

**SELECTBOARD AND BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING  
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM  
1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA  
MONDAY, April 27, 2020**

Remote Zoom Meeting was opened at 6:00 PM in the Upstairs Meeting Room. Present: Town Administrator Steven Ellis, Executive Assistant Wendy Bogusz; Participating remotely: Selectpersons Rich Kuklewicz, Chris Boutwell, and Michael Nelson, Board of Health Chair Al Cummings, Administrative Assistant Anne Stuart, Director of Public Health Daniel Wasiuk, and Town Planner Walter Ramsey.

**Meeting Being Taped**

**Votes May Be Taken**

Chairs open the meeting, including announcing that the meeting is being recorded and roll call taken.

**Approve Selectboard Minutes of April 13, 2020 if available**

*Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Selectboard Minutes of April 13, 2020 as presented. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

**Approve Board of Health Minutes of April 13, 2020**

*Boutwell makes the motion to approve the Board of Health Minutes of April 13, 2020. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Cummings - Aye*

**Public Comment Period: Individuals will be limited to two (2) minutes each and the Selectboard will strictly adhere to time allotted for public comment**

None

**Personnel Board**

- **RiverCulture Steering Committee Appointments: Lilith Wolinsky, Tammy Ketcham, Kristi Bodin, 2 years until 6/30/2020**
- *Boutwell makes the motion to appoint Lilith Wolinsky, Tammy Ketcham, and Kristi Bodin to the Steering Committee, 2 years until 6/30/2020. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- **Execute MOA with NAGE to include the position of Assistant Planner pending Town Meeting approval and funding**  
*Boutwell makes the motion to sign and execute the MOA with NAGE to include in the unit the position of Assistant Planner pending Town Meeting approval and funding. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*
- **Appoint Gina McNeely as Health Dept. Consultant, up to 4 hrs/week effective 4/20/20**
  - *Boutwell makes the motion that the Board of Health appoint Gina McNeely as Health Dept. Consultant, up to 4 hrs/week effective 4/20/20 until 06/30/21. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Cummings - Aye*
  - *Boutwell makes the motion that the Selectboard to appoint Gina McNeely as Health Dept. Consultant, up to 4 hrs/week effective 4/20/20 until 06/30/21. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

**Carolyn Olsen, Town Accountant**

**Annual Town Meeting Logistics**

- Bogusz reports that of the 94 individuals who were sent the survey regarding the Annual Town Meeting, 28 responded.
- Nelson is in favor of having the meeting in the gymnasium as a remote conference would be a challenge.
- Olsen emphasizes to the Board that a decision needs to be made by this Monday in order to facilitate planning. There is more flexibility if a tent is not going to be used.
- Boutwell agrees with Nelson in that doing a remote conference would lead to a lot of issues.
- Wasiuk stresses the need for diligence regarding social distancing.
- Dobosz and Olsen stress the importance of having the attendants wear masks.
- Ellis hopes that the response to the survey will double or triple. He states that if the meeting is held at Unity Park, there will be a 10-foot distance between individuals.

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- Ellis reports the following responses to the survey: 60% were in favor of using video, 46% were in favor of holding the meeting under a tent, and 39% were in favor of holding the meeting in the auditorium.
- Kuklewicz has been in touch with professionals who can facilitate a video conference if that is the route that is decided on.
- Kuklewicz would prefer that the Selectboard, Finance Committee, Town Moderator, and Town Clerk be in a central area that can then be broadcast to a video audience.

**Town Meeting Agenda** *(not on Selectboard Meeting agenda):*

- Kuklewicz would like to pare the Town Meeting Agenda down to just the items we need (i.e., Town budgets) and address other items later in the year (in the fall).
- Nelson expresses concern as the virus is not going away any time soon so putting off Town Meeting business may be detrimental.
- Olsen feels that delaying the non-operating budget items until the fall would have the benefit of giving us time for more clarity about whether we are likely to have more revenue deficits.
- Ellis approves of truncating the agenda, which would allow as much flexibility as possible before making other funding commitments.

**Jon Dobosz, Parks & Recreation Director**

**Parking Concerns at Rutters Park**

Dobosz reports that he has received several complaints regarding the fact that two or three residents have been parking long-term at the New Rutters Park parking lot. He is concerned that when the park opens, there will not be enough parking for people who want to enjoy the park.

Discussion:

- Dobosz states that there are some parking spaces on Lyman Ave.
- George Shapiro, who is one of the residents parking at the park, states that before the construction started, he and Mo (another resident) were assured at the planning meeting that they could park in the parking lot.
- Deborah Frenkel, who was part of the planning committee, states she sees both sides of this, but agrees that George and Mo were told that there would be space for them to park. Regarding Lyman Street, she is concerned that this situation would be repeated as the basketball court is slated to be renovated as part of the project for Rutters Park.
- Boutwell suggests sending Bergeron out to see if he can come up with a solution to help the residents.
- Kuklewicz suggests designating three of the five parking spots as park parking (with a specific set of hours) and designating two to be potentially used for residents.
- Dobosz, the Parks and Recreation Committee, and the Town Planner will do some more research on this issue before a formal plan which includes a compromise is made.
- The police will be asked to hold off on any enforcements around the use of the parking spots until a more definitive plan is decided on.
- Ellis is concerned that residents may develop a sense of ownership relative to individual parking spaces, and suggests that any parking agreements be solidified in a Town-granted license.

**Update on Town response to COVID-19**

- **Review Park Closures**
  - Dobosz states that things are going smoothly and that the park closures are being honored by the residents.
  - *Nelson makes the motion to keep the parks closed, and that we review on May 11 our policies and procedures regarding the park and come up with an appropriate reopening plan. Seconded by Boutwell, unanimously approved. Nelson - Aye, Boutwell - Aye, Cummings - Aye*
- **Health Department Emergency Policies: Town Staff COVID Reporting and Mask Policies**
  - Cummings reports that he gave each member of the Town Staff five face masks, and they are all wearing them.
  - *Nelson makes the motion to endorse the Emergency Policy that was set forth by the Emergency Management Team in regards to Town Staff being advised to wear masks during business hours. Seconded by Boutwell, unanimously approved. Seconded by Boutwell, unanimously approved. Nelson - Aye, Boutwell - Aye, Cummings - Aye*

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- *Nelson makes the motion to endorse the Emergency Policy that was set forth by the Emergency Management Team in regards to Town Staff COVID Reporting. Seconded by Boutwell, unanimously approved. Seconded by Boutwell, unanimously approved. Nelson - Aye, Boutwell - Aye, Cummings - Aye*
- **Consideration of any expansion of mask requirements for businesses or the public**
  - Nelson states that we are at the peak with regard to COVID cases and suggests that we continue to wear masks until we are further down the curve.
  - Chief Zellman suggests that we strongly recommend to all individuals that they continue wearing masks even after the Governor starts allowing us to go back to normal. He states that he has boxes of masks that he can drop off to businesses that need them.
  - Kuklewicz shares a comprehensive but relatively strict policy from the City of Chicopee which requires employees of essential businesses to wear masks.
  - Wasiuk shares his findings pertaining to mandates versus suggestions of mask requirement extensions for essential businesses. The consensus is that this would adversely impact the businesses and that the enforcement of the policy would be challenging as well as detrimental.
  - Nelson emphasizes that the priority for the Board of Health is to keep people healthy.
  - *Nelson makes the motion that the Board of Health make a strong advisory that the general public wear masks when in the public realm. Seconded by Boutwell, unanimously approved. Nelson - Aye, Boutwell - Aye, Cummings - Aye*
- **Discussion of Expenses related to COVID-19 to date**
  - Ellis reports the following added expenses related to COVID-19: Town Nurse's time (covered by a small grant from FRCOG), technology devices (laptops), and IT expenses (possibly up to \$8,000 to be incurred by June 30). We have a balance of approximately \$60,000 in our Reserve Fund Account, which at present can cover these expenses.
  - Boutwell mentions that we may have some additional expenses related to the Annual Town Meeting.
- **Discussion of any additional State Guidance**
  - Wasiuk reports that we have received some guidance from the Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences regarding the safety practices for non-health-care, essential service workers who may have been exposed to COVID-19, which he will be discussing with the Town Nurse as well as the Emergency Management Team.
  - Kuklewicz suggests asking our legislators to take into account the differences between the rural and urban areas when making decisions about re-opening businesses.

**Board of Health Adjournment**

*Boutwell makes the motion to adjourn the Board of Health Meeting. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Cummings - Aye*

**Brian McHugh, FCRHRA**

**Authorization to Disburse No. 3, Invoice #2019-135-5, Spinner Park Restoration Project, Berkshire Design Group, Inc. \$2,050.00**

*Boutwell makes the motion to authorize Disbursement No. 3, Invoice #2019-135-5, Spinner Park Restoration Project, Berkshire Design Group, Inc. \$2,050.00. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

**Walter Ramsey, Town Planner**

- **Discuss emergency assistance programming and possible reprogramming of CDBG grant funds for this purpose**
  - Ramsey discusses the creation of a county-wide program administered by the Franklin County Community Development Corporation to help provide small business relief and general community development relief.
  - We are looking at grants in the range of \$5,000 to \$10,000.
  - Step 1 is to reprogram an existing 2004 Small Business Revolving Loan Fund, which carries a balance of \$60,000. Greenfield is the lead agency and has scheduled a public hearing on Wednesday, May 13, where the rules will be changed to make the loans forgivable.

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UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM  
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MONDAY, April 27, 2020**

- We have excess funds in our Fiscal Year 19 Block Grant, which can be used to supplement the Revolving Loan Fund. Since the Spinner Park was under budget, we have about \$64,000 to re-program. A public hearing is required to reallocate these funds.
- In the next few months, we will have an additional \$45,000 if contingency is not needed for Spinner Park.
- The Housing and Redevelopment Authority has reached out to the four social services programs to see if they need any additional support. Montague Catholic Services is requesting chrome books. We will hopefully hear from the other agencies by this Wednesday.
- The FCHRA is also building a model for housing relief in the form of rental payment assistance.
- **Discussion of possible changes to 5th Street Pedestrian Bridge Replacement Project**
  - Ramsey reports that this project is in the design process. We discovered during the process that we cannot have the handicapped accessible bridge and provide adequate vehicular access down the Canal Access Road. Ramsey proposes relocating the bridge to the other side of the Fifth Street vehicular bridge, which would allow better vehicular access to the Canal Access Road.
  - First Light has inquired about the status of the utilities that go over the Strathmore Pedestrian Foot Bridge, and would like to know if the Town would be amenable to some type of planned proposal that would provide the utilities that go over the Strathmore Bridge to be placed into the Canal Access Road.
- **Authorize professional services contract with GZA for Corrective Action Design Construction Services for the Burn Dump Capping Project. Estimated contract cost \$132,500**  
Postponed until all commitments are in place and the pilot agreement is signed.

**Cassie Damkoehler**

**Downtown Lamp posts: Discussion of Senior Recognition**

- Damkoehler states that a group of individuals would like to create small banners to line the avenue to celebrate the seniors graduating from TFHS. This would be funded through donations from the community.
- Boutwell expresses concern about singling out the graduating seniors from the Tech School.
- Kuklewicz will discuss this with the Superintendent of the Franklin County Tech to address also recognizing their graduating students (whether tying in with the TFHS banner project or coming up with a separate project).
- *Nelson makes the motion to allow Cassie Damkoehler's team to begin the process of putting together the required elements to hang banners in the downtown area honoring the Turners Falls High School students, and to begin working with the Franklin County Tech School Associated Partners to see if there are specific partnerships that can be built, and to come back to the Board with a formal proposal of exactly how many and where and more minute details about getting these set up. Boutwell seconded, approved. Nelson - Aye, Boutwell - Aye, Kuklewicz - Abstain*

**Town Administrator's Report**

- **Strathmore Building 2 Roof Repairs Needed**

*Boutwell makes the motion to authorize the Town Administrator to enter into a contract regarding the Strathmore Building 2 Roof Repairs, that does not exceed our remaining appropriation. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*

- **Kearsarge Update**

Kearsarge and the Assessors remain in negotiations regarding the pilot agreement. It should be done in the next week.

- **DPW Garage Construction Update**

The carpenters union has taken its people off of Massachusetts job sites. Our construction team needs to redesign the work flow around the unavailability of those professionals. The work continues to go on, and should the union change its orientation, we feel that the impact on the overall project timeline will be minimized. The project will come \$1 million under budget.

- **Topics not anticipated in 48 hour posting/Smoke Stack Abatement**

Ramsey clarifies that the smoke stack abatement and demolition is part of the approved bid Alternate No. 1 that the Board authorized previously. There are 8 cubic yards of soot that need to be disposed of and the stack will be demolished.

*Boutwell makes the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 PM. Seconded by Nelson, unanimously approved. Boutwell - Aye, Nelson - Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye*