

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES –October 16, 2023

6:00 p.m. - Chair's Introduction to Remote Meeting

SB Chair Cohen read the current remote meeting notice and confirmed the following Select Board members and others could hear and be heard.

Select Board (SB)

Mitch Cohen, Chair

Kristen Wixted, Vice Chair

Laura Ziton, Clerk

Julianne Hirsh

Lisa Maselli

Others

Michael Gallagher, Interim Town Administrator

Diane Wackell, Interim Assistant Town Administrator

6:04 p.m. – EXECUTIVE SESSION

SB Member Hirsh moved the Board vote to enter into Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to litigation – SA Farm; and pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a)(7) to review and consider the executive session meeting minutes of March 27, 2023, July 17, 2023, July 26, 2023, July 31, 2023, September 11, 2023, October 11, 2023 due to the Chair's determination that a discussion regarding these matters in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Board; SB Member Wixted seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	“aye”	Maselli	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”	Cohen	“aye”
Ziton	“aye”		

SB Chair Cohen then announced that the Select Board was now entering into Executive Session for the purpose previously voted and that the Board will return to Open Meeting at 7:00 pm.

7:05 p.m. – RETURN TO OPEN MEETING

SB Chair Cohen announced the Board's return to Open Meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Cohen invited comments from the public. There were none.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 11, 2023 MEETING

SB Member Wixted moved the Board vote to approve the September 11, 2023 meeting minutes as amended; SB Member Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	“aye”	Maselli	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”	Cohen	“aye”
Ziton	“aye”		

GOWTHAM CHUNDRU, VEDIC LLC d/b/a PEPPER'S INDIAN RESTAURANT

To consider an application for a Common Victualler and Entertainment License for premises located at 8110 Shops Way.

Gotham Chundru and Sunil Kolli presented this application request. They explained that they are the new owners of this restaurant, which was previously known as Kumar South Indian Restaurant. They explained that there will be no changes to the interior of the restaurant. They added that they will be expanding the menu to include both North and South Indian Cuisine.

SB Member Maselli moved the Board vote to approve the application for a common victualler license and an entertainment license as submitted by Vedic LLC d/b/a Pepper's Indian Restaurant for premises located at 8110 Shops Way; SB Member Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	"aye"	Maselli	"aye"
Wixted	"aye"	Cohen	"aye"
Ziton	"aye"		

ST. BERNADETTE'S SCHOOL

To consider a One- Day Special Liquor License for October 22, 2023 for premises located at 266 Main Street

Megan Kelleher, Advancement Director at St. Bernadette's School reviewed the history of this family event which was held on an annual basis prior to the pandemic. The event will take place on Sunday, October 22, 2023 from 1–4 pm. There is no rain date. All the necessary steps regarding this type of license have been taken and all requirements will be adhered to.

After a brief discussion, SB Member Ziton moved the Board vote to approve the application for a One-Day Special Liquor License as submitted by St. Bernadette's School for October 22, 2023 for premises located at 266 Main Street; SB Member Wixted seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	"aye"	Maselli	"aye"
Wixted	"aye"	Cohen	"aye"
Ziton	"aye"		

CABLE ACCESS DIRECTOR DANA VOLKE

To consider a request for ARPA funding for Hybrid Meeting Project at Town Hall.

Dana Volke reviewed the request for ARPA funding to install hybrid AV technology into town hall meeting rooms. The amount is \$33,865.00 to professionally install hybrid AV technology into Town Hall's meeting rooms. This technology will allow boards and committees to continue to engage with the community via Zoom meetings while taking place in-person at Town Hall. He reviewed the details of the request for upgrades to the Select Board's Meeting Room and Conference Room B. He noted this request also includes a mobile cart that can be used in various other locations if needed.

After discussion, the Board was pleased to see progress with the hybrid meeting project.

SB Member Hirsh moved the Board vote to approve the use of ARPA funds in the amount of \$33,865 for the Town Hall Hybrid Meeting Project and for expenditure of such sum by the Cable

Access Director pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44, Section 53A; SB Member Wixted seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	“aye”	Maselli	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”	Cohen	“aye”
Ziton	“aye”		

FIRE CHIEF DAVID PARENTI

To consider a request to implement a new permit fee for Battery Power Storage Units.

The Fire Chief was present to request the Board’s approval of the implementation of a new permit fee. Due to a new state requirement, the Fire Department is responsible for the issuance of permits to install and operate energy storage systems at any property within the town. The amount of the new fee to be added to the Fire Department fee schedule is \$100.

SB Member Wixted moved the Board vote to add a \$100 fee to the existing Fire Department Fee Schedule for the issuance of permits to install and operate energy storage systems at any property within the Town; SB Member Ziton seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	“aye”	Maselli	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”	Cohen	“aye”
Ziton	“aye”		

AMY PORETSKY

To consider a request for ARPA funding for the Town Common Illumination Project and Installation of an Irrigation System.

Amy Poretsky with the Northborough Town Common Committee requested \$3,263.46 to complete a lighting project at the Town Common. She referred to a proposal from the Veron Company which was sent to the DPW Director.

SB Member Maselli moved the Board vote to approve the use of ARPA funds in the amount of \$3,263.46 for the completion of the Town Common Tree Illumination Project as requested by Town Common Committee and for expenditure of such sum by the DPW Director pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44, Section 53A; SB Member Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	“aye”	Maselli	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”	Cohen	“aye”
Ziton	“aye”		

Ms. Poretsky also requested the Board vote to approve the use of ARPA funds in the amount of \$16,092.50 to install an irrigation system at the Town Common. This request is to allow the town to maintain the landscaping at the Town Common. She referred to proposals from the Verin Company which were sent to the DPW Director.

SB Member Ziton moved the Board vote to approve the use of ARPA funds in the amount of \$16,029.50 for the installation of an irrigation system at the Town Common as requested by the

Town Common Committee and for expenditure of such sum by the DPW Director pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44, Section 53A; SB Member Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	“aye”	Maselli	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”	Cohen	“aye”
Ziton	“aye”		

Public Comments were received from the following individuals:

Scott Rogers, 26 Tomahawk Drive

Jason Perreault, 27 Treetop Circle

RE-CONDERATION OF VOTE

To re-consider the September 18, 2023 Select Board vote using ARPA funding to establish a Northborough Sign and Façade program.

SB Chair indicated that this request came up after the Board’s last meeting where this request was voted 3 to 2 in favor. After the meeting, one of the members requested that the Board reconsider this vote due to recent information that was received after the meeting.

SB Member Hirsh indicated that at the last meeting, she expressed concerns with using a 3-member committee rather than a 5-member committee and only voted in favor of the request because they know architect that was on the committee. The architect has since resigned and that is what has caused this request to reconsider the vote.

SB Member Wixted also expressed similar concerns and would like to reconsider the vote.

SB Chair Cohen expressed his thoughts that this is a good program and would like to see it continue.

SB Member Hirsh moved the Board vote to reconsider the September 18, 2023 Select Board vote approving the use of ARPA funds in the amount of \$250,000 to establish a Northborough Sign & Façade Program; SB Member Wixted seconded the motion; The roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	“aye”	Maselli	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”	Cohen	“no”
Ziton	“aye”		

SB Member Wixted moved the Board vote to approve the use of ARPA funds in the amount of \$250,000 to establish a Northborough Sign & Façade Program and for expenditure of such sum by the Planning Director pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44, Section 53A; SB Member Hirsh seconded the motion; The roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	“no”	Maselli	“no”
Wixted	“no”	Cohen	“aye”
Ziton	“no”		

Public Comments were received from the following individuals:

Amy Poretsky, 47 Indian Meadow Drive

Scott Rogers, 26 Tomahawk Drive

REPORTS

Kristen Wixted

- Reminder that the Sneaker Drive is on for the Scholarship Fund.
- Enjoyed meeting the Governor and Lt. Governor at the Senior Center at the meeting when they discussed the new Senior Tax Relief Program.
- Noted that there was one more flu clinic this coming Thursday at the Senior Center from 8:30 am – noon.

Julianne Hirsh

- As Liaison to Planning Board, provided these updates: they are working on bylaws for town meeting; continue to discuss ways to move forward with the MBTA Housing; looking for architect to serve on Design Review Committee and added if anyone knows or if anyone is interested, please reach out.
- Also attended CMRPC, Historic District Commission; Cultural Council; and added that MPIC will be meeting soon.

Laura Ziton

- Participated in the Scarecrow building contest which was sponsored by Cultural Council and the Recreation Department.
- Congratulated the High School Association on their 150th Anniversary, this is the oldest in the country.
- Thanked Helping Hands for organizing the clothes drive.
- Was honored to meet the Governor and Lt. Governor.
- Update as Liaison to Assessors – Had a great conversation with the Principal Assessor who told her that they completed the sales analysis ahead of schedule.
- Mentioned that tomorrow is the first official meeting of the traffic safety committee.

Lisa Maselli

- Congratulated the Treasurer/Collector, Lisa Troast, for passing the Massachusetts Collectors and Treasurers Association (MCTA) exam.
- Congratulated Kendra Faldetta, Senior Center Director, for the featured Senior Center article in the Blue Cross Blue Shield Magazine October issue of the Healthy Times.
- Also excited to meet the Governor and Lt. Governor at the Senior Center where they discussed their new tax credit plan.
- Mentioned that there are openings on various boards and committees and if anyone is interested, please apply.
- Thanked David Devries for his years of service on the Financial Planning Committee.
- Thanked Dario DiMare for his services on so many committees.
- Looking for an update on the complete streets program, specifically the projects and where they stand

Mitch Cohen

- Met with the Community Meals Organization. Beginning in November, they will be returning to meeting in-person and are looking for volunteer groups to provide meals, provide services, and assistance with the program. Asked if the members of the Board would be interested in volunteering, which they all agreed, so he will coordinate the Board's participation.
- Mentioned that the Interim Town Administrator met with the Appropriations Committee to request an increase in staff hours in the Building Inspections Department to help assist with the backlog of permits.
- The 1st Public Input Session will be tomorrow night at the Library at 7:00 pm. All are welcome to attend and participate. There will be 2 more public input sessions in November and January. Asked the committee to come to the November meeting to provide an update to the Board.
- Thanked Governor Healy and Lt. Governor Driscoll for their informational meeting at the Senior Center and thought it was important for them to talk about their senior tax relief plan.
- Noted that the Community Affairs set dates for the Tree Lighting and Minora lighting events for December 2nd and December 13th.
- Thanked the legislature for moving along the Charter Amendments that were approved at Town Meeting to change the Board's name to Select Board and to remove the Town Administrator residency requirement.
- Noted that the Library is having a Haunted House event on October 28th from 6:30-9:30 pm.
- Also noted that the new Arts Council, which is an offshoot of the Cultural Council, will hold a Trick or Treat Halloween House decorating contest.

Town Administrator Report

- No Report

EXECUTION OF CEMETERY DEEDS 1177, 1178, 1179 & 1180

SB Member Hirsh moved the Board vote to execute Cemetery Deeds 1177, 1178, 1179 & 1180; SB Member Wixted seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	"aye"	Maselli	"aye"
Wixted	"aye"	Cohen	"aye"
Ziton	"aye"		

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

SB Chair Cohen invited comments from the public. There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

SB Member Hirsh moved the Board vote to adjourn; SB Member Wixted seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	"aye"	Maselli	"aye"
Wixted	"aye"	Cohen	"aye"
Ziton	"aye"		

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynda LePoer
Executive Assistant to the
Board of Selectmen

Documents used during meeting:

1. October 16, 2023 Meeting Agenda
2. September 11, 2023 Meeting Minutes
3. Application - Common Victualler and Entertainment License for Vedic LLC d/b/a Pepper's Indian Restaurant
4. Application – One-Day Special Liquor License for St. Bernadettes School
5. Information Packet – Request for ARPA funding for Hybrid Project at Town Hall
6. Memo – Request to implement new permit fee for battery power storage units
7. Memo – Amy Poretsky re: ARPA funding request
8. Cemetery Deeds