

Board of Selectmen
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 14, 2021, 7:00 PM

Present: Chair Keyes, Selectman Arcudi, Selectman Hazard, Town Administrator

Chair Keyes called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. Chair Keyes began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

7:05 PM: Joint Meeting with Planning Board; to appoint Michael Costanza to the Hopedale Planning Board. Planning Board Committee Present: Chair Steve Chaplin, Jim Khokhar, Kaplan Hasanoglu
Chair Keyes stated that this appointment will be effective immediately. This appointment will carry until the next election cycle next May.

Chair Chaplin stated that the Planning Board has not discussed Mike Costanza's candidacy at previous planning board meetings. Mike Costanza is a long-time resident of Hopedale and Chair Chaplin feels that he would be a great addition to the Planning Board. Kaplan Hasanoglu shared Chair Chaplin's sentiments. Selectman Arcudi and Selectman Hazard stated that they encourage this appointment per the Planning Boards recommendation.

Chair Chaplin made a motion to appoint Michael Costanza to the Planning Board. Kaplan Hasanoglu seconded the motion.

Chaplin – Aye, Hasanoglu – Aye, Khokhar – Aye, Hazard – Aye, Arcudi – Aye, Keyes – Aye

Hasanoglu moved to close the Planning Board meeting. Khokhar seconded the motion.

Khokhar – Aye, Hasanoglu – Aye, Chaplin – Aye

7:15 PM: Meeting with Guardian Energy, Address Submittal of Green Communities Designation Grant to DOER (vote)

Town Administrator Schindler stated that the certification materials for the Green Communities application are in tonight's meeting packet. Schindler stated that Patrick Mahoney from Guardian Energy is on tonight's meeting. Mahoney stated that Guardian Energy has been working with 60-70 municipalities across Massachusetts through the Green Communities Grant Program. Mahoney stated this is an excellent opportunity to increase the Town's energy efficiency while reducing the carbon footprint. Town Administrator Schindler shared to the meeting screen the projects that are going to be implemented. The projects with the quickest paybacks are through the schools (Junior/Senior & Elementary), they will be implementing weatherization and the VFD pumps. Other projects include the Library and Police Department lighting upgrades. Mahoney stated that these projects were selected because the Town was looking for the highest payback. The DOER does have certain requirements that need to be met which was included in these decisions. The DOER requires weatherization before an HVAC project can be started. Mahoney stated that in 2022, Hopedale can apply for the more competitive Green Communities grant cycle and the Town can take on more HVAC related projects now that the weatherization has been addressed.

Selectman Hazard moved to submitting the application designation as presented for the projects listed and to give the Chair authorization to sign on behalf of the Board of Selectmen. Selectman Arcudi seconded the motion.

Arcudi – Aye, Hazard – Aye, Keyes – Aye

Appointments and Resignations

Appointment of Scott Savage to the Hopedale Zoning Board of Appeals (packet)

Scott Savage spoke to the Board regarding his interest and qualification to the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Board stated that they are all excited to see what he will accomplish while on the ZBA and are impressed with Savage's background. Chair Keyes stated that this does not have to be a joint appointment with the ZBA because this is an appointed Board, unlike the Planning Board which is elected and needs a joint meeting.

Selectman Arcudi moved to appoint Scott Savage to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a three-year term effective immediately. Selectman Hazard seconded the motion.

Arcudi – Aye, Hazard – Aye, Keyes – Aye

Resignation of Ed Holland Jr. from the Hopedale Board of Assessors, effective immediately (packet)

Chair Keyes read the letter provided by Ed Holland Jr regarding his resignation. Chair Keyes stated that this is a bittersweet resignation, and that Ed Holland has done tremendous work while on the Board of Assessors. The Board agreed that they will miss his participation with the Town and thanked him for his time and efforts on the BOA.

Selectman Hazard moved to accept the resignation of Ed Holland Jr. from the Board of Assessors, effective immediately. Selectman Arcudi seconded the motion.

Hazard – Aye, Arcudi – Aye, Keyes – Aye

New Business

Vote to Support and Sign IMA & Blackstone Valley Partnership (packet); Inter-Municipal Agreement (IMA) for Local Public Health Services through the Blackstone Valley Public Health Partnership: Town of Northbridge (lead town), Blackstone, Douglas, Hopedale, Mendon, Millville, Upton, Uxbridge; *Bill Fisher, Hopedale Health Agent*

Bill Fisher stated that the Town is eligible for a shared services grant as part of a partnership called the Blackstone Valley Partnership. This is composed of 8 Towns; this partnership is to share public health services. The amount of the grant is \$277, 397, this is an annual grant for the next 3 years. Through this grant, two positions will be filled, a Regional Health Inspector and Regional Health Coordinator. The Inspector will be able to assist local inspectors on a state and local level. The coordinator will be more focused on the education side of public health. There will be an oversight committee for this partnership, this will be composed of 2 Board of Health members or staff from each town. This committee will meet quarterly. Bill Fisher stated that after 3-year commitment, they are hoping that the State will renew the funding. However, if the State does not, the Town's are not committed to exceed the 3-year term. Town Administrator Schindler confirmed with Bill Fisher that the IMA in tonight's meeting packet is a draft. Bill Fisher stated that the finalized IMA is scheduled to be provided by the end of June 2021. Due to the IMA not being finalized, a vote will not be taken tonight. The Board of Selectmen stated that they support this partnership and thanked Bill Fisher for his work regarding this. Town Administrator Schindler stated that this item will be put onto a future agenda once the IMA is finalized.

Old Business

Request to Revisit Green River Cannabis Host Community Agreement, Constant Poholek, Owner

Town Administrator Schindler provided an update regarding this agenda item. Schindler stated that there is a standing host community agreement (HCA) with the Town, the address being 54 Mellen St, Hopedale MA 01747. As is required, Poholek had applied to the ZBA for a special permit, however, Poholek was denied the special permit. After receiving word of the ZBA denial, Poholek has filed an appeal. There is a case management conference on June 22, 2021, to proceed with this case.

In the meantime, Poholek wanted to have an audience with the Board of Selectmen to revisit the possibility of relocating to the Charlesview location. Town Administrator Schindler stated that she received from the Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) the paperwork stating the Board signs off on stating the business is approved and has a clear path for permitting. Chair Keyes stated that he would prefer to postpone any hypothetical location discussion with Poholek until the appeals process with the ZBA regarding Mellen Street has concluded. Keyes stated that there is already application and construction of a retail cannabis store at Charlesview. Poholek stated that the location at Charlesview has over 40 parking spaces for customers. Green River Cannabis' business model is different than Caroline's Cannabis, which is already located on Charlesview. If Green River Cannabis were approved to be located on Charlesview, it would be more appointment only retail oriented. The software that Green River Cannabis would be using for Mellen Street is "Dutchie" this allowed consumers to preorder and pick-up orders at specific times, this will alleviate an overflow of traffic by limiting the number of consumers ordering and picking up per day (12 customers per hour/120 customers per day). Poholek requested the Boards approval to transfer the HCA to the Charlesview location and be able to open and go through the ZBA near Caroline's Cannabis or go back to Mellen Street and go by preorder/appointment only. Chair Keyes feels that regardless of the location and or business model, traffic will still be an issue. Selectman Arcudi that as a Selectmen he cannot overturn the ZBA decision or waive the HCA. Selectman Arcudi stated Green River Cannabis would have to have a public hearing regarding a change of address. Chair Keyes instructed Poholek to organize a public hearing with Town Administrator Schindler.

Review and Submit Green Communities Designation Grant Application (Vote), Ian McElwee, Associate Planner, CMRPC

Town Administrator Schindler stated that this item was discussed with Patrick Mahoney earlier during this meeting due to Ian McElwee being unable to attend, a vote it not needed again.

Town Reopening; KP Law, P.C. eUpdate - Implications of the Rescission of the State of Emergency (packet); Town's Emergency Declaration Expires June 15, 2021

Town Administrator Schindler stated that because the state of emergency expires tomorrow (June 15, 2021) Board and Committee meetings will have to be held in person. A quorum would have to be met in person, however, if the quorum is met in person, other Board/Committee members can meet via zoom. There is no longer a requirement to hold zoom meetings but if the Board/Committee chooses to do so for public attendance that is allowed. The Governor has filed legislation to extend the open meeting law to hold remote meetings and some other provisions, however, it has not passed as of yet. The Hopedale's Emergency Declaration is set up to run concurrent to the State order so there is no need for the Board of Selectmen to vote out this item. Town Administrator Schindler stated that there are requirements to have publicly accessible meetings and to have the meeting minutes available for the public.

Future Agenda Items:

Joint Meeting with COA, Carole Mullen

PFAS Litigation

ARPA

Administrator Updates

Town Administrator Schindler provided projects updates to the Board and public.

Executive Session:

Chair Keyes read the paragraph below regarding executive session.

Selectman Arcudi moved to enter executive session per the purpose that Chair Keyes read. Selectman Hazard seconded the motion.

Arcudi – Aye, Hazard – Aye, Keyes – Aye

For item # (3) To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigation position of the public body and the chair so declares, which he does. **Purpose: Collective Bargaining; Clerical, Public Works & Dispatch Units.**

Meeting Dissolved 8:40PM

Submitted by:

Lindsay Mercier

Lindsay Mercier, Executive Assistant

Adopted: _____