

**MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD MEETING
NOVEMBER 3, 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), David McPhillips (Veterans Agent), Linda Osborne, Catherine Salmon (Chief Assessor), Elizabeth Bates (Assessor), Mary Quill (Assessor), Elaine Boidi (Assessor), Don Bryant, Carol Dodge, Arthur Egerton, Rob Adams, 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.

VETERANS AGENT DAVID MCPHILLIPS: READING OF VETERANS DAY PROCLAMATION

Town Memorial Committee Chair Linda Osborne member and Veterans Agent David McPhillips advised that there will be an airing of a video presentation that is expanding to be a remote Veterans Day program for viewing on November 11th. Mr. McPhillips' read the Governor's proclamation honoring November 11th as Veterans Day.

REQUEST FROM HERRING SUPERINTENDENT: APPOINT APPLICANT CHRISTOS KAPOUTAS TO ALTERNATE VACANCY

Ms. Marino moved to appoint Christos Kapoutas to the Herring Fisheries Commission for a term to expire 2023. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF RONALD BOIDI FROM CONSERVATION COMMISSION AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Ms. Marino moved to accept the resignation of Ronald Boidi from the Conservation Commission and the Open Space Committee with regret; Mr. Brown seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE TO APPOINT A SELECT BOARD MEMBER TO THE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Brown expressed interest in serving as the Select Board representative. Ms. Marino moved to appoint John Brown as the Select Board's representative to the Public Safety Committee; Ms. Coletta seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

VOTE TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 6, 2021 AND OCTOBER 20, 2021

Ms. Marino moved to accept the minutes of October 6th and October 20th and Mr. Brown seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

DISCUSSION, REVIEW AND POSSIBLE VOTE REGARDING PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY

The Board's current Public Comment Policy was reviewed in depth and discussion ensued (https://www.pembroke-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf3666/f/uploads/public_comment_policy_2020.pdf). Ms. Marino stated that this policy was discussed in depth when developed and then discussed in several meetings before the vote to adopt the policy was taken. Further discussion ensued on balancing the Open Meeting Law violation concerns with the spontaneous public comment or forum. Ms. Rushing read the policy and each section was reviewed and determined to be comprehensive. Mr. Trabucco concurred, stating that the policy affords a mechanism for the public to come in and speak, and does not stifle speech; comment would be in a more structured format, departing from the past unstructured casualness. Ms. Rushing stated that the Board will adhere to the policy going forward; Ms. Coletta stated that agendas will be amended if requests for public comment are received on Monday or Tuesday. Consensus was achieved on keeping the policy as it is with no changes.

LIAISON UPDATES

Ms. Marino stated School Committee met and DESE has extended the mask mandate to January.

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TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Storm Update

Mr. Chenard advised that this was one of the worst storms for power outage and not isolated to Pembroke. As of Monday, ten Plymouth County towns and twelve Barnstable County towns were not fully restored; Pembroke is fully restored. National Grid reported over 642,000 customers lost power and operated over 700 electrical crews and over 150 tree crews. Mr. Chenard stated that Pembroke's tree loss was enormous and over sixty roadways were blocked; he thanked public safety and DPW for their hard work and success and thanked the library and senior center staff for maximizing their generator output providing warming and power stations for residents throughout the event. Mr. Chenard advised that the Monroe Street Pit will be open Saturday from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm.

7:30 TAX CLASSIFICATION HEARING: BOARD OF ASSESSORS – FY22

Ms. Rushing opened the Public Hearing at 7:30 pm. Chief Assessor Cathy Salmon appeared before the Board to request they vote on whether to keep a uniform tax rate or split the rate between residential property and commercial/industrial/personal property. Ms. Salmon also requested the Board vote on a small commercial property exemption. Ms. Salmon provided the current finalized value of the Town at \$3,243,782,429. The estimated levy based on the votes from Town Meeting will be \$45,888,622 resulting in a uniform tax rate of \$14.15 per thousand dollars of assessed value. This is an average of \$6,393 per residential taxpayer on an average single-family assessment of \$451,778 and \$15,399 per commercial taxpayer on an average assessment of \$1,088,136. Pembroke has 87.67% in the residential class, 7.63% in commercial class, 2.87% in industrial class and 1.44% in personal property class. Ms. Salmon stated that, in order for the residential taxpayers to save \$89.91 per year, the shifting burden to commercial taxpayers would result in an increase of \$1,539.90. The Board of Assessors recommends staying with the single rate. Ms. Salmon introduced the small commercial exemption; only twelve towns in the state have adopted it. This shifts the tax burden from small commercial to large commercial. To qualify the business must have less than ten employees in a property worth less than \$1million; however, the owner of the property then gets the exemption, not the qualifying business owner. The Board of Assessors does not recommend this exemption. Discussion ensued. Ms. Coletta moved to accept the recommendation of the Board of Assessors for a uniform tax rate for the Town of Pembroke for FY22 for the Town of Pembroke; Ms. Marino seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor. Ms. Coletta moved that the Board does not vote to adopt the small commercial exemption; Ms. Marino seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor. Mr. Trabucco moved to continue the public hearing until further information is received from the Assessors. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Storm Update continued

Mr. Chenard stated that the primary area for concern for the town in power outage discussions is the water infrastructure, wells, pumps, filtration systems. There are generators on all of our wells but we need to increase to 100% backup for the SCADA system, the supervisory control and data acquisition control system. Discussion ensued on balancing concerns for tree preservation versus trees down impairing the power transmission.

COVID Update

Mr. Chenard stated that 288 individuals have become fully vaccinated since the last meeting, or 12,159 residents over the age of twelve. The vaccination rate for residents over 16 years of age is over 70% with ages 12-15 at 57%. Cases continue to trend down.

Construction Updates:

Center Street is still on track to complete domestic water service transfers by Thanksgiving. Town Landing poured in place rubber is complete.

Mr. Brown voiced concerns about the settling of the pavement over the water service gate valves on Center Street and how those concave areas will be affected by winter storm plowing. Mr. Chenard advised that they will receive another cover of pavement prior to winter. Ms. Carol Dodge voiced gratitude over the town staff's handling of the storm during its height, the storm damage and the extreme effect of tree loss.

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At 8:05 pm, Ms. Rushing read the upcoming issues from the agenda. Ms. Coletta moved to adjourn; Ms. Marino seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

MATERIALS & EXHIBITS

Vacancy Application, Email W. Boulter RE: Herring Fisheries Vacancy C. Kapoutas (TM Office)

Email, M. Joyce RE: Resignation of R. Boidi (ConCom/TM Office)

Draft Minutes October 6, 2021 and October 20, 2021 (TM Office)

Board's Public Comment Policy (https://www.pembroke-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf3666f/uploads/public_comment_policy_2020.pdf)