

Approved

**TOWN OF NEWBURY
SELECT BOARD**

MINUTES

DATE: October 12, 2021

PRESENT: **Select Board:** Chairwoman Alicia Greco; Vice Chair JR Colby; Clerk Geof Walker;
Gerry Heavey

Staff:

Tracy Blais, Town Administrator
Julie O'Brien, Executive Administrator
Martha Taylor, Town Planner
John Lucey, Police Chief

Call to Order:

At 7:00 p.m. Chairwoman Alicia Greco called the meeting to order with a salute to the flag

Motion: JR Colby moved to open the meeting seconded, G. Walker and voted unanimously

Discussion: A. Greco asked for a moment of silence in recognition of the passing of Geri Dorr

Public Comment:

Tony Mathews, Main street, asked regarding old business topic on tonight's agenda and asked if it would include citizen discussion as was done with Larkin Road. A. Greco explained this is a meeting of the Select Board and the Board will discuss these items. Mr. Matthews inquired about the plan that was presented by the COA. A. Greco confirmed only thing that was approved was the floor plan, how much space they needed, the layout has not been solidified as of yet

Jim Moran, Elm Street, Discussed Agenda format involving people talking early on in the meeting which was instituted during Covid. Feels that should now be dropped. Stated now should revert back and let the people in the audience talk and communicate with the Board. Asked why COA has not been using the original Town Hall as a space

Mike Bowling, Forest Street, asked if there would be a discussion set up so persons could get involved more. Asked if there are any plans for an open meeting for both sides to discuss. A. Greco responded when there is a Public Hearing scheduled, yes. Asked if there is a Public Hearing scheduled or do you not have enough information yet. A. Greco confirmed does not have enough information yet.

Evelyn Noyes, Byfield, stated she felt 10,000 square feet is an over build for COA Center. Stated there should have been more research done regarding the elderly the Town is providing for. Mentioned the need to determine how many elderly actually utilize the 10,000 square feet of space. Feels should hire a professional to do a study. Feels should look at social and economic groups of elderly. Feels research is important to determine the various needs of the groups. Does agree there is a need for a senior center but does not want to over build. Discussed having a structure which could be expanded upon if needed for future use.

Board and Committee Reports

Report of Chairwoman Greco:

Signed PR22-07, Julie O'Brien

Signed VW22-08, Staples

Grants, Gifts & Donations

(Chapter 44: Section 53A Grants and gifts; acceptance and expenditure)

None

Public Hearings:

None

New Business:

New Business License Approval – North Shore AAC, LLC, dba Michelle Britt-Thompson, 65 Newburyport Turnpike, Speech-Language Therapy, Evaluation, Consultation

Motion: JR Colby moved to approve the Business License seconded, G. Walker and voted unanimously

Discussion: Discussion ensued

Select Board to vote to allow Boards/Committees to go back to electronic format if they choose

Motion: JR Colby moved to allow Boards/Committees to go back to electronic format if they choose seconded, G. Walker and voted unanimously

Discussion: Discussion ensued

Old Business

COA Space Needs Assessment Discussion

A. Greco discussed was brought to her attention that seniors had concerns regarding being exposed to Covid and also exposing non-vaccinated persons in reference to the current COA Elementary School location. Expressed it was essential seniors have a facility where they feel safe. She explained the use of ARPA, American Rescue Plan, grant funds for a safer location for the Senior Center. Stated had asked the Town Administrator to look into if use of the ARPA funds in this manner was feasible.

T. Blais shared what she learned regarding how we may be able to use ARPA funds for a Senior Center for Covid related concerns and space related terms at least on a temporary basis. Expressed will still pursue permanent solution and mentioned potentially a move to Kent Way would be a temporary/short term solution, perhaps for three to five years. Explained this space would provide many of the items identified in the Expansion Committees report. Provided details of what this space offers. Would encumber approximately \$550,000 of the 2.1 million dollars allotted from ARPA funds. All indications at this time would be an allowable expenditure of the ARPA funds.

Motion: JR Colby moved to support the COA move to a safer location where more people can participate in their programming to Kent Way seconded, G. Walker. Vote: JR Colby, G. Walker, A. Greco Yes; G. Heavey abstained

Discussion: Discussion Ensued

Town Hall Building Project Discussion

A.Greco explained that a preliminary space needs analysis has been done for the Town Hall and asked the Town Administrator and Planning Director to work on finalizing the document

Motion: JR Colby move to direct the Town Administrator and Planning Director to update the Town Hall Space Needs Assessment to move to the next stage of the project seconded, G. Walker and voted unanimously

Discussion: Discussion ensued

Social Media Policy Discussion

A.Greco passed out the Social Media Policies that G. Heavey had researched and provided, to the Select Board members. Asked the Board to review and prepare to discuss at the October 26th meeting

Re-Approve 2020 Re-Precincting Newbury Draft Legal Boundary Description

Motion: G. Walker moved to approve and sign pending review by Town Counsel, the 2020 Re-Precincting Newbury Draft Legal Boundary Description as presented seconded, JR Colby and voted unanimously

Discussion: Discussion ensued

Town Administrators Report

- Received Firefighter Gear Grant award from the Commonwealth totaling \$40,000
- Received National Grid Efficiency Incentives of \$10,400, directly relate to the Police Department facility
- Civil War monument cement base has been repaired
- Tax Titles were advertised, as of today only six unpaid
- Harvest Festival at the Library October 23rd from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p .m.

Correspondence

Annual Operational Report from Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School

Thank you letter from Plumfest Charitable, Inc.

Meeting Updates

As requested by G. Heavey, Chief Lucey provided a brief Covid update. Confirmed still at 14 positive Covid cases and holding steady

A.Greco, mentioned an MMA fiscal policy committee meeting she attended. Stated she requested during the meeting that ARPA Grant money remain on the agenda continually as questions remain as to the specific use of funds

Discussed attending a District Communication Committee Meeting. Mentioned a handout was provided, Comprehensive Facilities Assessment. Asked Julie to please request copies from Brian Forget to provide to the remaining Select Board members

Explained that Brian Forget and Kyle Warne along with Finance Committee, will attend the November 9th, Select Board meeting

Review of Meeting Minutes

Draft Meeting Minutes September 28, 2021

Motion: JR Colby moved to approve the minutes seconded, G. Walker and voted unanimously

Discussion: None

Warrants:

PRVW2206

Motion: G. Walker moved to sign the Warrants seconded, JR Colby and voted unanimously

Discussion:

Executive Session:

None

Adjourn

Motion: At 7:56 p.m. G. Walker moved to adjourn seconded, JR Colby and voted unanimously

Discussion: None

Respectfully submitted,
Julie O'Brien
Executive Administrator