

Select Board Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, January 19, 2021 - 7:00 p.m.  
REMOTE

Arrangements for remote participation by Select Board members and members of the public were made in accordance with Governor Baker's Emergency Order Modifying the State's Open Meeting Law. Participation in this meeting was done remotely via Zoom.

**Select Board Members Present via Zoom:** Chair Thomas Lachiusa, Marc Strange, Steven Marantz, Mark Gold, and Richard Foster

**Also Present via Zoom:** Town Manager Lyn Simmons, CFO Paul Pasterczyk, Debbie House, Chief John Dearborn, Marybeth Bergeron, Rep. Brian Ashe, Tanya Campbell, Peter Landon, Cynthia Sommer, Frank Smith

This meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Lachiusa. Due to COVID-19 concerns, and the Governor's executive order, and changes to Open Meeting Law remote participation, this meeting was held remotely with residents having the option of calling in or sending in their comments. All votes were taken by roll call. LCTV was also utilized to broadcast and record the meeting.

Chair Lachiusa confirmed that all members and persons anticipated on the agenda were present and could hear and be heard throughout the meeting. Ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law. This meeting allowed for public comment.

**COVID-19 Update** – Chief Dearborn gave the COVID update. There are currently 51 cases in town as of today. The counts are trending downward. The cases are within family groups with some being in long care facilities. Chief Dearborn expressed the importance of continuing to wear a mask, wash hands, and social distance.

In regards to vaccine distribution, we are in the state's phase 1 which covers first responders and long term care facilities. Phase 2 and 3 will provide the vaccine to most of the residents. Clinics will be set up, similar to the flu vaccine clinics, for COVID vaccine distribution. All supplies and equipment are ready, just waiting for the vaccine. Greenwood (daycare area) will be used as a clinic. Chief Dearborn is planning on running the vaccination clinics for 16 weeks, 5 days/week, Tuesday through Saturday. Homebound residents and transportation will be addressed. Many volunteers will be utilized.

### **Announcements**

Satellite Office Hours - As of January 11<sup>th</sup>, the Town Clerk's and Town Treasurer/Collector's satellite offices will be open in the Community House on Wednesdays (10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.) and Fridays (9:00 a.m. – noon) ONLY. They will no longer hold Monday hours with the exception of February 1.

*The Treasurer Collector will hold special satellite office hours on February 1st (the day 3rd quarter property taxes are due) from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.*

### Recycling/Yard Waste Center Hours

The Recycling and Yard Waste Center will be open Saturdays ONLY from 9:00 a.m. - noon throughout the winter.

### Governor's COVID Restrictions Extended

The Governor's restrictions that went into effect on December 26, have been extended to January 24, unless further extended by the Governor.

Gatherings are limited to 10 persons indoors and 25 outdoors (at both private homes, event venues and public spaces). Businesses, including restaurants, offices and retailers, must limit occupancy to 25% of capacity.

### Reminder to Clear Sidewalks and Hydrants

Residents are reminded that it is their responsibility to shovel snow from sidewalks adjacent to their property and clean snow away from hydrants (Town Bylaw 4-310 Snow Removal).

### **Resident Comments**

1. Cynthia Sommer, 57 Farmington Avenue spoke in favor of a resolution in opposition of state subsidies for wood biomass. Air pollution from biomass travels 90 miles, Longmeadow is only 6 miles from the proposed plant. Ms. Sommer has asthma and her husband is a physician who treats many people with respiratory diseases. Wood burning releases harmful pollutants linked to many diseases.
2. Frank Smith, 20 Green Willow Drive has a son who is an asthmatic and has had 15 hospital admissions by the time he was 5 years old. Mr. Smith's wife is also an asthmatic and was hospitalized for 9 days 2 years ago due to complications from the flu. A biomass study was done 10 years ago and is on the Mass.gov website. Wood burning emits twice the pollutants as coal burning. Mr. Smith asked the Select Board to vote in favor of the resolution in opposition of state subsidies for wood biomass.

**Interview for Historical Commission** – applicant withdrew application.

### **Select Board Comments**

Mr. Lachiusa commented on the violence at the Capital two weeks ago and noted that violence can escalate over time. The sooner we eliminate violence we can move on.

Mr. Gold acknowledged the Russel Family gift of an electric patrol bicycle to the Police Department and the monetary gift from the Bearingstar Insurance Company to the Longmeadow Food Pantry.

### **Discussion with State Rep Brian Ashe**

Rep. Ashe explained that the budget process slowed way down due to COVID, the House has recently been reimbursed by the Federal Government. The House normally does their budget in April. The House has a new speaker, Ron Mariano. Things change when a new speaker comes in. All committees, chairs, vice chairs are all reassigned. This has to be done before anything else.

The vaccine response has been slow, Massachusetts is second to last in the nation for vaccine distribution. Rep. Ashe had meetings with the Governor to get a better plan in place.

Rep. Ashe and Senator Gobi filed legislation to pay for crumbling foundations that have pyrrhotite. There was no money in the last budget. This will be filed again when the session starts up.

The Governor recently vetoed a climate bill that was part of a larger bill. No action will be taken on this until next week.

The Board of Registrars/Election Commissioners Home Rule Petition and the recall of elected officials Home Rule Petition did not get through the House. Rep. Ashe will file them as soon as the next session starts.

Rep. Ashe will have a better idea in the coming weeks about the FY 2022 budget and getting back on track with Chapter 70.

Rep. Ashe brought up the problem of hitting the \$25 cap during the last session. Hopefully this session they can come up with a solution plan as a Commonwealth.

Other legislators have brought up the local tax option issue. We will have to see what the new Speaker's agenda is over the next few months.

Rep. Ashe will get together with Chief Dearborn to discuss how to get a better response with vaccine distribution, resources, support and help with software services in Western Mass.

Rep. Ashe has offered to come back to a Select Board meeting later in the year.

### **Town Manager's Report**

#### COVID-19 Updates

Our first responders started receiving the vaccine the week of January 11 at a regional clinic with other area public safety departments. Planning is being done for a municipal clinic for Phases 2 and 3 following the state

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schedule. A town website has been created to provide updates, when more information is available it will be posted on the website, Facebook, Twitter, news media outlets, and distributed directly via CodeRED.

#### Board of Health and the Health Department

The Board of Health, with its three new members, held its first meeting on January 14. Chief Dearborn and Ms. Simmons attended and provided a past, present, and future overview on the Town's pandemic response. Interviews have been held for the Public Health Director position, no decision has been made yet. To reach someone regarding a public health matter residents can email [health@longmeadow.org](mailto:health@longmeadow.org).

#### Longmeadow Street Improvements

We received confirmation and notice of MassDOT's Design Public Hearing for the resurfacing and intersection improvements for Longmeadow Street and Converse Street. The Design Public Hearing will be held virtually and was pre-recorded. A link is available on the Town's website and comments can be submitted to MassDOT between January 28 – February 11.

#### Greenwood Play Structure

The repairs to the Greenwood play are complete. There was some damage to the playground during the August 4 tropical storm. Due to the age of the structure there was a longer lead time for replacement parts.

#### New DPW and Adult Center

Furniture is expected to be delivered to the DPW facility next week. The Adult Center is expected to reach substantial completion early in 2021. Plans for a ribbon cutting at both facilities will be made later this year.

#### Satellite Offices at the Community House

The Treasurer/Collector and Town Clerk will hold office hours on Wednesdays and Fridays only, with the exception of Monday, February 1 from 10am – 1pm to receive tax payments. The Assessor's Office is offering appointment based office hours to provide assistance with abatement applications which are due on February 1. More information can be found on the town website.

#### CARES Act

Reimbursement from the Secretary of State's Office in the amount of \$2,809.68 was received to cover additional postage costs for the mailing of ballots for the November Election.

#### Treasurer/Collector Position

The Treasurer Collector position was posted, the applicant response was minimal. The position has been reposted. In the interim, Amy Nelson (the Assistant) was made the acting/interim Treasurer/Collector and Stephanie Cummings was made the Assistant Treasurer/Collector. The vacancy in the department puts a strain on being able to keep the satellite offices open.

#### Adult Center Staff

Julie Pearce has been hired as the new Outreach Coordinator. She is a Longmeadow resident and has worked for Highland Valley Elder Services as the Program Director of Elder Protective Services & Money Management Program.

#### Solar Analysis for the DPW Facility

The solar analysis for the DPW facility is complete. The analysis will be shared with the Energy & Sustainability Committee at the January 21 meeting. Ms. Simmons has reached out to the Conservation Commission, Planning Board, and the Zoning Board to find out what permits or zoning issues may need to be addresses for the installation of a community shared solar array. Deconstruction or demolishing plans will begin on the existing DPW garage structures once the move to the new facility is complete.

#### Open Space and Recreation Plan

The State Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs has given the Open Space and Recreation Plan conditional approval through January 2028. The Town can now participate in Division of Conservation Service grants. There are 10 items that the Town needs to complete for final approval.

#### Board of Registrars and Home Rule Legislation

SB2468 was not acted upon before the session ended. The Home Rule Legislation will be refiled. Senator Lesser's office has been in touch and will refile the bill in the new session. As long as we are under the Emergency Orders we will rely on the determination given by the Attorney for the Elections Division and continue to operate with a 3 member Board of Registrars.

### Old Business

1. Approved Minutes – *Mr. Gold made the motion to approve the regular meeting minutes from December 21, 2020 as presented. Mr. Foster seconded the motion.*  
*Roll Call Vote: Mr. Lachiusa-YES, Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Foster-YES*

### New Business

1. FY2020 Audit Acceptance – Tanya Campbell from the auditing firm Melanson attended the meeting and gave a brief presentation of the FY 2020 audit. Peter Landon, Chair of the Audit Committee attended the meeting and stated that the Audit Committee recommends approval of the FY 2020 audit.  
*Mr. Gold made the motion to accept the FY 2020 audit report. Mr. Foster seconded the motion.*  
*Roll Call Vote: Mr. Lachiusa-YES, Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Foster-YES*
2. Adult Center Gift and Naming of Gymnasium – Marybeth Bergeron, Chair of the Building Committee joined the meeting. S. Prestley Blake and his wife Helen Blake made a \$200,000 donation to name the gymnasium at the new Adult Center. Ms. Bergeron presented a drawing of the gymnasium sign and also a drawing of the sign to be placed by the road with the gymnasium name on it for wayfinding. The gymnasium signage was a big arch with the Blake’s name fitted in the arch. Several people did not support the look of the arch. Ms. Bergeron will go back to the designers for another sketch for the gymnasium name.  
*Mr. Lachiusa made the motion to accept the \$200,000 gift from the Blakes and add “The S. Prestley & Helen Blake Gymnasium” to the Longmeadow Adult Center street signage. Mr. Strange seconded the motion.*  
The street sign has already been approved by the Planning Board, it will go back for the extra wording.  
*Roll Call Vote: Mr. Lachiusa-YES, Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Gold-NO, Mr. Foster-NO*
3. Resolution in Opposition of State Subsidies for Wood Biomass – The Resolution was brought forward to the Select Board by Mr. Marantz. He used Springfield’s resolution with a few changes. Mr. Gold did not agree with paragraph 4, as he has not seen any plans for this plant. Mr. Marantz explained that state subsidies would be needed to make money at the plant. After some discussion, a motion was put forward by Mr. Marantz.  
*Mr. Marantz made the motion to accept the Resolution as presented with the removal of the 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph. Mr. Strange seconded the motion.*  
*Roll Call Vote: Mr. Lachiusa-YES, Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Gold-PRESENT, Mr. Foster-PRESENT*
4. Annual Town Meeting 2021 Article Submission Deadline – The Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for May 11, 2021. Articles for the warrant, including citizen petitions are due in the Select Board’s office by noon on February 22, 2021. There will be many articles on the May warrant that will be brought up from the fall town meeting. There will be a discussion at the next Select Board meeting on the Annual Town Meeting and possibly holding it on 2 evenings due to the length of the warrant.  
*Mr. Gold made the motion to accept the Annual Town Meeting Article Deadline memo as presented. Mr. Foster seconded the motion.*  
*Roll Call Vote: Mr. Lachiusa-YES, Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Foster-YES*
5. Annual Town Election 2021 Date Setting – *Mr. Gold made the motion to set the Annual Town Election date for June 22, 2021, with a preliminary election date, if needed, for May 4, 2021. Mr. Marantz seconded the motion.*  
*Roll Call Vote: Mr. Lachiusa-YES, Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Foster-YES*

*Mr. Gold made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m. Mr. Strange seconded the motion.*

*Roll Call Vote: Mr. Lachiusa-YES, Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Foster-YES*

Respectfully submitted,  
Debbie House

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**Documents:**

Agenda

Announcement sheet

Town Managers Report

Department Reports for December

Draft Minutes 12/21/2020

Audit Management Draft Letter

Audit CAFR Draft Report

Signage for Adult Center Gym and Street Sign

Adult Center Gift Policy

Property Naming Policy

Resolution in Opposition to State Subsidies & Incentives for Biomass Incinerating Power Plants in Mass

Conservation Law Foundation letter 12/23/20

Attorney General Letter 12/23/20

Annual Town Meeting Article Submission Deadline memo

Annual Town Election memo 1/13/21

Correspondence:

Comcast Letter 12/16/2020

PVTA Letter 12/24/20