

# **MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD MEETING**

## **SEPTEMBER 1, 2021**

**PRESENT:** Jessica Rushing (Chairwoman), John G. Brown, Jr. (Vice-Chairman), Rebecca Coletta (Clerk), Daniel W. Trabucco (Selectman), Tracy Marino (Selectwoman), William Chenard (Town Manager), Sandra Wright (Ply. Cty. Comm.), Jared Valanzola (Ply. Cty. Comm.), Adam Fontaine (National Grid), Linda Peterson (Advisory Committee), Margaret Struzik, Kathleen McCarthy (Treasurer-Collector), Ken McCormick (Fire Chief), Sharon McNamara, Robert Inglis, John McGrath, David Ponte, Dale Harrison, Linda Peterson, Steve Ciciotti, Don Bryant, Dana Bean, Mark Ames, Karen Ames, Sabrina Chilcott (Assistant Town Manager), and others.

At 7:00 pm Ms. Rushing opened the meeting and advised that this meeting is being made available to the public through an audio recording which will be used to ensure an accurate record of proceedings produced in the minutes of the meeting. All comments made in open session will be recorded. Ms. Rushing requested a moment of silence for the thirteen service members who died in Afghanistan this week.

**POLE HEARING – NATIONAL GRID/MASS ELECTRIC/VERIZON NEW ENGLAND PLAN  
#16227752**

Ms. Rushing opened the pole hearing on the joint petition of National Grid and Verizon. This joint pole hearing includes joint pole relocations, Center St & Mattakesett St, relocating 71 poles) and National Grid has filed three related petitions (pole relocation Center St & Cranberry Rd relocating Pole 73-30 Center St, manhole and duct locations Center St & Fox Path installing one new hand hole on Fox Path ROW, and order for manhole and duct locations Center St & Lady Slipper Circle installing one new hand hole on Lady Slipper Circle ROW). These petitions are all aspects of Plan# 16227752 dated June 29, 2021. All abutters have been notified by the town. NGRID Engineer Adam Fontaine from National Grid was present before the board to answer any questions. The petitions, order, request forms and petition sketches were presented, and details were discussed. Two abutters were present, and Mr. Fontaine offered to speak with them individually after the hearing on their pole relocations. Mr. Trabucco moved to close the pole hearing. Mr. Trabucco moved to grant approval to National Grid and Verizon on their petition requesting permission for joint pole relocations, Center St & Mattakesett St, relocating 71 poles; and further to grant approval to National Grid for pole relocation Center St & Cranberry Rd relocating Pole 73-30 Center St, manhole and duct locations Center St & Fox Path installing one new hand hole on Fox Path ROW, and order for manhole and duct locations Center St & Lady Slipper Circle installing one new hand hole on Lady Slipper Circle ROW in accordance with Plan #16227752. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

## **PLYMOUTH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS: CARES UPDATE, PRESENTATION OF ARPA**

Plymouth County Commissioner Sandra Wright was present to summarize Pembroke's CARES reimbursement status; to date 74% of funds requested for reimbursement have been received by the town. Pembroke was capped at \$2.8million and have been awarded \$2.3million to date. The remaining balance of \$7million will most likely be award based on population. Plymouth County Commissioner Jared Valanzola was present as Pembroke's liaison for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) stating that the County will be administering \$101million for the cities and towns in Plymouth County, and more information and details will be available at the end of September. Photographs were taken. Ms. Margaret Struzik was present on behalf of Firehouse Food Pantry to present a certificate acknowledging and thanking the Commissioners for including the food pantry in the CARES program.

**MODERATOR/ADVISORY COMMITTEE: JOINT APPOINTMENT OF ELIZABETH BENOTTI**

Advisory Committee Chairwoman Linda Peterson was present before the Board stating that the Committee voted unanimously to support Ms. Benotti's appointment, and this appointment is joint between the Select Board and the Advisory Committee; discussion ensued on the mechanics of appointing versus reappointing members in accordance with the bylaw inconsistencies. Mr. Trabucco moved to appoint Elizabeth Benotti of 388 School Street to the Advisory Committee for a three-year term, term to expire June 30, 2024. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

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## **ACCEPT RESIGNATION OF DAVID BOYLE, FAITH BYRNE - TOWN LANDING COMMITTEE**

Ms. Marino moved to accept the resignation of David Boyle and Faith Byrne from the Town Landing Committee with regret; Ms. Coletta seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

## **REVIEW APPLICATIONS, POSSIBLE INTERVIEWS AND VOTE: PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING COMMITTEE**

Ms. Rushing stated that the Board had slated three resident representatives for this Committee, and they have five highly qualified candidates. Discussion ensued on increasing the size of the Committee versus changing the composition.

Sharon McNamara was present before the Board on her application; Ms. McNamara stated that she was on the original Committee and is familiar with the working conditions at both stations. Ms. McNamara's professional background and the value her role would add was discussed.

Robert C. Inglis was present before the Board; he has recently moved to town, is a full-time dispatcher in Duxbury and a part-time firefighter in Halifax, is familiar with the concerns with the current buildings and he looks forward to volunteering in town.

Nicholas Konarski was unable to attend this meeting. Ms. Coletta highlighted his relevant qualifications.

John F. McGrath was present before the Board on his application; as a mechanical services contractor, he has detailed knowledge of the planning and construction of these types of facilities.

David M. Ponte was present before the Board with thirty-five years in the construction industry as a designer, an engineer and as a contractor. He is a licensed professional engineer in Massachusetts and five other states, holds a Massachusetts construction supervisor's license, a certified construction managers license and is a certified forensic claims consultant. Ms. Coletta moved to reconstitute the Public Safety Building Committee to consist of the Police Chief or their designee, Fire Chief or their designee, the Town Manager, one member of the Select Board, five resident representatives, one Planning Board representative and one Advisory Committee member. Ms. Marino seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor. Ms. Coletta moved to appoint Sharon McNamara, Robert Inglis, Nicholas Konarski, John McGrath and David Ponte to the Public Safety Building Committee. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

## **REVIEW APPLICATIONS, POSSIBLE INTERVIEWS AND VOTE: DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE**

Elin Flashman was present before the Board on his application; Ms. Rushing asked if Mr. Flashman supports the creation of this Committee and its mission statement; he answered in the affirmative. Mr. Flashman summarized his background and experiences and stated that he looked forward to contributing to the committee.

Dale Harrison was present before the Board on her application; she stated that she has over thirty years of experience in her company working with diverse groups and working to bring them together; her current focus is working to improve access and assistance for people with physical and mental disabilities. Ms. Coletta asked why Ms. Harrison wants to work to support the Committee when she signed a citizens petition article opposing the creation and continuation of the Committee. Ms. Harrison initially opposed the Committee created by the Board and signed the petition to refer the creation to town meeting to decide; she stated that, now that it has been created, she would like to participate. Ms. Rushing asked if she supports the mission statement and Ms. Harrison answered in the affirmative.

Steven Ciciotti was present before the Board on his application; Ms. Rushing asked if he supported the creation of the Committee and he responded in the negative. Mr. Ciciotti stated that he does not think it is ideal, but since the Committee has been created, he feels it is important for the Committee to have balance. He appreciates and agrees with the goals of the personal and social side as presented, but he also appreciates the smaller concerns that have been raised as well. Ms. Rushing asked if he supports the mission statement and read it into the record at Mr. Ciciotti's request. Mr. Ciciotti stated that he supports it fully, and he also supports the scope remaining as stated. Ms. Coletta asked how Mr. Ciciotti would be motivated to support the concerns of the Committee when he signed a petition article asking town meeting to disband it. Mr. Ciciotti stated that concerns surrounding the subjective goals and statements were concerning and he wants to be a part of the Committee to lend balance. Discussion ensued on objective versus subjective goals. Ms. Rushing read an email from Kristin and David Norman into the record: "Dear Madam Chair and

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Members of the Select Board (“SB”): As you begin to make appointments to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (“DEIC”), please consider the following. The DEIC statement indicates that the SB will seek volunteers from “marginalized communities and various backgrounds to represent an accurate cross section of the Pembroke community.” We firmly believe that the DEIC should be comprised of a diversity of backgrounds and opinions, but we urge the SB to only appoint candidates that meet at least this one basic qualification; that they are not opposed to the very existence of the DEIC. As a most fundamental, minimal qualification, DEIC appointees should not be opposed to the existence of the DEIC. As far as we know, there is no committee in Pembroke that has been empaneled with committee members who do not believe in the existence or general core mission of the committee. The Affordable Housing Committee does not have members that show up to the meeting and say 1: “this committee should be disbanded”; and 2) “Even if the committee is not disbanded, Pembroke does not need affordable housing.” You can plug in the same analogy for all the Committees and Commissions in town. Ideally, each committee should have a diversity of ideas on how to implement the core mission and goals, but the members are generally of one mind that the core mission and goals are worthy; and they don’t seek to dissolve the committee. Would anyone walk into a job interview and say, “I don’t think this company/agency should exist, but I would like to work here”? Messrs. Boulter and Fellini came before the SB earlier this month, vying for the Herring Fisheries Commission Superintendent position. The two applicants expressed broad and different ideas about how best to manage and advance the goals of the Herring Fisheries Commission, but neither candidate expressed that the Herring Fisheries Commission should cease to exist. As always, we sincerely thank you all for your time and commitment to the Town and for your consideration of this matter.” Mr. Trabucco stated that he disagrees with the Norman’s email as people can oppose the creation of something, but now be a part of it and the process now that it exists. Mr. Trabucco stated that he feels that inclusion of differing ideas is as important as inclusion of differing types, and that members of the Board gave the applicants this evening a political litmus test. Ms. Rushing stated that the line of questioning was appropriate. Ms. Coletta moved to table these votes to the meeting until the September 15<sup>th</sup> meeting and asked that the people who could not appear tonight, Kimberly Nashawaty and John Connaughton, be asked to come in for possible interviews on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Trabucco seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

## **DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBERS' INDIVIDUAL GOALS FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR**

Ms. Rushing requested a motion to table; Mr. Trabucco moved to table this discussion; Mr. Brown seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

## **VOTE TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 4 AND AUGUST 18, 2021**

Ms. Coletta moved to accept the minutes of August 4<sup>th</sup> and August 18, 2021; Ms. Marino seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

## **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

## COVID

Mr. Chenard updated the Board on vaccinations in Pembroke, as of September 1, 2021 that rate was 61%. Adolescent vaccination rates have steadily increased with seniors being a highly vaccinated population. Ms. Coletta asked what the case count was for August; Mr. Chenard stated that Pembroke was at 91 cases for the month of August. Ms. Coletta stated that with the case count at 91 for the month of August, why did the Assistant Town Manager speak at the Board of Health meeting stating that it would be difficult to implement a mask mandate in the town. Mr. Chenard stated that the comment was about notification to businesses, not the mask mandate itself. Discussion ensued about what the Town Manager's office is doing to support the idea of an indoor mask mandate. Ms. Chilcott clarified her comments at the Board of Health meeting stating that she asked for discussion to be had among the Board of Health members regarding notifying the business owners if an indoor mask mandate was voted and approved. Mr. Chenard noted that the meeting was available as it was recorded, for clarification. There was further discussion by Ms. Coletta, Mr. Trabucco and Ms. Rushing regarding an indoor mask mandate for public buildings to limit the spread of Covid-19.

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## Recycle Center Update

Mr. Chenard noted that the Recycling Center will be closing at noon on September 18, 2021 in order to prepare for the fireworks for the Pembroke Celebrates event being held at Pembroke High School.

## Construction Updates

Route 36 – Center Street: Mr. Chenard advised that the water main replacement phase is on track overall, and last week we completed the transfer of services from the 16" main from Center Street to Furnace Colony. The two asbestos concrete lines were abandoned, and the new lines are connected. It is anticipated that progress will be to Mill Street by the end of the week.

Route 53

MassDOT will begin paving the entire stretch of Route 53 beginning September 7 and continuing until September 24<sup>th</sup> working overnight hours of 8pm to 5am.

## Town Landing Project

Mr. Chenard advised that the building exterior is complete, but the poured-in-place rubber component is still delayed.

## Community Center Building Project

Mr. Chenard stated that there were seven responses to the Owners Project Manager RFQ, many of them the best companies in the state or region. The selection was narrowed down to four, and the town's architect on the project BH&A weighed in to narrow the final selection to two firms. Once the final selection is made, Mr. Chenard will schedule their presentation before the Board.

The Chiefs' pinning ceremonies will be held September 13, 2021.

At 9:00 pm, Ms. Rushing read the upcoming issues. Ms. Marino moved to adjourn; Mr. Brown seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

## MATERIALS & EXHIBITS

NRG/Verizon Joint petitions/orders/request forms/petition sketches Plan# 16227752 (TM Office)

Application for Appointment to Advisory Committee, E. Benotti (TM Office)

Emails, D. Boyle and F. Byrne RE: Resignation from Town Landing (TM Office)

## Public Safety Building Committee Applications: McNamara, Inglis, Konarski, McGrath, Ponte (TM Office)

DEI Applications: Nashawaty, Connaughton, Flashman, Harrison, Ciciotti (TM Office)

Draft Minutes of August 4, 2021, and August 8, 2021 (TM Office)