



MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA

SELECT BOARD • TOWN HALL
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MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD

October 16, 2023 5:30 p.m. Hybrid Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting, Meeting ID: 845 7012 2203 Passcode: Zr9Kwq Mobile: 1.646.558.8656

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Harrison – Chair, Mr. Round - Vice-Chair, Ms. Jaques, Ms. Bilotta, Mr. Sollosy

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Town Administrator, Mr. Federspiel, Executive Assistant, Debbie Powers, Fire Chief Jake McNeilly, DPW Director Chuck Dam

Ms. Harrison called the Select Board meeting to order a 5:30 pm and four members were in person. Ms. Jaques arrived virtually at 6:03pm.

Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items: None

Chairman's Report & Action Items: Reviewed the Action Items.

1. Open Meeting Forum:

Helen Bethal, Open Space Committee member, informed the Board that the Committee is working on a project to protect the watersheds around the Gordon College Woods, due to the proximity to Round Pond. The Committee will be sending along a memo to the Board.

Kim Logue, 142 Summer Street, spoke on the Pickleball Courts. She asked the Board to move the courts to Upper Pine Street. Spoke on numerous issues with the courts and for use by only residents.

Sandy Rogers, 82 Old Essex Road, asked to see more of the financial planning effect and information on larger projects pending for the future. Also would like to see more public forums going forward. Ms. Harrison suggested she review the Finance Committee's agendas. Mr. Federspiel informed all that the Finance Committee's Annual Report has a 5-year projection on capital.

Sarah Pierce, 9 Friend Street, asked for an update on the Manchester Community Center. Mr. Federspiel updated the Board and Ms. Pierce on the Community Center. She also asked about the rotunda and if the Board would be willing to open the process up again with a different company.

Karen Bennett, 28 Lincoln Street, would like to see this happen once a month because transparency has been a struggle in Town. She suggested providing a microphone in front of Ms. Harrison and Mr. Federspiel. She addressed the MBTA zoning and asked if the STM had been voted on yet? Ms. Harrison answered there has been no official vote.

Mary Foley, 1 Pulaski Drive, commented on the Gordon College land and finance topics. Before items going to Town Meeting, residents should know what they are voting on. She asked about the governance project and communication between committees/boards. Ms. Harrison explained the many projects are not ready on July 1st and money is left in accounts. Ms. Bilotta updated Ms. Foley on the governance project.

Sarah Pierce, 9 Friend Street, asked about having the MBTA ferry come to Manchester. Ms. Harrison explained that the Harbormaster does not recommend.

Mr. Sollosy and Mr. Round spoke on the MBTA Zoning forum and how much information has been distributed and will be continually worked on.

Sandy Rogers, 82 Old Essex Road, spoke on the MBTA forum and stated having the information disseminated and articulated very carefully and clearly will help everyone.

Lee Simmons, 291 Summer Street, asked if Manchester has considered solar panel field in town and if we have investigated installing panels by the Transfer Station. Mr. Federspiel answered that the Town looked into installing panels at the closed landfill and the slopes were too steep. She also asked about a assisted living facility. Ms. Harrison stated the Board is very aware of the older population and the Planning Board is working on a senior housing zoning article.

6:25pm Meeting Recess

2. Affordable Housing Trust/Manc. Housing Authority Update:

John Feuerbach, Chair of the Affordable Housing Trust explained that this is a continuation of engagement with the Board. He reviewed the background of the past RFP, which produced no bids. The Trust changed the focus to an RFQ and received one bid from the Preservation of Affordable Housing group (POA). POA has been involved in many communities in the US. and Public Housing authorities. The Trust met with POA to discuss the Town's plan, the challenges developers may face and the Pleasant Street site. He explained that this is a very important land area to help with the plan and without it the envisioned project would be very hard.

Sheila Hill, 2 Running Ridge Road, asked about Pleasant Street - would it be market rate housing or affordable housing. Mr. Feuerbach indicated that would be determined later but he thinks market rate housing would be an option. Mr. Sollosy stated that we would be looking to develop the area as a friendly 40B.

Ms. Jaques asked Mr. Feuerbach if we can modify the footprint of our existing affordable housing areas. MHA member Gretchen Wood explained that this has been looked at before. They will be working with POA and see what we can do with the existing structures.

Muffin Driscoll spoke on the Pleasant Street property and where it fits in the facilities plan. Mr. Federspiel stated the facilities plan will be discussed at a meeting in November.

3. Water Department – PFAS Updates:

Chuck Dam, DPW Director, provided a background of PFAS and his FAQs, that were included in the packet. He explained this began about four to five years ago at the state level and the Town is currently under the maximum contaminant limit (MCL). The Department has been monitoring, keeping up with all information and talking about how we are going to treat it. Further testing will be done at Lincoln Street and Gravelly Pond before treatment can be done.

Ms. Bilotta stated she would like a timeline of the testing to be done so the residents have a better understanding of when to re-engage. Mr. Dam answered he would like to start as soon as possible, and we should have enough ARPA funds to cover the testing. It might take a year to complete for the final numbers.

Mr. Sollosy asked about our water compared to other municipalities. Mr. Dam answered we are under the MCL and several communities are over the MCL. We are working through the details before the MCL changes. Mr. Federspiel explained that water is not the sole source of the contaminant, they are in many products people use at their homes.

Alison Alholt-White, Spy Rock Hill asked if manufacturers will be required to change their processes so that PFAS levels will decrease over time. Mr. Dam answered that there is a restriction in the U.S. but anything that comes from overseas stills uses products that contain PFAS.

4. Special Town Meeting Warrant:

Mr. Federspiel explained that the Planning Board will hold a public hearing on October 23rd which will determine if they have an article ready. He asked for the Board to hold a special meeting to finalize the warrant next week, as we need to post the warrant by October 30th. He stated that a few items are still open, and we received a few petition articles.

Mr. Federspiel and the Board walked through the potential articles. The Board discussed and decided to hold a special meeting on October 26 at 8:30am to finalize the warrant.

Ms. Bilotta moved to schedule a Special Town Meeting at the Memorial School on November 13, 2023, at 6:30pm; Mr. Sollosy seconded. Unanimously approved by roll call vote.

5. Discussion Items:

a. Staffing Updates: Mr. Federspiel updated the Board on staffing updates, which includes the search for a Town Planner and an interim Planner. A consultant will be brought on for MBTA zoning. The new Conservation Agent started today, and we will be sharing her services with Hamilton.

b. Boosters Club Carnival: Mr. Federspiel explained the new carnival vendor has requested to allow staff to sleep overnight in trailers. This is needed now due to the change of vendor. The original vendor was overbooked. The Board would need to vote to amend the original permission and the Police Chief is aware of this change.

Mr. Sollosy moved to amend the Select Board's previous permission to allow crew to sleep on site with a curfew and the possibility of a police detail; Ms. Bilotta seconded. Unanimously approved by roll call vote.

c. Fire Department – Call Firefighters:

Fire Chief McNeilly reviewed the presentation with the Board, which is available in the packet. The Town received fourteen applicants and seven applicants reside in a “reasonable” response range. He is looking to see what the Board would like to do after reviewing the costs for the implementation of a call force.

Ms. Bilotta asked if we could start with fewer than 7. Chief McNeilly answered that the seven needs to be vetted and a few may not make it all the way through.

Chief McNeilly feels the money should be spent on a day deputy. Sarah Mellish, Chair of the Finance Committee commented that the Committee did not recommend a Deputy Chief and they would like to have a call fire force.

Ms. Harrison would like to know how many of the seven are reasonable candidates. Ms. Jaques asked what the numbers are for the Deputy. Mr. Federspiel answered that it would cost roughly 100-120K a year. Ms. Harrison would like to see the process moved through the seven applicants and the Board agreed.

a. Quarterly Review - Town Administrator:

Mr. Federspiel reviewed the highlights of the last quarter, which included efforts to hire a new planner, getting the MBTA Task Force up and running, closing out FY23, beginning the process for developing the FY25 budget, continuing the governance project and advancing solutions for the Community Center and a Senior Center. Also spoke on his succession planning and working with three internal candidates.

Ms. Bilotta stated she appreciated the way he engaged so quickly on the community center and the Masons. She was happy to see his succession and cybersecurity planning.

Mr. Round spoke on his expanded role with MBTA zoning due to no town planner. Ms. Jaques stated the Town is very fortunate to have him as the Town Administrator and glad he is sharing some of his work.

6. Liaison Updates:

Mr. Sollosy updated the Board on Parks & Recreation. The Director has been in communication with the new carnival vendor. Pickleball mitigation efforts are ongoing and the new Pine Street field is doing very well.

Mr. Round stated the presentation of the Boston Post Cane has been rescheduled to noon on Wednesday. Ms. Harrison will attend.

7. Consent Agenda:

- a. Approval of Minutes – September 18, 2023
- b. Halloween Trick or Treating
- c. Parks & Recreation Committee Appt – Sean Masterson

Ms. Jaques moved to approve items a and b on the consent agenda; Ms. Bilotta seconded. Unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Ms. Bilotta asked to have both Parks & Recreation candidates come before the Board to be interviewed.

8. Town Administrator's Report:

Community Center: Making good progress on a plan for a 10-year nominal cost lease with Harbor Points who will take possession of the building next month. We will then have a side agreement with the Community Center for their continued use under a shared cost arrangement.

Well Regulations: The Board of Health is still working on possible new regulations for wells. One of the more controversial parts of the proposal is requiring annual testing of wells that are used for irrigation purposes only. Once they have a clearer sense of what they want to propose we will then present the draft to the Board for input.

Route 127 dead trees: Some residents have been trying to get the State to remove some dead trees along 127 from near the railroad overpass to Hickory Hill. Senator Tarr's office has been contacted to help.

MBTA Task Force work: The Task Force is hosting a forum on the Town Common Saturday. A consultant is starting up to assist. The consultant will be able to run various zoning scenarios in different potential land areas to see what the results might be. Students from MIT will be presenting their initial ideas at the October 26th Task Force meeting.

9:05pm *Mr. Sollosy moved to adjourn; Ms. Bilotta seconded. Unanimously approved by roll call vote.*

Meeting materials are available in the packet online.

Next meetings:

November 6, 2023

November 13, 2023 (STM)

November 20, 2023