

Select Board Minutes

March 28, 2023

Town of Cohasset
Select Board Meeting
Tuesday, March 28, 2023
Town Hall Auditorium

Select Board Members Present: Jack Creighton, Chair
Jean Healey Dippold
Paul Grady
Corey Evans
Diane Kennedy

Others Participating: Christopher Senior, Town Manager

Chair Creighton called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Roll Call Vote; All present.

Motion by Select Member Dippold to go into Executive Session Exemption #6-To consider the purchase, exchange, lease, and value of real estate, if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body, seconded by Select Member Evans. Roll Call Vote, All-aye.

The Board went into Executive Session at 6:32 p.m.

The Board came back into Public Session at 7:22 p.m.

Public Comment-None.

License/Permits/Events-3 Beach Minimum-Applicant John Donlon-48 Beach Plum Lane, Scituate was present and reviewed his proposed plan for the 3 Beach Minimum on September 30, 2023. He advised the Board that nothing has changed from last year's event. They are expecting about 400 participants. **Motion by Select Member Grady to approve the 3 Beach Minimum on Saturday, September 30, 2023, as presented, seconded by Select Member Evans. Roll Call Vote, All aye.**

Memorial Day Events-VSO Phil Mahoney reviewed the proposed events for Memorial Day Events on May 27-29, 2023. **Motion by Select Member Grady to approve the Memorial Day Events on May 27-29, 2023, as presented, seconded by Select Member Kennedy. Roll Call Vote, All aye.**

Request for Turtle Ramp in Wheelwright Park-Emma Thorton and Miya Bishop were present asking for permission to create a turtle ramp in the Skating Pond at Wheelwright Park as their National Honor Society Service Project. They have received approvals from the Conservation Commission. **Motion by Select Member Grady to approve the request for a Turtle Ramp in Wheelwright Park as presented, seconded by Select Member Kennedy. Roll Call Vote, All aye.**

Special Town Meeting/Special Election (Fall 2023): Discussion and Vote-Chair Creighton stated the Board is considering a Special Town Meeting in the Fall for funding for infrastructure projects including schools, town hall, fields & courts, and recreation. It will be a significant amount of money and they need more outreach to the community. Select Member Dippold stated the Board was considering changing the date of Annual Town Meeting and Elections however, it is not possible. Chair Creighton thanked all the boards and committees for all their work. Select Member Evans stated he believes that the Town Hall project and fields & courts should be on the warrant for this ATM since those projects are ready, and the other

projects should go to Special Town Meeting. Select Member Kennedy agreed with Mr. Evans. She stated the Board has been talking about the Town Hall project since July and the committee has been working on it for years. She is frustrated with the process and the fact that Advisory and Capital have not weighed in on the project yet. Select Member Dippold stated if everyone is in favor of this, she thinks they cannot leave out the school's feasibility project with the Stabilization Fund. Finance Director Jennifer Mullen reviewed debt exclusion calculations. Chair Creighton stated the Board will continue this discussion later tonight.

Major Capital Projects to be presented and proposed financing plan for Annual Town Meeting & Town Election-Town Hall-Town Hall Building Committee (THBC) members Phil Lehr, Mark Cameron, Gerhard Lubitz, Carolyn Coffey, Josiah Stevenson, and Wayne Sawchuk were present. They reviewed the proposed project and explained why it is so important to put this project forward. They stated waiting until the fall would mean the current bids are no longer valid. Phil Lehr stated it has taken 15 years to get to this point and a lot of money has been spent. It would be a shame not to go forward to Annual Town Meeting. Chair Creighton advised the Board they are going to hold off on this discussion for now and move to the next agenda item.

Annual Town Meeting-Review of Articles/Vote-Zoning Bylaw Committee member Tom Callahan and Judge Judith Cutler reviewed the proposed Zoning Bylaw Articles. **Motion by Select Member Dippold to recommend the 6 Zoning Bylaw Articles as presented, seconded by Select Member Kennedy. Roll Call Vote, All aye.**

Town Hall Discussion (continued)-Town Hall Building Committee Member Mark Cameron stated they have a charge from the Select Board and if the Select Board wanted to change it, they should have done it. It is very frustrating to work on something this long and get to this point. Carolyn Coffey reminded the Board that she was on the last town hall committee, and they explored many other alternatives and locations for town hall. The Board had a lengthy discussion. **Motion by Select Member Evans to put an article on the warrant for ATM for town hall borrowing, seconded by Select Member Kennedy. Roll Call Vote; Corey Evans-Aye, Diane Kennedy-Aye, Paul Grady-Nay, Jean Healey Dippold-Nay, Jack Creighton-Nay.** Motion failed. Mr. Grady asked Carolyn Coffey if he could see the information the previous committee has with the different options.

School Facilities Committee-Chair of School Facilities Committee Jason Earls stated he was confused on why he was asked to the meeting tonight. He thought it was to discuss a second article for the feasibility study. He would like to pause and discuss their original request for renovations for \$1.5 million. This is very important. The schools need to be maintained. He is shocked at the condition of the schools. There are a lot of things that are at their life expectancy. The Board discussed creating a school facilities stabilization fund at the fall Special Town Meeting. Mr. Earls reviewed the Feasibility Study. After the last meeting the committee went back and came up with other options. The cost of that study would be \$447,000. The Board had a lengthy discussion.

Major Capital Projects to be presented and proposed financing plan for Annual Town Meeting & Town Election-Town Hall-Discussion continued. Motion by Select Member Dippold to have a Special Town Meeting and Special Town Election in the fall as early as possible for town hall, schools' stabilization fund, fields & courts, and roads & sidewalks, seconded by Select Member Grady. The Board had a lengthy discussion. Select Member Evans stated he doesn't see a reason to have a STM since there won't be any more information by then. There are projects that are ready, tennis courts, school feasibility study and

town hall. Select Member Dippold added that waiting until the fall will give more time to go to Advisory and Capital Budget committees and get more information out to the public. Chair Creighton stated that everyone has been working hard but they may need more time. The Board had a lengthy discussion. Motion by Select Member Dippold to call the question. Roll Call Vote; Jean Healey Dippold-Aye, Jack Creighton-Aye, Paul Grady-Aye, Corey Evans-Nay, Diane Kennedy-Nay. Mr. Evans stated the motion was not seconded. **Motion by Select Member Dippold to call the vote, seconded by Chair Creighton. Roll Call Vote; Corey Evans-Nay, Diane Kennedy-Nay, Paul Grady-Nay, Jean Healey Dippold-Aye, Jack Creighton-Aye.** Motion failed. The discussion continued. **Motion by Select Member Dippold to have a Special Town Meeting in the fall to include but not limited to the big infrastructure projects such as town hall, fields & courts, schools, roads, and sidewalks, seconded by Select Member Grady. Roll Call Vote; Paul Grady-Aye, Jean Healey Dippold-Aye, Jack Creighton-Aye, Diane Kennedy-Nay.** Corey Evans abstained from the vote stating he doesn't see the purpose. Motion passed.

Sewer Budget-Vice Chair of Sewer Commission Paul Kierce advised the Board that the budget they have submitted has been pretty much the same budget as they have presented over the last couple of years. The only changes were for legal expenses, consulting, and unplanned pumping expenses. He discussed the expected revenues from 390 CJC and the Cook Estates.

Town Manager Update-Mr. Senior advised the Board that Advisory voted unanimously to recommend the Warrant Article on Police Removal from Civil Services. **Motion by Select Member Evans to recommend the Article to Remove Police from Civil Service to ATM, seconded by Select Member Kennedy. Roll Call Vote, All aye.** Mr. Senior advised the Select Board that he spoke with counsel, and it is recommended that they put an article on ATM Warrant to take out the language regarding the posting of building permits in the local newspaper. **Motion by Select Member Dippold to put Publication of Building Permits Issued as an Article on the ATM Warrant, seconded by Select Member Grady. Roll Call Vote, All aye.** Mr. Senior advised the Board that Advisory & Capital will be meeting tomorrow and wrapping up their votes. The Board's meeting on April 4th will vote on any outstanding articles and vote to close and publish the warrant. The warrant will be going to the printer by April 6th. The flag on the Town Common is at half-staff for former Cohasset resident and Navy Chief Special Warfare Operator Michael T. Ernst, 36, who died Sunday, Feb. 19, during a parachute training exercise. VSO Phil Mahoney reached out to the Governor's office to have the flag lowered.

Topics not reasonably anticipated within 48 hours-Chair Creighton stated there was a tragic school shooting. He would like the Board and the Town to know there are a lot a things that the schools and police are doing. They will also be having an executive session with the School Committee and Police to discuss school security.

Select Board Comments-Select Member Evans stated process always wins. He asked the Board to put the Town Hall Project on the Warrant for ATM because the process led them there. The Board disagreed; however, he doesn't believe this project will make it to Special Town Meeting in the fall. This project has been killed tonight. He stated it is sad that the Board is ignoring the process. Select Member Kennedy thanked Chief Dockray and the Fire Department for responding to the terrible fire in Scituate. Also, she learned by reading a recent article that Cohasset loans their ambulance to Hingham, which is great. Lastly, thanks to everyone for all their work at the Health & Recreation Fair this past weekend. Select Member Grady stated he is disappointed that the Board couldn't get some things on the Warrant for Annual Town Meeting. He wants to make sure and let people know they are still working hard on these projects. He

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suggested the Town put something out on social media. Select Member Dippold agreed and said communicating to the public is great. It taxes are going to be raised up to 10% she wants to get the information out to the public. She feels strongly about this. Chair Creighton added that it is a difficult situation and a significant amount of money, and they need to get the information out. They are not kicking the can down the road.

Approval of Minutes-Motion by Select Member Kennedy to approve the minutes of 2/28/2023 and 3/16/2023 as amended, seconded by Select Member Grady. Roll Call Vote, All aye.

Motion by Select Member Kennedy to adjourn, seconded by Select Member Grady. Roll Call Vote, All aye.

The meeting adjourned at 10:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jack Creighton, Chair