

TOWN OF IPSWICH
Select Board Meeting
Monday, July 10, 2023 at 7:00 PM
Ipswich Town Hall, Meeting Room A
25 Green St. Ipswich, MA

Pursuant to Open Meeting Law M.G.L. Chapter 30A, §§ 18-25, a written notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Select Board was held on Monday, July 10, 2023 at Town Hall, 25 Green Street.

Select Board members present: Sarah Player (Chair), Linda Alexson (Vice Chair), Charles Surpitski, Michael Dougherty

Select Board members not present: Carl Nysten

Also Present: Stephen Crane (Town Manager)

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Welcome/Announcements – S. Player

- Jeff Turner, long-time Assistant Superintendent of Substations and Generation at the ELD has passed away. The service for him will be on Thursday at 10AM at Our Lady of Hope Church.
- The Commissioners have received a resignation from Jon Blair, ELD Manager. There will be an executive session held tonight to discuss a counter offer.
- There is an Affordable Housing Trust/ Ipswich Housing Partnership meeting Thursday the July 13 at 7:30 AM in room c.
- There will be an ELD Subcommittee meeting on the July 12 at the Utilities Office.
- The Shade Tree Beautification Committee is meeting on Wednesday July 12.

3. Citizen Queries – S. Player

- Nat Pulsifer, 11 Waldingfield Rd, brought a safety issue to the Select Board and said he is looking for guidance on how to solve this. Traffic on Waldingfield Rd. has increased significantly as a way to bypass to downtown. The safety issue focuses on the new railroad bridge, which has very poor sightlines. They have some ideas about how to help but don't know the process within the town on how to proceed. Stephen said he can have Police and Public Works take a look at it.
- Wendy Copithorne, 41 Linebrook Rd, presented the Build It Right petition package. Wendy read a statement outlining concerns, including the lack of a traffic study as well as concerns regarding the industrial look of the building and its inability for expansion in the future. So far, they have gathered 700 signatures.
- Michael asked, regarding the petition, does it have specifically one idea in mind? Is it focusing on the façade or the location, or both. Wendy said both. Because the land is smaller than originally thought due to wetlands, the building had to go up vs. out, which is part of why it looks so industrial.

4. Boards and Committee Appointments – S. Player

a. Board and Committee Appointment Process

Sarah said they have heard a few comments about how they appoint boards and committees at the Select Board. The process seems too quick for potential appointments and does not allow for time to analyze and process feedback. One potential way to go about this would be to have two processes: one process for reappointing existing members and one process for appointing new members. Reappointing existing members could be a one-night process. For new appointments, one night would be used to meet the person and ask questions, and the vote would take place at the next meeting. Michael said he thinks that's a great process and would allow them to have some time to digest.

b. Finance Committee Nominations

i. Robert Chambers, New Appointment Request

1. Robert said he is a lifelong resident of Ipswich and was appointed to fill an expired position on FinCom last year. He worked through the budget process with the committee last year and was impressed by the process, the quality, and the detail. He would like to continue on the Committee. Linda thanked Robert for stepping up. She asked how he feels the Finance Committee and the Select Board could collaborate together going forward. Robert said he observed very good collaboration and communication between the groups, and commented that Stephen does a good job enabling that communication to take place.
2. Michael asked Robert to give a synopsis of his professional career. Robert said he has been an educator for many years. He taught finance, economics, and macroeconomics at Endicott College. Sarah asked what experience Bob has with conflict and what strategies would he use to resolve conflicts. Bob said he was the president of the Faculty Association at Endicott for four years. They did a lot of problem resolution and he realized it was very important to represent their employees well. Sarah also asked how he would build new relationships with new members of the committees, Bob said it probably comes down to communication.

ii. Christa Luongo, New Appointment Request

1. Not present. Sarah will reach out to Christa.

iii. Lisa-Marie Cashman, New Appointment Request

1. Lisa-Marie has lived here since 1999 and moved here from Washington DC. Her 20-year-old son went through the public school system. She has been an elected official for 16 years. For 6 of those years she was the Chair for the Republican Town Committee and was the former Chairperson for the Government Study Committee. She is very passionate about the town and wants to help keep the town close-knit and help the town to move forward in a way that makes sense. Lisa-Marie has worked in Public Affairs for 30 years and has worked to represent several Fortune 500 accounts and nonprofits. Lisa-Marie said she has strong leadership skills and has been able to identify strengths in others and allow others to be leaders within a group.
2. Sarah asked Lisa-Marie how she would work to create new relationships. Lisa said she thinks it's important to be a good listener, and to interact with others one person at a time as well as with the entire group. She would be a good listener and pay close attention to the processes and policies that are in place. She would also like to look at problems strategically. She thinks we need more civil discourse between all stakeholders and we need respect in order to accomplish things that need to be accomplished in town.
3. Sarah asked what experience Lisa-Marie has with professional conflict. Lisa-Marie said she did a lot of media training and crises communications on Capitol Hill. One thing that is important is meeting people where they are at. You need to hear what people are saying. Find out what the root cause of their pain is and why are they reacting a certain way. Then drill deep to come to an understanding.

c. Royce Knowlton, Reappointment Agricultural Commission

- a. Linda said in the packet it mentions a 3-year term but ends in 2025. Sarah suggested they amend the motion to expire in 2026. Stephen said this is to fulfill an unexpired term so that is why.

- Motion to reappoint Royce Knowlton to the Agricultural Commission made by Charlie, seconded by Michael.
- Stephen said he would double check the term and they can amend it if they need to.

→ *Motion passed unanimously, 4-0*

5. New Application for On-Premise Farmer Series Wine Pouring Permit, Russell Orchards, 143 Argilla Road – S. Player

- Sarah read the Public Hearing notice.
- Motion to open the Public Hearing made by Michael, seconded by Linda.

→ *Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote, 4-0*

Sarah said Russell Orchards already has a license to sell wine for off premises consumption. This new license is for the sale of on premises and consumption on the property as well as on the adjacent vineyard property. Sarah asked if there are any comments from the public or from the orchard.

Miranda Russell, 15 Northgate Rd, from Russell Orchards, spoke about the request. Charlie said they will now be able to sell wine by the glass in the vineyard or in the barn. He asked if the vineyard is considered the entire orchard. Miranda said the licensed premises is the whole farm but they do not have any intention of letting people walk around the farm drinking wine. It would be contained to in the barn or the designated picnic areas around the farm. The reason to have the entire farm licensed is in case they want to do a dinner or an event.

- Motion to close the Public Hearing made by Linda, seconded by Michael

→ *Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote, 4-0*

- Linda moved that the Select Board, as the local licensing authority, approve the application from Russell Orchards Inc. for an on-premises farmer series wine pouring permit, as presented in tonight's meeting packed, seconded by Michael.

→ *Motion passed unanimously, 4-0*

6. Public Safety Facility Committee Discussion – S. Player

Stephen and Charlie gave a project update. Stephen said the project has continued to go through the permitting process. They have had productive meetings with the Planning Board, Zoning Board, and Conversation Commission. They have also been to the Design Review Board. They feel they have tried to move the process forward while also trying to be accommodating to the input from the public. They had a site plan review with the Planning Board 2 weeks ago. They sorted through a number of site plan issues and resolved those. They also discovered recently they need a special permit for the project and they have gone through that process. They have received a fair amount of detail about the design of the project. The working group has met with the architect and the project manager to take a look at the design of the building but still within the constraints of the building program and the buildability of the site. The way the project has evolved meets the needs of the departments but they will look at the design. They are looking at the color palette of the building as well as some of the more prominent design features that they have heard feedback about. Charlie said this site is the best that is available and will be available in the downtown area. This is the best location for response time for the fire station.

Michael asked if there is going to be a need to retain the current buildings for public safety reasons. Stephen said no, not for public safety. We have talked about using them for storage, but they will revisit it once everything is out and we can see the space. The Re-use Committee has talked about a number of alternatives, including housing. Michael also asked how specifically the concerns of the petitioners are being passed along to the architect so we can avoid this

happening again. Charlie said he thinks they are working strenuously to come up with something everyone will be happy with. Michael also asked if we will see images for proposed designs prior to starting the work. Stephen said they are continuing to do due diligence with regulatory committees and those are public. There is also a projects page on the Planning Board's website.

Marlene Doyle, 20 Damon Ave, asked Charlie if there is still a small station. Charlie said there is a fire truck and an ambulance there. Marlene also said it's not just about the color or the material used for the building, there are other design issues that need to be solved, too. Just changing it to brick is not the only thing that needs to happen.

Georgia Soffron Martineau, 37 Linebrook Rd., read previous minutes stating issues and previous concerns.

Dan Trindade, 11 Pineswamp Rd, acknowledged all of the work that the Public Safety Building Committee has done. It is a lot of work to volunteer time. With that being said, this is not the building that was sold to town meeting. Will we be able to build what the town needs with the funds that have already been allocated? Why not go back and ask for more money now and do it right. It would hold it off a bit, but it would be done right and would deliver the building the town wants and needs.

Seth Perry, 29 Linebrook Rd. said we were told the land was vetted and buildable to the tune of 4-6 acres but it turns out it had not been properly vetted. Regarding changing the façade, just changing the brick is not going to fix the problems. Seth asked, at what point does this go back to the drawing board?

Amy Ranier, 20 Pineswamp Rd. Amy asked who is speaking with the architect. Stephen said he is at every meeting. Amy asked how exactly are the concerns being conveyed to the architect. Stephen said they have been following up on the meetings and talking with the architect. Amy said she has heard the architect speak and he sounded dismissive of concerns. Amy asked who specifically is asking him to make changes, Stephen said the committee and the working group are speaking with him and he is also listening in at each meeting. Stephen said the working group has been charged with managing the project and they meet with the architect at least weekly.

Michael said he thinks we need to recognize the people who have put together the petition. Their voices are being heard but Michael expressed concern that he is hearing that the architect is perhaps not taking concerns seriously. Sarah said she is anxious to hear what they come back with. Charlie said the town is getting what they voted on because it has all of the essentials that are needed for the building. The committee in charge of this has also faced a number of frustrations, including inflation.

Marlene Markos, 27 Damon Ave, said the Design Review Board works under the Planning Department but it was formed and voted on at Town Meeting. Marlene said the architect was very defensive at the Design Review Board meeting and she doesn't think he understands what the public wants.

Rick Covino, Pineswamp Rd, asked who has the final responsibility for the success or failure of this project. Where do we go for recourse of this? Stephen said under the town bylaw the Town Manager is responsible for the project. Rick said he spoke up at a meeting and was met with dismissal and attitude from the architect. It took three meetings to be heard. The public is not being treated well and aren't being treated like their opinion wants to be heard. We were promised 4.5 buildable acres and the due diligence was not done on that. The site may not have all of the buildable acres that were promised at the meeting, but it does have the buildable acres that we need to make the building we need. This is the only viable site we have for what we need.

7. Request for Approval to Install Plaque on Corner of East and Spring Streets – Mariana Ovnic

Mariana Ovnic, Chair of Ipswich Historical Commission, Ryan Conary, representative for Essex National Heritage, said that two sisters contacted Gordon Harris to say they traced their heritage to a former slave who was freed in Ipswich. They wanted to honor the fact that they were not only freed, but able to purchase land and live there. Ryan said they received a Veterans' Heritage Grant earlier this year and the project they applied for was an interpretive signage trail throughout 7 towns. Ryan contacted Gordon and he suggested they partner to honor John Freeman. The trail is meant to honor the contributions of African Americans in the revolution effort. Ryan got approval from Jeff Putur from Parks and

Cemeteries. The Historical Commission and Essex National Heritage have approved of the location and the sign. Sarah said the request is to place a historical plaque at the corner of East and Spring Streets. Linda and Charlie both commented on how fascinating this story is. Linda suggested putting a story in the local newspaper. The official unveiling will be on September 16th.

- Linda moved to approve the installation of the John Freeman plaque on the corner of East and Spring Streets, seconded by Charlie.

→ *Motion passed unanimously, 4-0*

8. Open Warrant for Special Town Meeting (October 24, 2023) – S. Player

Sarah read the legal notice.

- Michael moved to open the warrant for the 2023 Special town Meeting, seconded by Linda.

→ *Motion passed unanimously, 4-0*

Sarah said the Special Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday October 24, 2023 at 7:00 PM at the Ipswich Middle/High School. The warrant will be open from July 10, 2023 to August 11, 2023. All articles from departments or boards are due to the office of the Select Board no later than 12 PM Friday, August 11, 2023. Once the warrant is set, it will go for Town Counsel for review and the Finance Committee for recommendations on articles. Zoning proposals requiring drafting, review, and hearings must be submitted earlier. The Select Board will hold a Public Hearing and sign the warrant on Monday August 21, 2023. In order for citizens petitions to be guaranteed placement on the Special Town Meeting Warrant, names, signatures, and addresses for 100 voters are required. This must be certified by the Town Clerk. Petition articles must be submitted no later than Friday August 11, 2023.

Linda said she would like to have the Select Board revisit consideration of a two-year temporary building moratorium for multifamily and subdivision projects unless those projects offer 25% affordable housing. Linda said she would like to put this on an upcoming agenda so we have time to get it on a warrant for Fall Town Meeting.

Michael asked about who determines the order of the warrant articles. Stephen said articles are grouped together by category and the order is based on how it is traditionally done.

9. Consent Agenda – S. Player

a. One Day Wine and Malt License Application(s) –

- i. Linda Behan for First Church of Ipswich for Gather on the Green Art Show Fundraiser at North Green, North Main Street on September 9 and 10, 2023.
 - ii. Joe Karr for Appleton Farms at 219 County Rd. for Hike and Brews Event on July 15, August 12, and September 15, 2023.
 - iii. John Collins for Great Marsh Brewing Company for Charitable Fundraiser at Appleton Farms, 219 County Road on September 23, 2023.
- Linda moved to approve the Consent Agenda as written in the packet, seconded by Michael.
 - Charlie asked about what the circles indicate on the applications, Sarah said she thinks it's because the name is typed in, the circle is an indication of a signature. Stephen said the check marks at the beginning show police, fire, and health have reviewed and approved.

→ *Motion passed unanimously, 4-0*

10. Approval of Minutes – S. Player

a. May 9, 2023

- Linda said Chris Lapointe’s name should have an “e” at the end of it
- Motion to approve minutes from May 9, with the edits, made by Linda, seconded by Michael.

→ *Motion passed unanimously, 4-0*

11. Town Manager Report – S. Crane

Stephen said he does not have a printed report but they got news last week that the Fire Department received an Assistance for Fires grant of \$21k which will be used for turnout gear. They also received a grant from MA Housing Partnership for \$20k to help provide community outreach assistance for the MBTA communities process.

12. Select Board Sub Committee Updates – S. Player

a. Section 3A Task Force

Sarah said the charge of the 3A task force is to study and understand the new legislation that came out from the state, and to recommend the best option to the town. Citizens can vote on whether or not to make the change. The 3A legislation coming from the state has us create at least one district of reasonable size, for Ipswich this has been deemed 50 acres. Ipswich needs to create a zoning area that would encompass 50 acres, and in that zoning area, would allow multifamily housing permitted by right. There would be no age restrictions and it would be suitable for families and children. We currently have different versions of multifamily housing in town. At least 40%, or 20 acres, of the new zoning area must be within half a mile of the commuter rail. Ipswich has to zone for a capacity of 971 units at 15 units per acre. The legislation does not force the town to construct units or homes but we must create an area or an environment that allows this construction. The task force has not dug into how we will assemble the zoning area. The residents will decide at the 2024 Town Meeting whether or not to adopt this zoning change.

Sarah went over what the 3A task force has done so far. They have received \$40k from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and an additional \$20k from the Massachusetts Housing Partnership to assist in this process. Sarah also went over the makeup of the task force.

Charlie asked if this is about new construction, and if some towns already meet the requirements. Sarah said it is just about zoning. She also said some of our zoning allows for multifamily housing by special permit but not by right, so they can change the zoning to “by right” instead. Linda asked if the 971 units can include the housing that is already in that area. Sarah said the idea is to pretend an area is blank, and if it was could we put 971 units in that area. Linda also asked if we can raise the number of affordable housing units, Sarah said the cap is 20%. Michael asked how many more public meetings will there be, Sarah said they have another year of work. Stephen said the number of units sounds alarming as a concept but there is a way to make this make sense and work for the town.

Linda asked if this law takes into account each community’s unique challenges like water supply, schools, and infrastructure. Stephen said no, and Linda asked Sarah if she could take this concern back to the working group. Linda asked what grant programs would the town forfeit if they did not comply, along with litigation. Stephen said it’s not just grants we have now, it’s also grants we may want to apply for in the future. We want to have the opportunity to apply for any grant we can. In reality, all we have to do is produce a zoning map. Stephen said he has spoken with Glenn Gibbs about an overlay map that shows how much of Ipswich already allows this kind of permit. He does not think that it’s really going to be that big of a difference. Linda also asked if there are any communities that intend to fight this. Middleborough, Holden, and Newton are planning to not comply. Sarah said we should not forget the state is also threatening litigation.

Helen Weatherall, 44 Fellows Rd, asked if we crunch the numbers, what do we stand to lose vs. what we can gain. She reminded us of the difficulties we have had with the public safety building and asked that we learn from our mistakes in this regard. Helen also said we should not just call this a zoning change. There is a lot of money in construction and real estate, so to say we are changing density requirements and to not expect there will be new construction is not the right message.

Torii Bottomley, 60 Central Street, said she thinks we are spending a lot of time researching this but she said the state density zoning will trump Ipswich density and zoning in the 3A area, so she does not understand why we are putting time and money into researching this. Sarah said they are researching how to do this and where to put the zoning.

Chris Cerino, Broadway Ave, said he believes the town needs more affordable housing, but he is not sure if this is going to accomplish what the town wants. He asked, through this process, has anyone thought about moving the train station elsewhere in town, or even getting rid of the train station. Sarah said this task force is not discussing removing the train station. Stephen said the MBTA controls the train and the tracks and moving the train station would cost millions of dollars.

John Crespi, 5 Cottage St, said Ipswich has housing issues especially around affordable housing. Higher density housing is consistently more affordable. The neighborhood by Riverview pizza which is right near the train station has a density of about 20 units per acre which is well in excess of the regulation. This density is not foreign to the town and is certainly not foreign to that area of town.

Charlie said the Shade Tree and Beautification Committee met on June 28 and they are working on a rain barrel watering program for the plants in downtown. There are some new islands that have been taken over so they will be adding plants to those as well. They also spent time looking at the 25% completion drawings of the Central Street project. They discussed the placement of trees and what to do when they have to cut trees down. They are meeting again on July 12 and the landscape architect for the Public Safety Building will be there. Cemetery and Parks have had money in the years past for summer help with the islands and Charlie asked Stephen if they have this again this summer, Stephen said yes.

Linda said the Eastern Essex Veterans Board met on June 28. Sheri David of the Rowley Select Board has taken the place of Bob Snow, who was the chair for many years. Michael Flynn from Essex is now the Chair and Linda is the Vice Chair. They reviewed and approved the revised description for the administrative assistant, which will now have the title of Veterans Services Assistant. Her hours were increased from 19 to 24 and her pay was also changed to reflect the job description. The hour and pay increase have already been reflected in the present budget.

13. New Business/ Future Business – S. Player

- Michael said Angus, the iCAM technician, will be leaving to backpack Europe. He thanked him for his years of service.
- Linda brought up the idea of having coffee a few times per year to get involved in the community. Michael said he and Janice Skelton did that a few times when he was on the FinCom, and they had some people attend.
- Linda also talked about making parking restrictions and time limits downtown more consistent. Stephen said he has talked to Chief Nikas about this and it is a big undertaking. It's difficult to take one part and tweak it without it affecting other parts. Stephen said perhaps we could discuss this in the fall or in the spring because we are working on the Public Safety Building right now. Charlie said it has been tried and it is very difficult because different businesses want different things.
- Helen Weatherall said the 3A task force must wrap in the parking issues. Discussing time limits on spots because of a lack of parking while also discussing raising density doesn't make sense.
- Torii Bottomley said they have not addressed non-resident parking at Pavilion Beach yet. Those ticket funds could be used to purchase the buoys that are needed in the swimming area. Also, there are two lots on Washington

Street that could be used for parking.

14. Miscellaneous and Correspondence – S. Player

15. Executive Session – S. Player

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government's bargaining or litigating position. Also, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel as it relates to the electric light manager contract.

a. Approval of Executive Session Minutes – May 1, 2023, May 9, 2023

- Michael moved to go into executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government's bargaining or litigating position. Also, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel as it relates to the electric light manager contract, seconded by Linda. The Board will not return to open session.

→ *Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote, 4-0*

The next meeting is July 24.

- Add motion to adjourn.

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Respectfully Submitted By
Alyson von der Esch
July 19, 2023