



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

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Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

Select Board

Date: 2023-04-18

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: Reading Town Hall

Location: Select Board Meeting Room

Address: 16 Lowell Street

Session: Open Session

Purpose: General Business

Version: Final

Attendees: **Members - Present:**

Mark Dockser, Karen Herrick, Carlo Bacci, Chris Haley, Jackie McCarthy

Members - Not Present:

Others Present:

Town Manager Fidel Maltez, Executive Assistant Caitlin Nocella, Bill Brown, Angela Binda, Town Clerk Laura Gemme, Lt. Jones

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Executive Assistant Caitlin Nocella

Topics of Discussion:

This meeting was held in person and remote via Zoom.

Public Comment

Bill Brown noted Memorial Day celebrations are coming up and if anyone notices a veteran grave without a flag or marker to please let him know.

Select Board Reorganization

Dockser noted his thoughts on delaying this one more meeting until the recount is over. Bacci, Haley and McCarthy agreed with Dockser while Herrick felt the board should continue and reorganize tonight.

Bacci moved to delay the board reorganization until their next meeting, May 9th, after the recount is certified. The motion was seconded by McCarthy and approved with a 4-1 vote with Herrick abstaining.

Vice Chair Herrick voted "no" on the motion to post pone reorganizing before Town Meeting as per our Select Board policy. She noted Town Counsel had previously advised the Select Board that the petition for a recount had no bearing on the operations of the Select Board.

Liaison Reports

Haley noted at the School Committee meeting it was announced that Susan Bottan is leaving the Superintendents Office.

McCarthy noted the State extended allowing remote and hybrid meetings for local government until 2025. The Board of Health has some women's health events coming up. They are also continuing with

the community self needs assessment. Meadow Brook Country Club Pro Shoppe applied for a tobacco license to sell cigars at their pro-shop.

Bacci noted at the Recreation Committee they announced Jim Sullivan has been hired for the Program Coordinator position. SWEC met and he noted he was personally attacked by Angela Binda for the first bit of the meeting accusing him of many things. The Board of Health is working on updating tobacco regulations. The board of registrars met and discussed the re-count and certified the petitions. The re-count will be this Saturday and they appointed David Zeek as a temporary Registrar to do the re-count.

Herrick attended the Recreation Committee meeting and got an update from Angela Binda on her concerns about process and OML violations at SWEC. She noted the Council on Aging meeting was zoom bombed last week. She will be attending RMHS on April 26th to come in and meet staff at the school.

Dockser noted the Council on Aging has been working hard on a video to highlight the conditions of the Pleasant Street Center and what they truly need. They would like to show the video at Town Meeting if the vote passes at their meeting. He noted he had a busy office hour at the PSC last week. He attended the Commissioner of Trust Funds and Beth Klepis has decided to not continue after her term is up in June.

Angela Binda requested two minutes to do public comment now. She wanted to respond to Bacci's comments earlier. She noted she did not personally attack him; she pointed out things in the SWEC meetings that have been lacking in process.

Town Manager Report

Maltez noted the warrant books for Town Meeting are now available. He mentioned that Lowell Street closures are due to repaving. They are prepping the road now to be paved in the next couple weeks. He asked residents to please follow all road closure signs. The rubbish and recycling carts survey has gotten great results.

Appoint Temporary Board of Registrars Member

Laura Gemme noted that a current Board of Registrars member is out of the country and unable to attend and participate in the recount on Saturday. Earlier this evening the Board of Registrars appointed David Zeek to temporarily fill the position until the recount is certified. The Select Board now must appoint him as well.

Haley moved to appoint David Zeek temporarily to the Board of Registrars until the recount is certified. The motion was seconded by Herrick and approved with a 5-0 vote.

Parking Fee Discussion and Vote

Lt. Jones was back before the board to go over any further questions regarding the proposed parking fees they discussed at a prior meeting. The changes would be for Group A,B and C violations.

Haley moved to adopt the recommendations from Reading Police department on parking violation fees as presented, including the recommendation to allow that a separate violation ticket may be issued after two hours of the violation if the original violation is still occurring. The motion was seconded by Herrick and approved with a 5-0 vote.

Select Board Policy

In light of recent the recent Supreme Judicial Court ruling on Barron v. Kolenda; Town Counsel and recommending the board revise section 1.2.5 of the Select Board policy. She specifically recommends the last part of the last sentence stating "avoid making disparaging comments about individuals".

Haley noted the policy uses the word “shall” and not “must” which seems like the board doesn’t need to address this.

The board discussed the wording and ultimately decided to reword the last sentence and remove the last part as suggested by Counsel. They also agreed to come back and clean up the wording better at a later meeting.

Haley moved to remove item (3) from the Select Board Policy 1.2.5 – Public Comment. The motion was seconded by McCarthy and approved with a 5-0 vote.

The new complete wording will be as follows:

1.2.5 Public Comment

Each person appearing before the Select Board who wishes to speak will, upon recognition by the Chair, identify him/herself by name and address of residence. Failure to identify him/herself may result in the Chair withdrawing permission for that individual to speak to the Select Board. When recognized by the Chair, the speaker will (1) address only the Chair and (2) speak for only the time allocated by the Chair.

Executive Session

Haley moved to enter under Purpose 6 to consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of 17 Harden Street, as the Chair declares that an open meeting could have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the body, to invite Town Manager Fidel Maltez and Executive Assistant Caitlin Nocella to attend the executive session, and to reconvene in open session afterwards. The motion was seconded by McCarthy and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

Harden Street

Dockser noted that in consultation with Town Counsel and Bond Counsel, the structure of a purchase and sale agreement proposed by the current owner is not something that as a municipality we are able to execute. They have explored multiple avenues to make it happen but have been unsuccessful. They will go back to discussing further options for a senior center.

Future Agendas

The board discussed future agenda items.

Minutes

The board edited the last set of meeting minutes.

Haley moved to approve the meeting minutes of March 21, 2023 as amended. The motion was seconded by Herrick and approved with a 5-0 vote.

Haley moved to adjourn at 9:06PM. The motion was seconded by Herrick and approved with a 5-0 vote.