Mr. Boling called the BOS meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Mr. Boling stated the meeting is being recorded by Studio 1623 (Cape Ann TV) for future broadcast and recorded by Ms. Hunter for accuracy in minutes. He asked if anyone was recording the meeting to please let him know and requested attendees silence their cell phones.

0. **Items not on the agenda** – There were no requests to comment on items not on the agenda.

1. **Joint Appointment of Chris Olney as Planning Board Representative to Affordable Housing Trust**

*Mr. Feuerbach called the Affordable Housing Trust meeting to order.*

*Ms. Jaques moved to appoint Mr. Olney as a Trustee to the Affordable Housing Trust representing the Planning Board; Mr. Bodmer-Turner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Mr. Feuerbach moved to approve appointment of Mr. Olney as a Trustee to the Affordable Housing Trust representing the Planning Board; Ms. Mellish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Mr. Feuerbach moved to adjourn the Affordable Housing Trust meeting; Ms. Mellish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*
2. Public Hearing – Conduit Construction Summer and Ocean Street – National Grid

Ms. Jaques moved to open the public hearing for conduit construction serving Summer and Ocean Streets; Mr. Steinert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

National Grid Representative stated the conduit upgrade proposed for Summer and Ocean Streets was to improve reliability for service in the area. Mr. Boling asked for further clarification of the scope of the project. The Representative stated the current conduit does not satisfy the load or manage the needs of the area. National Grid will be replacing antiquated infrastructure to curtail outages and black outs.

Jack Burke, 16 Ocean Street – Mr. Burke asked if there were any poles proposed for the new conduit? National Grid Representative stated no new poles. Mr. Burke asked if National Grid was proposing new above ground boxes in the area? There will be new above ground boxes. Mr. Burke had images of boxes on his cell phone and showed the images to the Representative asking for clarification of the new boxes proposed. The National Grid Representative was unable to comment regarding the exact type of box proposed. Mr. Burke also asked for the new boxes to be placed near the fire hydrant on Ocean Street.

Carolyn Kelly, 355 Summer Street – Ms. Kelly asked about the transformer which is located next to her home and if it would be possible to have that transformer relocated as a part of the project. National Grid Representative stated she would need to make a formal request about the specific transformer but this maybe a good opportunity to address the issue.

Mr. Burke stated he is in favor of the upgrade but is concerned about the aesthetics.

Mr. Boling stated he will ask DPW to coordinate the work with National Grid and will continue the hearing in order for Engineers to review and make specific recommendations regarding the new conduit.

Ms. Jaques moved to continue the public hearing for conduit construction serving Summer and Ocean Streets to December 16, 2019 at 6:30; Mr. Steinert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Hearing – FY20 Tax Classifications

Mr. Bodmer-Turner moved to open the public hearing on FY20 Tax Classifications; Ms. Jaques seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Information for FY 20 Classification Hearing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>FY19</th>
<th>FY20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Taxable Value</td>
<td>2,443,466,556</td>
<td>2,508,986,638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference in Taxable Value</td>
<td>+ 65,520,082</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax Rate</td>
<td>$11.23/1000</td>
<td>$11.70/1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference in Tax Rate</td>
<td>+ .47 cents/1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Average Single-Family Value FY19 = 1,145,100   FY20 = 1,178,600  
Median Single-Family Value  FY19 = 751,200  FY20 = 766,400  
Average Residential Value FY19 = 1,062,300 FY20 = 1,081,700  
Average Com/Indust. Value FY19 = 744,900 FY20 = 776,400  
Average Taxable Value FY19 = 1,006,000 FY20 = 1,038,100  
Average Overall Value FY19 = 944,400 FY20 = 972,300  
Median Overall Value FY19 = 650,700 FY20 = 663,000

Example of Tax Changes for average residential  
FY19 = assessment of $1,062,300 x $11.23 = $11,929.63  
FY20 = assessment of $1,081,700 x $11.70 = $12,655.89

Example of Tax Changes for median single family  
FY19 = assessment of $751,200 x $11.23 = $8,435.98  
FY20 = assessment of $766,400 x $11.70 = $8,966.88

Increase  
FY19 = $536.74/ based on average residential assessment  
FY20 = $726.26/ based on average residential assessment

Growth  
FY19 = $276,134 (25,034,870 in value)  
FY20 = $166,271 (14,805,988 in value)

Ms. Thompson stated this is not a Recertification year but an Interim year. The Town adjusted values based on 2018 sales for single family homes. Sales from July 2017 through June 2019 were used for all other classes of property. The total increase in taxable value was a little over 2.5%. The tax rate increase was a little over 4%. As you can see from above the increase in taxes, based on the average assessment, is more than last year due primarily to the new bonds payments related to the new elementary school. The total assessment on the Town, including exempt property, is $2,697,178,938. That is $69,787,382 higher than last year.

The tax rate is not official until approved by the Department of Revenue.

Ms. Thompson provided a shift analysis in the event the Board added Commercial or Industrial tax rates. A shift to C.I.P, also affects businesses and second homes with an increase in personal property tax.

Based on the analysis provided, the Board of Assessors recommends a single tax rate for all classes of property.

Residential Exemption: the maximum amount of exemption is 35% of average Class 1, residential value. Only properties that are owner occupied receive the exemption. The decrease in value for residential, Class 1, due to the exemption causes the tax rate to increase, which in turn affects the other classes of property.

A residential exemption is not recommended by the Board of Assessors.

Small Commercial Exemption: only an estimated 28 businesses out of 139 listed from the State will benefit from this exemption and the remaining commercial and industrial properties will have to pay more with a higher tax rate.
A small commercial exemption is not recommended by the Board of Assessors.

Ms. Jaques asked if the Finance Committee took a position on the tax classification. Mr. Boling stated the Finance Committee did not take a position opposite the Board of Assessors.

Mr. Bodmer-Turner asked if properties renting an Airbnb were taxed at a different rate. Ms. Thompson indicated the properties being rented were likely single-family or multi-family homes and they were being taxed at the assigned rate. Ms. Jaques asked if there was a distinction for properties rented out for events and Ms. Thompson stated that was different and there could be a distinction made.

Mr. Federspiel indicated the State allowed for communities to apply a room tax to Airbnb properties. He further stated the room tax question may be on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant in April 2020. Mr. Steinert stated that would be a tax on the operation not the asset.

Mr. Steinert is concerned the increase on the average homeowner is significant and residents paying an additional $500.00 a year due to the new Memorial School is not sustainable over the long run. Ms. Thompson pointed out the Town was not proposing taxing up to the levy limit. Mr. Federspiel stated the $11.70 rate assumes the FY 20 budget will rely on more revenues from local receipts.

Ms. Jaques asked about open space discount. The Town has no land classified as open space.

Ms. Isabella Bates, 2 Masconomo Street – Ms. Bates asked if the classification reflects the decision to fund the new school? Mr. Federspiel stated the projected rate incorporates the debt service on the new Memorial School.

Mr. Boling stated the Board was not voting on the tax increase this evening. The Board was voting on the tax classifications.

Ms. Jaques moved to close the evidentiary portion of the public hearing on FY20 Tax Classifications; Mr. Bodmer-Turner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Jaques moved to maintain a single tax rate on all classes of property; Mr. Steinert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bodmer-Turner moved to approve no residential exemption on the tax rate; Mr. Steinert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Jaques moved to approve no commercial exemption on the tax rate; Mr. Bodmer-Turner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Jaques moved to acknowledge the Board’s receipt of the LA-5 Report and Mr. Federspiel’s approval to authorize receipt of the Report on behalf of the Board; Mr. Bodmer-Turner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
4. Grant of Easement to National Grid, New Conduit for Memorial School

Mr. Federspiel introduced a request for the Board to grant an easement for new power and a conduit to support electrical power for the new Memorial School. The new power cannot go off Summer Street because there is not enough power to support the needs of the new Memorial School. Power on Lincoln Street was increased with the construction of the new Middle High School and will be the source of power for the new school.

Mr. Federspiel indicated the underground system requires a trench of under 1,000-feet and is within the Board’s authority to grant an easement. Mr. Boling asked if the intent was to complete the work this fall. Mr. Federspiel replied yes, it is the intent to get the work done before the ground freezes. Mr. Boling wanted to confirm the work did not require a public hearing. Mr. Federspiel confirmed the work does not require a public hearing.

Ms. Jaques asked when the work would be done given students are in school? Mr. Federspiel indicated work is scheduled around arrival and departure times and sometimes on weekends. Mr. Steinert asked if the power lines off Lincoln Street went across wetlands and had the environmental consequences been checked. Mr. Federspiel assured the Board all work had been fully permitted.

Ms. Jaques asked if the work from new pole 18 was being discussed to go underground. Mr. Bodmer-Turner stated he had raised the question earlier with Mr. Federspiel expressing concern about the above ground 162-feet of hanging wire in a forested area and potential for power outages given the storms the Town has been experiencing. Mr. Bodmer-Turner noted Mr. Steinert’s concern about wetlands and he had not considered this when thinking about placing the wires underground in this location. Mr. Bodmer-Turner recalled the controversy about wetlands raised when the tennis courts were constructed.

Mr. Steinert asked why the construction did not go straight across the parking lot. Ms. Jaques wondered why this was not considered at the beginning of the project. Mr. Federspiel stated this is part of completing the necessary paperwork for a large project.

Mr. Bodmer-Turner would like to have a National Grid representative available to answer questions. Mr. Federspiel stated we could ask National Grid to come for the December 2, 2019 Board meeting to answer questions. Ms. Jaques asked if this would provide enough time for construction to go forward?

Mr. Boling stated it appeared the Board has some relatively weighty questions and wonders what the consequences are if the work is not completed in the fall. Mr. Bodmer-Turner stated they would need to cut open the recently paved road if we asked them to drop the pole and eliminate the above ground wire.

Mr. Boling asked if the School Building Committee is aware of this project. Mr. Federspiel indicated the School Building Committee is aware of the project.
requested a representative of the School Building Committee come in with National Grid on December 2, 2019.

5. Update from Harbormaster

Reed Park Docks

The Town had a successful first season, with more than $15K collected to date from transient visitors. A new fee recommendation for overnight visitors is in order. There are funds remaining in the federal grant that will allow the installation of power for boaters on the docks. This will allow the Town to charge a higher fee for overnight dockage.

Mr. Bodmer-Turner asked if the installation of power would be metered. Harbormaster Pike stated the power posts and water spickets would not be metered, however, the Town would increase current rates to cover the costs.

Transient Vessels

Black Beach, 607, Long Beach 1,780

Reed/one hour 931, Reed/paid 449 and Reed/Overnight 123

Harbormaster Pike credited the new boat with increased safety at both Black and Long beaches.

Steering Committee

Formed to work with contractor Tetra Tech to develop site recommendation for the Town regarding a maritime center/office/restrooms. Ms. Jaques asked if the Harbormaster’s office would be moved permanently to the new site. Harbormaster Pike stated it would by a year-round facility.

Boats

The new boat served as expected. No tickets were issued by Police Department, however the Officers and Firemen contributed to a safer and better managed waterfront. Eastern suffered a structural issue resulting in a leak. Crocker’s corrected the problem. No wake buoy location made a difference.

October Storm

More than 20 vessels suffered some degree of damage during the October 17th Nor’easter. Sails were destroyed on numerous vessels, three small power boats went ashore on Long and Magnolia Beaches, 4 sailing vessels went adrift and were either captured and placed on moorings after colliding with other vessels or went ashore. One power vessel went ashore at Glass Head and is a total loss. The storm has prompted a mooring standard discussions for Manchester with the Harbor Advisory committee, Yacht Club and mooring service providers and should yield appropriate
recommendations for the Board to approve for Harbor Regulations come the first of the year.

**Harbor Plan**

Much has been achieved in the harbor since January 2012 thanks to the ideas, forward thinking and support of the community and those who use the Manchester waterfront. Commercial and recreational boaters all contributed to the improvements that have enhanced the character of this fabulous harbor. Projects ranging from the life jacket loaner racks (Eagle Scout Project) to dredging, a boat ramp, fisherman’s crane and kayak racks just scratch the surface of what the Town has accomplished.

So, what else if anything could or should be done to realize the harbor’s fullest potential? As it turns out there are a few recommendations from residents that have come up over the summer. One issue that must be addressed and one for the Harbor Department.

- **Tuck’s Point** – Tuck’s Point docks are not currently permitted, and the Army Corps of Engineers will not issue a permit for the next round of dredging unless these floats become compliant with regulations. As part of the permitting I believe that the addition of two more face floats would be appropriate to meet tie up needs for dinghies and boats alike as well as the addition of a longer ramp. With any luck the floats will be permitted by spring and will no longer be a barrier to ongoing dredging needs.

  In addition, the Town has been approached about the possibility of partnering to build a small land trailering ramp at Tuck’s Point for small sailing and paddling vessels.

- **Commercial Docks** – When the dredging project was completed someone pointed out that we wasted valuable space made available by the project. In fact, dredging did go beyond the Town pier toward Beach St. creating what may be an opportunity to provide dockage for our Commercial Fleet.

  The construction of floats and slips at the very head of the harbor would allow half a dozen or so lobster boats to beautify the area. We all love to see the working boats when we visit quaint New England towns such as Manchester-by-the-Sea. If connected to the new Reed Park facility, there would be a waterfront boardwalk from Masconomo Park halfway to the draw bridge.

- **Recreational Docks** – After some initial distress about the pilings supporting the docks the general feeling seems to be positive about this new facility. The inner harbor was as well managed as it has been since before 2012. The staff ensured the docks were used appropriately and all fees were collected. The lobstermen did not have to compete with recreational boaters to get to their docks and reported a much better overall environment.

  Several residents pointed out another error in the Harbor Department’s thinking and the attendant short-sighted ways of the Harbormaster. The individuals stated
that the new float system should have carried all the way to the bridge thus creating an entire inner harbor walkway for residents to enjoy.

- **Office** – Lastly is the one item not proposed by residents but rather by the Harbormaster. The relocation of the office to Reed Park would have the advantage of allowing the Harbormaster to be productive in the office while keeping an eye on waterfront activity, standard procedure in other harbors. It is important that trained response personnel be on duty to ensure that the important work of responding to on water related needs of the boaters are adequately met, the same as Police and Fire Departments. This is nearly impossible with the current office location. Relocation of the office has been an idea since December 2011 when the Harbormaster first walked into the Harbormaster’s office. As part of this proposal bathrooms accessible to the public in the building are recommended. This proposal in no way suggests that there should be no bathrooms at Masconomo, simply that if there is going to be a building lets have bathrooms.

- **Dredging** – Carry on with the 40-year plan for dredging 25% per decade. The Dredging Committee is reviewing the 25% plan, reimbursement grants and the possibility of a new dredging cycle recommendation. The Committee will recommend an increase in water way fees to assist in paying for dredging. Recommendations from the Dredging Committee can be expected in February or March 2020.

As always, the Harbor Department will pursue grant money and other funding opportunities to realize these goals with minimum impact to taxpayers.

6. **Preview of Fall Town Meeting**

**Article 1: Town Land to be under the Conservation Commission** – Mr. Gang, Conservation Commission will introduce the article. Town Counsel edited the original article with support of the Conservation Commission.

**Article 2: Two CPA Projects – Town Common rehab and Trask House preservation** – will be presented by the Community Preservation Committee.

**Article 3: Funds for waterline replacement design work** – will be presented by Mr. Steinert.

**Article 4 and 5: Lease and funding for a new compost facility at the existing transfer station** – will be presented by Mr. Boling. Mr. Boling stated he is still working on his written notes for the articles.

Mr. Steinert is concerned the Town is using funds to support a private enterprise and asked if the Board is prepared to answer questions during Town meeting. Mr. Creighton clarified that article 4 authorizes the Board with a member of the Finance Committee to enter into contract and lease negotiations and article 5 authorizes money. If the lease cannot be worked out the process will stop.
7. Budget Discussion

Mr. Federspiel indicated details of the budget will be fully discussed during the joint meeting with the Finance Committee on December 2, 2019. This evening he would like to discuss what is sustainable and reasonable around the annual tax hike issue. He stated for the most part voters appear satisfied with a 2% to 2 ½% tax increase. He would like to know if the Board is comfortable with the proposed increase and if not, what services would the Board recommend targeting for savings.

Mr. Federspiel went on to say from an operating perspective it takes a 2% to 2 ½% increase to continue providing services at the current level. Capital investments are proceeding as planned and barring any major storms the Town is in good shape.

The Town has not done a lot towards growing the tax base and appears hesitant to do so. Residents did express a willingness to look at the LCD but for the most part residents are not interested in growing the tax base as a way out of fiscal challenges.

The Fire Department remains problematic. Can the Town rekindle the Call Force? Are there mutual aid or shared service models to pursue? Does the Town need to hire more career staff? Ms. Jaques asked if the decline in the Call Force is part of a national trend? Mr. Federspiel indicated it was.

Mr. Boling stated the Town spent a great deal of time during the FY 20 budget discussions developing a reasonable and sustainable compromise position with the Fire Department and he is a little bit unhappy the issue is being raised again. Mr. Boling stated he is not supportive of making a change at this time. He prefers to wait and discuss any changes with the new Fire Chief and in future budget discussions.

Ms. Jaques asked for how long the Town has been increasing taxes at an annual rate of 2 ½%. Mr. Creighton replied since Prop 2 ½ passed. Mr. Boling stated 2% to 2 ½% has been used for some time and he is comfortable with keeping the existing level of services for the coming year. He asked for suggestions from the Finance Committee.

Mr. Creighton stated reserves have been increasing steadily for a number of years. The Finance Committee is recommending looking at local receipts and recommends a 5-year average of .8% to pull back on the tax rate for a year or two until reserves level off or come down a bit.

Mr. Boling asked if there were additional areas that required special attention. Mr. Federspiel indicated DPW anticipates a high rate of retirement in the coming years and it may be time to bring on new hires for training and to overlap with staff about to retire. If there was an increase in staffing at DPW the Department could take on more basic maintenance work rather than contracting the work out. No other department is looking to consider big changes in the coming fiscal year.

Mr. Steinert asked if there were operational savings to be realized by contracting for infrastructure work to be done now while the Town had a surplus in reserves. This would be an easily justifiable expense for taxpayers to support. Mr. Federspiel will analyze projects currently laid out and consider moving some projects forward to save
and tweak the model. He stated there is a lot of waterline work to be completed in Town.

8. Consent Agenda
   - BOS Minutes – October 29, 2019 and November 4, 2019

Minutes for October 29, 2019 were held for Ms. Jaques’ edits and will be considered at the Board meeting on December 2, 2019.

Ms. Jaques moved to approve the minutes of November 4, 2019; Mr. Bodmer-Turner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Correspondence
   - Letter from Comcast re: Eligibility Expansion for Internet Essentials

10. Town Administrator’s Report

   ➢ Construction Update: The new water line work is progressing on Magnolia Avenue and should be completed by Thanksgiving. The crew will move to Ocean Street starting on the stretch along White Beach (no bypass needed.) Depending on weather this will likely be it for waterline work until spring. Work on Washington/Sea/Summer Streets intersection may also now wait until spring. Mr. Dam hopes to confirm this next week.

   ➢ Intersection Layout Design: The engineers have made necessary modifications to the alternative concepts. There is additional fine tuning being pursued as the Downtown Improvement Project react to the revisions. Intersection redesign may be ready for the Board to review at the December 2, 2019 meeting.

   ➢ Fire Chief Recruitment: We have received some promising applications for the Chief’s position. Mr. Federspiel will convene a review committee in December.

   ➢ Communication: Our new Communications Coordinator, Ms. Marletta, is into her second week. She is preparing a newsletter to go out with the December tax bills, is putting up new posts on social media and is preparing to assist with a refresh of the Town web site. If the Board members would like to see any specific areas addressed please let the TA know.

   ➢ BOH Staffing Issues: There have been some internal issues around staffing. There will likely be shifts in office arrangements, Mr. Federspiel will keep the Board informed.

11. Other Matters, as May Have Not Been Reasonably Anticipated by the Chairman – Discussion Only. NONE

Mr. Bodmer-Turner moved to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Jaques seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Documents:

- Harbormaster Update and Vision Discussion
- Town Administrator’s Report
- Town Meeting Warrant Articles
- Articles 4 and 5 Town Meeting Handout
- National Grid Public Hearing Request
- Public Hearing Tax Classification Report
- Grant of Easement, National Grid re: Memorial School
- Consent Agenda items as listed
- Correspondence as listed

**Upcoming BOS Meetings**

- December 2, 2019
- December 16, 2019