

IPSWICH SELECT BOARD
Meeting of Monday, June 6, 2022

Pursuant to Open Meeting Law M.G.L. Chapter 30A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Select Board was held on Monday, June 6, 2022, at 7:00 PM in Meeting Room A.

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

Also present: Mary Gallivan, Interim Town Manager; Eileen Page, Recording Secretary

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

Welcome/Announcements

The drought status has been changed from mild to moderate. Moderate conditions allow irrigation of public fields between 7 PM and 6 AM; residential lawn watering by hand between 7 PM and 6 AM; and no vehicle washing except to meet a core function of business. Residents will be allowed to fill and refill swimming pools. Ms. Alexson proposed that irrigation of public land also be prohibited. Mr. Whitmore stated that if the fields are not at least minimally maintained, they are expensive to rebuild. Ms. Player suggested inviting Vicki Halmen (Water & Wastewater Director) to a meeting to discuss the drought management plan and increase visibility to water concerns.

The Shellfish Advisory Board will meet on June 7 in Meeting Room A. There is one (1) open seat for a commercial permit holder.

The Affordable Housing Trust Board will meet on June 9 at 7:30 AM in Meeting Room A.

The ELD Subcommittee will meet on June 9 at the Electric building.

The Water/Wastewater Subcommittee will meet on June 14 at 6 PM.

There is an open seat for a resident member of the Public Safety Property Reuse Working Group.

Citizen Queries

None.

Board & Committee Appointments

- I. Dorothy Johnson and Doug Stewart – Reappointments – Library Board of Trustees
- II. Stephen Veiga, Lillian Riley, Rita Badami – Reappointments – Council on Aging
- III. Larry Seidler – Reappointment – Feoffees
- IV. Nicole Whitten and Jody Huffcut – Reappointments – Waste Reduction Advisory Committee
- V. Richard Fates – Reappointment – Trust Fund Commission
- VI. Joseph Bourque – Reappointment – Finance Committee
- VII. Jim Engel and William Craft – Reappointments – Water, Wastewater, and Electric Light Subcommittees
- VIII. Robert Clocker – Reappointment – Zoning Board of Appeals
- IX. George Mathey – New Appointment, Alternate Members – Architectural Preservation District Commission
- X. James Maloney – Reappointment – ICAM Board of Directors

- *Vote: Ms. Mackin moved to confirm the reappointments. Mr. Whitmore seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

Board Reorganization

- *Vote: Ms. Mackin moved to nominate Mr. Whitmore as the Chair. Ms. Player seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*
- *Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to nominate Ms. Player as the Vice Chair. Ms. Mackin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

Consent Agenda

- I. One Day Wine and Malt License Applications
 - a. Gary Rogers of True North Ale for Fathers' Day Weekend Event at Appleton Farms on June 19, 2022 and Cape Ann Cannabis & Botanicals Anniversary Event at 4 Union Street parking lot on June 17, 2022, rain date June 24, 2022
 - b. Bea Tiberii of Monarch and Rose Foods, Inc. for Music Events at 1 N. Main Street on June 23, July 21, and August 18, 2022.
- *Vote: Dr. Jones moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Alexson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

Approval of Minutes

- I. April 19, 2022
- *Vote: Ms. Mackin moved to approve the minutes. Ms. Alexson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

Temporary Outdoor Entertainment Permit Request, Heart & Soul Café, 0 Central Street

Postponed.

Interim Town Manager Report

Ms. Gallivan has been meeting with department heads regarding ongoing projects, as well as meeting with residents and business owners regarding traffic flow on Peabody Street.

The Town is currently negotiating a contract for the architect of the Public Safety Facility.

Ms. Gallivan recently attended a meeting of the Ipswich Human Rights Commission.

Select Board Member Subcommittee Update

PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY REUSE WORKING GROUP

The Working Group will publish a letter in this week's *Local News* introducing the group members and inviting the community to join meetings. The Working Group hopes to host Harborlight at an upcoming meeting. They also recently met with a representative from the Ipswich Partnership to hear a presentation regarding grant programs and fundraising for a feasibility study. There has been discussion with the YMCA regarding possible relocation of the community gardens currently at the site of the future public safety facility..

Presentation of Peabody Street Options

Rick Clarke (DPW Director) reported that by dead-ending Peabody Street, vehicles were getting stuck as they tried to turn around. The Town investigated installing a hammerhead turn, but the Conservation Commission would not

allow it as the property was too close to a brook. Mr. Clarke suggested installing a gate that would allow business owners to access the industrial park. Boulders would also be added to prevent turnarounds.

Louis Vlahos (Owner, ValMac Construction, located at 9 Peabody Street) stated that when business owners met with Mr. Clarke and Police Chief Paul Nikas in January, they'd been informed that the Town could acquire adequate property to install a turnaround, which was later blocked by the Conservation Commission. He argued that based on the agreement made in January, the road should be reopened.

Susan Thurst (16 Peabody Street) stated that a truck had become stuck in her yard during an attempted turnaround, and that her landscaper has informed her that he will not be able to continue work on her lawn unless she makes repairs, as the terrain is damaging his equipment. Mr. Whitmore and Mr. Clarke resolved to have the Town cover repairs to Ms. Thurst's yard.

Chris Cornetta (2 Peabody Street) stated that he is in favor of a gate or dead end. He stated that trucks have shown complete disregard for the neighborhood, ignoring "no thru way" signs.

Jim Walsh (1 Peabody Street) stated that he is in favor of keeping the street a dead end.

Ms. Alexson asked how garbage trucks have been exiting the neighborhood since the street was dead-ended. Mr. Walsh reported that an employee stops traffic on Topsfield Road to help them back out. Mr. Clarke confirmed that this is standard practice for dead-end roads, and that a key could be provided to the company if the Town chose to install a gate instead.

Paul Surpitski (Owner of Meadow Street) stated that according to the bylaws, 600' is the maximum length allowed for a local road with a dead end. He asked if this is situation is in line with that bylaw. Mr. Clarke responded that he would confirm with the Planning Department.

Ashley Huntington (10 Peabody Street) stated that she is in favor of installing a gate. She added that Chief Nikas should be present for any decisions made by the Board on the subject.

Jim Zaroulis (3 Peabody Street) stated that he is amazed nothing bad has happened due to speeding issues.

Dr. Jones stated that she would like to move forward with a gate and better signage. Ms. Player agreed.

Ms. Mackin stated that she would like the neighborhood to allow for pedestrians to walk safely.

Ms. Alexson cautioned the Board about permanently dead-ending streets that were not originally designed as dead-ends, and added that she does not want to see trucks using private property to turn around and relying on the Town to pay for damages.

- *Vote: Dr. Jones moved to proceed with developing a plan for a temporary solution to install a gate with a key and properly sign the road to make it obvious that it is a dead end, make a designated turnaround space in the grass at the end, include a sign on the gate that instructs users to call the police to proceed, and instruct Mr. Clarke to return to the Board in two (2) weeks with pricing and the availability of such a gate. Ms. Player seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

Pedestrian and Cycle Safe Committee Recommendation

Brian Hone (20 Upper River Road) reported that the state has asked for a full, committed plan from the Town on what type of restriping is necessary for public roadways. Mr. Hone stated that shoulders should have consistent

widths. The Committee recommended a standard 11' travel lane for re-striping on Topsfield Road, High Street at the Middle School, and High Street at The Clam Box. The cost of drawing up a plan is \$3,000, and the re-striping has already been paid for.

- *Vote: Dr. Jones moved to accept the recommendation for 11' lanes to match existing conditions at Ipswich High School, with design fees. Ms. Alexson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

FY23 ELD Budget Review

Jon Blair (ELD Manager) presented the proposed FY23 department budget.

Mr. Blair reported that in FY22, the department was recertified as RP3, received an 87% customer approval rating, implemented a successful peak reduction program, completed a rate stated, expanded their ReSource program, improved their carbon footprint by diversifying the portfolio to include hydroelectric and solar power, and received a \$200,000 grant for electric vehicle charging.

FY23 budget highlights include a \$0 increase to the base rate, no increase in full-time employees, a raise in depreciation rates from 3% to 4%, and an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) conversion project. He noted that the budget also accounts for rising energy costs, supply chain constraints, and inflation.

Mr. Whitmore noted that there was a discrepancy in the FY21 budget that indicated an 18% increase in salaries mid-year. Mr. Blair responded that some existing employees received salary increases mid-year. He explained that a senior-level manager resigned about three (3) weeks into the fiscal year, which relieved that department of roughly \$90,000 in salary, but left a hole in the ability to maintain operations. Rather than hiring a new employee, Mr. Blair reallocated duties to existing staff and adjusted salaries accordingly. He stated that while the department budget stuck to the "bottom line," they use line items as a guideline.

Walter Hartford (Finance Committee) suggested that the budget might be showing artificial inflation to salaries due to emergency call-outs, but added that the budget could be presented in a clearer format.

Jim Engel (ELD Subcommittee) stated that labor in the ELD is distributed by function, and an individual may work on both capital and distribution projects during the year, which requires their labor to be funded from various accounts.

Dr. Jones acknowledged that some expenses cannot always be fixed, such as emergency call-outs, but salaries can. Mr. Whitmore agreed, and noted that when other departments make changes in position advancements or salaries, it is done in general consultation with the Select Board, so that hiring practices and salary administration are done in accordance with Town policies.

Dr. Jones asked what items are included in *Outside Services* under office expenses. Mr. Blair responded that the line encompasses the copy machine lease, pest control, bill printing, and the department's Munis subscription.

Ms. Alexson stated that over the next several months, the Board should work closely with the ELD Subcommittee to ensure the budget is presented in a format that is easier to understand.

- *Vote: Ms. Mackin moved to approve and endorse the FY23 ELD budget. Ms. Player seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

Discuss 53 Waldingfield Road Project

Mr. Whitmore acknowledged that the Ora project on Waldingfield Road has generated public interest, and asked if the Board would like to discuss the project and vote to send a letter either expressing support or not.

Ms. Alexson stated that she is in support of the Ora project, and is unclear as to why it has taken so long to come to fruition.

Dr. Jones stated that as long as the plans submitted meet the Town's statutory guidelines and the law, the Planning Board should be encouraged to proceed appropriately. She added that everything submitted by Ora seems to be in keeping with the Great Estate Bylaw.

Mr. Whitmore suggested that the Board instruct the Interim Town Manager to consult with Town Counsel on whether or not it is appropriate to draft a letter supporting the project.

Post Town Meeting Briefing

SCHEDULE

Mr. Whitmore acknowledged that the meeting started late, and that going forward, ceremonial items will begin early so that the actual meeting can begin promptly at 7 PM. He added that Brad Hill (former State Representative) suggested that Town implement a Consent Article (similar to the Board's Consent Agenda) as a way to streamline standard, non-controversial articles such as stabilization funding.

TOWN MODERATOR

Ms. Alexson raised concerns about the Town Moderator's implementation of a rule that required Board and Committee members to oppose articles as residents when they held a dissenting vote. She stated that if she was speaking as "Linda Alexson from Juniper Street" it would be appropriate to speak at the podium as a resident, but not when a dissenting vote on an article is a decision made as a Board member. Ms. Alexson also added that in the past few years, the Town Moderator has taken it upon himself to declare votes following an election, which by law falls to the Town Clerk.

Gary Champion (3 Palomino Way) stated that Town Meeting is supposed to educate voters so that they can make informed decisions, and the Town Moderator should not be allowed to silence a minority voice.

MEETING DATE

Ms. Alexson asked that the Board revisit holding a Saturday morning Town Meeting, as many parents have expressed that it is more convenient. Ms. Mackin agreed. Dr. Jones stated that she prefers Tuesdays, as it allows for a bounded end time of 11 PM. Mr. Whitmore stated that he is opposed to a Saturday meeting as he prefers to have his Saturdays off.

TOWN MEETING ATTENDANCE

Mr. Whitmore expressed frustration at seeing social media comments chastising people who left Town Meeting shortly after the override vote was taken. He noted that while a babysitting service is offered, it ends at 9 PM, and it many parents who attended were spending money on babysitters to attend Town Meeting.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Whitmore has recommended more consistent time management throughout the meeting. If residents will be limited to 2-3 minutes of commentary, it needs to be established ahead of time.

Gary Champion (3 Palomino Way) stated that while some residents submitted their names for Town Meeting appointment to the Government Study Committee, they were unable to make the meeting, and their candidacy was

not addressed. Ms. Player stated that it appeared some people were confused and believed that submitting the request was the only step to being appointed. Mr. Whitmore agreed, and added that the appointment was not announced simply because the person seeking appointment was not present, but no malice was intended.

New Business

UPCOMING MEETINGS

A Bi-Board meeting of the Select and Planning Boards will be held on June 21.

TRAFFIC

Ms. Alexson reported on an accident at Ipswich Woods Drive, which intersects with Topsfield Road. Because there is no stop sign at Ipswich Woods Drive, residents do not yield to oncoming traffic. In 2017, Chief Nikas wrote a letter to the condominium management company asking them to install a sign, but it was not done. She reported that the driver struck yesterday was cited for failure to yield to oncoming traffic. She asked that the Town take steps to having a stop sign installed.

A construction project in Hamilton will require dump trucks of gravel to pass through town approximately every nine (9) minutes for several weeks. The Town will be asking the trucks to reroute down Route 22 rather than entering the downtown areas, and the Planning Board will be following up with the construction company.

The traffic mirror on the pole across from the entrance to Argilla Road has been missing for some time. Mr. Whitmore suggested that before replacing the mirror, the Town look into what their liability would be if there were ever an accident due to a driver being reliant on the mirror.

Ms. Alexson asked if a sidewalk blocking permit was issued for the new townhouses being constructed on Market Street, noting that the area has been blocked for some time.

Old Business

TOWN MANAGER SALARY

Mr. Whitmore reported that the suggested salary posting for the Town Manager position is +/- \$170,000. Ms. Gallivan stated that the salary is low, noting that a Town Administrator in Marblehead was just hired at \$195,000, and has less responsibility than a Town Manager. Dr. Jones agreed. Ms. Player suggested advertising the position at +/- \$180,000.

- *Vote: Ms. Player moved to approve the Town Manager position statement as presented by Community Paradigm, with an amendment saying that the salary will be commensurate with experience, estimated at +/- \$180,000. Dr. Jones seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

TOWN MANAGER SCREENING COMMITTEE

- *Dr. Jones moved to appoint a screening committee of two (2) Select Board members, one (1) Finance Committee member, one (1) School Committee member, two (2) department heads, one (1) staff member, one (1) resident, one (1) business owner, and the Superintendent of Schools. Ms. Mackin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

Miscellaneous & Correspondence

None.

➤ *Vote: Ms. Mackin moved to adjourn. Ms. Player seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

The Select Board adjourned at 11:09 PM.

*Respectfully submitted by Eileen G. Page
07.17.22*