

October 5, 2020

**Board of Selectmen  
October 5, 2020  
Town Hall**

**AMENDED**

**Present:**

Mary Blanchard, Chair  
Mary Dowling, Vice Chair  
Selectman Michael Suprenant  
Selectman Chase Kaitbenski  
Selectman Ian Dunnigan

**Staff:**

Jeff Bridges, Town Administrator  
Alex McConnon, Administrative Assistant

**Chair Blanchard called the meeting to order at 6:32pm**

**Chair Blanchard read the following statement:** Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting law, G.L. c. 30A Section 18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Sturbridge Board of Selectmen will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation can be found on the Town's website at <https://www.sturbridge.gov/town-administrator/pages/how-access-virtual-meeting>. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to listen and or watch the meeting either online via the Town's on demand video broadcast, on cable television on channel 191, or dial into the meeting at 774-304-1455, enter 1428# for the meeting number and 12345 for the access code. (This phone number is only active for the public during public meetings). No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post of the Town's website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of the proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

**The Selectmen led the Pledge of Allegiance.**

**Chair Blanchard read the Agenda.**

**Public Service Announcements**

Chair Blanchard asked all of the members of the Board if they had any Public Service Announcements.

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Selectman Suprenant mentioned that MassDOT will have an online information session on October 22, 2020 about the East West Rail if townspeople are interested. For more information, they can go to the website at <https://www.mass.gov/east-west-passenger-rail-study>.

Vice Chair Dowling wished to extend her prayers for a full recovery to President Trump and the First Lady. She also extended her prayers to Vice President Pence and his family, and to Former Vice President Biden, and Senator Harris and their families that they stay healthy so the Democratic and election process can continue to go on in a healthy and safe way.

Chair Blanchard stated that there is a posting from Town Clerk from the Autumn Voting Guide, which is on the website too. Chair Blanchard listed that the polls will be open Saturday, October 17, 2020 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and Saturday, October 24, 2020 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., and 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The last day to register to vote or change political designation is October 24, 2020. Early voting at the Town Hall is on Sunday, October 18, 2020 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. People can go directly to the website for more information.

Selectman Chase Kaitbenski and Selectman Ian Dunnigan had no Public Service Announcements.

#### **Moment of Silence**

The Selectmen held a moment of silence in honor of all those affected from COVID- 19.

#### **Recognition of Employees – Barbara Boiteu – 30 Years of Service**

Interim Police Chief, Earl Dessert read a letter of appreciation honoring Barbara Boiteu for her 30 years in service as a Dispatcher. The Police Department presented Ms. Boiteu with a plaque on September 17, 2020 for her years in service. Chair Blanchard thanked Ms. Boiteu on behalf of the Board and said that it is the Town's policy to present a plaque at the next Annual Town Meeting. The rest of the Board of Selectmen extended appreciation for Ms. Boiteu's dedicated service to the Town of Sturbridge.

#### **Public Hearing- Propane Tank- Sail Energy, LLC- 59 Technology Park Road, Sturbridge MA**

Selectman Suprenant read the Legal Notice that was published in the Stonebridge Press on September 18, 2020. Mr. Jalbert from Jalbert Engineering, Inc. introduced himself as representing Sail Energy, LLC at 59 Technology Park Road in Sturbridge, MA. Mr. Jalbert notified the Board of Selectmen that there was one certified mailing card that was sent to the abutter that was not returned yet but he said he received it late from Prouty Trustees in Worcester, MA. Per Mr. Jalbert, the property was laid out in 2003 and is basically staying as is but the only change is that they are putting in two 30,000-gallon propane tanks in the northerly/westerly corner of property. Mr. Jalbert found that they needed to do three things for approval, which was to go before the Planning Board for approval, followed by the Fire Department, and finally the Board of Selectmen. On September 8, 2020, Mr. Jalbert went for approval from the Planning Board in which it was approved on September 11, 2020, as long as they get applicable permits. Mr. Jalbert then went to the Water Department for approval of submittal, followed by the Fire Department who wanted to do a pressure study on the property. Mr. Jalbert went to Performance Consultants, Inc., a Licensed Fire Protection Engineers in Holland, Massachusetts and a study was done where they found that the flow positions of 40,000 psi (pound per square inch) was 500,000 gallons per minute with pressure of around 29 psi. Mr. Jalbert talked to the Fire Department and found no negative response and now they are here for approval before the Board of Selectmen for two 30,000 gallon above ground tanks. After approval from the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Department, and the Fire Department, they will submit all applications for approval for the aboveground tanks.

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Mr. Bridges stated that he got the sign off from the Fire Department for the tanks saying that Chief Grasso has no issue with the placement of the tanks on the study that Mr. Jalbert referenced. Chair Blanchard asked Mr. Jalbert why two 30,000 gallons tanks says 48,000 gallons on the application. Mr. Jalbert clarified that per the Fire Department, the tanks are only filled to 80% capacity. Mr. Bridges checked for anyone calling in on this application but there were no calls and no emails.

**Motion: To close the public hearing By: Selectman Kaitbenski**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Selectman Dunnigan**

**Roll Call Vote: Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: YES, Selectman Dunnigan: YES**

**Vote: 5-0**

**Motion: To approve the propane tanks of Sail Energy, LLC at 59 Technology Park Road, Sturbridge MA. By: Selectman Kaitbenski**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Selectman Dunnigan**

**Roll Call Vote: Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: YES, Selectman Dunnigan: YES**

**Vote: 5-0**

**Public Hearing- Propane Tank- Porchlight III, LLC- 420 Main Street Sturbridge MA**

Selectman Suprenant read the Legal Notice that was published in the Stonebridge Press on September 18, 2020. Mr. Keith Hiser represented the Public Hearing for Porchlight III, LLC. Mr. Hiser explained that the property is located at Wight Farm at the corner near Cedar Street Café, the sales office, and another building in-between saying those properties were separate parcels and now they have been combined to one entity and their allotment of propene storage had to be combined. Mr. Hiser said that around 4,000 gallons of propane is already on the property, but only to accommodate and not for the restaurant or cooking. Now they need to increase the barn entity with two tanks, add one more for the café, and add the other tanks in front of Building #2, next to the barn which serves as the function hall and overflow for the restaurant. Those two tanks will be replaced in-ground and increase the volume for in-ground at the property. 5,820 gallons will potentially be put in ground at the property. Chair Blanchard asked if it was a 2,000 gallon increase from the previous, which it was. There were no additional questions from the Board of Selectmen or the Public.

**Motion: To close the public hearing By: Selectman Kaitbenski**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Selectman Dunnigan**

Chair Blanchard asked if there was any more discussion on this item. Selectman Suprenant asked if there was a more definite site plan of where the tanks are going that are available besides the Assessors' map. Mr. Hiser said that it would be a direct replacement at 75% of tanks that are currently there and that there is a tank next to the barn already, which will have two additional tanks, added next to it. Selectman Suprenant requested that the Board of Selectmen have plans that are more exact for the Fire Department. Mr. Hiser agreed saying that he has been working closely with Fire Department on the layout. Selectman Suprenant said that if it ends up being in the GIS (Geographic Information System), then the Fire Department could know where it is within and as long as they know where it is then that would work.

**Roll Call Vote: Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: YES, Selectman Dunnigan: YES**

**Vote: 5-0**

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**Motion: To approve the propane tanks of Porchlight III, LLC - 420 Main Street Sturbridge MA. By: Selectman Suprenant**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Selectman Kaitbenski**

**Roll Call Vote: Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: YES, Selectman Dunnigan: YES**

**Vote: 5-0**

### **Presentation: Pine Lake Resort**

Mr. Philip Moreau, owner of Pine Lake Resort provided a progress update on the RV Resort located in Sturbridge with a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Moreau showed before and after pictures of the relevant parts of the park and the progress made within the past two years. The park is equipped with multiple buildings, four conference centers with warming kitchens, one pool, a laundry mat, a gift shop stocked with art from local artisans, a barbeque area, a fire pit, a fitness center, a billiard room, and various cottages for guests to stay in. Mr. Moreau said that they hope to be conducting tours for next season and there has been a strong response from people with buying a season pass from April to November.

Chair Blanchard asked if the Board of Selectmen had any questions. Both Selectman Kaitbenski and Vice Chair Dowling complimented Mr. Moreau on the beauty of the resort. Vice Chair Dowling asked if there was a timeframe for the opening of the resort and Mr. Moreau said that it could possibly open within the week. Mr. Moreau expressed that they are hoping to open the doors and stay open through November 2020, then close from December 2020 to March 2021 and then open back up in April 2021 for the new season until the end of November 2021. The park has a variety of events planned with COVID-19 regulations in place. The Board of Selectmen thanked Mr. Moreau for his presentation.

### **Department Reports**

#### **Facilities**

Ms. Robyn Chrabasz, Facilities Coordinator, submitted her Annual Department Report to the Board, listing the projects that she worked on this year, future projects, recreation, and conservation and said that everyone has been a pleasure to work with. Ms. Chrabasz asked if the Board of Selectmen had questions and Vice Chair Dowling said that Robyn did a great job on first few projects, COVID notwithstanding. Vice Chair Dowling asked if the Nursery school got window washing and Ms. Chrabasz said that before the school opened up, they did a deep cleaning along with window washing. Vice Chair Dowling also asked if the Nursery school, the Department of Public Works, and Public Safety had their carpets cleaned. Ms. Chrabasz said limited carpet cleaning was done in the safety complex. The Department of Public Works recently installed their carpet and Ms. Chrabasz has stated that one of her goals is to acquire a carpet extractor to do in-house carpet cleaning. Chair Blanchard asked about trash services and Ms. Chrabasz said that Republic Services has been doing well with delivering dumpsters and that they brought one for Cedar Street Recreation area for the summer that has been removed since. Chair Blanchard and Vice Chair Dowling were impressed with the thoroughness of Robyn's report. Mr. Bridges thanked Ms. Chrabasz for a great year with her expertise and attitude on getting things done. Ms. Chrabasz thanked the Board of Selectmen and the three custodians; Jim Mortell, Michael DeHaan, Shawn Lans for helping her take care of the facilities during this period of COVID-19.

#### **Town Administrator**

Mr. Bridges submitted his Department report and said that per the Board of Health, door-to-door trick or treating is on for Sturbridge. A COVID-19 guidance document came out on October 6, 2020 that will be

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published on the town website and statewide this week. Mr. Bridges urged everyone to trick-or-treat in a safe way. Mr. Bridges said that the decision for the Horribles Parade is still pending but should have answer in the next week or so.

Mr. Bridges discussed a new item, which was looking at the net metering contracts for energy credits with Blue Wave that started back in 2018. There is an imbalance in the allocation in the different buildings and where the credits are being built up and not expending credits. Mr. Bridges has been working with the consultant, Beth Greenblatt, and Town Accountant Chris Geraghty, to balance the credits out stating that there may be some credits that are owed to Sturbridge and Sturbridge may owe some funds to Blue Wave. Mr. Bridges also mentioned that Sturbridge might be owed money by National Grid. Mr. Bridges has been in the process of sorting it out among the different accounts and said that more information on it will come out in next couple of weeks.

Mr. Bridges also finished his last rounds of purchasing classes for Goods and Services. Mr. Bridges still has one more class to go before he becomes a certified purchasing officer with the town.

Vice Chair Dowling asked about 508 International and if a conference call has taken place yet. Mr. Bridges said that they need to take look at the zoning and how it relates to what he has heard from the owner and that a call will take place on Wednesday with the Attorney. Vice Chair Dowling said that she wrote a memorandum with questions and asked if she could listen in on the call. Mr. Bridges said that the decision is up to the Board of Selectmen. Chair Blanchard asked if anyone else was interested in attending the call but Vice Chair Dowling was the only one.

Under Old Business, Vice Chair Dowling asked what the statute was and what other criteria the Board of Selectmen use for approving a racetrack, including the process for holding a public hearing. Mr. Bridges said that once the bylaw is finished and agreed on, they will work on timing that is acceptable to both parties stating that he does not want to spend attorney time for the bylaw. Vice Chair Dowling said the applicant's council told the Board of Selectmen that they will have to hold a public hearing to approve the racetrack in the town. Vice Chair Dowling requested that they receive guidance from town council as to what the legal parameters are to holding a public hearing. Vice Chair Dowling stated that she understands the zoning process but wants to know if the zoning change happens before or after the public hearing. Mr. Bridges explained that KP Law and the Attorney are working on pushing out the bylaw. Mr. Bridges said that there will need to be a public hearing on the approval of a racetrack but we are not there yet. Per Mr. Bridges, Vice Chair Dowling and the rest of the Board of Selectmen will get statute but the focus right now is with the bylaw.

**Consideration and possible acceptance of the resignation of Robert Barrows from the Sturbridge Department of Public Works.**

There was no discussion or questions from the Board of Selectmen.

**Motion: By: Accept the resignation of Robert Barrows from the Sturbridge Department of Public Works effective October 1, 2020. By: Selectman Kaitbenski**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Selectman Dunnigan**

**Roll Call Vote: Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: YES, Selectman Dunnigan: YES**

**Vote: 5-0**

**Consideration and possible action on the concurrence of the appointment of Erin Carson as the Administrative Assistant for Conservation.**

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Mr. Bridges reported that Rebecca Gendreau and Jean Bubon have reviewed the applications and interviewed the applicants for the position and recommended that Erin Carson who is current Administrative Assistant for Board of Health be awarded this new position. Chair Blanchard asked if Mrs. Carson is resigning from the Board of Health position and Mrs. Carson said yes, effective October 15, 2020. Vice Chair Dowling said she appreciates having good employees who move around rather than losing them and she is glad that Mrs. Carson found a department that she is excited to transfer into.

**Motion: To concur the appointment of Erin Carson as the Administrative Assistant for Conservation at the rate of \$20.28 per hour effective October 15, 2020. By: Selectman Kaitbenski 2<sup>nd</sup>: Vice Chair Dowling**

**Roll Call Vote: Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: YES, Selectman Dunnigan: YES**

**Vote: 5-0**

**Consideration and possible action on the concurrence of the appointment of Terence Masterson as the Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator.**

Jean Bubon, Town Planner and Brian Amedy, Chair of Sturbridge Tourist Association interviewed the applicants and Terence Masterson came out as the top candidate. Mr. Masterson did an analysis on the hotel and meal tax for the town and Mr. Bridges is excited to have him on the team. Vice Chair Dowling said that she was excited to have data on the revenue and what was lost because of COVID-19. Vice Chair Dowling also stated that she was impressed to have this detailed data in the documents that Mr. Masterson made as well as having a new knowledgeable person to join the team. Mr. Masterson expressed excitement for the position and said that he has experience in Tourism and Economic Development. Mr. Masterson is looking forward to reaching out to businesses in the community to help and connect with them and to support Elizabeth McCabe and her Economic Development study. Mr. Masterson is also looking forward to figuring out ways to measure and record data to market and improve Sturbridge and where Sturbridge want to go. Mr. Masterson stated that he was excited about the RV presentation that took place earlier in the meeting. Vice Chair Dowling asked when Mr. Masterson's expected start date was and Mr. Bridges said that now that he has finished his screening, it will probably be sometime this week or next.

**Motion: To concur with the appointment of Terence Masterson as the Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator at a salary of \$50,135 contingent on successful completion on a pre-employment screening. By: Selectman Suprenant**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Vice Chair Dowling**

**Roll Call Vote: Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: YES, Selectman Dunnigan: YES**

**Vote: 5-0**

**Consideration and possible action on the acceptance of the warrant for the 2020 State Election and authorize the signing and to post thereof.**

There were no discussion or questions from the Board of Selectmen.

**Motion: To approve and authorize the signing of the warrant for the 2020 State Election By: Selectman Kaitbenski**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Selectman Dunnigan**

**Roll Call Vote: Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: YES, Selectman Dunnigan: YES**

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**Vote: 5-0**

**Consideration and possible action on salt vendors for winter of 2020 – 2021.**

Mr. Jackson, the Department of Public Works Director, spoke saying that they bid their salt through the Consortium and bid normal road salt through Shrewsbury Consortium. The Department of Public Works got a bid price of \$46.50, which is \$1.65 cheaper than a state contract and they bid treated salt through Oxford Consortium and got a price of \$60.17, which is \$2.10 cheaper than last year and \$5.73 cheaper than the state contracts this year. Selectman Suprenant asked how much treated salt the town uses and Mr. Jackson said they put a number of 500 ton last year but only used about 200 ton since there was not much cold weather last year, stating that it all depends on the weather. Mr. Jackson explained that if the weather gets colder than 15 degrees then they use the treated salt since regular salt will not melt under 15 degrees.

**Motion: To approve the contracts with Eastern Minerals at \$46.50 per ton, Morton Salt at \$46.69 per ton, and Leed Salt at \$60.17 per ton for ice control materials for 2020-2021. By: Selectman Suprenant**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Selectman Kaitbenski**

**Roll Call Vote: Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: YES, Selectman Dunnigan: YES**

**Vote: 5-0**

**Consideration and possible action on the selection of delegates and alternates from the Board of Selectmen to the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission.**

Chair Blanchard stated that Selectman Suprenant is the current Delegate and Vice Chair Dowling is the Alternate. Chair Blanchard asked if Selectman Suprenant was still interested in the position but Selectman Suprenant offered the opportunity to anyone else who was interested. Selectman Suprenant said that as a Delegate, you have to attend four Quarterly meetings a year. No one on the Board expressed interest in being the Delegate for Fiscal Year 2021 but Vice Chair Dowling said that she would like to continue to be the Alternate. Chair Blanchard asked if Selectman Suprenant went to the first meeting and Selectman Suprenant said there was only one he went to in 2020 because a few were canceled. Chair Blanchard stated that the next meetings are in November, January, and March.

**Motion: To reappoint Selectman Suprenant as the Delegate and Vice Chair Dowling as the Alternate to the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission for Fiscal Year 2021 By: Selectman Kaitbenski.**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Selectman Dunnigan**

**Roll Call Vote: Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: YES, Selectman Dunnigan: YES**

**Vote: 5-0**

**Consideration and review of the authorization of \$1,000 of Project Funds from the Town Administrator Budget for the purpose of conducting a background investigation on the finalist for Police Chief.**

Vice Chair Dowling asked if Mr. Bridges if he was doing this in advance to line up the money or if the committee has already made the selection on who they would recommend as the new Chief of Police. Mr. Bridges stated that they have not started interviews yet.



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**Motion: Authorize the use of \$1,000 of Project Funds from the Town Administrator Budget for the purpose of conducting a background investigation on the finalist for Police Chief. By: Selectman Dunnigan**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Selectman Suprenant**

**Roll Call Vote: Chair Blanchard: ABSTAINED, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: YES, Selectman Dunnigan: YES**

**Vote: 4-0-1 (Chair Blanchard abstained)**

**Consideration and possible action on a Memorandum of Agreement (amended) among the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and the Town of Sturbridge and the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division for the Design and Engineering Services for the Grand Trunk Trail Project.**

Mr. Bridges said the town has a memorandum of agreement in place; however, with the increase in budget due to necessary additional engineering and environmental studies and an increase in revenue from \$150,000 Trail Grant, the town had to update the MOA to account for the new expenditures and the new revenues. There is still a \$214,000 difference between the expected total cost and what is available; however, the town is not at the 70% design of plans yet, so once the town is at the 70% design, there should be a better handle on total cost. There is also a \$121,000 contingency in the budget right now, so the difference between available resources and total cost may compress as the town heads towards the final design.

**Motion: To approve the revised Memorandum of Agreement among the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and the Town of Sturbridge and the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division for the Design and Engineering Services for the Grand Trunk Trail Project. By: Selectman Suprenant**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Selectman Kaitbenski**

**Roll Call Vote: Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: YES, Selectman Dunnigan: YES**

**Vote: 5-0**

**Old Business**

Vice Chair Dowling said that the town has a COVID-19 update on the website and she urges residents to check the website regularly as the Board of Health is constantly updating it. Vice Chair Dowling stated that she often gets questions about testing and forwards her questions to the Board of Health and learned that as part of Charlie Baker's "Stop the Spread" Initiative, there are 18 sites through end of October, where people can get tested with no referral, no cost to them, and even if they have no symptoms. People also do not have to live in the city where the testing sites are located. Vice Chair Dowling said that there is a site that is open in Worcester and Selectman Suprenant said that there is also a site in Springfield at the Eastfield Mall, which could be more convenient for people going the other way.

**COVID-19 Update**

Mr. Bridges said that in addition to the clearing out of the top floor of the Town Hall for the election, he has given the employees who work in that area an option to work a flexible schedule or to work from home



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for those two weeks so that they will not mix with the voters coming in and out of the building. This option was presented to the employees since there is no way to separate the employees who work upstairs as they do with the plexiglass for the employees working on the first floor of Town Hall. Mr. Bridges also evaluated a hard separation from the doorkeepers and the people entering the Town Hall and the Center Office Building but the town does not have that ability due to egress issues. The town has decided to eliminate the doorkeeper position at the Center Office Building, allowing each department to track separately at each office since the Central Office Building is equipped with plexiglass shields at each office. Mr. Bridges also said that he would keep the doorkeeper at the Town Hall until after the election but then they will move to a process where each office will do its own contract tracing.

Mr. Bridges said that there was a request from a resident for a way to assist restaurants to stay open with COVID-19 during colder months. Mr. Bridges reached out to the 14 locations that have outdoor dining and only heard back from six businesses. Four of them were not interested in continuing outdoor dining when the weather gets colder because they do not think that customers will want to participate. Two businesses expressed interest but one business was more interested in the relief of the on town bills like water/sewer bills and taxes. The type of heaters for the tents would be heat that is generated outside of the tent and pumped inside since the heaters cannot be under the tents. The resident requested that the town support the purchasing of the heaters and loaning them to the businesses for the wintertime. Mr. Bridges went to Town Counsel, who said that town funds could be used if the town goes to the Finance Committee, per interest in the business community. Mr. Bridges stated that some businesses already have the heaters and the tents are expensive to rent for the wintertime. Chair Blanchard asked about pricing and Mr. Bridges said that from his understanding the heaters could be around \$2,000 each. Chair Blanchard was concerned with the amount of businesses interested against the cost of them and when they could be delivered since delivering them in December would be a bit late. Chair Blanchard asked if Mr. Bridges could get more information together before the Board of Selectmen makes a decision and Mr. Bridges agreed, saying he will also get pricing.

Chair Blanchard asked if any of the other Board Members had anything to add. Vice Chair Dowling fully supported the idea, whether the town goes to the Finance Committee or approaches the Sturbridge Tourist Association to see if there is room in their budget. Vice Chair Dowling was concerned because she saw that in a three-month period, the town of Sturbridge saw a reduction in overall restaurant dining of more than 10 million dollars, a 59% decline from last year to June, July, August 2020. Vice Chair Dowling thinks that even if just two restaurants are interested, it is two more businesses that can stay open a little longer and it might still be good for word of mouth for other businesses. Vice Chair Dowling stated that December might be a little too cold but that Sturbridge may still be in COVID-19 for a while with vaccines not available for everyone, so when restaurants want to open in March and April, the town may still want to produce heaters for them. Vice Chair Dowling said that she hopes the other Board of Selectmen members will see this as a good idea to support the business committee and thinks that recreation might get use from them during Halloween and Christmas time.

Chair Blanchard expressed interest but requested more information on the cost from Mr. Bridges and Vice Chair Dowling agreed. Chair Blanchard asked how rest of the Board of Selectmen felt about the idea and Selectman Dunnigan said that those heaters are hard to find and are more money now because people are buying them to stock up. Selectman Dunnigan also stated that in talking to customers, many people prefer to sit inside during the cold weather. Mr. Bridges stated that he would get more information on the subject.

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**Board of Selectmen participation in the Municipal Vulnerability Program stakeholders meetings.**

Chair Blanchard said there are three meetings. Mr. Bridges said he would like Board of Selectmen's participation and that they could all pick different nights to participate with different stakeholders of the community.

**New Business**

Selectman Dunnigan said that a resident reached out to him about the policy with items (that were voted on previously) being purchased at the town auction and asked why town employees were barred from bidding on those items. The resident also wanted to know if the Board of Selectmen were interested in changing the policy. Chair Blanchard said that she also got a question on that and referred the person to Mr. Bridges. Mr. Bridges said that he received one email from a town employee who works at the Burgess School. Mr. Bridges stated that in the towns that he has worked in previously, they did not allow public employees to bid on such items and that it was a routine practice for him to make that recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Bridges also stated that if the Board of Selectmen has a different opinion on the matter, then that is fine.

Chair Blanchard suggested checking with policy book and looking at who has purchased items in the past. Selectman Kaitbenski agreed with the recommendation of Mr. Bridges on the current policy and Selectman Suprenant agreed, said that allowing town employees to purchase these items appears to be a conflict of interest even if it is not. Selectman Suprenant stated that under Massachusetts Conflict of Interest regulations, if an employee is gaining advantage that the public does not have access to by bidding on an item that they have inside knowledge on that is a conflict of interest. Selectman Suprenant said that the employees have to be careful and that anyone bidding on town property will have to make a disclosure that they do not have special knowledge of what they are bidding on. Vice Chair Dowling asked if family members can bid on these items and Mr. Bridges said yes.

**Correspondence**

Selectman Suprenant read the correspondence:

**Approval of Minutes**

September 21, 2020

**Motion: To approve the minutes of September 21, 2020 as amended Vice Chair Dowling By:  
Selectman Kaitbenski**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Selectman Dunnigan**

**Roll Call Vote: Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Dunnigan: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES,  
Chair Blanchard: YES Selectman Kaitbenski: YES**

**Vote: 5-0**

**Citizen's forum**

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NONE

**Adjourn**

**Motion: To adjourn at 8:39pm By: Chair Blanchard**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Selectman Kaitbenski**

**Roll Call Vote: Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Dunnigan: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: YES,  
Selectman Suprenant: YES, Chair Blanchard: YES,**

**Vote: 5-0**

**Adjourned at 8:39pm**

**Minutes prepared by: Alex McConnon**

**Clerk of the Board:**  **Date signed:** 11-19-2020