

Meeting Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Hanover Board of Selectmen held in a hybrid approach via teleconference as well as in person at Hanover Town Hall on Monday, April 5, 2021 @ 7:00 PM.

Present at Town Hall, Chairman David Delaney, Vice Chair Rhonda Nyman, Selectman John Tuzik and Selectwoman Vanessa O'Connor. Selectman John Barry was unable to attend. Also present, Town Manager (TM) Joseph Colangelo and Executive Assistant Janet Tierney, Assistant Town Manager (ATM) Ann Lee, and Finance Director Chelsea Stevens (FD).

Call meeting to order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and asked for any public comments on topics not listed on the agenda, seeing none.

Minutes

The Board voted to approve the meeting minutes of March 15, 2021.

Presentations

Dr. Julie Goodman an expert in toxicology and epidemiology, and their application to human health risk assessments provided an overview of the Department of Public Health (DPH) report on cancer rates, [attached](#). TM clarified that Dr. Goodman did not draft the DPH report, but was hired by TM at the recommendation of special counsel, to provide a summary of the report. Dr. Goodman discussed the report's findings, the analysis that produced those findings and the limitations of the report. Residents Ken Greene, Steven Louko and Guiseppe Fornaro raised their virtual hands and joined the discussion.

Appointments

The Board voted to appoint Finance Director Chelsea Stevens as the Mayflower Municipal Health Group Primary Designee.

The Chair informed those listening that with the passing of Elaine Shea, a vacancy was created on the Board of Assessors. TM informed those listening that this portion of the meeting was warned as a joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Assessors. The Board of Selectmen along with the Board of Assessors voted to appoint Melsi Xhengo as a Member of the Board of Assessors.

The Chair informed those listening that with the passing of Elaine Shea, another vacancy was created on the Board of Library Trustees. TM informed those listening that this portion of the meeting was warned as a joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and Board of Library Trustees. The Board of Selectmen along with the Board of Library Trustees voted to appoint Tammy Tedeschi to the Board of Library Trustees.

(Salmond &) Sylvester

The Board discussed a request from the food pantry to use a portion of the available space at the Sylvester School Building to house the food pantry with TM. Residents Libby Corbo and Ruth Lynch joined the discussion. The Chair noted that should things change at the Sylvester School there would surely be plenty of residents willing to help move the food pantry to another location.

The Board voted to expand food pantry to the amount of space available at the Sylvester School Building.

The Board moved on to discuss the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Sylvester School Building reuse with TM. TM clarified for those listening that according to Town Counsel MGL Chapter 40 §3 prohibits leases of public buildings for more than 30 years, however Chapter 40 §4 does allow for longer term leases with the approval of Town Meeting, and Town Meeting did grant approval this back in 2019. TM wished to make one small correction under Section 5, number 2, (page 4 of the RFP), changing the wording to: “2. renovate existing spaces for public uses;”.

TM further clarified that also under section 5, TM did not include a member of the Planning Board on the RFP review committee. He explained that in the event the project ever had to go through agency review, the Town wouldn’t want the same people sitting on the Committee to review the RFP having to then decide whether or not it is in compliance. TM informed the Board that the RFP has been reviewed by Town Counsel, includes everything the Board has directed and is ready to go. Resident Ken Greene raised his hand and joined the discussion. The Board voted to approve the Request For Proposals for the Edmund Q. Sylvester School as issued by the Board of Selectmen April 6, 2021 as amended by the Town Manager since the Board’s last meeting. Vice Chair Nyman, aye, Selectwoman O’Connor, aye, Chairman Delaney, aye. Selectman Tuzik abstained from voting as he had not been present at the last meeting, and had not had a chance to look the RFP over.

Donation

TM informed the Board that the donation of a shed is from the Hanover Softball League, with a value of about \$12,000, and the shed will be used for the purpose of providing better housing for the John Deere tractor the League has also donated for grooming the field. TM further stated that the Parks and Rec Committee received this request and voted in support of it, and now it is before the Board as the donation has a value greater than \$5,000.00, therefore the Board must take action on it. The Board voted pursuant to Board of Selectmen Policy 7-7 Sponsorship and Donations, to accept the donation of the shed for Parks and Rec to be located at Forge Pond Park, noting the donation has a value greater than \$5,000.00. The Chair expressed that the Town appreciates the donation.

Annual and Special Town Meeting

The Board Voted to approve the Notice for the Election of Officers as provided by the Town Clerk.

The Chair informed those listening that he had several people reach out to him regarding the Town Clerk position and the recent Board of Selectmen discussions regarding the Study regarding the Town Clerk’s Office and the Petition Article addressing the Town Clerk’s hours of operation and the number of hours the Town Clerk should be in the Town Clerk’s Office on this year’s warrant. The Chair was asked if an elected Town Clerk could become an appointed Town Clerk. A number of people have expressed that the controversy surrounding this position may be resolved if the position is appointed. Therefore, there is an agenda item tonight regarding an article for consideration of the Board to insert an Article into this year’s Town Meeting Warrant titled “Elected Town Clerk vs. Appointed”. The Chair noted it does not yet have an article number as it is up for discussion tonight. The Board discussed the proposed article.

The Board voted to open the Annual Town Meeting Warrant

The Board voted to add an article to the Annual Town Meeting Warrant titled, "Elected Town Clerk vs. Appointed", such article to be numbered later.

Selectman Tuzik, aye, Vice Chair Nyman, aye, Chairman Delany, aye. Selectwoman O'Connor abstained from voting.

TM ran through the latest draft of the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

Of the three articles regarding the Town Clerk in the Annual Town Meeting Warrant, the Board agreed to insert the new "Elected vs Appointed Town Clerk" Article first (at Article 6), the petition article second, (at Article 7) and the article regarding setting the pay for the Town Clerk last, (at Article 8).

Resident Steve Louko raised his hand and discussed Article 20 titled "Appropriate Funds – Sylvester and Salmond Schools Renovation and Feasibility Consultation", and encouraged the Board to support the Article.

Resident Guiseppe Fornaro raised his hand and spoke against an appointed Town Clerk and asked the Board to remove the Article from the warrant. Selectwoman O'Connor spoke against the article being on the warrant and stated she wished she had voted against it.

Selectman Tuzik stated that his decision to make the motion to insert the article was based on his experience over the last 5 ½ years of serving on the Board and not based on the recent report.

He further stated that he believes that an appointed Clerk would make for a smoother running operation and the Townspeople would be better served, noting that 20% of the Clerks in Massachusetts are appointed and an appointed Clerk would be better for the Town of Hanover.

The Chair stated that his experience goes back 6 years and there are issues there that could be addressed. He further noted that the discussion surrounding the Clerk's Office Study Report brought this issue forward, and Town Meeting is held so that people can vote on how they think things should go. The Chair stated that this issue is worthy of being addressed and looked at and voted upon so the taxpayers can have a say in where their \$72,000 or so dollars are going each year. The Vice Chair stated that this Article is not because of the report, but rather because there have been complaints over the last few years. She further stated that the report brought about awareness of certain facts contained within the report, and this issue is worthy of being placed on the warrant and discussing.

Selectwoman O'Connor expressed that she understands there are issues that exist however she believes it is a rash to make a decision of this magnitude which would take the determination of who the Town Clerk is from residents of Town and giving it to the five-member Board of Selectmen. The Chair clarified that putting the Article on the warrant isn't taking that decision from the townspeople, it is giving people the right to vote on their position of what they think is best for the Town.

Selectmen Tuzik expressed that this is not a rash decision. This is a problem the Board has been hearing about for years, where residents come to Town Hall looking for services they are unable to get. He quoted Tip O'Neil saying that, "All politics are local" and asserted that this is a local issue that needs to be addressed. He further mentioned that there are checks and balances that need to occur for the transition and this change does not necessarily mean that the current holder of the office couldn't be the appointed Town Clerk. Resident Guiseppe Fornaro joined the conversation again and expressed that he vehemently disagrees with this and stated that this sounds like more of an administrative and HR problem at Town Hall. Selectmen Tuzik clarified that because the Town Clerk is elected he or she is not subject to the Town Manager or HR Director,

but is free to act as they choose. That is the problem. Selectmen Tuzik stressed the Importance of understanding that the Board is not attempting to take away anyone's right to vote by putting this on the warrant, but are putting it out there for consideration of the townspeople. Selectmen Tuzik moved that the Board move on the issue.

TM informed the Board that Article 29 is new. CDMI Director Ann Lee provided background to the Board on the Article.

The Board voted to add article 5 as elected make changes to numbering of Articles 6-9 as discussed and approve the changes as highlight in yellow in the Draft Warrant.

The board voted to close the annual town meeting warrant.

The Board voted to open the special town meeting warrant.
FD ran through the proposed changes to the Special Town Meeting Warrant for the Board.

Selectwoman O'Connor requested information regarding the profitability of selling the parcels in proposed Article 2 as opposed to granting an easement for access to the other property landlocked property nearby. FD agreed to look into that for her.

FD clarified that the appropriated funds in proposed Article 4 would only be used if necessary.

Resident Steve Louko raised his hand and questioned if the language included in Article 20 in the Draft Warrant was the latest version approved by the Community Preservation Committee. The CDMI Director agreed to look into the language and report back to the Board tomorrow.

Board voted to close the Special Town Meeting Warrant

Transfer Station

Selectwoman O'Connor presented the draft mission statement for the Transfer Station Committee that she and TM had created, attached. The Board agreed that the wording of the mission statement did not preclude the Committee from exploring curbside pickup. Selectwoman O'Connor informed the Board that for the sake of getting a diverse range of opinions on the Committee talent bank applications from any interested residents would be accepted.

TM informed the Board that this committee will have some background information to look at which will aid them in moving forward. Selectwoman O'Connor informed the Board that the State has also issued some guidelines in terms of what Towns should be looking to do and that will also aid the Committee in performing its mission. The Board voted to create the Transfer Station Committee as outlined.

The Chair thanked those listening for paying attention and caring enough to participate in the meetings

Other

Executive Assistant Janet Tierney presented the Board of Selectmen Annual Town Report for fiscal year July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020 to the Board.

The Board voted to approve the Board of Selectmen Annual Town Report for year ending June 30, 2020.

Approved
4/26/2021

The Board agreed to meet next on April 26th and then meet again on May 3rd at 6:00pm just prior to the Annual Town Meeting.

Adjourn

The Meeting ended and adjourned at 9:27 pm.