

IPSWICH SELECT BOARD
Meeting of Tuesday, February 14, 2022

The Select Board participated in this meeting remotely utilizing Zoom in accordance with the Governor's March 12, 2020 Order suspending provisions of Open Meeting Law and to promote public health and social distancing.

Board Members present: Dr. Tammy Jones, Chair; William, Whitmore, Vice Chair; Linda Alexson; Kerry Mackin; Sarah Player

Also present: Anthony Marino, Town Manager; Eileen Page, Recording Secretary

With a quorum present, Dr. Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Citizen Queries

None.

Approval of Minutes

- I. January 18, 2022
- II. February 1, 2022

- *Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to approved the minutes. Ms. Mackin seconded. The motion carried unanimously via roll call.*

Ipswich-Rowley Rotary Club Request for Flag Installation, "Flags for Heroes"

Last year, the Rotary Club installed 100 flags in honor of local heroes. This year, they are asking to install 200 in response to the demand for participation. The flags will be displayed from May 27-June 18, 2022.

Ms. Alexson asked if any pedestrian or parking issues were anticipated due to the installation; Mr. Marino responded that there are no anticipated issues.

Ms. Player asked if the permanent flag stands posed any hazard for tripping; Mr. Marino responded that the stands are sunken holders, and that the Cemetery & Parks crews have also confirmed they are deep enough so as not to interfere with maintenance operations.

- *Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to approve the request. Ms. Mackin seconded. The motion carried unanimously via roll call.*

Select Board Member Subcommittee Update

ELECTRIC SUBCOMMITTEE

The Electric Subcommittee met last week to discuss the FY23 budget and rate structures.

CLIMATE RESILIENCY COMMITTEE

The Climate Resiliency Committee will meet on February 15 at 6:30 PM via Zoom.

MBTA ADVISORY BOARD COMMUTER RAIL COMMITTEE

It was recently reported that there will be no commuter rail service to/from Ipswich during March and April. Bussing will be available from Newburyport, Rowley, and Ipswich to Beverly Depot during March and to Salem during April.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING BOARD

The affordable housing unit recently purchased and then put up for sale by the Town has received a buyer. The unit will remain on the SHI, but is now owned by a new Ipswich resident.

PUBLIC HEARING: Alteration of Premises and Change of Corporate Structure Application for On-Premise Pouring Permit, 1634 Meadery, 3 Short Street

“Residents of the Town of Ipswich, please note that the Select Board will conduct a hybrid Public Hearing on Monday, February 14, 2022 at 7:15 PM in Meeting Room A at Ipswich Town Hall, 25 Green Street, and via Zoom on an application for multiple amendments, including Alteration of Premises for Annual Pouring Permit Licensee 1634 Meadery, located at 3 Short Street.” -Dr. Tammy Jones, Select Board Chair

- *Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to open the Public Hearing. Ms. Mackin seconded. The motion carried unanimously via roll call.*

Dan Clapp (Owner, 1634 Meadery) stated that the outdoor serving allowed by the Town and State for the summers of 2020 and 2021 allowed for excellent foot traffic to the Meadery, and the business would like to make outdoor tastings permanently available to patrons. Mr. Clapp has updated his federal liquor license, and is now seeking to update the local liquor license.

Ms. Alexson asked if there are any structural changes planned to accommodate outdoor tastings; Mr. Clapp responded that there are not any changes planned, and that the Meadery has in the past put up shade tents and a temporary rope fence. Outdoor tasting runs from April through October. Ms. Alexson asked if any parking issues were anticipated with the increase in foot traffic; Mr. Clapp responded that the Meadery has three (3) private parking spaces, but noted that due to the line painting on Short Street, people often do not realize that public parking is available.

Ms. Player asked if any entertainment was planned. Mr. Clapp responded that he would consider requesting acoustic music in the future, but has not yet done so.

- *Vote: Mr. Whitmore moved to approve the alteration. Ms. Player seconded. The motion carried unanimously via roll call.*

Town Manager Report

UNION NEGOTIATIONS

Union Negotiations are ongoing. The current contracts expire on June 31, 2022.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGERS

\$200,000 in grant money was awarded to install electric vehicle charging stations throughout town. The exact sites are still to be selected.

MBTA ZONING

Mr. Marino and several local Town Managers recently met to draft a letter expressing concerns about the MBTA’s overlay district rezoning intentions.

BUDGET HEARINGS

Budget hearings are ongoing. The Finance Committee will hold their next meeting on February 15, and continue through early March.

PUBLIC HEARING: Water and Wastewater Rates (2 of 2)

“Residents of the Town of Ipswich, please note that the Select Board, as Water and Sewer Commissioners, will hold remote Public Hearings on Tuesday, February 1, 2022, at 7:15 PM, and Monday, February 14, 2022, at 7:30 PM to consider and act on the increase and/or modification of the current water and sewer rates effective for billings on and after May 1, 2022.” -Dr. Tammy Jones, Chair, Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners

- *Vote: Ms. Mackin moved to open the Public Hearing. Mr. Whitmore seconded. The motion carried unanimously via roll call.*

WATER

Vicki Halmen (Water and Wastewater Director) presented a proposal to increase the water base rate from \$12.38 to \$13.62 per 100^{ft}³, and the residential summer rate from \$7.19 per 100^{ft}³ (winter rate) to \$20.43 per 100^{ft}³. Residential summer rates apply from May 1 through September 30. Ms. Halmen stated that the goal of a seasonal rate design is to meet departmental financial needs and long term capital goals, generate stable, predictable income, and influence customer use patterns while minimizing customer impact.

Ms. Alexson noted that the adjustment does not apply to the commercial and industrial classes, and that there is no incentive for those classes to reduce their water consumption. Ms. Halmen responded that there are about 4,800 water customers, only about 300 of whom are commercial or industrial. She stated that the largest spike in seasonal water consumption is seen residentially and by seasonal businesses, which is where the rate structure is applied. Ms. Alexson stated that she would also like to see a unit price listed on monthly bills.

WASTEWATER

The Commissioners were asked to increase the wastewater rate from \$11.39 to \$11.96 per 100^{ft}³, and increase the septage rates from \$0.07 to \$0.08 for in-town customers, and from \$0.085 to \$0.09 for out-of-town customers.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Lisa Roth (179 Linebrook Road) stated that by her calculations, out-of-town dumping currently only pays about 14% more of a premium than in-town dumping, however with the proposed change, that percentage would be lowered to 6%. Ms. Halmen responded that the goal of the change is to hit a price point that is competitive while continuing to collect revenue. Ms. Roth argued that ratepayers end up paying for system upgrades, while out-of-town dumping use facilities at a rate that does not keep up with the burden of cost. Mr. Whitmore stated that if the out-of-town rates are increased too much, dumpers will take their business elsewhere.

- *Vote: Ms. Mackin moved to close the Public Hearing. Ms. Alexson seconded. The motion carried unanimously via roll call.*
- *Vote: Ms. Mackin moved to approve the Wastewater rate change. Ms. Player seconded. The motion carried 4-1 via roll call, with Ms. Alexson opposed.*
- *Vote: Ms. Player moved to approve the Water rate change. Mr. Whitmore seconded. The motion carried 4-1 via roll call, with Ms. Alexson opposed.*

Discuss/Vote Historical Commission Plaque Installation Request at 58 Market Street

Rachel Meyer (Historical Commission) reported that the Ipswich Historical Commission recently unanimously voted to fund a plaque commemorating the 1913 Ipswich Millworkers Strike. The strike resulted in multiple injuries and resulted in the death of Nicoletta Pantelopoulou. The 24"x26" plaque is proposed to be installed on a Town-owned parcel at the intersection of Market and Saltonstall Streets. It will read, "Ipswich Millworkers' Strike, 'Bloody Tuesday', June 10, 1913. Near this spot, police clashed with immigrant workers striking for an increase in pay at the Ipswich Hosiery Mill, firing into the crowd. Several people were injured, and onlooker Nicoletta Pantelopoulou was fatally shot. Ipswich Historical Commission 2022."

- *Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to accept the proposed sign so long as it complies with DPW and Dig Safe requirements. Mr. Whitmore seconded. The motion carried unanimously via roll call.*

Select Board Refer Proposed Building Moratorium to the Planning Board

The proposed building moratorium discussed at the February 1 meeting was reviewed by the Planning Board, and Ethan Parsons (Planning Director). Based on the Planning Board and public feedback, Mr. Parsons suggested the following:

- Clearly define the intended purpose and outcome of such a moratorium, and be willing to hire outside counsel to develop a master plan and outline assessment measures
- Clearly identify where language imposing such a moratorium would be inserted into the current zoning bylaws
- Consider ways of increasing affordable housing that do not require the imposition of a moratorium, such as removing the payment-in-lieu option

Mr. Whitmore suggested holding a Select Board and Planning Board joint meeting to discuss the next steps. Dr. Jones agreed.

Carolyn Britt (Planning Board Chair) stated that the Planning Board had also proposed holding a bi-board meeting.

Ken Savoie (15 Old England Road) stated that in his work with developers, he has seen Ipswich develop a reputation of being not user-friendly. He encouraged that Board to increase affordable housing by modifying existing laws, rather than imposing a moratorium.

Linda Grimes (Green Street) stated that residents often don't feel represented by the Boards and that they would like more inclusion in meetings. Dr. Jones responded that the Select Board's goal was always to represent the community, and noted that there are several openings on Boards and Committees for residents who would like to volunteer.

- *Vote: Mr. Whitmore moved to hold a joint meeting with the Planning Board in March or April to discuss the Community Development Plan, Housing Production Plan, affordable housing, and future growth in Ipswich. Ms. Player seconded. The motion carried unanimously via roll call.*

Discussion on Dam Removal

Mr. Marino reported that the Town continues to move forward in developing mitigation plans for the EBSCO buildings for the potential removal of the Ipswich River Mills Dam. Progress has been slightly delayed due to EBSCO's resistance to allow further excavation of their foundations.

Ms. Mackin stated that in the 1990s, EBSCO leadership had been in favor of removing the dam due to flooding issues.

Ms. Alexson asked if there would be consideration of the removal of the dam near Foote Brothers if the mills dam was removed. Ms. Mackin stated that there would not, as the mills dam is unique in that it causes issues with fish migration.

Discuss Outdoor Entertainment Policy

Mr. Marino presented a draft of an Outdoor Entertainment Policy, which outlines requirements for the application process, enforcement, and communication with abutters. The policy specifically addresses bass levels.

Ms. Alexson asked how an abutter would be defined. Mr. Marino responded that under zoning law, an abutter is within 300' feet, however in this case, they would consider abutters anybody who can hear music from their home.

Tim Driscoll (31 Upper River Road) stated that he lives about five (5) houses down from the Hellenic Center, and has experienced excessive noise and bass rattling the house even with the windows closed and air conditioning turned on. He stated that a lack of regulation allows many events to get out of control. He is in favor of the control this policy will provide.

Ms. Player stated that some residents have relayed that they have called the police to make noise complaints, but without a formal policy, the police often don't feel they have the authority to address the concerns. Mr. Marino responded that this policy would clearly outline enforcement actions.

- *Vote: Mr. Whitmore moved to move the Outdoor Entertainment Policy into Public Hearings. Ms. Alexson seconded. The motion carried unanimously via roll call.*

New Business

VERIZON EMAILS

Ms. Alexson stated that the Select Board regularly receives emails from Verizon and Comcast regarding services changes, and asked if those could be collected and added to meeting packets which could be accessed by the public. Mr. Marino responded that he would begin including them in the meeting packet.

COFFEE EVENTS

Ms. Player suggested the Select Board hold informal coffee events, as the Police and Fire Chiefs do.

Old Business

None.

Miscellaneous & Correspondence

None.

- *Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to adjourn. Ms. Mackin seconded. The motion carried unanimously via roll call.*

The Select Board adjourned at 9:34 PM.

*Respectfully submitted by Eileen G. Page
02.21.2022*