



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

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Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

Select Board

Date: 2024-05-07

Time: 6:00 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:**

Carlo Bacci via Zoom, Herrick via Zoom, Mark Docksler, Chris Haley, Melissa Murphy

Members - Not Present:

Others Present:

Town Manager Matt Kraunelis, Executive Assistant Caitlin Nocella, David Zeek, Kathy Zeek, John Sullivan, Tara Gregory, Chuck Robinson, Andrew MacNichol, Chuck Tirone, Officer Scouten, Matt Abrahams, Nilesh Patel, Andrew Upton, Sharon Angstrom, Chris Cole

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Caitlin Nocella

Topics of Discussion:

Bacci called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM with a roll call vote. Members Haley and Docksler were present and members Bacci and Herrick were present via zoom.

Public Comment

David Zeek expressed his concerns about tiered water rates when it comes to multi-family housing. It works for single-family homes but not for multi-family housing; this needs to be looked at so it can be more fair.

Kathy Zeek shared the same concerns as David Zeek.

John Sullivan also shared his concerns about the tiered rates within multi-unit buildings.

Tara Gregory shared their hopes that Symonds Way is used for recreation concerns. They also noted the same concerns about tiered rates for multi-unit buildings as the previous speakers. Lastly, they spoke about the ReCalc building committee and hopes this project moves forward as well as Killam is.

Liaison Reports

Docksler noted that ReCalc and the Council on Aging have been holding meetings in preparation for reviewing site options and making some decisions on bringing recommendations to the board. They are planned to sunset in June and hopefully turn over their work the building committee.

Haley thanked Alan Foulds and Laura Gemme along with all of town staff for a well-coordinated Town Meeting. School Committee meets tomorrow night.

Herrick noted the Housing Authority met last night and they are hoping the new nurse advocate position will be filled soon as the previous nurse was providing a lot of support to residents. They also want to participate in our trash contract to save operational expenses. Killam School Building Committee hosted another community outreach meeting. They recently toured three net zero schools in Action and Watertown. The energy managers and the Watertown Superintendent reported that the buildings were exceeding energy performance goals. Herrick joined MAPC, Town and RMLD staff to discuss completing our green communities application by the June 28th deadline.

Bacci noted he toured the Pleasant Street Center to see the condition it is in. SWEC approved their final minutes and looks forward to their presentation to the board tonight.

Town Manager Report

Kraunelis noted Town Meeting has concluded and the budget passed. He thanked everyone involved for helping with his first Town Meeting as Town Manager. The Police and Fire badge pinning ceremony is Monday, May 13; a great event to pin their new officers and announce promotions. Early voting is happening this week until Thursday; the election is Tuesday, May 14. We hired a Planner that will start in June; they are still trying to hire an economic development planner. They are also working on hiring an Assistant Town Manager.

National Public Works Week

Chris Haley read a proclamation to recognize National Public Works Week on May 19-25th, 2024.

Haley moved to accept the proclamation as presented. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

Symonds Way Exploratory Committee Presentation

SWEC called to order at 6:32 PM.

Chuck Robinson gave the board a presentation on what SWEC has been working on and some recommendations for use of the Symonds Way property. The presentation can be found in the Select Board packet on the town website.

SWEC adjourned at 7:12 PM.

Parking Kiosk Update

Andrew MacNichol gave the board a quick update on the parking kiosks. They will be installed in May and go live June 3rd, 2024. There have been many delays with the vendor, but we are finally ready to move forward. They are doing outreach to the public and downtown again. This is going forward as planned and approved by the Select Board and Town Meeting.

Hearing - Alteration of Premises Application

Haley read the hearing notice. The applicant Nilesh Patel and his attorney Andrew Upton were present to answer any questions.

City Wine Spirits & Smoke Shop at 345 Main Street filed an alteration of premises application with the town. The applicant is proposing to take over additional retail space from the store that closed next to them. It was noted there will still only be one checkout, entrance, and exit.

Dockser told the applicant that this Town and this board take alcohol compliance very seriously and he hopes they continue too as well.

Haley moved to close the hearing regarding the liquor license alteration of premises for 345 Main Street. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll-call vote.

Haley moved to approve the Alteration of Premises application for an annual All - Alcohol Package Store License for Nilkant 350, Inc. d/b/a City Wine Spirits & Smoke Shop at 345 Main Street. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll-call vote.

Traffic Amendments

Haley read the hearing notice to open the hearing regarding the traffic and safety amendments being proposed.

Safety Officer Scouten was present to explain the two traffic amendments that were before the board this evening. These requests came out of PTTTF and include placing a stop sign on Sanborn Street at the intersection of Haven Street and another on Walnut Street at the intersection of Summer Avenue.

Haley moved to close the hearing regarding the traffic and safety amendments. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

Haley moved to approve Traffic and Parking Regulations Amendment Number 2024 -1 as presented. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

Haley moved to approve Traffic and Parking Regulations Amendment Number 2024 -2 as presented. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

Water & Sewer Rates Discussion

Matt Abrahams of The Abrahams Group gave the board a presentation about water and sewer rates in town. The board switched to tiered water rates last year and there are still some concerns that the tiers are not accurate for multi-unit buildings. The board will be holding a hearing to set the rates at their first meeting in June. The presentation can be found in the Select Board packet on the town website.

Mr. Abrahams recommended an increase in rates in order to maximize the length of time the reserves will remain healthy.

Conservation Restriction Vote

Conservation Administrator Chuck Tirone explained that the Select Board needed to vote to accept a conservation restriction on Grove Street. The CPDC already voted on this as presented.

Haley moved to approve the Conservation Commission's acceptance of a Conservation Restriction over a portion of Assessor's Parcel 44-135 (a lot located off Grove Street) such area marked as "Conservation Restriction Easement Area" and shown on a plan entitled "Proposed Plot Plan in Reading, MA Showing Development of 4 Lots at #0 Grove Street" recorded in the Southern Middlesex County District Registry of Deeds as

Plan No. 28 of 2023. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

ReCalc Building Committee

Dockser explained that ReCalc wants to bring the Permanent Building Committee into the site selection process which is a little earlier than the PBC would normally get involved. Dockser spoke with the Chair of the PBC and he agreed he would like to be involved and will put it on their next agenda. ReCalc would like to come to the board June 18th to give the board a presentation. ReCalc is set to sunset June 30th, so the board needs to think about if they want to extend ReCalc a little longer or make sure the building committee is ready to take the project further. He is proposing a project building committee which would include all the members of the PBC plus one or two other members specifically dedicated to the Senior Center project who would be appointed by the Town Moderator, the Select Board Chair and the PBC Chair.

Future Agendas

The board discussed upcoming future agenda topics.

Carlo Bacci left the meeting at 8:52 PM. Vice Chair Karen Herrick took over as Chair of the meeting.

Minutes

The board reviewed previous meeting minutes.

Haley moved to approve the meeting minutes from April 9, 2024 as amended. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

Executive Session

At 8:56 PM, Haley moved that the Board enter into Executive Session to strategy with respect to collective bargaining and to conduct collective bargaining with AFSCME Council 93 Local 1703 Engineers Union, including potential approval of contracts, under Purpose 2 and Purpose 3, as the Chair declares that an open meeting could have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the body, and to invite staff members Matt Kraunelis, Sharon Angstrom, Chris Cole, and Caitlin Nocella into the Executive Session; and to reconvene in open session for the purpose of sharing whether the Board voted to execute the contract with the Engineers Union. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

The board returned to open session at 9:08 PM.

Haley noted that while in Executive Session the Select Board approved a contract for the Engineers Union with a 3-0 vote.

Haley moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:10. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a 3-0 roll call vote.