

Hull Board of Selectmen

Minutes

January 5, 2016

The meeting of the Hull Board of Selectmen was called to order at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday evening, January 5, 2016, at the Hull Municipal Building, 253 Atlantic Ave., Hull, Massachusetts.

Present: John C. Brannan, Chair; Domenico Sestito, Vice-Chair; John D. Reilly, Jr., Member; and Kevin Richardson, Member. Also present were Phillip Lemnios, Town Manager; James Lampke, Town Counsel; and Catherine Goldhammer, recording secretary. Christopher Mitchell, Clerk, was absent.

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A moment of silence was observed for Phyllis Kitson, who retired from the Treasurer-Collector's Office and Gail Coggins, wife of retired Hull Police Officer John Coggins, an active member of the community and aunt of Selectman Kevin Richardson.

APPOINTMENTS

Chief Billings regarding commendations

Chief Billings was present at the meeting to present commendations to two Hull citizens, Flavio Truglia and Stephen Collins, whose intervention on September 26, 2015 during a volatile confrontation between police officers and a suspect were critical to the successful outcome of the incident. Brannan read a letter of commendation from Billings to each and Chief Billings presented each with a commendation. Brannan then read a letter of departmental commendation from Billings recognizing Lt. Dale Shea, Officer Mike Angellis, and Officer Paul Kelly for their outstanding efforts in the same incident. Chief Billings presented each with a commendation.

Billings also thanked the selectmen and the town for their support in his 33 years of being with the Department and his 12 years of service as police chief. He also introduced Officer Steven O'Neill, who grew up in Hull and recently graduated from the police academy in October.

Christopher Olivieri regarding application to the Conservation Commission

This appointment was to be rescheduled for next week.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion of Board and Committee appointments

Richardson recommended that the board wait until Selectman Mitchell is present before voting on appointments and reappointments. Brannan said that he had spoken to Mitchell, who had said that he did not have a problem with the board voting in his absence. Board of Appeals Chairman Alana Swiec was at the meeting and expressed her wish that the vote would be held that evening or no later than next week so that she can modify her schedule accordingly. Brannan said that the votes would be taken next week.

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Later in the meeting, Lampke noted that Mark Gladstone had been interviewed for appointment to the Board of Appeals last year and as the selectmen have been re-interviewing candidates who were interviewed prior to Mitchell's election, Lampke had reached out to Gladstone regarding his interest. Gladstone will be getting back to Lampke and if interested he will be scheduled for an interview prior to the board and committee appointment votes next week.

MINUTES

The selectmen voted to approve the minutes of the Board of Selectmen meetings of:

- October 6, 2015
- October 13, 2015
- October 20, 2015
- October 27, 2015
- November 3, 2015
- November 24, 2015
- December 1, 2015

Motion	Reilly	Motion to approve
Second	Sestito	
Vote	Unanimous	

The minutes of November 17, 2015 were voted on separately, because Sestito wished to abstain as he was not at the meeting on that day.

Motion	Reilly	Motion to approve minutes of November 17, 2015
Second	Richardson	
Vote	Approved	Brannan - Aye Reilly - Aye Richardson - Aye Sestito - Abstain

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CORRESPONDENCE

Letter from French Consulate

A letter from the French Consulate thanked the board for its letter of condolence and support after the terrorist attacks in Paris.

Letter of commendation for Town Counsel James Lampke

Brannan read a letter on behalf of the board, commending Town Counsel Lampke for his exemplary service to the town while serving as Acting Town Manager during the month of December while Lemnios was on medical leave. He was thanked for his excellent service and dedication.

Letter of commendation for Nancy Allen

Brannan read a letter on behalf of the board, commending Nancy Allen, Administrative Assistant to the Town Manager, for her service to the town during Lemnios' medical leave, her assistance in keeping the town running smoothly, and her professionalism and unfailingly positive demeanor.

Letter from Eileen White, Treasurer/Collector, regarding property foreclosure

A letter from Eileen White informed the selectmen that on November 2, 2015, the Land Court approved foreclosure on a Mountford Road property for nonpayment of taxes. The letter noted that appropriate steps should be taken to secure the property, which is now owned by the town.

Brannan noted that a significant amount of time had passed with the property being behind in tax payments. Lemnios said that steps were being taken to move more quickly in such matters.

LICENSES AND RENEWALS

The selectmen postponed a vote on a license renewal for NeighborWorks Southern MA, dba NHS of the South Shore, 422 Washington St., Quincy, for a lodging house at 24 Park Ave., Donna Ackerman, Manager. The selectmen wanted to investigate whether this was properly a renewal or a new license.

The board voted as follows to approve licenses and renewals:

Motion	Reilly	Sandpiper Real Estate LLC, dba Sandpiper Inn, Steve Austin, Mgr., 165 Nantasket Ave. – Lodging house - renewal
Second	Sestito	
Vote	Unanimous	

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Motion	Reilly	West Corner, Inc., dba Pizza Box, Angeliki Booras, Mgr., 14 Nantasket Ave. – Common Victualer - renewal
Second	Sestito	
Vote	Unanimous	

Motion	Reilly	Placido and Gaetano Treviso, dba Nantasket Seafood, 533B Nantasket Ave. – Common Victualer - renewal
Second	Sestito	
Vote	Unanimous	

OLD BUSINESS, CONTINUED

Discussion of Police Chief preliminary screening committee

[Note: Reilly recused himself from this discussion, as his son is on the police force. He left the Selectmen's desk and sat in the audience.]

The selectmen discussed the creation of a preliminary screening committee for the hiring of a new police chief. Lemnios explained that Mark Morse of the MMA Consulting Group, which the selectmen had voted to hire for the process, would be coming in to talk with the board about what attributes they were seeking in a new chief. This would be an important discussion as it would direct the preliminary screening committee in their search process. A meeting with Morse would be scheduled in an upcoming week.

Lemnios had sent a memo to the board in December with recommendations about the make-up of the committee. It suggested one or two members of the Board of Selectmen, the School Superintendent, the Chief of Police from Hingham or Norwell, Town Counsel Lampke, Lemnios, and two citizens, preferably one from the business community and one with a law enforcement background.

Resident Pat Cormiere recommended that one of the citizens at large be a member of the gay community given some of the recent allegations regarding the department. Board of Appeals Chairman Swiec recommended that there should be at least one female member of the committee. Lemnios noted that legally it might not be possible to advertise these suggestions properly. Resident Steve Forcum said that someone from the No Place for Hate Committee would be a good addition in that regard. Brannan suggested that one of the citizens at large be someone with a background in Human Resources. Reilly, speaking as a citizen, noted that having four, rather than two, members of the public on the committee might better accommodate some of these suggestions.

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The board discussed difference compositions for the committee. It was suggested that there be two members of the board and that Lampke be part of staff support.

The selectmen voted to adopt Lemnios' recommendation, as modified, on the make-up of the committee on a motion and amendment by Sestito.

Motion	Sestito	Motion to create the Police Chief Preliminary Screening Committee consisting of two members of the Board of Selectmen; the Superintendent of Schools or her designee; Town Manager Lemnios; one police chief from a different town; and two citizens at large. Amendment by Sestito to change two citizens at large to four citizens at large
Second	Brannan	
Vote	Unanimous	Brannan - Aye Sestito - Aye Richardson - Aye Reilly - Recused

Fort Revere Committee discussion

Brannan stated that this discussion would be held when Mitchell was present.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion of tax bills

Brannan noted that he has been getting many communications regarding the increases that many in town have seen in their January tax bills. He said that he would like to schedule the town assessor for an upcoming meeting so that she can explain the process.

Lemnios said that town-wide taxes cannot increase more than 2.5% as dictated by Proposition 2 ½ in 1981. In the mid-2000s, the town went to quarterly tax payments and the first two of these are estimated amounts prior to the voting of the tax rate. The second two yearly bills are based on actual values. He noted that there is a nine year cycle for tax valuations during which all properties are visited at least once and that residents can dispute their property valuations and ask for abatements from the Board of Assessors. They can also appeal to the Appellate Tax Board if not satisfied with that decision.

Resident Polly Rowe said that many are overwhelmed and surprised by the increases and said that it raised the question of what residents are getting for those dollars and what the boards are doing to increase the commercial tax base. She also asked why there had been no advance warning about the increases.

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Lemnios said that people are getting basic services such as safety and schools, but they are not getting consistent capital improvements or maintenance, which is why a debt exclusion would be helpful. He noted that attracting businesses to the area is an ongoing issue and problem and noted the efforts of many boards as well as the HRA in their efforts to revitalize the town. He said that tax rates and budgets are always discussed and voted on at Town Meeting and that the overall increase is no different than in previous years, the change is in how the gross amount is divided throughout town.

Discussion of HRA flood insurance initiative

HRA member Bob DeCoste said that following the HRA's flood insurance seminar, it hired the Woods Hole Group to do a preliminary study in order to decide which flood map transects would be best to look at in efforts to mitigate flood insurance increases. They identified approximately 14 that they felt would most likely have an impact. The HRA sent a request to the town to go ahead with the further examination and a request that the town partner with the HRA to share the cost. Lemnios noted that it was a question of the timing of the funds. DeCoste said that he didn't think that the HRA would have any problem with the scheduling of the payments.

Motion	Richardson	Motion to partner with the HRA in hiring the Woods Hole Group, subject to the final approval from the Town Manager and Conservation Agent
Second	Sestito	
Vote	Unanimous	

DeCoste further said that the HRA had met with Robert Fultz, Director of Community Development, regarding the Community Compact and had voted to recommend that the selectmen sign the application. He asked that if they started reviewing the housing component that the HRA be involved in the process. Lemnios said that he would schedule Fultz so that the selectmen could vote on the matter.

Other new business

Reilly noted that the Capital Outlay Committee would hold a meeting at 1 p.m. on Saturday, January 9, in the Exhibition Room at the high school. The agenda would include an overview of capital needs, a review of the elements of the current proposal, a discussion of the roadway study process, and citizen input.

Sestito asked if the Opiate Task Force update had been rescheduled from the cancelled December 22 meeting. It has been rescheduled for January 12.

Sestito further asked about the status of a traffic safety concern expressed by a resident in the Village. Lampke noted that this had been referred to Police Chief Billings. The Safety Officer would be looking into it and would report back.

Sestito also asked about the possibility of changing the meeting night for the board.

Brannan asked if the Town Manager would poll other South Shore communities on their tax rates. Lemnios will do so. Reilly noted that there may be a better way to communicate with residents regarding their tax bills and how the process works in advance of increases.

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Resident Rhoda Kanet announced the Martin Luther King Day events to be held on Monday, January 18. These include a pancake breakfast at St. Nicholas Church and pizza and a movie at the Temple.

Lampke noted that during Lemnios' medical leave Lemnios continued to work from home and provided direction and assistance from afar throughout his absence.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 9:25 p.m. Brannan requested a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss the reputation, character, physical condition, or mental health of an individual; to go into Executive Session to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel; to go into Executive Session to conduct negotiations with nonunion personnel; to go into executive session to discuss strategy with respect to litigation and that the chair declare that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect of the litigating position of the body; to go into Executive Session to comply with or act under the authority of the Attorney-Client privilege; and to go into Executive Session to consult with legal counsel and obtain legal advice pursuant to the Attorney-Client privilege; and to not reconvene in open session.

The matters to be discussed were:

- Cope-Allen v. Hull
- Cummings v. Hull
- Saunders v. Hull
- Reputation and character of an individual
- Strategy regarding negotiations and to conduct negotiations for an employment contract for Acting Police Chief candidate Robert Sawtelle.

Motion	Richardson	Motion to go into Executive Session to discuss the reputation, character, physical condition, or mental health of an individual; to go into Executive Session to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel; to go into Executive Session to conduct negotiations with nonunion personnel; to go into executive session to discuss strategy with respect to litigation and that the chair declare that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect of the litigating position of the body; to go into Executive Session to comply with or act under the authority of the Attorney-Client privilege; and to go into Executive Session to consult with legal counsel and obtain legal advice pursuant to the Attorney-Client privilege; and to not reconvene in open session.
Second	Sestito	
Vote	Unanimous	Richardson – Aye Brannan – Aye Sestito – Aye Reilly – Recused himself from Executive Session as he has family serving on the police force

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The open meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m. The board will meet again on January 12, 2016.

Recorded by Catherine Goldhammer

Approved by:

Documents

The following documents were included in the Board of Selectmen's packets or were presented during the meeting and are available in the Board of Selectmen's office upon request:

- Board of Selectmen agenda and added agenda for January 5, 2015
- License application from Sandpiper Real Estate LLC, dba Sandpiper Inn, Steve Austin, Mgr., 165 Nantasket Ave. – Lodging house – renewal
- License application from West Corner, Inc., dba Pizza Box, Angeliki Booras, Mgr., 14 Nantasket Ave. – Common Victualer - renewal
- License application from Placido & Gaetano Treviso, dba Nantasket Seafood, 533B Nantasket Ave. – Common Victualer – renewal
- License application from NeighborWorks Southern MA, dba NHS of the So. Shore, 422 Washington St., Quincy for a lodging house at 24 Park Ave., Donna Ackerman, Manager - renewal
- Letters from Police Chief Billings regarding commendations
- Memo from office manager regarding board and committee appointments
- Letter from Eileen White regarding property foreclosure
- Letter from Board of Selectmen commending James Lampke
- Letter from Board of Selectmen commending Nancy Allen

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