sign State Massachusetts Cultural Council Grant form

Chairman Pierce read the following:

The Town has been awarded a \$5,200 grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. The Board of Selectmen needs to vote to authorize Chairman Pierce to sign the State grant contract form.

Bob Snow made a motion to authorize Chairman Pierce to sign the State grant contract form, Joe Perry second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

5. Approve new voting tabulator machine

Chairman Pierce read the following:

The Town Clerk is purchasing a new voting tabulation machine for elections. Susan Hazen received a proposal from LHS Associates for an ICP Tabulator Bundle Image Casting System. (See attached.) The cost is \$9,900 and is covered under a capital spending appropriation approved at the May 6, 2019 Special Town Meeting.

The Town currently uses a system called “Accu-vote Optical Scanning.” This purchase will replace Accu-vote Optical Scanning” system with a new “ImageCast Precinct” system.

State Law (G.L. c. 54 §34) requires the Board of Selectmen to vote to approve the purchase and the change in the voting tabulation equipment not less than 120 days before the March 3, 2020 Primary Election. The Board needs to vote and sign the attached letter addressed to Secretary of State William Galvin.

Town Clerk Susan Hazen spoke to the need for new voting tabulation equipment. She said that the current machines are 20 years old and she was told that they can no longer be repaired. She said that while they have been working fine, she cannot risk a malfunction during an election. Hazen said the new machines are a newer technology and they also incorporate security features – the new machines are built without modems, so that they cannot be hacked and the count manipulated. She added that they actually are purchasing two machines so that there is a back-up.

Bernie Cullen asked if the existing machines are being retained. Hazen responded that they are not. She said that the voter cards are created specifically for the machine-type being used and are not interchangeable. She added that the current machines are being bought back for \$1,500. Cullen asked if there will be a trial run. Hazen responded that there is extensive training and representatives from LHS will be on-site for the first election when the machines are used.

Joe Perry made a motion to approve the purchase of the voting machines, Bob Snow second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

Town Administrator Debbie Eagan asked that Chairman Pierce read the letter to Secretary Galvin into the record and also that the Board vote to sign the letter.

Chairman Pierce read the following:

Dear Secretary Galvin:

As required by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 54 Section 34, the undersigned hereby votes to use the ImageCast Precinct Optical (ICP) Tabulator at the Presidential Primary Election on March 3, 2020, and thereafter, at all primaries, preliminary elections, and elections held in the Town of Rowley, until otherwise ordered by vote of the Rowley Board of Selectmen, said electronic voting system shall be used in those polling places designated by the Board of Selectmen.

Further, the Town will discontinue the use of the Accu-Vote Optical Scanner in any and all elections held in the Town of Rowley.

Voted and approved by the Rowley Board of Selectmen on October 21, 2019.

Joe Perry made a motion to approve and sign the letter to Secretary Galvin, Bob Snow second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

The Board then signed the letter.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Update on Pine Grove School Project

Joe Perry said that the PGS construction is completed; however, there are still outstanding landscaping issues and a punch list to complete. He said he hoped last week's School Building Committee meeting would be the last, but they have scheduled one more for November. He said that construction meetings will continue on Friday afternoons until all the outstanding issues are resolved.

Petersen asked about the status of the basketball court embankment. Perry responded that they have said they will ensure that the embankment on the street-side of the court will not create any runoff onto the court. Petersen said that the Parks and Recreation Committee may be requesting funding to resurface the court at the next Town Meeting. Petersen asked about the status of the softball field. Perry responded that he is meeting with Larry Berger that afternoon and will ask him about the softball field then.

MINUTES

- October 7, 2019

Dave Petersen made a motion to approve the minutes of October 7, 2019, Bob Snow second, all in favor – aye (5-0).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Rowley Board of Health reminds residents that mosquitos carrying diseases have been identified in the region and that individuals should avoid outdoor activities from dusk to dawn, wear long sleeve and long pants and socks when outdoors, and to apply mosquito repellent when outdoors during peak hours
- Vacancies:
 - 1) Two vacancies on the Conservation Commission;
 - 2) One vacancy on the Zoning Board of Appeals Associate seat; and
 - 3) Several vacancies on the Rowley Cultural CouncilInterested residents should send a letter of interest to the Board of Selectmen or call the Selectmen's Office at 948-2372.

ADJOURN

Chairman Pierce called for a motion to adjourn. Bob Snow so moved, Deana Ziev second, all in favor - aye (5-0).

Meeting adjourned at 10:24 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Natalie Lovett
Assistant Town Administrator

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Letter from Police Chief Scott Dumas to the Board of Selectmen re: recommendation to appoint Stephen Levesque as full-time police officer
3. Meeting memo regarding General Business #1: Review Road Opening Permit Applications from National Grid to open the following streets: 904 Haverhill Street, 789 Haverhill Street
4. Meeting memo regarding General Business #2: Review Road Opening Permit Applications from F.M. Bridges to open the following streets: 610 Wethersfield Street, 590 Wethersfield Street, 600 Wethersfield Street
2. Meeting memo regarding New Business #1: Discuss snow plowing at the Pine Grove School and the purchase of a snow blower for the Pine Grove School
3. Memorandum from Amy Lydon to Board of Selectmen re: Flagpole in front of Town Hall
4. Quote from All-American Flagpoles dated October 10, 2019 w/ attached specifications and warrantee
5. Letter from Debbie Eagan to Board of Selectmen re: Retiree Health Insurance Renewal dated October 17, 2019 w/ attached retiree health insurance rates
6. Meeting memo regarding New Business #4: Sign State Massachusetts Cultural Council Grant form
7. Letter from Mass Cultural Council to Cliff Pierce dated October 9, 2019
8. Meeting memo regarding New Business #5: Approve new voting tabulator machine
9. Memo from Debbie Eagan to Board of Selectmen re: New voting tabulation equipment dated October 17, 2019
10. Letter from LHS to Susan Hazen dated October 16, 2019 w/attached quote and specification
11. Meeting memo regarding Old Business #5: Update on Pine Grove School Project
12. Draft minutes of October 7, 2019