

**Minutes of Regular Meeting  
Select Board  
Tuesday, March 28, 2023  
Remote Online Meeting (Zoom: 871 3178 5506)  
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, Finance Director Susan Kelley, Town Engineer Jason Lavoie and others.

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 vote to go into executive session for the following purpose: Exemption 3 – to conduct a strategy session in preparation for union contract negotiations and for litigation in the case of Commonwealth of Massachusetts vs. Tresca Brothers Concrete, and Exemption 6 to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property known as the existing cell towers located at 180 Boston Post Road and the chair declare that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Board.**

**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.

Mr. Houston announced Town Officials present for the meeting including the three members of the Select Board. He asked to take the scheduled public hearing first on the agenda.

**Public Hearing: National Grid Grant of Location Petition, 9 - 20 Riverside Road**

Mr. Houston called the public hearing to order for a grant of location petition from National Grid for 9 through 20 Riverside Road. Introduced was Mary Maloney (National Grid) and Jason Lavoie, Town Engineer. Ms. Mulrone informed the Board that National Grid is seeking grant for relaying the existing two-inch coated steel plastic gas main with approximately 1500 feet of 4 inch plastic main Riverside Road from the existing 8 inch coated steel main in Park road to number 20 Riverside Road. This upgrade is needed to support the new Greatlands development.

Mr. Lavoie stated that the requirements from the DPW are typical ones however DPW is recommending that National Grid communicate with Eversource prior to coordinate the work so nothing happens to the utility poles as National Grid comes by with the trenching equipment next to

the utility poles. In addition, the DPW wishes to reserve the right to require additional paving above the normal trench paving. Mr. Gaumond asked if National Grid had any concerns with the requirements of the DPW and Ms. Mulroney responded that they were fine with the requirements as stated.

There were no other questions or comments from attendees at the public hearing.

Motion: Ms. Bent moved to close the public hearing. Seconded by Mr. Houston.

**Roll call vote:** Ms. Bent and Mr. Houston voted in the affirmative. **Approved 2-0 with Mr. Boshart abstaining.**

Motion: Ms. Bent moved to grant the Grant of Location as requested under National Grid's petition for main replacement at 20 Riverside Road as requested with the conditions as recommended to be imposed by the Weston Department of Public Works. Seconded by Mr. Houston.

**Roll call vote:** Ms. Bent and Mr. Houston voted in the affirmative. **Approved 2-0 with Mr. Boshart abstaining.**

#### **Resident Comment**

There were no resident comments.

#### **Land Sake – update on the project/plans for construction**

Pam Hess from Land's Sake was introduced to provide an update on their efforts to improve the infrastructure on the Land's Sake site to better meet Land's Sake's mission as it relates to the town and focusing on increasing the education, the amount of food they grow, the community engagement and bringing the community together to celebrate the land. She introduced Kevin Sullivan who showed images of the approved infrastructure that was presented to the Select Board in May 2021 which includes the farm stand, the barn, the parking lots, as well as the high tunnel, the greenhouse, and the equipment barn at the rear of the site. This was infrastructure plan phase one. All the infrastructure that they need is on-site to do the farm stand now. During that phase one construction they also built the Hoop House and the greenhouse and images were shown of those structures. In Phase two they are interested in constructing an additional service building and a new farm stand at the front of the site. The farm stand is a few hundred square feet smaller than the one they presented earlier with a slightly smaller loft as well as a service parking area for the farm vehicles on the left-hand side of the site. The site has been laid out so that they are preserving this vista from the entrance to the site to the rear of the farm. Land's Sake has been pushing the new buildings, the barn, the farm stand to the edges of this vista.

Mr. Sullivan pointed out that there are two trees needing to be removed to make room for the service area to the left of the farm stand.

Wesley Schwartz from Land's Sake was introduced. He displayed images of the current floor plan of the farm stand. There is a large open space of the farm stand to set up all sales of vegetables and other produce with a smaller sales area on the left-hand side that will also house display coolers for long term items. One the public side of the house is a demonstration kitchen which is flexible space that will be used both for their children programming, kind of summer campers and other kinds of child programming as well as for possible adult education for cooking classes and other types of events. Mr. Sullivan pointed out the loading zone is separated from the public side of the farm stand,

which is on the South on the right hand side, to avoid crossover traffic with people coming in the farm stand and those trucks and deliveries in the rear. Land's Sake highlighted its efforts to ensure that this is a sustainable farm and built those principles into the design of the farm to make it a net zero structure. It's an all-electric building that will use air source heat pumps for heating and cooling when needed and they plan to offset all the energy used with the large solar array. The plan is to break ground on the farm stand approximately in May, and it will be about a six-month construction sequence.

Ms. Hess identified two trees that needed to be removed to continue with their efforts to improve the site for which Land's Sake needs Select Board approval: a spruce and a Norway Maple. Representatives of Land's Sake walked the property with Ms. Hess of the TAG as well as the Conservation Administrator to review the trees. Neither TAG nor the Conservation Administrator opposed the tree removal. Land's Sake intends to replant two trees for the trees removed.

Ms. Glynn from the Planning Board suggested that they try to incorporate aesthetic features with the fencing and to employ screening in order to make the back of the barn not look like the back of a barn.

Ms. Hess from TAG mentioned that the two trees were 15-20 feet high and were younger growth trees that were not specifically planted to be there in TAG's opinion. The trunks are approximately 8 inches DBH (diameter at breast height). Ms. Bent indicated that these trees did not appear to be specimen trees and the Norway Maple is a weed tree. Ms. Glynn asked if there was any way to move the proposed improvements to save the trees. Mr. Sullivan stated that the site is pretty tight and they need the space for truck turning for this to be a functional area.

Motion: Ms. Bent moved to authorize the removal of the trees as requested by Lands Sake and to approve the replanting as requested by Lands Sake. Seconded by Mr. Houston.

**Roll call vote:** Ms. Bent and Mr. Houston voted in the affirmative. **Approved 2-0 with Mr. Boshart abstaining.**

### **Approve FY24 Budget/Annual Town Meeting Warrant**

Mr. Gaumond met with the Board to present the proposed FY24 budget. The proposed operating budget of the town including the unclassified, town and school budgets is about \$92,996,901, representing an increase of about \$2,380,000, so a 2.6% increase over FY23. He pointed out that this is a high-inflation year so he was happy the increase came in as low as it has.

Mr. Gaumond presented a draft version of the warrant for Town Meeting in May. There was a discussion about the property tax deferral article and the Select Board was comfortable with the recommendation from Ms. Kelley on the setting of the interest rate at 4% as the intent is not for the Town to make money from low-income residents. He highlighted the items in the free cash article which is nearly \$1.8 million as well as the articles proposed under CPC. Mr. Houston suggested putting the CPC operating budget and the RHSO into the consent agenda. After discussion the idea would be to have the CPC budget presented separately this year. Mr. Houston pointed out that there were still some vote quantum which needed to be added to this draft warrant. He also pointed out that there would be a citizen's petition seeking a new package store license upon request by supporters of Weston Provisions.

There was a discussion about the water tanks and if articles would be presented at this Town Meeting. Ms. Bent informed the Board that she feels we should simply go for the design funds at Town

Meeting and seek the construction funds and bylaw change for height restrictions at a future Select Board meeting. There was support for seeking some design funds and to offset that appropriation with ARPA funds by future vote of the Select Board. Mr. Houston asked what the Town had in available ARPA funds. Mr. Gaumond responded that Weston had roughly \$3.5 million and the Select Board has only dedicated roughly \$600,000 up to this point.

Mr. Houston suggested that the warrant start with the budget and then add the Town's typical consent agenda items, then the wetlands protection bylaw from ConCom, then the CPC articles, then the water tank article and then the citizen's petition.

Motion: Mr. Houston moved to accept the recommended Town Manager Budget for FY24, and furthermore to approve the 2024 Annual Town Meeting Warrant and authorize the Town Manager and Town Counsel to make any non-substantive changes for editing purposes or to comply with legal requirements, and furthermore to approve the 2024 Annual Town Meeting Select Board Report and authorize the Town Manager and Finance Director to make any necessary changes prior to publication. Seconded by Ms. Bent.

Mr. Gaumond announced there would not be a borrowing article on the ballot this year for the first time in a long time.

### **Consent agenda**

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

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

Approve the Weston Garden Club's donation of a young native dogwood, the tree will be a replacement of an existing dogwood.

Accept gift received from Bruce & Carol Hanson \$100, to be applied to the Weston Arts & Innovation Center.

Motion to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. by Ms. Bent, seconded by Mr. Houston.

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

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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*