

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
FEBRUARY 21, 2018
REGULAR SESSION

Members Present: David Andrade, Nelson Almeida, David Viera,
Michelle Hines, David Parker

Town Administrator Shawn E. Cadime was absent.

Atty. Mark Reich of KP Law was in attendance.

Chairman Andrade opened the meeting at 7 p.m. He offered a moment of silence for the victims of the school shooting in Parkland, Florida.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE OPENINGS UPDATE

Mr. Almeida announced that volunteers are needed on the Charter Study Committee (2 Board of Selectmen appointments), Conservation Commission (2 BOS), Energy Committee (2 BOS), Finance Committee (2 Moderator), Historical Commission (1 BOS), and Property Tax Work-Off Committee (3 BOS).

The order of business moved to:

PRIORITY MATTERS

Chairman Andrade advised that Mr. Cadime recommended the appointments.

Appoint and Swear in Jared Turkington to the Position of Patrolman 3rd Class

Police Chief Craig Mace requested the appointment of Jared Turkington, effective February 25, 2018. He has completed all stipulations.

A motion was made by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Viera, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Jared Turkington as a Patrolman 3rd Class with the
Seekonk Police Department, effective February 25, 2018.

Appoint and Swear in Justin Labonte as a Probationary Third Class Firefighter/Paramedic for the Fire Department

Fire Chief Michael Healy requested the appointment of Justin Labonte, effective February 27, 2018.

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Parker, and it was unanimously

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VOTED: To appoint Justin Labonte as Probationary Third Class Firefighter/Paramedic with the Seekonk Fire Department, effective February 27, 2018.

Town Clerk Florice Craig swore him in. His fiancé pinned his badge.

Appoint and Swear in Harrison McComb as a Probationary Third Class Firefighter/Paramedic for he Fire Department

Chief Healy requested the appointment of Harrison McComb, effective February 23, 2018.

A motion was made by Ms. Hines, seconded by Mr. Parker, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Harrison McComb as a Probationary Third Class Firefighter/Paramedic, effective February 23, 2018 with the stipulation that he move within the 15 mile radius within a year and obtain his paramedic certification within three years from the date of appointment.

Town Clerk Florice Craig swore him in. His father pinned his badge.

Appoint and Swear in Jacob Novick as a Probationary Third Class Firefighter/Paramedic for the Fire Department

Chief Healy requested the appointment of Jacob Novick, effective February 25, 2018.

A motion was made by Ms. Hines, seconded by Mr. Parker, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Jacob Novick as a Probationary Third Class Firefighter/Paramedic, effective February 25, 2018 with the stipulation that he obtain his paramedic certification within three years from the date of hire.

Town Clerk Florice Craig sworn him in. His son, Tyler, pinned is badge.

Consider the Appointment of Kevin Hurst as Operator for the Department of Public Works

DPW Superintendent David Cabral requested the appointment of Mr. Hurst.

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Parker, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Kevin Hurst as Operator with the DPW, effective February 22, 2018.

Town Clerk Lottery Drawing for Ballot Positions for the Upcoming Election

Board of Selectmen

David S. Parker
David F. Viera
Christopher Zorro

School Committee

Kimberly A. Sluter
Justin Sullivan
Noah Escaler
Cynthia E. Corbett

Water Commission

David Mello
Jeffrey Starr Mararian

COMMUNITY SPEAKS

Mr. David Saad of 150 Forsythe Circle distributed language regarding Article 3, Section 2 of the Charter.

He questioned the part that said an elected person could run for Charter Commission but could not hold any other elected office

Ms. Hines read from the article that was passed on the town meeting floor.

Ms. Craig said the language for the ballot was given to her from the Town Administrator's office.

Chairman Andrade said he would get clarification from Atty. Fair.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion Regarding the Status of the Cole Street Soccer Fields

DPW Superintendent David Cabral noted the Board closed the fields on October 18, 2017. They cleared one field last year. As of today, they cleared one softball field and set up a 400 x 300 ft. grid or 2.75 acres. In six days they covered 25% of the area. He estimated it would take 20 days to complete the cleanup depending on the weather. He will consider five-hour shifts on Saturdays. He intends to order a magnet. He had two handouts showing the fields.

Chairman Andrade and Ms. Hines were disappointed that not much was done.

The fields open at the end of the month so Mr. Cabral would like to come before the Board on March 21.

Mr. Jason Audet of 50 Agawam Court, President of Seekonk Youth Soccer, and other board members were in attendance

Mr. Audet explained the soccer league granted a brief extension on the schedule. He requested a decision by March 7. He asked about the criteria for opening the fields.

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Chairman Andrade said it would be Mr. Cabral's decision and a vote of the Board of Selectmen to reopen.

Mr. Audet wanted to make sure all debris is removed.

Chairman Andrade said something that is one or two feet down might not be detected. It could have happened during the winter. Fields will be monitored.

Mr. Audet asked about the possibility of having temporary union workers or volunteers complete the work. He has 22 coaches and parents willing to help. One hundred fifty players are registered for the spring season.

Chairman Andrade said he could not address that at this time – it would require discussion with Mr. Cabral.

Mr. Audet said the league rented the Sherwood Complex and relocated playoff games to Dighton/Rehoboth for a fee. Invoices submitted to Parks and Recreation were rejected.

Chairman Andrade will check on it.

Mr. Almeida felt those bills should have been approved.

Mr. Parker said the department head has a certain budget. He could request a transfer from the Finance Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion Regarding the May 24, 2010 Town Meeting Decision to Transfer Control of Library Property to the Board of Library Trustees

Chairman Andrade noted this is in direct response to questions as to the legality of the May 14, 2010 vote. At the repeated adamant requests, the matter was referred to town counsel.

Atty. Mark Reich referred to the action taken with respect to this piece of property. There were reservations about certain access rights for the Board of Selectmen with respect to the use of the property for the Veterans Memorial Park. It is not a sale of property; it is a transfer of care, custody, and control of that property. Therefore, Chapter 30B does not apply. The transfer was done by unanimous vote of the Board of Selectmen and 2/3 vote at Town Meeting. The property is under control of the Board of Library Trustees with access by the Board of Selectmen.

Consider the Appointment of a School Committee Liaison for the Board of Selectmen

Mr. Viera said he brought this up because it is always at the last minute that a determination is made about how much money the School Department needs. He would like to partner with the School Committee. He felt by going to town meeting as partners the budget would pass with little or no opposition. He noted this is not to take over the School Committee and not to get involved in the day to day operations of the schools. There appears to be divisiveness.

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Almeida, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To appoint the Chairman or designee as liaison between the Board of Selectmen and School Committee.

Ms. Hines said it was discussed at the School Committee meeting.

Consider the Approval of Regular Session Minutes of January 24, 2018

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Almeida, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept the Regular Session minutes of January 24, 2018.

COMMUNITY SPEAKS

Mr. David Saad was in attendance representing Mr. Tapalian. He distributed maps to Board members. He stated that Mr. Tapalian has entered into an agreement to purchase the Showcase Cinema property. The intent is to build 90 to 96 townhouses, generating \$250,000 additional revenue for the town.

Chairman Andrade said he was opposed to putting this on the agenda because it is the same presentation made by Mr. Tapalian. It hasn't gone to Planning. He questioned why Mr. Tapalian had asked him to come before the Board or did he take it upon himself to do it.

Mr. Saad said back then it was an idea; a financial agreement has now been reached. There's no written agreement. There are conditions to be met.

Mr. Almeida noted that the people at the November Town Meeting supported leaving it the way it is.

Mr. Saad said residents will be asked to rezone that property at the May Town Meeting. He suggested the Board of Selectmen meet with the parties involved.

He said Mr. Tapalian has agreed to pay taxes if he has enough time to get rezoning or extend overlay district.

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Dr. Paul Miles Matthias of 663 Ledge Road asked if there would be another ballot question to rezone the Showcase Cinema property.

Chairman Andrade said there is nothing on the ballot. Mr. Saad was referring to a possible warrant article for Spring Town Meeting to include a rezone of that property. The Economic Development Committee is proceeding to prepare wording to present to the Board of Selectmen.

Dr. Matthias asked for a definition of “liaison to the School Committee.”

Mr. Almeida said to attend meetings and report back to the Board of Selectmen.

Chairman Andrade said it is an effort to work together.

Mr. Tom Benoit of 80 Ferncliffe Road felt the issue is if somebody has a plan and presents a purchase and sales agreement with the contingency that it be rezoned.

Mr. Almeida said if there is a purchase and sales agreement and it is purchased as commercial highway in the front and residential in the rear that is it.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN REPORTS AND COMMENTS..

Veterans Memorial Park Committee Liaison Report

Mr. Viera reported additional bricks will be added when the weather gets warmer.

He would like to partner with the School Committee to make sure the schools are safe and offer assistance.

Ms. Hines acknowledged people who sent e-mails regarding the library property. She received an e-mail from McDonald’s indicating the contents of Happy Meals will be healthier.

She attended a recent meeting at Bristol Aggie. They will build and restructure three buildings at a price of \$103M. All participating communities, such as Seekonk, will have to pay an assessment fee of \$5,000 per student. Seekonk has ten students there right now. Bristol Aggie was able to get a 30-year loan. She voted against it because it was the first meeting she attended and she didn’t have enough information.

Chairman Andrade, who is the representative from Seekonk, said he would have voted no.

Ms. Hines said that Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School is also looking to build a school at \$50M to \$75M. They did not get a grant from the Mass. School Building Authority. Seventy four Seekonk residents are at Tri -County. Seekonk has a representative who never came before the Board of Selectmen.

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That is why she talked at the last meeting about a schedule to have members of boards and committees present reports to the Board.

She informed the Seekonk School Committee about this.

It almost seems that students will not be allowed to Bristol Aggie if only tuition is paid and not assessment.

The Seekonk School Committee is looking for members to interview for Superintendent of Schools. Anyone interested should contact a School Committee member. They need 7 to 11 members. She suggested Mr. Cadime.

Ms. Hines acknowledged the two podiums made by students at Tri-County. She noted that Communications Director Chris Campbell had reached out to Tri-County. She suggested a plaque that says made by Tri-County students.

She advised the town election is on April 2 and town meeting on May 14.

The Taste of the Town is on March 6, 2018. Rabies clinic on March 10. The Save-A-Pet Auction on April 10, 11, and 12 from 6:30 to 10 p.m. each night. March 24 is Seekonk Hazardous Waste Day.

Mr. Almeida said Tri-County and Bristol Aggie do a great job, but in reality it is a business. He can't believe they want tuition and assessment.

As a result of the recent school shootings in Parkland, Florida, a nationwide walk out is scheduled on March 14. He doesn't support that because all students will be outside.

He suggested the School Committee look at the possibility of one full time SRO in both the high school and middle school.

Ms. Hines said it is paid by the Police Department.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:38 p.m. Mr. Almeida motioned, seconded by Mr. Viera, to go into Executive Session to conduct strategy sessions with respect to negotiations with proposed opioid litigation per M.G.L. Chapter 30 A, Section 21(a)(3) as having discussion in open session would be detrimental to the litigation or bargaining position of the town and the approve executive session minutes of November 29, 2018 and January 24, 2018; not to return to open session.

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The vote: Mr. Almeida – Aye; Mr. Viera – Aye; Ms. Hines – Aye; Mr. Parker – Aye; Chairman Andrade – Aye.

Respectfully submitted,

David Viera, Clerk

Prepared by:

Patricia Gamer, Secretary

Items Distributed at the February 21, 2018 Board of Selectmen Meeting

Resume for Kevin Hurst – DPW Operator