



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

RECEIVED

By Town Clerk GP at 9:14 am, Jul 24, 2024

Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

Select Board

Date: 2024-06-04

Time: 6:30 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, Karen Herrick via Zoom, Chris Haley, Mark Dockser, Melissa Murphy

Members - Not Present:

Others Present:

Town Manager Matt Kraunelis, Executive Assistant Caitlin Nocella, Ivria Fried, Emily Meehan, Mark Delaney, John Lippitt, Cathy Zeek, Angela Binda, John Sasso, Lt. Jones, Linda Snow Dockser, Chris Cridler, Karen Janowski, Matt Abrahams

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Caitlin Nocella

Topics of Discussion:

Bacci called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Haley moved to go into Executive Session under purpose 1 to discuss and potentially respond to an Open Meeting Law Complaint filed by Daniel Dewar, dated May 17, 2024, to invite Ivria Fried and Emily Meehan from Town Counsel's office, Town Manager Matt Kraunelis and Executive Assistant Caitlin Nocella and resident Mark Delaney, into the Executive Session and to return to Open Session to continue discussion on this topic and to continue on with the rest of the meeting. The motion was seconded by Dockser.

The board had the following discussion about the motion. Herrick asked why Delaney is being invited into the board's private executive session and asked if they are even allowed to do that.

Counsel Ivria Fried explained legally, they can invite whoever they want into executive session, however, it is atypical. She also explained if they invite a resident into executive session, attorney client privilege will not apply, and the minutes will be public.

Herrick then suggested doing this in open session then if the minutes will be public anyway there is no point in going into executive session.

Bacci noted he invited Delaney to attend because the open meeting law complaint directly references him, and he thought it would be helpful to have his side of the story.

Herrick noted the board has never invited residents into executive session before and asked why are we starting now.

The board took a vote on the motion to go into executive session with Delaney and the motion passed with the following roll call vote: Dockser - no; Murphy - yes; Haley - yes; Herrick - abstained; Bacci - yes.

The board returned to open session at 8:16 PM.

Public Comment

John Lippitt feels Bacci and Haley are making this political by attacking Dockser and now Herrick.

Cathy Zeek is asking the Select Board to fix the water and sewer billing rates for multifamily buildings.

Angela Binda feels Haley needs to apologize to Dockser for accusing him of blackmail.

John Sasso noted his letter to the editor was affected by the recent time stamp manipulation accusations on the Reading Post. He noted it seems to be only certain letters being affected and the Select Board should look into this.

Liaison Reports

Herrick attended the Pride Celebration on Saturday, and it was wonderful. She attended Killam leadership meetings. They are expecting feedback back from the MSBA on their recent submission including justification for centralized pre-K. VASC met yesterday to start their annual renewals.

Haley wanted to make it clear he did not accuse Dockser of blackmail. He attended the Pride celebration as well and the POST 1917 ribbon cutting earlier today.

Melissa Murphy attended the Board of Health hearing for the tobacco ban and noted it was well attended. She is on VASC with Herrick, and they are getting started on interviews. She attended the POST 1917 ribbon cutting today.

Dockser noted ReCalc is meeting regularly to put together a preview of all the work they have done. They want the PBC to accept the project and as of last night they did.

Bacci attended the Board of Health hearing, and they will be voting on that at a future meeting. The financial forum was great and robust. The three major topics covered were Killam School, senior center and CPA.

Town Manager Report

Kraunelis noted he attended all the Memorial Day Celebrations and thanked all the staff and everyone who helped with that event. HE also attended the POST 1917 ribbon cutting earlier. The ribbon cutting set for the Grove Street lot is set for 1pm on the 13th. Friends and Family Day is this Saturday, come on down. Olivia Knightly, our new Town Planner started this week, and our new Assistant Town Manager Jayne Wellman is in the audience tonight. She has been with the town for 8 years now, so she is not new to the Town and we're very excited to have her in this new role.

Hearing - Safety Amendment 2024-3

Lt. Jones noted this request came through PTTTF (Parking Traffic Transportation Task Force). They are requesting to prohibit overnight parking of heavy or commercial vehicles weighing over 10,000 lbs on any public way or public parking lot between the hours of 10 PM - 6 AM. Exceptions to this regulation for commercial vehicles and equipment are only for temporary

parking for any vehicle performing emergency services, repairs, improvement to infrastructure or residential work with the approval of the Reading Police Department.

Haley moved to close the hearing regarding Traffic Amendment 2024-3. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

Haley moved to approve Amendment 2024-3 to the Traffic and Parking Regulations as presented. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

PTTTF Update

Lt. Jones then gave the board a quick update on PTTTF.

RCTV Discussion

Bacci noted this is on the agenda because it has come to his attention that The Reading Post which is owned by RCTV has been backdating certain letters to the editors so that they go to the bottom of the page. He wants to know if RCTV wants to address that or if they have any comments about the issue.

Linda Snow Dockser called a point of order noting Haley probably has interest in this because he runs his own blog/website.

Chris Cridler, chair of the RCTV Board of Directors, said he had no comment on this matter.

Karen Janowski noted her letter was one of the ones that was manipulated. She hopes the board gets to the bottom of this because it is not right.

Water and Sewer Rates

Matt Abrahams of the Abrahams group gave the board another presentation regarding water and sewer rates.

The board discussed rates and where each member would be comfortable.

Dockser suggested water 4% and sewer 3%. Bacci agreed he's close to Dockser's thoughts.

Haley noted he is not voting on this tonight. He is not happy with any of the options tonight. He still wants a pilot program for separate meters.

Herrick noted because of healthy sewer reserves, so she agrees we can go up a little less on sewer.

The board agreed to discuss the multi-family rates at a future meeting.

add in % they actually voted

Haley moved to close the hearing regarding the FY25 Water and Sewer Rates. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

Haley moved to set the FY2025 water rate at the following rates:

- **\$11.15 per 100 cubic feet with usage between 0 and 1,000 cubic feet**
- **\$12.14 per 100 cubic feet with usage between 1,001 to 2,501 cubic feet**
- **\$12.45 per 100 cubic feet with usage between 2,501 to 4,000 cubic feet**
- **\$12.97 per 100 cubic feet with usage between 4,001 and above cubic feet**
- **minimum quarterly bill of \$22.30 effective with the December 2024 billing.**

The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with the following roll call vote: Herrick - yes; Murphy - yes; Dockser - yes; Haley - no; Bacci -yes.

Haley moved to set the FY2025 sewer rate at the following rates:

- **\$10.51 per 100 cubic feet with usage between 0 and 1,000 cubic feet**
- **\$11.48 per 100 cubic feet with usage between 1,001 to 2,501 cubic feet**
- **\$11.85 per 100 cubic feet with usage between 2,501 to 4,000 cubic feet**
- **\$12.36 per 100 cubic feet with usage between 4,001 and above cubic feet**
- **minimum quarterly bill of \$21.02 effective with the December 2024 billing.**

The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with the following roll call vote: Herrick - yes; Murphy - yes; Dockser - yes; Haley - no; Bacci -yes.

Haley moved to set the FY2025 Storm Water Rate at \$60 per unit (3210 square feet) per year to be billed quarterly effective with the December 2024 billing. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

Gazebo Circle Easement

Kraunelis noted this is a housekeeping issue. This was already voted on at Town Meeting and now the board needs to vote as well.

Haley moved to grant the Gazebo Circle easement as presented. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

Boards/Committees Budget Request

The Select Board has \$20K to divvy up between the boards. The boards submitted their requests which are well in excess of \$20K. The board took a look at what they allocated last year.

Haley moved to allocate the following funds:

- **\$1,000 to Climate Advisory Committee**
- **\$6,000 to Conservation Commission**
- **\$1,500 to Historical Commission**
- **\$6,500 to Town Forest Committee**
- **\$5,000 to Trails Committee**

The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

ReCalc Update

Dockser noted they would like to extend their sunset date by 60 days. The board agreed to vote on this at their next meeting. They also asked to push off the presentation they were intending to do at the next meeting to July.

Future Agendas

The board discussed future agenda items.

Minutes

The board edited previous meeting minutes.

Haley moved to approve the meeting minutes from May 21, 2024 as amended. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

Haley moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:07 AM. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

