



SELECT BOARD
Meeting Minutes
March 28, 2022

APPROVED:

PRESENT: Wes Fowlks, Chair; John Markiewicz, Member; Les Fox, Member; Jennifer Campbell, Member and Diana Lipari, Member

ALSO PRESENT: Rajon Hudson, Assistant Town Administrator; and Kirby Dolak, BXBTV

The documents discussed herein have been included with the file copy of the agenda packet for the above referenced date and are hereby incorporated by reference.

OPEN SESSION

At 7:00PM, Chair Fowlks called Select Board meeting to order, via ZOOM pursuant to the procedures noted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Fowlks read the announcements.

MINUTES

None at this time.

INTRODUCTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

a. Introductions of New Staff

None at this time.

CITIZEN'S CONCERNS

Becky Neville noted that there will be a celebration on May 22nd for John Fallon's retirement as moderator. She noted that she previously sent an email to the Board regarding the Town Accountant. She stressed how important it is to have a full-time person with municipal experience in this role.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Action RE: Springfest Permits

i. Boxborough Regency

Member Markiewicz moved to approve the one-day liquor-license for the Boxboro Regency for April 3, 2022 (with a rain date of April 10, 2022). Seconded by Member Campbell.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox "aye," Markiewicz "aye," Campbell "aye," Lipari "aye," and Fowlks "aye."

ii. True West Brewing Company

Member Markiewicz moved to approve the one-day liquor-license for the True West Brewing Company, LLC for April 3, 2022 (with a rain date of April 10, 2022). Seconded by Member Lipari.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox "aye," Markiewicz "aye," Campbell "aye," Lipari "aye," and Fowlks "aye."

iii. Pony Shack Cider

Member Markiewicz moved to approve the one-day liquor-license for the Pony Shack Cider for April 3, 2022 (with a rain date of April 10, 2022). Seconded by Member Lipari.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox "aye," Markiewicz "aye," Campbell "aye," Lipari "aye," and Fowlks "aye."

TOWN MEETING

a. Discussion/Action RE: Town Meeting(s) and Personnel Administration Plan

i. Review of final proposed changes to Personnel Plan

Sheila Bauer called the Personnel Board meeting to order via a roll call vote: Keith Lyons, Bill Litant, and Tracey Sierra all in attendance.

The Board reviewed the proposed changes.

Under Article V, the Position Classification Plan is proposed to be amended to change the word “allocation” to “classification.” Under Article VI, the proposal is to amend the section title to “Promotions & Reclassifications,” and some language within. Article VI, Section 7 is proposed to be amended to remove the language requiring step increases to be voted on at Annual Town Meeting. Step increases would be determined based on if annual reviews have been conducted. The Employee Handbook will require an update around the language for reviews as part of this. Chair Fowlks stated that he believes the Employee Handbook also needs to be updated regarding language about grievances.

In response to a question from Member Markiewicz, Ms. Bauer stated that it is unclear as to who must approve updates to the Employee Handbook.

Ms. Bauer explained that one of the proposed changes is to amend Article VI, by adding Section 11. Regarding Article XI, Section 1 the proposal is to add the language “and regular part-time.”

The second vote will be on the Classification and Compensation Schedule. The Personnel Board met and voted to add the position of Associate Town Planner at level 13. The Personnel Board felt it did not have enough information to add the Assistant Treasurer/Collector and Executive Assistant positions at anything higher than level 11. The position descriptions were not high enough to recommend at higher levels.

In response to a question from Member Markiewicz, Ms. Bauer stated that the things that would help increase the levels for these positions are amount of education and experience required.

Member Lipari stated that the Personnel Plan is clear that the Personnel Board can grade a position without going to Town Meeting as long as there is a group the position would come under. There is also a process, through a formal grievance submittal, for someone to explain why they do not agree with the proposed level for a position. She is concerned with bringing this item to Town Meeting, as it creates an unnecessary step that is not in the Plan. These jobs can be graded with the existing Schedule.

Chair Fowlks stated that he believes being able to acknowledge people’s past experiences as part of applying to a position for the Town is important, even if it is not required for the position. He believes the Town will need to get creative in order to attract and keep employees.

Maria Neyland explained that the Assistant Treasurer/Collector and Executive Assistant positions are not on the compensation schedule, which is why they are proposed to go to Town Meeting as part of this item. This is about transparency.

Member Lipari stated that any new position can be put on the compensation schedule by the Personnel Board, as long as the funding for it is appropriated at Town Meeting. This is where transparency occurs.

The Personnel Board is also recommending removing the following positions from the Temporary, Per Diem, and Intermittent Schedule: Junior Library Page, Library Page, Fire Department Chaplain, Gym Director, and Call Fire Chief.

The third vote is regarding the proposed step increase and 1.9% wage adjustment, effective July 1st.

The Personnel Board meeting was adjourned with a roll call vote.

The Board took a brief two-minute recess.

ii. Review and vote Warrant Articles and designate unwritten recommendations

Member Lipari expressed concern regarding the Select Board’s stipend being listed in the budget, even though the Board previously voted not to take the stipend this year.

Member Markiewicz moved to reconsider the Select Board vote for Article 3. Seconded by Member Lipari.

Discussion:

Maria Neyland noted that, if this Article is voted down, it means voting down the salary for all positions listed, including the Constable and Town Clerk.

Chair Fowlks explained that his intention was to amend the motion for Article 3 on Town Meeting floor to set the stipend for all non-required by statutory law and/or full-time employees, to zero.

Member Markiewicz withdrew his previous motion.

Member Lipari moved to accept the changes to the Personnel Plan, as discussed this evening. Seconded by Member Campbell.
Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox “aye,” Markiewicz “aye,” Campbell “aye,” Lipari “aye,” and Fowlks “aye.”

Chair Fowlks moved to approve the Town Operating Budget. Seconded by Member Campbell.

Discussion:

Member Lipari stated that she plans to vote against the budget, with the caveat at she does not believe the Fin Com and Police Department should have put back the \$77,000 voted to be removed from the budget at Town Meeting. This is disrespectful to the voters from last year who voted this out. She noted that, overall, there are many errors in the budget document that need to be fixed.

Chair Fowlks stated that he believes things will even themselves out over time, in terms of any small budget document errors. He agrees with approving the budget, but does share the concern regarding the \$77,000 being placed back in.

Member Markiewicz stated that he would prefer for the Fin Com to vote on the budget first. He strongly feels that the cruiser should be a capital item and placed on a warrant article for the public to decide.

Member Campbell agreed with the process of letting the Fin Com vote on the budget first. She withdrew her second of this motion.

The previous motion died on the floor.

Becky Neville stated that the Interim Town Administrator was the one who suggested increasing the amount for the cruiser proposed in the budget. She also suggested that the Board discuss any errors in the budget with the Town Accountant.

Member Campbell moved to recommend Article 9 – First Year Collective Bargaining Agreements. Seconded by Member Markiewicz.

It was noted that this item could be deferred at this time.

Member Campbell withdrew her motion.

Chair Fowlks moved to recommend Article 10 – Fire Addition to Staff as presented in the warrant. Seconded by Member Lipari.

Discussion:

Chair Fowlks noted that he does not believe the Town will be receiving the Safer Grant.

Member Lipari stated that she will be voting against this Article, as she does not believe the Town should be adding additional staff at this time.

Approved: 4-1 by Roll Call Fox “aye,” Markiewicz “aye,” Campbell “aye,” Lipari “nay,” and Fowlks “aye.”

Member Lipari moved to recommend Article 11 – Associate Planner. Seconded by Member Campbell.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox “aye,” Markiewicz “aye,” Campbell “aye,” Lipari “aye,” and Fowlks “aye.”

Chair Fowlks moved to recommend Article 12 – Town Hall Staffing. Seconded by Member Campbell.

Discussion:

Maria Neyland noted that the total for Item C should be decreased. She also noted that the total amounts listed for the positions are incorrect. The listed amount is \$2,186 too high. Chair Fowlks explained that he is mainly voting on the principal of the article, not necessarily the underlying budget amount, as this may change. Maria Neyland stated that she will not vote to recommend this article tomorrow evening if the numbers are still incorrect, as the Fin Com does care about the budget numbers. Member Campbell stated that she will correct the numbers.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox “aye,” Markiewicz “aye,” Campbell “aye,” Lipari “aye,” and Fowlks “aye.”

Member Lipari moved to recommend Article 13 – Police/Fire Injury Coverage Transfer. Seconded by Member Markiewicz.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox “aye,” Markiewicz “aye,” Campbell “aye,” Lipari “aye,” and Fowlks “aye.”

Member Lipari moved to recommend Article 14 – Cable Services & Equipment, Article 15 – Transfer to OPEB Trust Fund, Article 16 – Revolving Funds, Article 17 – Acceptance of Taylor Farm Road, and Article 18 – Acceptance of a Gift of Land. Seconded by Member Campbell.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox “aye,” Markiewicz “aye,” Campbell “aye,” Lipari “aye,” and Fowlks “aye.”

Member Lipari moved to recommend the CPC – Reserves, BRAP, Conservation, and Sargent Road articles. Seconded by Member Campbell.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox “aye,” Markiewicz “aye,” Campbell “aye,” Lipari “aye,” and Fowlks “aye.”

Member Lipari moved to recommend the articles for Fire Department – Building Improvements, Cisterns, and Truck Grant; for DPW – and DPW – Dumpster, and Roads. Seconded by Member Campbell.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox “aye,” Markiewicz “aye,” Campbell “aye,” Lipari “aye,” and Fowlks “aye.”

Member Lipari moved to recommend the articles for Fire Department – Building Improvements, Cisterns, and Truck Grant; for DPW – and DPW – Dumpster, and Roads. Seconded by Member Campbell.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox “aye,” Markiewicz “aye,” Campbell “aye,” Lipari “aye,” and Fowlks “aye.”

The Board tabled the vote on the Steele Farm – Ice House article.

Member Lipari moved to recommend the article to Amend Article 11 from 2020. Seconded by Member Campbell.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox “aye,” Markiewicz “aye,” Campbell “aye,” Lipari “aye,” and Fowlks “aye.”

Regarding the proposed, Member Lipari stated that she would like to see if grants for this work can be sought. The Board agreed to table a vote on this item for now.

Chair Fowlks moved to recommend the Town Hall PFAS Article. Seconded by Member Campbell.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox “aye,” Markiewicz “aye,” Campbell “aye,” Lipari “aye,” and Fowlks “aye.”

Chair Fowlks moved to recommend the MGL Fire Suppression Article. Seconded by Member Campbell.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox “aye,” Markiewicz “aye,” Campbell “aye,” Lipari “aye,” and Fowlks “aye.”

Chair Fowlks moved to recommend the FinCom Bylaw. Seconded by Member Markiewicz.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox “aye,” Markiewicz “aye,” Campbell “aye,” Lipari “aye,” and Fowlks “aye.”

Member Lipari moved to recommend the Sense of the Motion Article and the Sargent Road Bonding Article. Seconded by Member Campbell.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox “aye,” Markiewicz “aye,” Campbell “aye,” Lipari “aye,” and Fowlks “aye.”

Member Campbell moved to recommend the MS4 Stormwater Article. Seconded by Member Lipari.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox “aye,” Markiewicz “aye,” Campbell “aye,” Lipari “aye,” and Fowlks “aye.”

Chair Fowlks suggested having a brief meeting on March 31st at 8:30am to discuss the unvoted upon articles.

The Board discussed which members will write the recommendation statements for each article.

OLD BUSINESS – *this was not addressed at this time.*

SELECT BOARD & TOWN ADMINISTRATOR’S OFFICE REPORTS/UPDATES – *this was not addressed at this time.*

ADJOURN

At 9:24 PM, Member Lipari moved to adjourn. Seconded by Member Campbell.

Approved: 5-0 by Roll Call Fox “aye,” Markiewicz “aye,” Campbell “aye,” Lipari “aye,” and Fowlks “aye.”

Item# **Exhibits**
 Agenda

- 6. I. Application for License/Permit – Boxborough Regency
- II. Application for License/Permit – True West Brewing Company
- III. Application for License/Permit – Pony Shack Cider

- 7. I. Personnel Plan, draft
- II. Annual Town Meeting, draft & Warrant Articles
 Internal Communications & Outgoing Communications
 Minutes, Notices & Updates