

January 4, 2021

**Board of Selectmen
January 4, 2021
Town Hall**

Present:

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

Absent:

Selectman Chase Kaitbenski

Staff:

Jeff Bridges, Town Administrator
Alex McConnon, Administrative Assistant

Absent:

Chair Blanchard called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

The Selectmen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Blanchard read the Agenda.

Public Service Announcements

The selectmen wished everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Moment of Silence

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

Department Reports:

Fire Department

Chief Grasso reported for the months of November and December saying the department was awarded a grant for \$18,853 from the Leary Firefighters Foundation, which will be used to purchase personal bailout kits for the Firefighters and the associated training that goes along with those kits. Chief Grasso also thanked the firefighters who helped coordinate the Santa Ride. Per Chief Grasso, there are currently two positive COVID-19 cases at the Fire Department and the individuals are feeling better and are waiting for their quarantine period to end to return to work.

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Town Administrator

Mr. Bridges sent out the release to the owners of the property where the "Welcome to Sturbridge" sign is located and asked the Board of Selectmen to put it under "Old Business" on their Agenda to accept the release to get the sign removed. Mr. Bridges also said the Little League lighting project is underway and there will be lights on the field by springtime.

Water/Sewer

Mr. Shane Moody, Water and Sewer Department, reported for the months of October and November. Per Mr. Moody, their department completed a second round of PFAS testing on all the wells and treatment plants. Mr. Moody said the sampling would have to be done quarterly and for every quarter on every well, they will have to budget about \$30,000 a year for it. The Fiske Hill Pump Station work is completed for now until the pump station is built in the next couple of months. Mr. Moody explained that after it is built, they will drop it in place and hook up the electricity and generator. Per Mr. Moody, the DEP looked over the Well #4 report and it does not appear to have an impact on the brook. Mr. Moody said the DEP sent the report to Fish and Wildlife and once they sign off on the streamline on Well #4, it can be removed.

Selectman Suprenant asked about a charge on Mr. Moody's report for removing and replacing an E-One and asked if the \$500 charge is a typical charge any time the Town has to replace an E-One. Mr. Moody said the charges vary and people are only billed if the pump was abused. Chair Blanchard asked if all the hydrants are in working condition and Mr. Moody confirmed that all are in working condition except for one that will be repaired.

Consideration and possible action on a change order for the Public Safety Complex RTU #1 Replacement Project.

Robyn Chrabaszcz, Facilities Coordinator said the change order for \$2,166 is a result of when the town replaced the rooftop unit and discovered there are no carbon dioxide sensors measuring the content of the returned air. Ms. Chrabaszcz recommended adding the CO2 dispenser so the unit can be more efficient, which will also help with COVID-19 fresh air guidelines. Vice Chair Dowling asked if it was possible to use CARE money for the change order and Mr. Bridges confirmed since the deadline has been extended.

Motion: Approve the change order on the Public Safety Complex Roof Top Unit #1 for \$2,166.00 under contract with New England Mechanical.

By: Vice Chair Dowling

2nd: Selectman Suprenant

Roll Call Vote:

Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: ABSENT, Selectman Dunnigan: YES

Vote: 4-0 (Selectman Kaitbenski absent)

Consideration and possible action of a request for sewer service at 1 Old Towne Way.

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Butch Jackson, DPW Director said this is regarding the last house on Old Towne Way with a septic system that abuts Lake Road, which has the sewer system for the lake. Per Mr. Jackson, the line goes right by the owner's property and Towne Way does not have town services but Lake View does.

Motion: Approve the request for sewer service at 1 Old Town Way.

By: Selectman Suprenant

2nd: Selectman Dunnigan

Roll Call Vote:

Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: ABSTAINED, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: ABSENT, Selectman Dunnigan: YES

Vote: 3-0-1 (Selectman Kaitbenski absent)

Habitat for Humanity House – 226 Cedar Street:

1. Consideration and possible action on a Community Preservation Grant Agreement for the Habitat for Humanity Metro West/Greater Worcester, Inc. for a proposed home at 226 Cedar Street.

Mr. Bridges said the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) allocated \$201,756 for the project and the town created a grant agreement for steps towards the release of CPC funds. Mr. Bridges said there is an initial funding amount for this project and the majority of the funds are released based on the percentage of work completed. Per Mr. Bridges, the grant agreement with the town is at the end of the project and there is a hold back of about \$30,000 once the project is complete.

Motion: Approve the grant agreement with Habitat for Humanity.

By: Selectman Dunnigan

2nd: Selectman Suprenant

Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: ABSENT, Selectman Dunnigan: YES

Vote: 4-0 (Selectman Kaitbenski absent)

2. Consideration and possible action on a Purchase and Sale Agreement between the Town of Sturbridge and Habitat for Humanity Metro West/Greater Worcester, Inc. for a parcel of land at 226 Cedar Street.

Mr. Bridges said this is the Purchase and Sale Agreement that will transfer the property to Habitat for Humanity so they can start the project. Per Mr. Bridges, the key to this agreement is a deed restriction that requires any occupant or owner to 80% of the median income for the area. Mr. Bridges said this would be in the affordable housing stock for the length of time of the project or the property is in place. Selectman Dunnigan asked how the town came to own this piece of property and Mr. Bridges said the town solicited a request for proposal (RFP) for an affordable housing unit.

Motion: Approve the Purchase and Sale Agreement with Habit for Humanity for the Cedar Street property.

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By: Selectman Suprenant

2nd: Selectman Dunnigan

Roll Call Vote:

Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES,

Selectman Kaitbenski: ABSENT, Selectman Dunnigan: YES

Vote: 4-0 (Selectman Kaitbenski absent)

Consideration and possible action on the new position of Food Service Coordinator for the Council on Aging.

Leslie Wong, Director of Council on Aging reported that TriValley currently does the lunch program and Meals on Wheels and is not looking to replace Meals on Wheels but is looking for an in-house lunch program with this new position through their grant which would oversee a vendor to provide lunch at the Senior Center. Per Ms. Wong, the lunch program helps bring seniors into the center and gets them involved with various activities. Ms. Wong said the plan is to have the vendor deliver the food at 11:00 a.m. and the Food Service Coordinator would oversee the volunteers in the kitchen to serve lunch at 11:30 a.m. so the food would be served hot. Ms. Wong stated that there is a demand for lunches right now that are not being met.

Motion: Approve the new position titled "Food Service Coordinator" for the Council on Aging as presented by Leslie Wong to be paid for through grant funding by a formula grant.

By: Vice Chair Dowling

2nd: Selectman Suprenant

Roll Call Vote:

Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman

Kaitbenski: ABSENT, Selectman Dunnigan: YES

Vote: 4-0 (Chase Kaitbenski absent)

Old Business:

COVID-19 Update

Mr. Bridges reported that Harrington Hospital has started to register and administer the COVID-19 vaccine to first responders. Per Mr. Bridges, the federal stimulus package extended the time period to spend the already authorized funds until December 31, 2021. Mr. Bridges said the expanded Family Medical Leave was not extended through this fund. Vice Chair Dowling asked what the policy was on Citizen Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T.) members getting the vaccine, saying even though they are volunteers, she considers them to fall into the category as a first responder. Mr. Bridges explained that the rules are administrated at a state level but he will talk to the Board of Health to see if they are eligible to get the vaccine.

Vaccination Leave Policy

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Chair Blanchard said at their last discussion, the Board of Selectmen agreed that a day off was granted if the employee was experiencing symptoms but not to have a day off to get the vaccine. Chair Blanchard also explained that using a few hours would be okay but not the entire day.

Motion: Adopt the vaccination leave policy as amended by Jeff Bridges this evening.

By: Vice Chair Dowling

2nd: Selectman Suprenant

Roll Call Vote:

Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: ABSENT, Selectman Dunnigan: YES

Vote: 4-0 (Selectman Kaitbenski absent)

Trails in Riverlands

Brandon Goodwin represented the Trails Committee and explained the Riverlands Phase 1 map that they want to start in spring. The map was split up into different sections and Mr. Goodwin said this is the phase that will go to RFP in the winter to hopefully build the trail in the summer. Selectman Suprenant asked if any of these phases will develop the Grand Trunk Trail. Mr. Goodwin said this Phase is focused solely on flow trails and Tom Chamberlain said there is funding in place to build the first 2,000 feet of the Grand Trunk Trail but they need guidance from the town on what is happening with the Balenger property on which way to go with the trail. Per Mr. Chamberlain, the grant funding is in place and this flow trail is authorized in recreation masterplan under ST1 classification which is a standard used in the trails master plan. Mr. Goodwin said all of these trails would be built as one project and not give people access until completed.

Motion: To adopt the Trails Committee plan as presented and allow them to proceed according to their plan in place.

By: Vice Chair Dowling

2nd: Selectman Suprenant

Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: ABSENT, Selectman Dunnigan: YES

Vote: 4-0 (Selectman Kaitbenski absent)

Consideration and possible action on the demolition of the current "Welcome to Sturbridge" sign.

Motion: Accept the demolition of the current Sturbridge sign.

By: Selectman Dunnigan

2nd: Vice Chair Dowling

Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: ABSENT, Selectman Dunnigan: YES

Vote: 4-0 (Selectman Kaitbenski absent)

New Business:

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Senior Center Study Results

Mr. Bridges told the Board of Selectmen that he wants to invite the Architect to the next meeting to make a presentation on the outcome and results. Selectman Dunnigan asked if there was an intended usage for the old building and Mr. Bridges said it would have to be a subject on a community-wide conversation on what it could be used for.

Correspondence:

Selectman Suprenant read the correspondence.

Approval of Minutes:

December 21, 2020.

Motion: To approve minutes of December 21, 2020, as written.

By: Selectman Dunnigan

2nd: Selectman Suprenant

Roll Call Vote:

Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: ABSENT, Selectman Dunnigan: YES

Vote: 4-0 (Selectman Kaitbenski absent)

Citizen's forum:

NONE

Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn at 7:52 p.m.

By: Chair Blanchard

2nd: Selectman Dunnigan

Roll Call Vote:

Chair Blanchard: YES, Vice Chair Dowling: YES, Selectman Suprenant: YES, Selectman Kaitbenski: ABSENT, Selectman Dunnigan: YES

Vote: 4-0 (Selectman Kaitbenski absent)

Adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Minutes prepared by: Alex McConnon

Clerk of the Board: Michael Suprenant **Date signed:** 01-25-2021