



SELECT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 11, 2023

7:00 PM

ACTON TOWN HALL, ROOM 204
472 MAIN STREET

Present: Jim Snyder-Grant, Fran Arsenault, Dean Charter, David Martin, Alissa Nicol

Absent: None

I. Regular Business

1. Resident Concerns

Terra, West Acton – looking for an update for a community group regarding the Planning Board regarding state law

2. Chair Update/Town Manager Update/Members Minute

Mr. Snyder-Grant commented on the recent storm, appreciated neighbor outreach on social media for support, the response of the town to the event, COD hosted a picnic for families who care or have disabilities and appreciated the town providing free transportation to and from the event, noted the East Acton Village re-dedication on Saturday and met Strong Bear Medicine of the Nashobah Praying Indians, and noted the annual 9/11 commemoration at the Public Safety Facility this morning.

Mr. Mangiaratti updated on projects – the River Street Dam removal, renovation of Gardner Field is almost complete, new tennis courts have been installed on Elm Street, online permitting went live for Land Use and eventually other departments will follow; the town recently launched a taxi program called Acton Rides to supplement off hours and weekends for people who meet certain criteria to qualify for the program and email transportation@actonma.gov to sign up, DEI Director and Acton Police collaborated on a successful program providing a mobile “Cone with a Cop” providing ice cream to residents the day before school started along Great Road, and Acton Police is starting a body cam program, the bike share program is operating and can rent bikes in several locations. Mr. Mangiaratti also gave an extensive update on the recent severe storm on September 8th and commended all town staff on their response and working around the clock and all weekend, reminded residents that the Town does not provide curbside service for debris removal.

Mr. Charter discussed his experience with other major storms comparing it to the severe storm that occurred on Friday comparing it to previous hurricanes’ Bob and Gloria and commended the response from town staff. The Acton 250 will host

their first speaker on September 21st at 7:30 in Room 204 both in-person and virtually.

Ms. Arsenault thanked the DPW and Police and Fire Department's response to the violent storm on Friday.

Ms. Nicol commented on the Conservation Commission approved the design for the addition at Woodlawn Cemetery for 960 gravesites and preserving a section in the front of the cemetery for people that walk their dogs and remind people to be respectful. ABCC grant cycle is open and due October 17th, Acton Water District was awarded a grant for \$1.5 million dollars from the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Action grant to offset the purchase 549 Main Street, reminded people to save the date for the Walk Against Hate on October 15th at 2 PM at the ABRHS and concluding at Gardner Field.

II. Public Hearing

3. 7:10 PM. Site Plan Special Permit #02/27/23-490, MAG RE Holdings-Acton, LLC, 1 & 5 Nagog Park and 499 Great Road

The applicant has requested a continuance to September 16th. Mr. Charter explained the applicant have not completed the plans in time for a review since the last time they were in front of the Board. Mr. Mangiaratti spoke with their team and noted certain businesses will be or have moved out such as Anytime Fitness, Beijing Tokyo, but the other business will remain. **Mr. Charter moved, seconded by Mr. Martin that the Select Board approve the continuance Site Plan Special Permit #02/27/2023-490, MAG RE Holdings - Acton, LLC, 1 & 5 Nagog Park and 499 Great Road until 7:10 PM on September 18, 2023 and approved 5-0**

Karla Hailer, commented on the path connecting from Split Rock for access to the plaza and requested that be addressed, and the coordination with the Great Road Vision project and the reported traffic numbers in the study

III. New/Special Business

4. Discuss Next Steps for Sewer Commission Analysis Town Meeting Article

Ms. Nicol noted this is a short term goal to consider exploring the creation of an independent Sewer Commission, and looking for input on how to start the analysis with the many challenges the current Commission faces with sewerage and looking to move to an independent commission due to the amount of responsibilities the current Select Board must work with. Mr. Snyder-Grant questioned about the cost or size of the study and hire a consultant, Mr. Mangiaratti suggested between \$10-20,000, and to create a scope of services on what the Board wants the consultant to report on. Mr. Charter commented on that the town does not have the staff to undertake this and suggested that the Town Manager put a line item in the next fiscal year budget to hire a consultant, and not form a committee to study what would be needed. Mr. Martin noted the two items regarding sewerage are money and policies, and feels the Board is best to handle versus the technical issues. Ms. Nicol feels that an outside consultant would lean towards being an independent and un-biased analysis, noted that the Select Board

has a higher turnover in membership and separating Sewer Commissioners and Select Board responsibilities is not recommended.

5. Discuss Declaring October 9, 2023 Indigenous Peoples Day and Provide an Update on Longer Term Process in Cooperation with Local Indigenous Tribes

Mr. Snyder-Grant commented on previous years attempts regarding Columbus Day and declaring it Indigenous Peoples Day. Ms. Nicol updated the Board regarding the meeting on August 21st drafting a proclamation, and the feedback was to put on hold until an event could be held, and noted that the school district had already formally changed 3 years ago, and expressed that the public expressed the desire to have a formal event to officially recognize as Indigenous Peoples Day. Mr. Charter would like to see a draft of the proclamation, and to wait another year to make sure the process is done correctly, and hold separate public events on the subject. Mr. Martin commented that he felt due diligence was followed through and received mixed messages from both perspectives, but appreciates Ms. Nicol suggestion for more outreach.

Terra Friedrichs, West Acton – supports the Board declaring the date Indigenous People Day and moving forward yearly. **Ms. Arsenault moved, seconded by Ms. Nicol to declare Monday, October 9, 2023 as Indigenous Peoples Day and approved 5-0.**

Ms. Nicol noted that she had been working on a proclamation and communicating with Strong Bear Medicine and Quiet Storm to have a final draft for next year to build community support and have a vote for a permanent change.

6. Update on Acton Leadership Group Process

Mr. Snyder-Grant update the Board a new format of spreadsheet currently in practice, and explained to composition of the ALG with representatives from leadership and finance in both town and the schools. The purpose is to suggest the budget and to get feedback and direction from both the Finance Committee and Select Board and just held their first meeting.

7. Update on Health Insurance Trust

Ms. Nicol updated the Board regarding the last meeting the trust hired a new consultant (Gallagher) with an update to the last meeting that there was a loss of approximately 2.3 million, however the number is not firm due to a data breach with Harvard Pilgrim Health Care. The consultant shared with trustees different cost mitigation strategies to consider, but no decision made.

8. Assign New Liaison to the Minuteman Advisory Group Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC)

Ms. Nicol as current liaison has a scheduling conflict and cannot attend their meetings. Mr. Martin offered to be liaison and used to attend meetings in the past. Board members were in support of Mr. Martin without a formal vote conducted.

9. **Consent Items**

Ms. Nicol held consent item 13, and Mr. Martin held consent item 12 for West Acton Village Merchant Association One Day Alcoholic Beverage License.

Ms. Nicol moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to approve consent items 9-1 and 14 and approved 5-0.

Mr. Martin questioned if there were multiple West Acton Merchants were serving alcohol they should be listed on the application, and Ms. Nicol noted that the Police Chief requested police details but did not see confirmation in the application. The Board will hold the application for consideration and place at their next meeting. Mr. Martin would like to see their vendors serving listed and if a police detail.

Terra Freidrichs, West Acton – questioned if a police detail is now required for one day liquor licenses and that in previous years, the town provided the service at no cost to WAVMA

Mr. Martin requested the Town Manager to provide an update with the request of the Police Chief at the next meeting

Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Ms. Nicol to approve the 3 one day liquor licenses for Nashoba Valley Neighbors Club, Lauren Pollack and Iron Works Farm and approved 5-0.

Mr. Snyder-Grant noted that there is an ability for non-profits to request to waive the one day liquor licenses fee, and wanted to publicly announce it. Ms. Nicol held the consent item as she is a member of the Iron Works Farm and requests to recuse herself due to the financial matter. Mr. Martin noted that he is a member as well, but not a voting member. Mr. Snyder-Grant suggested if they are not voting members that they should be able to vote on the item.

Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Mr. Charter to approve the fee waiver request from Iron Work Farm for a one day alcoholic beverage license and approved 5-0.

IV. Meeting Evaluation

Mr. Snyder-Grant thought he would be more distracted as a result of the recent storm. Ms. Arsenault recognized Mr. Charter's comment regarding Indigenous Peoples Day and felt it was important to vote at this meeting. Ms. Nicol requests to put the Sewer Commissioners Analysis Town Meeting article on the next agenda.

**Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Mr. Charter to adjourn and approved 5-0.
Meeting adjourned at 8:38 PM**