



SELECT BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 4, 2024

7:00 PM

ACTON TOWN HALL, ROOM 204  
472 MAIN STREET

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

Additional Attendees: Town Manager John Mangiaratti, Assistant Town Manager Thom Begin

**I. Regular Business**

1. Resident Concerns

None

2. Chair Update/Town Manager Update/Members Minute

Mr. Snyder-Grant noted the presidential primary elections are tomorrow at RJ Grey Jr. High Auditorium between 7AM-8PM; discussed concerns about Board of Registrars brought up at last meeting and currently looking to resolve as soon as possible and announced that one member of that board has recently resigned. Mr. Mangiaratti noted the municipal monthly was issued today; the Planning Board will be holding public hearings in the upcoming weeks to present and review the draft Annual Town Meeting zoning articles. Ms. Nicol noted this Friday is the last day to pull nomination papers for Town elections with the Town Clerks Office, and the last day to return the nomination papers with 100 certifiable signatures is Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Martin congratulated new Deputy Fire Chief Chris Sammett and mentioned attending his pinning ceremony last week; discussed the School Committee's review and discussion of their "B" Budget and mentioned more information on that budget can be found on the School Committee's website at [abschools.org](http://abschools.org). Ms. Arsenault noted tomorrow night the DPW Director and Town Engineer are hosting a community open house to discuss the West Acton Village Streetscape from 6pm-8pm at 525 Mass Ave.

Mr. Charter noted the DPW Building Committee held first meeting last week and will be selecting an architect in May, then putting together outreach to neighbors and other Boards and Committees. He requested a future agenda item to discuss the issue with the Board of Registrar and Town Clerk.

**II. New/Special Business**

3. Request for Use of Town Roads, Silver Unicorn Bookstore, Kids Graphic Novel Festival, April 20, 2024

Paul Swyden from Silver Unicorn Bookstore was present, and Mr. Mangiaratti summarized the request for the use of Spruce Street for the purpose of setting up

vendors. Mr. Swyden made a brief presentation on the festival with parking planned at the Boardwalk School, and plans to close Spruce Street with assistance from the Acton Police Department. He has notified stakeholders on Spruce Street about the pending closure. Mr. Charter noted if any DPW vehicles should block intersections if necessary. Ms. Arsenault questioned if Mr. Swyden is encouraging people to park at Gates School, Mr. Swyden plans on notifications through his newsletter. Mr. Martin supports the festival and asked about specific locations for the police detail during the event. Ms. Nicol asked if shuttle busses will be required, and Mr. Swyden noted he has an agreement with the Economic Development Office to provide 1 shuttle bus for the satellite parking areas. **Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to close Spruce Street between 1-9 for the Kids Graphic novel Festival on April 20, 2024 as described to allow for vendor tables on the street and approved unanimously 5-0.**

4. Acton Leadership Group Update

Mr. Snyder-Grant provided an update - ALG met this morning and agreed the untaxed levy will be at least \$1.2 million. ALG recommended the Manager prepare another budget version as an ALG version that reflects this agreement. Mr. Martin agrees the updated tax table reflected impacts on households, but does not believe having 2 different tax table documents would be helpful. Mr. Charter questioned the impact if override passes, and understanding taxes will go up even if the override doesn't pass. Also noted that Town Meeting could amend the budget during Town Meeting, and on the school district side that Boxborough would have to pass the budget at their Town Meeting as well. Mr. Charter suggests getting materials out to the public to explain the actual override amount before voting on it and asked that this is brought back to the next Select Board meeting for further discussion. Mr. Martin suggested adding two additional columns to the spreadsheet that listed information for the estimate tax increase and total bill with an override and without an override. The Board further discussed additional edits to the spreadsheet that would include possible added columns and information.

5. Announce Nomination Process for the Colonel Francis Faulkner Sr. Volunteer of the Year Award

Mr. Snyder-Grant outlined the process of honoring volunteers in the Town of Acton through this award. The award was created by former Select Board member Peter J. Berry. Mr. Snyder-Grant requested Board members to email their nominees to the Managers Office by March 13<sup>th</sup> and would like to announce those nominees at the March 18<sup>th</sup> Select Board meeting.

6. Review Recommendation for Disposition of 19-21 Maple Street

Mr. Mangiaratti presented an overview of the RFP process and results. He indicated that the purpose of this agenda item is for Board members to view the proposals and the recommendation of the internal working group. Board members discussed concerns in potentially assisting a religious organization after previous experience with a government entity assisting a religious entity financially and discussed the need for the building to be fully accessible if it will be utilized as a

community space. Mr. Mangiaratti noted that the purpose was to get a general census of the Board regarding awarding the RFP, with noted further discussion would occur at a future meeting to discuss additional details. Mr. Martin noted that Pro EMS doesn't provide service to the town unless there is a mutual aid need, but does provide a financial aspect with the lease.

Franny Osman – asked if access from the train station will continue to be provided and that it should include protection from weather and be open to the public to provide bathroom/accessibility access for public use 24/7.

Aslof Yuosaf – ABRICC asked for more information into the Boards concerns with assisting a religious organization and asked for help in finding a facility for their organization. Mr. Charter noted that prior litigation regarding CPC funding to replace windows in a church led to a lawsuit where this determination was made.

Terra Friedrichs, Mass Ave – supporting ABRICC with placement in Acton and suggested locations in Acton, agree with having 24/7 access for bathrooms.

Lisa Gordon, Executive Director for Acton Food Pantry – thanked the Board for the opportunity to apply and to be considered for the RFP awarding for 19-21 Maple Street.

7. Discuss Town Counsel Review of Town Meeting Citizen Petition Articles

Mr. Snyder-Grant outlined the citizen petition process and would be fine for the use of Town Counsel for citizen petition review before the application is taken out by the petitioner for signatures. Mr. Martin expressed concerns about the use of Town Counsel on any citizen petition before signatures are solicited, and risks using Town Counsel time for something that might not come to fruition. Mr. Charter voiced similar concerns since only 10 signatures are required as there could be the chance of receiving 30 petitions at the last minute which would incur substantial legal costs. Ms. Nicol suggested some changes to the policy and felt it was important to get this on the town website. Mr. Snyder-Grant also voiced concerned if a petition is a binding article vs. non-binding or a resolution. The Board agreed to continue the discussion at a future meeting.

Terra Friedrichs, Mass Ave – people can submit any form as long as language is correct, but official forms are available at the Town Clerk's Office, Acton town attorney reviewing before signatures are gathered shouldn't be allowed, but would save the town money to be sure to have the appropriate language for clarity purposes.

8. Approve Proclamation Commemorating 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Acton Garden Club

Mr. Charter noted a celebration and dedication on May 1<sup>st</sup> at the garden in front of Town Hall, Mr. Charter did not have the proclamation drafted in time for the meeting and will revisit at the next Select Board meeting.

9. Approve Revised Fee Schedule for Fire Department

Mr. Mangiaratti presented the proposed Fire Department Fee Schedule changes to cover the cost of Fire Operations. Mr. Martin questioned the cost per page of copies, Mr. Mangiaratti will look further into the listed cost but expressed not in

favor of continuing the service of providing copies at the Fire Administration or Fire Department. Mr. Martin would like to strike the copy line item from the fee schedule. Ms. Nicol requested to keep the copy line item. **Ms. Nicol moved, seconded by Mr. Marin to approve the fire department fee schedule and unanimously approved 5-0.**

10. Approve Economic Development Committee Updated Charge

Ms. Arsenault noted a highlighted portion in yellow regarding the EDC serving as an advisory committee to the Select Board. **Ms. Arsenault moved, seconded by Ms. Nicol to approve the EDC charge and approved unanimously 5-0.**

11. Extended Producer Responsibility; Request for Support and Sign Resolution in Support of Paint Stewardship Legislation

Rob Gogan presented to the Board the paint stewardship program. Requests the Select Board send a letter of support to the House Ways and Means Committee and presented a model letter for the Board to consider. Mr. Martin questioned the stores you send cans to do they sign up for the program. Ms. Arsenault questioned if the disposal of paint at the Hazardous Waste Days at the Transfer station is a free service; Mr. Snyder-Grant confirmed, Mr. Mangiaratti noted that the 2 events are covered in the town budget and cost \$30,000. **Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to authorize the chair to send a letter of support to the legislature and approved unanimously 5-0.**

12. Approve Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association Health Benefits Trust Agreement and Business Associate Agreement

Mr. Mangiaratti introduced the two documents and is asking the Board to approve the Town Manager to sign both to get started on the implementation of transferring the Town to a new health insurance provider. **Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Ms. Nicol to approve the trust agreement and to authorize the Town Manager to sign both documents in the packet and approved unanimously 5-0.**

13. Discussion Regarding Zoom Usage for Select Board Meetings

Mr. Snyder-Grant discussed public involvement either in person or virtually at meetings and questioned if the Board would like to make any adjustments. Franny Osman – requests full participation by all remote participants and suggested allowing meeting panelists to show who virtual attendees are. Mr. Charter noted being in person at a meeting makes the best impact for presentations or discussions. Mr. Martin is comfortable with a hybrid meeting and would be willing to announce how many virtual participants are attending each meeting, but not showing pictures of the virtual participants, but does recommend announcing how many remote participants.

Corrine Hogseth – commented not to impede people from participating in meetings remotely and would like to see the Board announce the number of people participating periodically during the meeting.

Terra Friedrichs – does not want names or pictures displayed or announce number of remote participants

Charlie Kadlec – spent time in person at meetings but appreciates attending remotely, and urges the Board to continue hybrid meeting option

Mr. Snyder-Grant recapped the conversation and Board consensus on options, Mr. Martin can announce the number of people participating in person and remotely and discussed alternative modes of transportation available to those who need it.

### **III. Consent Items**

Ms. Nicol held consent item 17 and Ms. Arsenault held consent item 18. **Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Ms. Nicol to approve consent items 14-16, 19, and 20 and approved unanimously 5-0.**

Ms. Nicol questioned if the TIPS certification was ever received for the one day alcoholic beverage application and Ms. Tomyl confirmed it was received. **Ms. Nicol moved, seconded by Mr. Martin to approve consent item 17 and unanimously approved 5-0.**

### **IV. Meeting Evaluation**

Mr. Martin edited the liaison responsibilities memo and could bring it to the next Board meeting as a consent item. Mr. Charter requested that the discussion on the Board of Registrars issue be placed on the next meeting agenda. Mr. Martin asked if the Town Meeting Citizen petition warrant article process could be brought back to the Board for further discussion, Mr. Snyder-Grant suggested that it be brought back after the upcoming Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Nicol requested to look into what the Town Moderator is preparing as a similar document so that efforts are not duplicated.

**Ms. Nicol moved, seconded by Mr. Martin to adjourn and approved unanimously 5-0 Meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM**

### **Documents Used**

- March 4, 2024 Agenda
- Email from Julie pierce Dated February 22, 2024
- ALG Plan March 4, 2024
- Memo from Town Manager Regarding Col. Francis Faulkner Award for Exemplary Volunteer Service Dated March 4, 2024
- RFP Submissions and Email from John Mangiaratti Dated February 27, 2024
- Guide to Citizens' Petitions at Town Meeting
- Fire Department Fee Schedule and Email from John Mangiaratti Dated March 1, 2024
- Proposed Economic Development Committee Charge
- Letter from Green Advisory Board Dated February 21, 2024 and Resolution in Support of Paint Stewardship Legislation
- Memo from Maura Haberman Requesting a Donation Acceptance from John Palmer Moving & Storage/Big Foot Moving & Storage Dated February 16, 2024

- Letter from Acton Lions Club Requesting Donation Acceptance for the Council on Aging Dated February 17, 2024
- Letter from Acton Lions Club Requesting Donation Acceptance for the Acton 250 Committee Dated February 14, 2024
- One Day Alcoholic Beverage License Application, Nexstar Entertainment
- Email from John Mangiaratti Requesting Committee Appointment Dated February 26, 2024
- Memo from Volunteer Coordinating Committee Recommending David Pinsky for Land Stewardship Committee
- Email from Dean Charter Requesting Committee Appointment for Rebecca Schmidt Dated February 28, 2024