

**Select Board  
March 25, 2024  
Meeting Minutes**



**Public present:** C. DeFalco, T. Cofske, M. Egan, T. Pina, Chief W. Beaudry, J. Ferreira, J. Freeman, C. Jambora, P. Roach  
**Members present:** M. Kelly, G. Adams, A. Bercovici, A. Soto, P. Vandal

Chair M. Kelly called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. All in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. M. Kelly announced that the meeting is being recorded.

**Meeting Minutes**

P. Vandal had a correction for the meeting minutes. The meeting minutes stated that P. Vandal “asked if he currently had a job” when discussing the appointment of Gary Wilson to Animal/Barn Inspector but the question was if he was in that position now. For the sake of clarification, a motion was made to correct.

MOTION: P. Vandal, to correct minutes to say: “that he currently held that position.”

SECOND: A. Bercovici

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

MOTION: G. Adams, to accept the Select Board meeting minutes from the March 18, 2024 meeting with the clarification we just amended.

SECOND: A. Bercovici

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

**Appointments**

Alternate Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) Commissioner – Nominate & Appoint a Select Board Member

M. Kelly asked if there was anyone who wanted to be appointed to the role of Alternate Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Commissioner. A. Soto entered the meeting. A. Soto asked what the role entailed. T. Cofske said the Commissioner would receive correspondence from the Board of Directors and have a meeting possibly once a year. A. Soto said he would take on the role.

MOTION: G. Adams, to appoint Selectman Soto to the role of Alternate Commissioner for the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission.

SECOND: A. Bercovici

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

## **New Business**

### **Special Town Meeting Warrant (To be Held on May 8th, 2024 at 6:00 P.M. at the Brimfield Elementary School)**

M. Kelly specified there was only one Article on the Warrant. ["Article 1: To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum of money from the Capital Purchase Stabilization Fund (Account #85-3571-0000) or from Free Cash (Account #01-3590-0000) to the Facilities Study (Account #01-0195-6215) for the purpose of obtaining Owner's Project Management and Schematic Design services for the Town's Municipal Offices Project and the payment of costs incidental or related thereto, or, take any other action thereon."]

MOTION: G. Adams, to approve the Warrant for the Special Town Meeting scheduled for May 8th, 2024.

SECOND: A. Soto

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

### **Adopt the Municipal Website as the Official Method of Notice Posting, Pursuant to 940CMR § 29.03(2)(b).**

M. Kelly said that all 940CMR § 29.03(2)(b) does is allow the Board to identify the municipal website as the place notices can be officially posted. G. Adams asked if the municipal website was where notices were posted now. T. Cofske replied that it was but the Town's official location is the message board outside of the Annex. T. Cofske added that the law allowed Select Boards to select an alternate location as the official posting location. T. Cofske concluded that while this would change the official posting location from the board to the website, the Town could still post notices on the board as well. G. Adams said he thought it was important that the Town kept posting on the building because there were still people who do not use the internet. T. Cofske said that could be made part of the motion.

MOTION: A. Bercovici, to adopt the Municipal Website as the Official Method of Notice Posting, Pursuant to 940CMR § 29.03(2)(b) in addition to the current postings as they are on the Town building.

SECOND: G. Adams

DISCUSSION: A. Soto asked if the Town Clerk was responsible for posting notices. M. Kelly replied that a lot of the boards do it themselves but ultimately the Town Clerk is responsible. A. Soto asked if every department had access to the municipal website. T. Cofske replied most do, if they are responsible for posting their meetings, and if not they send notices to the Town Clerk or herself to post for them. A. Soto suggested making a list of who had access to the municipal website to make changes. T. Cofske said that there are different administrative levels. Only the Select Board office and the Town Clerk have administrative access to make change, other departments have the access in order to post to the website.

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

### **Posting of Meeting Minutes on Municipal Website**

T. Cofske said that it is not mandatory for boards or committees to post meeting minutes to the municipal website but it is the practice of many in Brimfield. T. Cofske went on to say that it was recommended that all municipal boards and committees work harder to ensure that all meeting minutes are posted on the municipal website. T. Cofske concluded that it had been asked that the matter be placed on the agenda for the Board to discuss and to encourage the practice to the other boards and committees.

MOTION: G. Adams, to request all boards post Meeting Minutes on the Municipal Website.

SECOND: A. Soto

DISCUSSION: M. Kelly said the Board could not mandate the posting of meeting minutes to the municipal website but they could request it. A. Soto said he thought posting meeting minutes to the municipal website was a great thing to have because not everyone can come to the meetings. A. Soto asked if it was an involved process or if there were barriers to posting meeting minutes to the municipal website. T. Cofske said it is very simple.

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

### **Select Board Annual Town Report**

The Board reviewed the Annual Town Report for the Select Board. M. Kelly said that it is not always the practice to bring the report to the full board but that he prefers doing so to allow Board members the opportunity to voice anything they would like to have included. A. Soto asked when would be the appropriate time to bring the Select Board stipend back to its previous level. T. Cofske said that at the last meeting, the Board went over the Select Board office budget for Fiscal 2025, and incorporated into that budget was a restoration of the Select Board stipend to its previous level with the addition of the Finance Committee's recommended 4% increase. M. Kelly said the Annual Report did not necessarily require a vote but that he wanted to bring it to a vote to establish that the Board was all on the same page.

MOTION: G. Adams, to accept the Select Board Report for the Annual Town Report.

SECOND: A. Bercovici

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

### **FY2025 Budget Review**

Select Board Budgets

T. Cofske continued with her presentation of the Select Board budgets to the Board from the previous Select Board meeting. The pest management control plan services were moved from the Town Hall Expense account to the Town Facilities Maintenance Account, because the Town Hall Expense account is used for supplies and not maintenance. This reduced the budget by \$3,000.

A. Soto asked if the increase in PermitPro was tied to an increase in use. T. Cofske replied that all boards and departments besides the Building Department were already using it. T. Cofske also explained that the contract was paid in 2/3rds out of the General Account and 1/3rd out of the Flea Market Account. A. Soto said there have been many complaints over the Building Department not using PermitPro. M. Kelly said to put it on a different agenda because the topic goes beyond the budget issue.

T. Cofske reviewed the Computer Maintenance Account. The figure included the amounts provided by Tantasqua IT for renewals of licensing, backup renewals, firewall protection, and Adobe for six users in the Town Hall. T. Cofske talked to S. Rich from Tantasqua IT, he was going to double-check if it included a higher level of cyber protection security. If it did not, the figure may need to be increased. Also included were the telephone lease and the contract for Tantasqua IT.

A. Soto asked about savings from heating on the Town Hall because it has not been in use. T. Cofske said that at the end of the fiscal year the Department of Revenue allows municipalities, come May, to make inter- and intra-departmental transfers. Any remaining funds may be used then to supplement any accounts that are running over. If there is still money after that, it will return to the General Fund in the form of Free Cash.

G. Adams said the Animal Control contract was showing a significant increase. T. Cofske said that it was going up by 58% for each of the towns involved in the agreement. The Town's total amount is based on population. When the regional inter-municipal agreement was put together, Palmer was in the lead. Palmer had not prepared with a lot of forecasting, and for the last three years have been running in the deficit and have been making up the costs, although they were not aware of that fact until recently. When Palmer took Brimfield on they had not forecasted the need for additional staff. Palmer had a per diem and one full-timer, but they need an additional full-timer. The numbers had not been looked at deeply when the agreement started. T. Cofske added that while it is a big increase, it is a professional service and if the Town decided to back out, ultimately, the burden would be placed on the Brimfield Police Department. T. Cofske further added the Town did not participate in the capital expenditures. The facility is housed in Monson but Brimfield did not contribute to purchasing the facility, although a vehicle was donated. G. Adams said he would be interested in knowing what the actual calls are. T. Cofske said she brought that up at the previous meeting because there is language in the contract about a log report being issued. T. Cofske said the Town should be getting a log report of the activity in Brimfield, and the other towns as well since it is a regional facility and service. T. Cofske said the Board should also have access to all of the expenditures. T. Cofske asked to be emailed invoices quarterly along with all backup documentation. Chief W. Beaudry brought the topic up at the most recent meeting as well. Palmer is trying to figure out the best way to do that because some logs are by phone call, some by email, and others by dispatch. Going forward, those documents will be part of the packet every quarter.

M. Kelly said the Board does not have to vote to accept the budget.

T. Cofske then reviewed the budget for insurance and liability. Workers' compensation went up by 4%. General property and liability increased by about 16%. 15% had been the forecasting from various underwriters due to the litigations and 1% was added for vehicles and equipment. Police and fire went down by 12%.

#### **Review And Determine Release of January 29, 2024 Executive Session Meeting Minutes**

M. Kelly said at this meeting the Board discussed vacation days, personal days, sick days, and how they are being handled. M. Kelly added the Board did not need to go into Executive Session to accept the minutes.

MOTION: G. Adams, to release the January 29, 2024 Executive Session Meeting Minutes.

SECOND: A. Soto

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

#### **Special & One Day Liquor License:**

The Beer Guy, LLC – David Capriati (2024 Flea Market Shows – May, July, September)

MOTION: A. Soto, to approve the Special & One Day Liquor License for The Beer Guy, LLC - David Capriati (2024 Flea Market Shows – for the May, July, September shows).

SECOND: A. Bercovici

DISCUSSION: A. Soto sought clarification over a One Day license being issued for multiple days. T. Cofske clarified that 'Special & One Day' was the type of liquor license and that Massachusetts General Law allows for it to function for up to 30 days in one calendar year.

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

ABSTAIN: M. Kelly

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: G. Adams, to adjourn the meeting.

SECOND: A. Bercovici

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

The meeting adjourned at 6:04 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Christopher DeFalco

  
Martin J. Kelly, Chairperson

#### MEETING MATERIALS:

- Posting Updated 3-21-24
- Meeting Minutes March 18th
- PVPC Commissioner and Alternative email
- Special Town Meeting Warrant
- Select Board Annual Report
- Open Meeting Law Regulation 940 CMR
- Select Board Budgets
- Executive Session Meeting Minutes January 29th