

BOARD OF SELECTMEN VIRTUAL MEETING

Wed., November 18, 2020 – 6:00 PM – Via Zoom

PRESENT: Alan Hanson, Chair; Neal Pilson, Selectman; Roger Manzolini, Selectmen; Danielle Fillio, Town Admin.;

GUESTS: Bob Gniadek, Chair Finance Cte.; Pat Callahan, Chair Building Cte.; Bob Youdelman; Steve Patterson; Peter Miller; Dick Stover; Peter Cohen; Angela Garrity, Town Clerk;

Alan opened the meeting at 6:00 PM with a request for Neal to read the Governor's Order revising the Open Meeting Law requirements due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

Approval of the November 4, 2020 Minutes: Neal moved that the minutes of the November 4th meeting of the Board be approved as revised. The motion was seconded by Roger and passed by unanimous agreement.

Public Comment: There were no comments from the audience.

Update on Town Hall Building Status due to COVID-19 Issues: Because of the sudden upsurge in positive COVID-19 cases in the area, the Town Hall building has been closed to the public. The public has been advised to drop off items in the black box on the front of the building or to call and make appointments to come in for assistance. This condition is temporary during the continued increase in cases. The public was informed of this change through the e-newsletter, announcements on the town website and on Facebook. There have been no complaints. In addition, staff has been offered the option to work from home if they feel uncomfortable coming into the building. Danielle assured the Board that staff is aware of the option, but no one shows any sign of taking advantage of it.

Danielle noted that she is working toward changing the provider for virtual meetings from Zoom to Go-To Meeting providing she is granted the \$5,000 Cares Act Fund grant money. Neal pointed out that the Board is anticipating a recommendation from the Cable Advisory Cte. to set up equipment to distribute our meetings from Town Hall on the internet. Danielle has spoken to Laura Brennon about the storage capacity of our website to house those videos. Laura created a You-Tube Channel which can store those videos with a link to them from our website.

Special Use Permits for Richmond Pond: Danielle read the names of the organizations that annually request the use of the pond for their events. As all of the requesters were the same that have been using the pond for years and as there have never been any complaints from the residents around the pond and as Roger was assured that noise restrictions are built into the permits, he moved to allow Danielle to approve the permits. Neal seconded the motion, which was carried by unanimous consent.

Bob Gniadek opened the Finance Committee meeting with a reading of the new Open Meeting Law requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finance Committee Opened their meeting and joined the Selectmen: Pat Callahan nominated Bob Gniadek as Chair of the Committee. Steve Patterson seconded that nomination. Bob called for additional nominations, of which there were none. There was no response. Bob accepted the nomination.

Call for nominations for a Recording Secretary elicited no responses and there were no volunteers to act in that capacity. Danielle assured the group that the Town Hall Staff will continue to post their agendas and transcribe their minutes as they have been doing.

Financing of new Town Hall/Library Building: Pat provided some background on the project which was put on hold in April of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The members of the Municipal Building Committee began to meet again and are all in agreement that now is the right time to move forward.

Plans are in place to send a letter to the Town's residents, advising them of the decision to take advantage of the opportunity now to move forward with this much-needed project at a time when costs are probably lower than they will ever be again. The Building Committee has created a slide presentation that will explain and illustrate the design, site and financing for the project.

David Eisenthal of UniBank was asked to provide alternative financing plans, which he presented at this meeting. Among his recommendations were to retain some flexibility of financing to be prepared for future unknowns. His plans assume a 30-year amortization and provided an option for level-funding.

David also offered an option of multiple funding, which elicited a discussion of a potential for unspent proceeds and the need for split financing.

Further discussion clearly developed a consensus that the new Town Hall/Library building is imperative to the future of the Town and the costs to the Town's taxpayers are necessary. All the members of the Board of Selectmen, the Finance Committee and the Municipal Building Committee were in enthusiastic agreement with that statement. Therefore, Bob Gniadek, Chair of the Finance Committee, stated his decision to support the Building Committee's going forward with the presentation of the slides to residents and the successful completion of the building project.

The business of the Finance Committee having been completed Bob adjourned the Finance Committee portion of the meeting.

There being also no further business before the Board of Selectmen, Alan moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Neal and adopted by unanimous vote.