

Accepted at the October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023 meeting of the Select Board

Select Board  
September 14, 2023  
Via Zoom Remote Conferencing\*

Robert Czekanski, Chair  
Stan Wysocki  
Brian Boyle

Don Lowe, Town Administrator  
Jenny Jacobsen, Town Secretary

Mr. Czekanski called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

#### SIGN REQUEST

Craig Lauer was in attendance to request permission for temporary signs. The signs will be brought out in the morning and taken down in the afternoon after the donut shift. Board reviewed the sign board.

**On a motion made by Mr. Wysocki and seconded by Boyle the Board voted by roll call unanimously to approve the request from the Lion's Club to place temporary signs at the entry to the Town Common and the top of West Berlin Road for their cider donut sale at Schartner Farm on the weekends from September 23<sup>rd</sup> through October 22<sup>nd</sup>. (Wysocki-yes, Boyle-yes, Czekanski-yes)**

#### FIRE TRUCK ARPA REQUEST

Deputy Chief Dana Amendola was in attendance to represent the department. On April 26<sup>th</sup> the town received a letter from Seagrave requesting additional funds in the amount of \$112,447 to complete the rescue pumper citing increase materials costs. The Chief negotiated the number down to \$90K. With the extra money in the article due to grant funds secured for equipment, the balance needed is \$57,601.50.

Mr. Wysocki questioned the math while supporting the request for the ARPA funds.

Mr. Wysocki made a motion to approve the request from Chief Legendre for additional funds requested by Seagraves to pay for the fire truck that is on order and agree that based upon his letter, negotiation continued and settled on an increase of \$90,000 for the fire truck and based upon an agreed upon purchase price of \$749,644 that at this point in time the Board is ok with a purchase price of \$839,644. Mr. Lowe noted that the motion would not be sufficient to release the ARPA funds.

**Mr. Wysocki revised the motion that \$39,644 be released from ARPA funds contingent upon understanding why the Chief has requested \$57,601.50. The motion was seconded by Boyle. The motion passed by roll call vote unanimously. (Wysocki-yes, Boyle-yes, Czekanski-yes)**

**On a motion made by Czekanski and seconded by Boyle, the Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to direct the Town Administrator to speak with Town Counsel to see what if any recourse we have to see about clawing back some or all of the additional money being appropriated. (Wysocki-yes, Boyle-yes, Czekanski-yes)**

#### SPECIAL TOWN MEETING PREPARATION UPDATE

Mr. Lowe reported on the testing that has been conducted on the clickers in preparation for Town meeting. The most recent test went very well. The extra chairs are being delivered on Friday September 15<sup>th</sup> and will be set up by honor society students. We are ready for Monday night and prepared for up to 1,000 people. Mr. Lowe encouraged voters to arrive early so the meeting can start as close to 7pm as possible.

#### TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

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Mr. Lowe introduced the new staff members, Lauren Ducat, the new administrative assistant to the Conservation Agent and Town Planner and the new Town Planner, Pam Harding. Both started on September 5<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Duggan was in attendance. Mr. Lowe explained that Ms. Duggan has experience as a Conservation Agent in addition to 26 years of experience in planning. Ms. Duggan is excited to help the Town move forward and maintain the beautiful character that it has.

## **SELECT BOARD BUSINESS**

### Public Service Announcements

Board had none.

### Future Agenda Items

Mr. Wysocki proposed a discussion on the U.S. News Report rankings on high schools in Massachusetts.

### Cultural Counsel Appointments

The Board can have up to 22 members and must have 5 members to receive grant money.

**On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle the Select Board voted by roll call unanimously to appoint six members (Marilyn Geer Rivera, Margret Campbell, Wendy Eldredge, Beth Freidinger, Lyn Slade and Holly Lauer) to the Bolton Cultural Counsel. (Wysocki-yes, Boyle-yes, Czekanski-yes)**

### All-In Costs for School Building Project

Mr. Wysocki shared a slide previously presented by Superintendent Downing showing the estimated totals per town. Mr. Wysocki noted that the costs reflect the cost if borrowing was not necessary. Mr. Wysocki shared a spreadsheet showed the actual cost inclusive of borrowing costs. Mr. Czekanski questioned using a different standard for this borrowing than for every other borrowing that the town has done. Mr. Boyle commented that the amount per year to the tax payer is in line with what the district presented. The Board agreed that the school district accurately reflected the impact to the taxpayer.

### Operational Costs for the Proposed New High School

Mr. Wysocki is seeking information from Skanska on the operational costs for the high school to understand the impact on the tax payers. Mr. Czekanski explained that Skanska's contract ends 1 year after the school building project is complete so they don't collect that kind of data. Mr. Boyle was concerned that the type of analysis that would be required to pull the data could be quite costly but was favorable to asking for a snapshot.

**On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle the Board voted by roll call 2-1 vote to make a request of the school committee to see if they can get information from the OPM on the 13 high schools that they have built to compare the operational cost of the schools in the last years and the operational cost of the replacement schools in their first years. (Wysocki-yes, Boyle-yes, Czekanski-no)**

### NRSC Budget Process

Mr. Wysocki reminded the Board that Mr. Boyle brought to his attention in 2022 the fact that in MGL Chapter 71, Section 16(k) the school committee is required to provide an annual report to member towns with detailed financial statement and a statement by which the annual charge is assessed against each town in the district. Mr. Wysocki would additionally like to see the transfers between budgets. Mr. Boyle recommended a more collaborative approach and suggested that questions be asked at the Budget and Warrant Subcommittee. Mr. Boyle offered to be a liaison between the school committee and the Select Board.

**On a motion made by Czekanski and seconded by Wysocki the Board voted by roll call unanimously to appoint Brian Boyle as the liaison between the Bolton Select Board and the financial community at the Nashoba Regional School District. (Wysocki-yes, Boyle-yes, Czekanski-yes)**

Update on Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Discussions.

Mr. Wysocki reported the at present the district liability is sitting at \$47M. That liability belongs to the three member towns. Once fully funded the money earns a higher interest rate of 7%. The committee is looking at strategies for reaching that goal of fully funding OPEB. The district is currently contributing \$500K annual which is wholly insufficient. Don Cole, John Petrin and Michael Horesh are also on the committee from Bolton.

Bills/Payroll Warrants

**On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle the Select Board voted by roll call unanimously to approve warrants W24-05, W24-05A and W24-04 Supplemental WH. (Wysocki-yes, Boyle-yes, Czekanski-yes)**

Bills/Payroll Warrants

**On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle the Select Board voted by roll call unanimously to accept the minutes of August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023. (Wysocki-yes, Boyle-yes, Czekanski-yes)**

**On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle the Select Board voted by roll call unanimously to adjourn at 8:39 pm. (Wysocki-yes, Boyle-yes, Czekanski-yes)**

Respectfully submitted by J. Jacobsen.