

**Minutes of Regular Meeting
Select Board
Tuesday, July 31, 2020
Remote Online Meeting (Zoom 857 5900 6738)
Called to Order at 9:00 a.m.**

Remotely participating were Board members Laurie Bent, Harvey Boshart, and Christopher Houston, Chair. Also present were Town Manager Leon A. Gaumond, Jr., Assistant Town Manager/Human Resources Director Lisa Yanakakis, and Recording Secretary Kara Fleming.

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

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order concerning imposition on strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, meetings in the Town of Weston will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. We will strive to provide access to such meetings via a link to call in, or other similar option. In the event we are unable to accommodate the same, despite best efforts, we will post recorded sessions of the meeting as soon as possible following the same. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings.

Resident Comments

Ms. Mary Ellen Sikes of Conant Road asked if an approved court order for the Town Election has been received. Mr. Gaumond said Town Counsel reported that the hearing went well but the official decision has not yet been received. Ms. Sikes further questioned why the Select Board is rushing to move forward with setting the Town Election date without it.

Dates for Annual Town Meeting and the Annual Town Election

Mr. Boshart recused himself from any discussion on the Town Election.

Mr. Houston informed the Board of the walkthrough of Proctor Field as the site of the Annual Town Meeting. He cited a conversation he had with Town Counsel regarding the timing of the meeting given religious services that day. As such, he proposed Saturday, September 12th at 3:00 p.m. as the date and time for Annual Town Meeting, with a rain date of the following day at the same time. As a result, the Town Election would be held on Thursday, September 10th. Mr. Houston and Ms. Bent discussed the election hours for in-person voting and the desire to limit them for the safety of the election workers and because of the opportunity to vote by mail.

MOTION: Mr. Houston moved to set the date of the Town Election for September 10, 2020, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Town Hall, subject to the Town's receipt of a court order authorizing the Town to hold the election on this date. 2nd by Ms. Bent.

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

MOTION: Ms. Bent moved to set the date of the Annual Town Meeting for September 12, 2020, at Proctor Field starting at 3:00 p.m. with a rain date of September 13, 2020. 2nd by Mr. Boshart.

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

Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Mr. Houston acknowledged receipt of the final warrant. All articles will be in a consent agenda except the ballot question, the recommended operating budget, the three zoning articles, and the Citizen's Petition. Mr. Gaumond informed the Select Board that the debt exclusion premium reserve number will need to be revised in the final budget but the operating budget has been updated with the compromise achieved with the Finance Committee.

MOTION: Ms. Bent moved to approve the September 12, 2020 Annual Town Meeting warrant as presented by the Town Manager and subject to any formatting and minor corrections of errors as recommended by the Town Manager or Town Counsel. 2nd by Mr. Boshart.

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

1/12th Budget for September

Mr. Gaumond informed the Board that the Department of Revenue approved the 1/12th budget for August and then presented the 1/12th budget for September. The total amount is approximately \$9 million.

MOTION: Mr. Houston moved to approve the monthly budget for September 2020 and to authorize town officials to submit the draft budget to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for review. 2nd by Ms. Bent.

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

Police Detail Rate

Mr. Houston asked to take this item out of order.

Mr. Gaumond provided the Board with an analysis prepared by the Finance Director. Currently, there is a \$5,000 surplus and the new police union contract calls for \$55 per hour for police details. This would be effective on August 1, 2020.

MOTION: Ms. Bent moved to increase the police detail rate to \$55 per hour effective August 1, 2020. 2nd by Mr. Boshart.

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

Update and Request for Support Regarding Site Improvements from Land's Sake, Inc.

Pam Hess, Executive Director of Land's Sake Inc.

Ms. Hess was joined by Land's Sake Board Members Beth Marsh Doyle, Brad Dutton, and Kevin Sullivan, along with project designer Wes Schwartz. Ms. Hess told the Board Land's Sake Farm is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. She gave a brief presentation on the role of Land's Sake in the Weston Community and pointed out the lack of on-site power or facilities has been an issue but the new long-term lease will ease. The organization is seeking permission from the Select Board on the following, which will go towards advancing its mission:

- 1) To build permanent structural improvements with the construction of a livestock barn, a greenhouse, and an equipment barn
- 2) To build permanent utility infrastructure improvements in association with the above items
- 3) To waive permitting fees associated with the above
- 4) For the Town Manager to sign grant requests, the funding of which will assist with the proposed work

Mr. Schwartz gave a brief presentation of the proposed structural site improvements (attached). The goal is to preserve the view corridor of 40 Acre Field. The existing parking lot will remain and could be expanded in phase 3. The proposed livestock barn will also accommodate programming. This is expected to be a net-zero facility with solar panels and compostable toilets, which would eliminate the need for a sewer connection. The building materials will be natural to complement the land. The greenhouse is proposed to be built at the rear of the property and the grant money will help offset that cost. Ms. Bent asked about the utilities needed, particularly with water. A water connection stub was installed during the Newton Street reconstruction last year and a meter pit will be needed to bring the service into the property.

Mr. Houston asked if the Case Estates buildings could be used as farm buildings and if an affordable apartment could be built above the barn. He also asked how many animals are expected to be on site. Ms. Hess said she expects to have rabbits, chickens, and about eight goats during the year. She said the organization is looking to consolidate staff and functions to one site, which means the Board is considering vacating the Melone House off Crescent Street and suggested that could be available to the Town for affordable housing. Further, the buildings on the Case Estates are far from the farm and they may be difficult to bring up to code.

Mr. Houston was concerned about the public perception that this was being discussed at an off-meeting time in the summer when people are either away or not paying close attention to Select Board business. He recommended acting on the grant application request at this meeting and then bring forward the other items at a meeting in the fall. Ms. Bent agreed. Ms. Marsh Doyle pointed out that the grant application speaks to the greenhouse only.

MOTION: Mr. Houston moved to support grant submission for the infrastructure project for Land's Sake and to approve the permanent infrastructure improvements on the site insofar as is necessary to obtain such grants. 2nd by Ms. Bent.

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

Consent agenda

MOTION: Ms. Bent moved to approve the consent agenda, as follows:

Authorize the deed transfer of 0 Wellesley Street to the Affordable Housing Trust.

Sign the Warrant for the State Primary Election to be held on September 1, 2020.

2nd by Mr. Boshart.

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

MOTION: Ms. Bent moved to adjourn. 2nd by Mr. Boshart

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

Meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

Laurie A. 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