



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

SELECT BOARD April 15, 2020 – 5:30 PM Zoom Video Conferencing

Vision Statement - *The Town of Ashland will be a prosperous and fiscally sound community with a full range of housing, business, cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities in a safe and attractive environment for residents and visitors.*

Mission Statement - *The Ashland Select Board is dedicated to promoting responsible fiscal management, advocating for sustainable development & growth and providing excellent municipal services which will enhance the quality of life in our diverse community. The Ashland Select Board is committed to providing clear goals and objectives for Town management and creating effective engagement and public participation with residents, state legislators and other elected officials in order to achieve our mission.*

Call Meeting to Order

Chair Steve Mitchell called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Mr. Mitchell stated that pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12th order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law the meeting is being recorded by WACA TV and broadcast live on WACA TV and Facebook using the Zoom Video Conferencing platform. All board and committee members are participating remotely. He read the video conferencing meeting objective and asked for a Select Board attendance rollcall; Brandi Kinsman-aye, Rob Scherer-aye, Yolanda Greaves-aye, Joe Magnani-aye, Steve Mitchell-aye. In addition, Town Manager Michael Herbert, and Assistant Town Manager Jennifer Ball were in attendance.

Old/New Business

Covid-19 Update

Concerning the impact COVID-19 is having on Ashland, Michael Herbert provided the following update. He reported that as of noon today 66 positive cases have been reported, none are first responders, and 25 individuals have recovered. Going forward Mr. Herbert's intends to provide an update on the number of cases, daily at 4:00 pm. He mentioned that Sgt. Ed Berman from the Ashland Police Dept. will lead the town's COVID-19 response effort with the Ashland Health Dept. Sgt. Berman efforts have been focused on intake, monitoring the case load, tracing including demographic, and tracking to identify close contacts. Mr. Herbert mentioned that the town is in good shape concerning the supply of personal protective equipment.

Jenn Ball provided an update on construction guidelines and requirements for construction workers in town, developed two weeks ago in conjunction with the Planning Dept. and state guidelines. The guidelines state that a construction site, including public work sites, with three or more people on crew must submit daily certifications that they are following the guidelines, including monitoring symptoms and providing handwashing stations. Weekly, Michael Crisafulli, Building Commissioner, is verifying the sites' compliance. Ms. Ball clarified that these guidelines are communicated during the permit application process. Landscaping workers do not fall under the guidelines, and there was discussion concerning methods to disseminate the guidelines to non-construction groups.

Mr. Herbert also provided an overview of information from the Attorney General's regarding restrictions and enforcement actions within municipalities' purview. He reviewed new COVID-19 related legislation, such as relief from evictions and foreclosures for renter and homeowners, the CARES Act provisions, and public funding through the Community Development Block Grant process and how it might flow through and

impact “entitlement communities” and other municipalities. Work the town is doing to address elements of Human Services were discussed, such as mental health, food security, housing and economics. Mr. Herbert highlighted the 3R restaurant food program’s success and the \$8,000 infusion from the Emergency Fund going to support the program’s efforts. He asked the board to consider a \$2,000 donation to the program from the Select Gift Account. There was a brief discussion concerning the board’s donation, and the cost to run the program for a week, which is \$2,000.

Yolanda Greaves made a motion for the Select Board to take \$4,000 from their Gift Account to give to the 3R program to support the residents of Ashland. This motion was seconded by Joe Magnani; Kinsman-aye, Scherer-aye, Greaves-aye, Magnani-aye, Mitchell-aye, with a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.

Diane Mortensen provided an update concerning the prior night’s Board of Health meeting and mentioned that the board will go back to meeting every other week.

Joe Magnani extended his condolences to the Fontenez family and the Boston Police Dept. for their loss, as Police Officer Jose Fontanez died from complications due to COVID-19.

Set new date for Town Meeting – June 16th

Mr. Herbert explained that due to Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020 the Town Meeting will be rescheduled until June 16, 2020, and if necessary, the date will be revisited. Concerning the start of the FY21 budget, Mr. Herbert clarified that the town would utilize no more than 1/12th of the previous year’s budget and appropriations for July and for August, if further extension is necessary.

Yolanda Greaves made a motion pursuant to General Law 39 Sub-chapter 39 Chapter 9 and Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020 due to the Governor’s declaration of emergency to respond to COVID-19 the board votes to postpone the annual Town Meeting from May 6, 2020 at 7:00 pm to June 16, 2020 at 7:00 pm. This motion was seconded by Joe Magnani; Kinsman-aye, Scherer-aye, Greaves-aye, Magnani-aye, Mitchell-aye, with a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.

Set new date for Town Election – June 23rd

Mr. Herbert explained that new legislation allows municipalities to change their municipal election date. The proposed dates for Ashland are Tuesday June 23rd or Wednesday June 24th. The latter date would allow the town to utilize staff to fill poll worker positions without incurring overtime costs. The proposed polling hours would be 10:00 am to 8:00 pm. The polling location would be either the High School or the Community Center and or voting by mail. There was discussion concerning the appropriate size of the polling local to accommodate social distancing, maintain as much normalcy as possible, the process to move the date out further, if necessary, and utilizing staff. Mr. Mitchell recommended requesting a report from the Town Clerk’s Office outlining the town election framework and campaign guidelines.

Yolanda Greaves made a motion pursuant to Chapter 45 of the Acts of 2020 an act granting authority to postpone 2020 municipal elections in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and increase voting options in response to the declaration of emergency to respond to COVID-19 the board votes to postpone the town election currently scheduled for Tuesday May 19, 2020 to be held on June 24, 2020. This motion was seconded by Joe Magnani; Greaves-aye, Scherer-aye, Magnani-aye, Kinsman-aye, Mitchell-aye, with a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.

Establish new payment due date for FY20 4th Quarter Property Taxes – June 1st

Mr. Herbert explained that under Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020 the town proposed extend the due date for property taxes and abatement applications from May 1st to June 1st.

Yolanda Greaves made a motion pursuant to accept Sections 10 and 11 of Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020 and extend our fiscal year 2020 property taxes due date from May 1, 2020 to June 1, 2020. This motion was seconded by Joe Magnani; Greaves-aye, Kinsman-aye, Scherer-aye, Magnani-aye, Mitchell-aye, with a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.

Recap of Tri-Board Meeting on Mindess Project & Public Safety Project

Ms. Greaves, Vice Chair of the Mindess School Building Feasibility Committee, provided a recap of the Mindess Project points discussed at the Tri-board meeting, including the proposed 2D design. She explained that the committee would create the final design and budget number for that building.

Mr. Magnani provided an update on the Public Safety Building project. He explained that tomorrow at 4:00 pm the Public Safety Committee will meet with HKT to review an HVAC design for the building.

Rob Scherer pointed out the importance of a Net-Zero design consideration for both buildings.

United Group of Companies (UGC) Project – Lot 2 of Rail Transit District

Mr. Herbert provided an update on the UGC project. He mentioned that in reviewing the updated development agreement that utilized the important criteria recommended by the Select Board, some discrepancies were identified. Mr. Herbert indicated the recommended undisturbed buffer, of a minimum of 150 ft. to 200 ft., on Apple Ridge was a sticking point, as UGC proposed 110ft. to 120 ft. A report will be provided by the end of the week with a rendering of how the proposed buffer will appear.

Waiver of demo delay – Warren Barn

Jenn Ball explained that David Foster has been working on the Warren Barn Project for some time. The barn was built prior to 1940 so she is requesting that the board serving as the Historical Commission waive the demo delay. She would like to have the demo company take the barn down on Monday. She explained that the contractor has applied for the demo permit and that was the trigger for the waiver request.

Yolanda Greaves made a motion to approve the waiving of the demo delay for the Warren Barn so that it can come down as of Monday April 20th. This motion was seconded by Brandi Kinsman with a roll call vote Greaves-aye, Scherer-aye, Magnani-aye, Mitchell-aye and Kinsman-aye, with a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.

Yolanda Greaves made a motion to approve work of construction/demolition on Monday April 20th. This motion was seconded by Rob Scherer with a roll call vote Greaves-aye, Scherer-aye, Kinsman-aye, Magnani-aye, Mitchell-aye, with a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.

Notification of the Town Manager's Appointment of Cynthia Valovcin as a Full-time

Mr. Herbert reported that Cynthia Valovcin has been appointed to the full-time dispatcher position on the Ashland Fire Dept., and her proposed start date is April 27, 2020.

Dispatcher for the Fire Department

Joe Magnani made a motion to approve the hiring of Cynthia Valovcin to the Fire Dept. full-time dispatcher position and waive the 15-day waiting period. This motion was seconded by Yolanda Greaves with a roll call vote Greaves-aye, Scherer-aye, Kinsman-aye, Magnani-aye, Mitchell-aye, with a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.

Declare 15 Manhole Structures as surplus so that DPW can dispose of them

Yolanda Greaves made a motion to approve the declaring of surplus of 15 manhole structures from the DPW. This motion was seconded by Rob Scherer with a roll call vote Greaves-aye, Scherer-aye, Kinsman-aye, Magnani-aye, Mitchell-aye, with a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.

Accept the March 18, 2020 Regular Session Minutes

Yolanda Greaves made a motion to accept the regular session minutes of March 18, 2020 as drafted. This motion was seconded by Joe Magnani with a roll call vote Greaves-aye, Scherer-aye, Kinsman-aye, Magnani-aye, Mitchell-aye, with a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.

Town Manager Report - Fiscal Year 2020 and 2021 Budget Update

Mr. Herbert explained that the last quarter of the FY20 budget will close out without significant impact to cashflow. A spending freeze has been imposed for non-essential items and authorized capital projects will be

reviewed to determine further spending. Concerning the FY21 budget, state aid funding factored in prior to COVID-19 are expected to change significantly, as Massachusetts state revenues could decline by 20%. The state budget numbers are anticipated close to July 1st. There was a brief discussion concerning the town's use of the Stabilization Fund and the fund policies.

The board thanked Mr. Herbert, Ms. Ball and Ms. Iacaponi for their time and effort.

Citizen's Participation

Preston Crow mentioned that he and Mr. Mitchell discussed the election rescheduling and he is on board with the proposed change. Mr. Herbert confirmed that the candidate submission period is closed.

Mark Dassoni thanked the town for the assistance offered.

Board Reports

Joe Magnani

Mr. Magnani mentioned that he contacted Mr. Kunis concerning the Eagle Scout program that has been rescheduled until August.

Mr. Magnani thanked all first responders dealing with the virus situation. He also thanked Bill Gath who resigned from the Ashland Day Committee.

Yolanda Greaves

Ms. Greaves reported that information is still being disseminated by way of the Around the Clock program.

Rob Scherer

Mr. Scherer mentioned the Liz Stanton report on the Eversource project and reminded all to respond the Mr. Herbert and Mr. Mitchell's email regarding questions or issues concerning the report.

Brandi Kinsman

Ms. Kinsman mentioned the economic impact of COVID-19 and resources available for businesses listed on the coronavirus page. She also pointed out the Rep. Jack Lewis is helping to connect residents waiting for unemployment benefits with the Dept. of Unemployment Assistance. Also, the Front Porch project is working to raise funds by offering family photographs and donating the funds to the Ashland Emergency Fund.

Steve Mitchell

Mr. Mitchell mentioned an initiative to celebrate George Sealy's 101st birthday by dropping of a birthday card for George at the Community Center. Kim Kotob is managing the project at kkotob@ashlandmass.com.

Mr. Mitchell thanked WACA TV staff and Paul Carpenter, IT Director, and the IT Dept. for their expertise and efforts managing the remote meetings.

Concerning the Farmer's Market, planning is underway to determine how the market will be handled. And, on April 15th One Boston Day will be commemorated in place of the Boston Marathon.

Adjournment

Yolanda Greaves made a motion to adjourn. This motion was seconded by Joe Magnani with a unanimous vote of 5-0-0; Kinsman-aye, Scherer-aye, Greaves-aye, Magnani-aye, Mitchell-aye, with a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.

Motion: Pursuant to Chapter 45 of the Acts of 2020, *An Act Granting Authority to Postpone 2020 Municipal Election in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Increase Voting Options in Response to the Declaration of Emergency to respond to COVID-19*, the Board votes to postpone the town election currently scheduled for _____, 2020 to be held on June 23, 2020.

Second

Motion: Pursuant to G.L. c. 39 §9, and Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020 due to the Governor's Declaration of Emergency to Respond to COVID 19, the Board votes to postpone Annual Town Meeting from May 6, 2020 at 7:00 pm to June 16th, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Second

Susan Robie <srobie@ashlandmass.com>



Select Board Meeting

1 message

Cindy Cincotta <ccincotta@ashlandmass.com>
To: Susan Robie <srobie@ashlandmass.com>

Thu, Apr 9, 2020 at 9:37 AM

Good Morning Susan,

Are the Select Board meeting next week? The legislation passed to extend the Real Estate & Personal Property Tax to June 1st and I was just wondering if that was on the agenda.

Thank you & have a great day 😊

--



Cynthia M. Cincotta, CMMT

Treasurer/Collector

Town of Ashland

a: 101 Main Street, Ashland, MA 01721

p: 508-532-7904





Town of Ashland, Massachusetts

Office of the Board of Selectmen
and Town Manager
101 Main Street, 01721-1191
(508) 881-0100

Michael Herbert, Town Manager, Ext 7911
Jennifer Ball, Assistant Town Manager, Ext 7901
Susan K. Robie, Executive Assistant, Ext. 7921
Diane Mortensen, Personnel and Financial Assistant, Ext. 7933

Select Board
Steve Mitchell, Chair
Yolanda Greaves, Vice Chair
Joseph J Magnani, Jr., Clerk
Brandi Kinsman, Member
Rob Scherer, Member

April 8, 2020

Ms. Cynthia Valovcin

Dear Ms. Valovcin:

We were impressed with your skills and accomplishments and feel your background and experience is a good match for our present needs. It is with great pleasure that the Town of Ashland offers you the position of **Full-time Dispatcher for the Ashland Fire Department**, with the following compensation package. This offer is contingent upon a successful pre-employment screening including: (1) a CORI check (see attached form and authorization), and (2) employment eligibility verification.

- ⌚ The position is **full-time, average of 42 hours/week, non-exempt** and is offered at a Step 2 rate of **\$21.2989/hr.**
- ⌚ You will have a **six-month probationary period.**
- ⌚ FT Dispatcher **schedule** is as follows: *24-hr on, 24-hr off, 24-hr on, 5 days off; schedule TBD on start.*
- ⌚ **COLA** and Performance-based **step increases**, based on an positive annual review;
- ⌚ Sick and Vacation Paid Time Off (**PTO**) per the employee handbook, and Town-paid holidays;
- ⌚ Insurance **benefits**, if selected; participation in Middlesex County Retirement System.

We will plan for a starting date of Monday, April 27; please contact us if this needs to change. On your first day, Keith Robie, Fire Chief, will meet you at the AFD Cedar Street Station. **Prior to your start date**, please be in touch with Kathy Arsenault, Payroll Coordinator, to complete employment forms. Kathy will let you know the appropriate documentation you need to bring for the completion of your new hire forms, including proof that you are presently eligible to work in the United States for I-9 purposes. Failure to provide appropriate documentation will result in immediate termination of employment in accordance with the terms of the Immigration Reform and Control Act. Feel free to contact my office with any questions.

If you are in acceptance of this employment offer, please sign below and return to Human Resources at your earliest convenience. I will request for consent from the Board of Selectmen at their next meeting for this appointment. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Congratulations and we look forward to having you as part of our team!

Sincerely,

Michael

cc: Lisa Ugliodoro, Human Resources
Keith Robie, Ashland Fire Department
Susan Robie, Town Manager's Office



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

SELECT BOARD Minutes March 18, 2020 – 7:00 PM Town Hall and Zoom Video Conference

Vision Statement - *The Town of Ashland will be a prosperous and fiscally sound community with a full range of housing, business, cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities in a safe and attractive environment for residents and visitors.*

Mission Statement - *The Ashland Select Board is dedicated to promoting responsible fiscal management, advocating for sustainable development & growth and providing excellent municipal services which will enhance the quality of life in our diverse community. The Ashland Select Board is committed to providing clear goals and objectives for Town management and creating effective engagement and public participation with residents, state legislators and other elected officials in order to achieve our mission.*

Call Meeting to Order

Chair Steve Mitchell called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and asked for a Select Board attendance rollcall; Brandi Kinsman-aye, Rob Scherer-aye, Yolanda Greaves-aye, Joe Magnani-aye, Steve Mitchell-aye. Also present were Michael Herbert, Town Manager; Jenn Ball, Assistant Town Manager; and Brittany Iacaponi, Finance Director.

Steve mentioned that WACA TV is recording and broadcasting the meeting live. He explained that this is the board's first attempt to conduct a remote participation meeting with several members attending via Zoom Video Conferencing. Steve also reviewed the modified meeting agenda.

Old / New Business

FY21 Budget Discussion & Vote

Michael Herbert explained that the FY21 budget is in flux due to the Governor's response to COVID-19 that includes provisions to extend the current budget and adopt the new budget later. Steve mentioned that a joint committee meeting will take place at the Statehouse regarding a bill concerning town government and budget dates.

Michael stated that he intends to move forward with the FY21 budget, as it is essentially the same as the draft the board reviewed in January. Michael explained that inclusion of the Enterprise Fund budget is a new addition, and per the Finance Director's recommendation there are no rate increases for water and sewer funds.

The board agreed with the proposed FY21 budget and the plan to move forward, however asked for the annual dollar amount and percent change to be included in the General Fund overview section. Brittany Iacaponi mentioned that the documents, with the requested updates, will be posted on the town website Finance page.

Concerning revenue, Michael explained that the cable franchise agreement revenue increase includes payments or donations, per President Trump and the FCC's new ruling. In addition, due to the potential impact of the state's current fiscal strain, Michael compared 2008 budget reductions to illustrate how FY21 state aid, new growth and local receipts may be affected.

Michael pointed out the reduction in new growth revenue, related to new construction and building permits, decreased from \$1 million in FY20 to \$600,000 in FY21, and as a result the tax levy increased

to approximately \$1.7 million. State aid, at this point, is expected to increase about \$200,000. However, local receipts and investment income will likely decrease, resulting in a total budget of \$66.0 million in FY21, an increase of roughly \$2 million from \$63.9 million in FY 20.

Michael explained the increase in veterans' benefits is due to serving and distributing less to veterans, given in 2018 \$77,000 was disbursed, dropped to \$40,000 in 2019 and to \$20,000 next year. Concerning new growth revenue, Michael made clear that the Robert Hill Way project is included, however the UGC-RTD Lot 2 development is not.

Regarding expenses, general government decreased due to an operations budget shift into capital. Public school funds increased from \$33.2 million in FY20 to \$34.7 million in FY21, which is attributed to and is in accordance with financial policies. The Keefe Tech's assessment was reduced due to a financial infusion the school received. Non-excluded debt service increased \$1 million and includes approved projects, land purchases as well as \$750,000 for the new Public Safety building. Excluded debt service increased slightly and includes authorized projects such as the Valentine Estate, the Mindess feasibility and the Public Safety building design and engineering. Capital outlay reduced from \$750,000 to \$500,000. Benefits and insurance increased from \$10.5 million to \$10.7. As a result, total appropriated expenses increased from \$62.7 million in FY20 to \$64.8 million in FY21. Non-appropriated expenses increased and included the overlay and 41C senior tax exemptions.

Michael highlighted several line-item budget changes, including Economic Development, Public Safety Dept., DPW and workers compensation. Brittany Iacaponi reviewed the Enterprise Funds, including water and sewer with no rate increase, the increased waste management costs due to higher recycling fees, field management, cable television access, and stormwater funds.

Yolanda Greaves made a motion to approve the FY21 budget as presented. This motion was seconded by Brandi Kinsman with a unanimous vote of 5-0-0; Kinsman-aye, Scherer-aye, Greaves-aye, Magnani-aye, Mitchell-aye.

Continued Participation in MetroWest Veteran's District (Ashland, Holliston, Hopkinton, Medway)

Michael provided an overview of the MetroWest Veteran's program that requires participating towns to establish a Veterans Officer, which is currently Sarah Bateman in Ashland. Michael expressed that this the regional initiative has collectively enhanced the community's profile. Michael requested the board approve the FY21 amended two-year agreement.

Yolanda Greaves made a motion to approve the FY21 amended agreement for our veteran's district as presented. This motion was seconded by Joe Magnani with a unanimous vote of 5-0-0; Kinsman-aye, Scherer-aye, Greaves-aye, Magnani-aye, Mitchell-aye.

Statements Regarding COVID-19

The board commended the Town Manager's office for the work done to assist residents and disseminate information concerning COVID-19. Michael Herbert thanked the board, the staff task force and WACATV for their support and efforts. Michael also gave an update on the impacts and activities to date at the local and state-level, and mentioned the Town Manager's Newsletter, the town's Facebook, Twitter and website that will be used to provide updates.

Steve noted that the Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government are scheduled to meet to discuss Bill H.4572, sponsored by Governor Baker, that addresses challenges to town governance resulting from COVID-19.

The board discussed the need for the board to continue the real-time remote meeting format via Zoom to conduct town business. They also recommended that residents routinely access the media previously mentioned to stay abreast of information pertaining to the town, as guidelines change. Jennifer Ball also provided an update on the town's COVID-19 activities and near-term plans.

Adjournment

Yolanda Greaves made a motion to adjourn. This motion was seconded by Brandi Kinsman with a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.

Meeting Materials:

This agenda is subject to change and includes those items reasonably anticipated by the Chair to be discussed at the meeting. Not all agenda items may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

Surplus - Manhole Structures

1 message

Doug Small <dsmall@ashlandmass.com>
To: Susan Robie <srobie@ashlandmass.com>

Mon, Mar 30, 2020 at 4:09 PM

Hi Susan,

We have no use for the 15 manhole structures that are sitting in the DPW yard. It will cost us thousands of dollars to crush and dispose of.

When can the Selectboard vote to determine them as surplus.

There are 15 manhole structures. Some have been sitting there for decades.

Any suggestions - please let me know.

Doug

--



Doug Small

Director of Public Works

[Town of Ashland](#)

a: 20 Ponderosa Road, Ashland, MA 01721

p: 508-532-7941

e. dsmall@ashlandmass.com

