

**Minutes of Regular Meeting  
Select Board  
Tuesday, February 28, 2023  
Remote Online Meeting (Zoom 828 1241 4075)  
Called to Order at 5:30 p.m.**

Remotely participating were Board members, Chair Christopher Houston, Harvey Boshart and Laurie Bent. Also present were Town Manager Leon A. Gaumont, Jr., Assistant Town Manager/Human Resources Director Lisa Yanakakis, Assistant to Town Manager, Michelle LeBlanc, Fire Chief Justin Woodside, Police Chief Dennis Linehan, and other residents & employees of the Town of Weston.

Mr. Houston called the remote meeting to order and read the following:

*Chapter 107 of the Acts of 2022, "An Act Relative to Extending Certain State of Emergency Accommodations", authorizes municipal boards to hold fully remote or hybrid meetings through March of 2023. The law does not mandate or prohibit in-person meetings; instead, it allows the Town flexibility in that regard. As required, if a meeting is held fully remotely or as a hybrid meeting, adequate alternative access is provided through a video conferencing link included on the meeting agenda.*

The three members of the Select Board were introduced as present: Chair Christopher Houston, Harvey Boshart and Laurie Bent.

#### **Executive Session**

**Motion: Mr. Boshart moved to go into Executive Session pursuant to: G.L. c. 30A(3): to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining negotiations with School Unions regarding health insurance and furthermore to discuss strategy with respect to litigation (Federal Multidistrict Litigation vs. CVS, Walgreens, Walmart, Teva, and Allergan), and the chair so declares an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public body. Seconded by Ms. Bent. The Chair so declared an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public body.**

**Roll call vote: Mr. Boshart, Ms. Bent and Mr. Houston voted in the affirmative. Approved unanimously.**

The Select Board reconvened in Open Session at 6:45 p.m.

#### **Resident Comment**

Ms. Chaplin asked about the status of the Town's assertion of the 1.5% 40B exemption. Mr. Gaumont stated that the Town made that case with the 518 submission and DHCD rejected the claim. However, we would make that declaration again if the opportunity presented itself.

Mr. Houston commented on the passing of Hugh Jones, who was a passionate advocate for affordable housing in Weston, and offered his condolences. Mr. Houston went on to say that it is a shame that news of things such as this is challenging given the lack of a local paper.

#### **Presentation of Best Website Award for Weston's website**

Mr. Gaumont took great pleasure in announcing that Weston recently received the Best Website Award by the MMA at their annual meeting in January. He specifically thanked former Assistant to

the Town Manager Anthony Senesi and current Assistant to the Town Manager Michelle LeBlanc for their work on the site. He offered extra thanks to former Assistant to the Town Manager Kara Fleming who was principally responsible for the appearance of the current website.

### **Weston Media Center Budget Presentation**

Ms. Bent acknowledged for the record that Mr. Angiolillo is her husband and stated that she could be dispassionate regarding Weston Media Center.

Nathan Suher from Weston Media Center was introduced along with Joel Angiolillo, WMC Treasurer and Nicole Mordecai, the WMC new Board Chair. Their main goal for 2022 is a rebranding of Weston Media, including a new website and redesigned logo. They expressed gratitude for all the support and acknowledgement of members of the community, other organizations, public schools, members of this board as well as town employees. He also thanked the staff of WMC for their hard work over the years. Mr. Suher showed a short video of WMC's work over the past year and announced that they have launched a new HD channel for all Verizon customers. They also brought live sports to our cable channel as well. The Board and staff of WMC acknowledge the news gap in Weston since the local paper has folded and stated that they wish to be part of the solution. Furthermore, they wish to get an exterior sign and to build a volunteer intern base as well as renting their studio space.

Ms. Mordecai announced that they have created two subcommittees (organization & fundraising) and is preparing for some needed studio upgrades that could actually affect how they cover meetings in town and the versatility and the flexibility and speed and convenience in the way they bring that content.

Mr. Angiolillo spoke about the current year's budget, which was expected to be \$15,000 in the hole. However WMC actually did better than expected. He credits the staff of WMC for being very careful with funds. This past year, they moved to a new accounting firm, a new bookkeeper and moved from Excel to QuickBooks. One of the items they are working on is trying to generate more revenues.

Mr. Houston asked about improving the cameras for WMC. Mr. Suher responded that they are exploring this and even looking at the mobile cameras as well. He mentioned that the studio cameras, TriCasters, are old and may need to be replaced. They are looking for a system upgrade for that. Mr. Angiolillo added that WMC has been talking with Wayland and Wellesley and the other cable local cable providers to explore the idea of remote filming. Mr. Suher mentioned that the equipment necessary to accomplish remote filming could ultimately be a big investment of funds so WMC will be exploring this further. Mr. Houston offered support for the concept and views the services WMC provides as important as a matter of good government.

All three Select Board members praised the work of WMC, and stated how critical its role is given the lack of independent news media in the Town. Mr. Boshart commented that he is impressed with the level of work from WMC during his tenure on the Board and commended them for their work. Mr. Gaumond also offered his thanks to the WMC team and reminded those at the meeting that there is an annual Town Meeting article at which the town votes to appropriate the grant funds that come in through the town via cable contracts to Weston Media, which enables WMC to operate.

### **Meet with Chiefs on communication ARPA request**

Mr. Gaumond introduced the Police & Fire Chiefs to seek support for an ARPA request for some communications equipment they had initially been thinking of putting forward an article at Annual

Town meeting. The ARPA funds are under the auspices of the select board. He has identified a critical need in communications that we had on our capital plan that we hope to address sooner if possible.

Chief Woodside reminded the Board that they started a radio project about five years ago with some money for a capital request for fiber optic upgrades and equipment upgrades. This effort has certainly helped. One of the projects they were attempting was the installation of a communications tower on Highland that ended up in litigation however it was just recently settled successfully. Unfortunately some cost estimates have increased since COVID. This request is to construct a single monopole tower at 150 Highland Street in accordance with the restriction that was recently filed in this settlement. He was working with the Police Chief as well to improve all public safety communications.

Chief Linehan thanked the Fire Chief for his explanation and expertise in this project. The Police Department is experiencing a number of different issues throughout the town, specifically Norumbega Road

where they have an increased number of calls as a result of the new recovery center. They struggle to properly communicate with the dispatch center in this location as well as at some of the schools which is a concern. The age of their radios and system is over 25 years old which includes the infrastructure that is in place as well as the equipment in the cruisers. They need to improve and upgrade their system. They plan to join in with the structure of the fire department for a quote to improve their system and to be able to communicate in various parts of the town. He acknowledged that boosters in the school have helped. Mr. Houston expressed concern about the current situation and was supportive of the improvements. Mr. Gaumond highlighted that the groundwork has been laid by the previous chiefs for this improvement and the current chiefs have brought the need forward as an ARPA request as this project is consistent with the goals and objectives of the ARPA funds that we were the recipient of.

Ms. Bent asked if the fire and police systems are at all integrated or if they completely separate. Chief Woodside responded that they are not integrated, partially due to the fact they are at different frequencies. Chief Linehan added that will not change through these improvements. Ms. Bent asked if separate towers would be necessary. Chief woodside responded no, just adding a small antenna. There was a discussion on the interdepartmental communication of the two departments. Chief Woodside clarified that sometimes the police are seeing degraded incoming and outgoing messages. Their audio can be garbled sometimes or may have no audio in or out because of topography and old equipment.

Mr. Gaumond said that communications is the lifeblood of both police and fire and EMTs and that there appears to be a path moving forward to correct this situation.

Motion by Ms. Bent to approve the ARPA request for public safety communications (\$525,000) as presented by the police and fire chiefs. Seconded by Mr. Boshart.

**Roll call vote:** Mr. Boshart, Ms. Bent and Mr. Houston voted in the affirmative. **Approved unanimously.**

### **Discussion on Water Tanks/Zoning change needed for Planning Board hearing**

Ms. Bent acknowledged Planning Board Chair Leslie Glynn who was present for the discussion as well. She mentioned that through discussions with Ms. Glynn they may have found a way to address the Planning Board's desire for a height limitation. She and Ms. Glynn proposed using a height

limitation based on elevation above sea level, rather than height from the ground, as a limit that would work both for the functionality of the water tanks as well as providing the Planning Board some comfort. She further stated that she has been in conversation with Rob Williamson at Wright-Pierce and they have recommended an elevation above sea level of 410 feet, that that would be sufficient to serve the town optimally. Ms. Glynn added that using the sea level elevation does make some sense and that some graphics might be helpful for people to visualize this. She offered concern about the trading of conservation land for municipal land and seeks to help to do so in the manner which works best for the neighborhoods. She acknowledged the need for replacing the water tanks. Ms. Bent thought the additional height may be about 42 feet above what is currently in place. Ms. Glynn asked if communication towers are included in that height. Ms. Bent did not think so. Chief Woodside offered that only town infrastructure appears on the existing water tanks and we should minimally be seeking to replace what is already there. Mr. Houston offered his strong support for some form of communications towers/antenna on the water tanks to support public safety & municipal needs but also cell coverage if feasible noting the town's concerns about cell coverage.

Mr. Houston questioned the elevation above sea level as a means of calculating height. Ms. Glynn suggested the method might be acceptable to the Planning Board when discussing a proposed bylaw change. Mr. Houston thought the explanation might be difficult to explain but recognized the value of having some sort of height restriction as opposed to unrestricted height.

Ms. Bent followed up on her previous comment about seeking authorization to build two tanks simultaneously and seeking those funds at the upcoming Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Houston and Mr. Boshart concurred with the suggestion as it may save time and money in doing so. Mr. Houston also commended the work done on the first water tank forum and he has heard some great feedback on it.

### **Interview candidates for Agricultural Commission: Joseph Dwyer**

Avery Chaplin, Chair of the Agricultural Commission joined the meeting and explained they are looking for some additional members to bring wider range of opinions and might help them with their quorum issues. Mr. Chaplin explained that the commission helps the Town by educating the community on the benefits of farming and the history of such in Weston. He introduced Joseph Dwyer, a candidate for the position.

Mr. Dwyer identified himself as a recent resident of Weston and is happy with its rural character. He has a farming background and is interested in working to preserve this aspect of Weston.

Motion by Mr. Boshart to appoint Joseph Dwyer to the Agriculture Commission for a term to expire in 2026. Seconded by Ms. Bent.

**Roll call vote:** Mr. Boshart, Ms. Bent and Mr. Houston voted in the affirmative. **Approved unanimously.**

### **Discussion on guardrails and cemetery regulations**

Mr. Houston announced that he was going to move the cemetery regulation discussion to a future agenda.

Mr. Houston summarized work on guardrails which consist of four building materials: galvanized steel, steel cable, steel-backed wood, and weathered steel. The weathered steel does not hold up in our climate and should be removed from consideration. The Planning Board seem fine with cable and

prefer it to regular steel guardrail. Ideally, they would prefer the steel backed wood but recognize this option is very costly. He suggested our future budgets to be based on galvanized steel and to offer a separate vote on upgrading certain replacements with steel backed wood on a case-by-case basis via Town Meeting vote. He acknowledged that the decision for moving this forward is the responsibility of the Select Board as Roads Commissioners. He sought support from the other Select Board members on this approach and to further discourage the use of steel cable at the recommendation of the DPW. Mr. Boshart and Ms. Bent saw the value in having Town Meeting decide on the appropriation of additional monies for steel backed wood guardrails. Mr. Houston thanked the Board for their consideration and will move forward with some additional tweaks before bringing it back for the Select Board to approve.

Diana Chaplin was recognized to speak who asked about the length of guardrail to be replaced. Mr. Houston felt it was roughly 2500 feet in length. She asked further if a neighborhood could privately raise the funds for the steel backed wood guardrail. Mr. Houston felt that the Select Board should have the flexibility to authorize that to happen.

### **Consent agenda**

Mr. Gaumond flagged the item notifying the Select Board if they would prefer to see the vacancy on the Commissioner of Trust position added to the Town Caucus list of candidates this year. After discussion the Select Board agreed to keep it as is on the consent agenda.

**MOTION:** Ms. Bent moved the Consent Agenda as follows. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Boshart.

**Roll call vote:** Mr. Boshart, Ms. Bent and Mr. Houston voted in the affirmative. **Approved unanimously.**

Add Commissioner of Trust vacancy to the election ballot for 2023  
Approve Master Plan Committee Charge and solicit for members.  
Approve collective bargaining agreement- Fire Department  
Approve Annual Town Report

Motion to adjourn at 8:54 p.m. by Mr. Boshart, seconded by Ms. Bent.

**Roll call vote:** Mr. Boshart, Ms. Bent and Mr. Houston voted in the affirmative. **Approved unanimously.**

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Laurie Bent  
Clerk

*Note: A copy of all documents, explanatory material, and exhibits presented to and used by the Select Board as part of this meeting are attached to the approved minutes*