

**MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 12, 2021**

Chairwoman Manupelli called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. via remote participation. Participating members were Mrs. Gonzalez, Mr. Wallner, Mr. Stuto, Mr. O’Leary, and Town Administrator, Michael Gilleberto.

CALL TO ORDER OPEN SESSION

Chairwoman Manupelli called to order the open session at 7:03 p.m.

Members recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

DISCUSS TOWN ELECTION AND SIGN TOWN ELECTION WARRANT

Town Clerk Barbara Stats spoke to the board about the upcoming election. Clerk Stats requested that the board limit the voting hours once again for the Town election given the pandemic. She stated that the CDC is still cautioning about gatherings and that her objective is to keep election workers safe. Clerk Stats continued by stating that last year’s races were uncontested and voter turn-out was a record low. The Legislature has allowed vote by mail due to the pandemic and that has been extended through June 30th. Citizens are able to request a mail-in ballot and there are links and additional information on the Town Clerk webpage. Based on previous election data, they are anticipating a low turnout for this election.

Mrs. Manupelli asked Clerk Stats to clarify that proposed voting times are 12 noon to 6pm. Clerk Stats confirmed the time as it was the same as last year’s under the statute. The opportunity to set voting hours has always been allowed in the statute; the Town just did not need to use it in the past. Clerk Stats continued that the 12 noon to 6pm timeframe would allow for only one shift of election workers. Mrs. Manupelli clarified with Clerk Stats the options for voting. The 12 noon to 6pm time was reiterated as was that unrestricted mail-in ballots are available now.

Mr. Wallner commented we did it last year, let’s do it again.

Mr. O’Leary thinks hours should be expanded a bit. Start at 10am rather than noon to provide people the opportunity to vote mid-morning. People are still working from home, but traffic is picking back up. Those working do have mail-in option. Mr. O’Leary feels that a 10am start would be more reasonable and accessible.

Mrs. Gonzalez stated that she wanted to make a comment similar to Mr. O’Leary. She would like to see the hours expanded at least until 7pm. She wants to give people the opportunity to get home from work. Clerk Stats noted that once they expand the hours, then she would have to consider two groups of election workers. Their day does not end when the polls close. She chose 12 noon to 6pm for that reason. That is how it was last year and it worked very well. Mrs. Manupelli asked if the Clerk would have the same issue if hours were only extended at 10am. Clerk Stats stated that would still need two shifts of staff. Mr. O’Leary stated that he is ok with two shifts. More and more people are getting out. Clerk Stats stated that there were a total of 290 voters for the day last year. There were 238 people walking in to the polls on Election Day. This

ballot is the same as the last one, the races are not contested and there are no open seats. Mr. O’Leary stated that the ballot shouldn’t be driving our thought process in relation to accessibility to the ballot. Mrs. Manupelli said that she would be from the same frame of mind as Mr. O’Leary and Mrs. Gonzalez and that she understands Clerk Stats points. Mrs. Gonzalez would like hours extended on the other end for people working. Mr. Wallner and Mr. Stuto were fine with 12 noon to 6pm as proposed. Mr. Stuto stated that he would be fine with the expanded hours as well. Mr. O’Leary would be fine with 10-7pm.

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO SIGN THE MAY 4, 2021 TOWN ELECTION WARRANT AND TO SET THE POLLING HOURS AS 10AM TO 7PM.

MOTION BY:	MR. STUTO	
SECONDED BY:	MR. O’LEARY	
VOTED BY:	MR. STUTO	AYE
	MRS. GONZALEZ	AYE
	MR. WALLNER	AYE
	MR. O’LEARY	AYE
	MRS. MANUPELLI	AYE

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

Clerk Stats reminded the board to come in to sign the warrant.

BOARD OF REGISTRARS

Clerk Stats presented an appointment for the Board of Registrars. The vacancy is due to the passing of Gloria Mastro who was the current seat holder. The appointment would be for a full three year term to begin in April. Under the statute, the Town political party whose seat it was votes to recommend one or more registrar candidates to the Select Board for appointment. They have met and recommend Mr. Dan Greenberg to fill this seat. Mr. O’Leary stated that Democratic Town Committee recommends Mr. Greenberg.

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO APPOINT DANIEL GREENBERG AS A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF REGISTRARS FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE APRIL 1, 2024.

MOTION BY:	MR. STUTO	
SECONDED BY:	MR. O’LEARY	
VOTED BY:	MR. STUTO	GREENBERG
	MRS. GONZALEZ	GREENBERG
	MR. WALLNER	GREENBERG
	MR. O’LEARY	GREENBERG
	MRS. MANUPELLI	GREENBERG

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

APPOINTMENTS:

FACILITIES MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO APPOINT THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUAL TO THE FACILITIES MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE FOR TERM AS NOTED.

TERM

RICH MCGOWAN (SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE)

MAY 4, 2021

MOTION BY:	MR. STUTO	
SECONDED BY:	MR. O'LEARY	
VOTED BY:	MR. STUTO	RICH MCGOWAN
	MRS. GONZALEZ	RICH MCGOWAN
	MR. WALLNER	RICH MCGOWAN
	MR. O'LEARY	RICH MCGOWAN
	MRS. MANUPELLI	RICH MCGOWAN

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

TAXATION AID COMMITTEE

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO APPOINT RICHARD WALLNER AS A MEMBER OF THE TAXATION AID COMMITTEE FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE MAY 3, 2022.

MOTION BY:	MR. STUTO	
SECONDED BY:	MR. O'LEARY	
VOTED BY:	MR. STUTO	RICHARD WALLNER
	MRS. GONZALEZ	RICHARD WALLNER
	MR. WALLNER	RICHARD WALLNER
	MR. O'LEARY	RICHARD WALLNER
	MRS. MANUPELLI	RICHARD WALLNER

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

VOTE TO APPROVE USEFUL LIFE OF CAPITAL ITEMS

Mr. Gilleberto stated that there are three items from 2019 and 2020 capital improvement plans that are at longer useful life than the statute allows.

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE THAT THE MAXIMUM USEFUL LIFE OF THE DEPARTMENTAL EQUIPMENT LISTED BELOW TO BE FINANCED WITH A PORTION OF THE PROCEEDS OF THE BORROWINGS AUTHORIZED BY THE VOTES OF THE TOWN DESCRIBED BELOW IS HEREBY DETERMINED PURSUANT TO G.L. C.44, §7(1) TO BE AS FOLLOWS:

<u>PURPOSE</u>	<u>BORROWING AMOUNT</u>	<u>MAXIMUM USEFUL LIFE</u>
TAKEUCHI EXCAVATOR REPLACEMENT	\$110,000	10 YEARS
GVW DUMP TRUCK	\$200,000	10 YEARS
F350 DUMP TRUCK	\$90,000	10 YEARS

I FURTHER CERTIFY THAT THE VOTES WERE TAKEN AT A MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, THAT NO VOTE WAS TAKEN BY SECRET BALLOT, THAT A NOTICE STATING THE PLACE, DATE, TIME AND AGENDA FOR THE MEETING (WHICH AGENDA INCLUDED THE ADOPTION OF THE ABOVE VOTES) WAS FILED WITH THE TOWN CLERK AND A COPY THEREOF POSTED IN A MANNER CONSPICUOUSLY VISIBLE TO THE PUBLIC AT ALL HOURS IN OR ON THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING THAT THE OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK IS LOCATED, OR, IF APPLICABLE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH AN ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF NOTICE PRESCRIBED OR APPROVED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AS SET FORTH IN 940 CMR 29.03(2)(B), AT LEAST 48 HOURS, NOT INCLUDING SATURDAYS, SUNDAYS AND LEGAL HOLIDAYS, PRIOR TO THE TIME OF THE MEETING AND REMAINED SO POSTED AT THE TIME OF THE MEETING, THAT NO DELIBERATIONS OR DECISION IN CONNECTION WITH THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THIS VOTE WERE TAKEN IN EXECUTIVE SESSION, ALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH G.L. C.30A, §§18-25 AS AMENDED.

MOTION BY: MR. STUTO
 SECONDED BY: MR. O'LEARY
 VOTED BY: MR. STUTO AYE
 MRS. GONZALEZ AYE
 MR. WALLNER AYE
 MR. O'LEARY AYE
 MRS. MANUPELLI AYE

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

APPROVE FY2022 EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE

Mr. Gilleberto stated that there were back and forth discussions with the insurance broker, regarding renewal with Blue Cross Blue Shield. The PFA premium rate increase is limited to 5.5 percent. That rate of increase allows the Town to maintain the amount of surplus as has been generated in recent years. This was reviewed with the Insurance Advisory Committee. We can obtain the same performance by keeping the rate at 5.5%. This is good news going into FY22.

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO APPROVE THE EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE FOR FY2022 AS INDICATED IN THE ATTACHED SUMMARY:

MOTION BY: MR. STUTO
 SECONDED BY: MR. O'LEARY
 VOTED BY: MR. STUTO AYE
 MRS. GONZALEZ AYE
 MR. WALLNER AYE

MR. O'LEARY AYE
MRS. MANUPELLI AYE

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

APPROVE LEGAL BILLS

KP LAW

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO APPROVE LEGAL BILLS FOR JANUARY, 2021 IN THE AMOUNT OF **\$10,055.93** AS FOLLOWS:

KOPELMAN AND PAIGE, P.C. (GENERAL)	\$ 4,888.43
KOPEMAN AND PAIGE, P.C. (LABOR)	\$ 4,153.50
20 ELM STREET 40B PROJECT	<u>\$ 1,014.00</u>
TOTAL	\$10,055.93

MOTION BY: MR. STUTO
SECONDED BY: MR. O'LEARY
VOTED BY: MR. STUTO AYE
 MRS. GONZALEZ AYE
 MR. WALLNER AYE
 MR. O'LEARY AYE
 MRS. MANUPELLI AYE

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

PUBLIC HEARING: CHANGE OF BENEFICIAL INTEREST
HOPOTHECARY ALE'S BREWERY AND KITCHEN (FORMERLY DOS LOBOS)

7:30PM PUBLIC HEARING

Mrs. Manupelli recused herself due to a family member being employed at the establishment. The role of Chair was turned over to Mrs. Gonzalez. Mr. Gilleberto read the hearing notice.

In attendance for the applicant was Attorney John Connell, Steve Gabardi, James Dietz.

Mr. Connell addressed the Board and stated that the applicant was to add one member to their group that already has 17 sub-members. There will not be any operational changes to the restaurant, nor will there be changes to the management of the restaurant or the officers. Mr. Gilleberto stated that this request was expected. The application has been reviewed at Town Hall and everything is in order. There are a couple of items being reviewed by town inspectional departments, but should not impact this approval.

Mr. O'Leary inquired about a timeline and Mr. Connell responded that they are looking at early June. Mr. O'Leary wished the applicant good luck.

Mrs. Gonzales welcomed the applicant and wished them all the best of luck.

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO APPROVE A CHANGE OF BENEFICIAL INTEREST FOR THE COMMON VICTUALLER/ALL ALCOHOL LICENSE FOR DOS LOBOS, LLC D/B/A HOPOTHECARY ALE'S BREWERY AND KITCHEN, 303 MAIN STREET.

MOTION BY:	MR. STUTO	
SECONDED BY:	MR. O'LEARY	
VOTED BY:	MR. STUTO	AYE
	MRS. GONZALEZ	AYE
	MR. WALLNER	AYE
	MR. O'LEARY	AYE
	MRS. MANUPELLI	RECUSED

VOTE: 4-0 (UNANIMOUS)

Mrs. Gonzalez opened the floor to Public Comment. None was seen, the topic was closed.

Meeting turned back over to Ms. Manupelli at 7:36pm.

APPROVE TRASH/RECYCLING FEE FOR FY2022

Mr. Gilleberto began the follow-up to a couple of previous conversations regarding the trash fee. Adjustments are needed in order to account for the increased costs. There are impending increases to the collection fee and also to the disposal fees. Based on the current system of 2 barrels per week, 1 bulk item per week and unlimited recycling the recommendation is for a fee increase from \$68 per quarter to \$75 per quarter starting July 1st. This plan would not fully cover the cost of the increase in the first year; it would rely on some funding from the stabilization fund for solid waste. For FY23, effective July 1, 2022, the fee would increase to \$80 per quarter and that would align the Town with the actual annual cost. Then an approximate \$3 per year increase in FY24, FY25 and FY26 to match the remainder of the contract.

Mrs. Manupelli noted that there was a committee that had been researching on behalf of the Town. They have evaluated what other communities are doing and what North Reading has done in the past. What has worked and what has not.

Mr. Wallner noted a letter sent in from a citizen. It cited multiple issues, including the abuse of the 2 barrel limit, the fact that the schools and some departments are getting trash disposal at the cost of residents. It sounds like the group did a good job putting together a package. He is concerned about residual complaints from citizens. Mr. Wallner feels there should be an active campaign to address some of these issues that keep coming up. The biggest abuse he hears of is the 2 barrel limit. People are abusing that and it is a continuing problem. What are we going to do to solve this long term problem?

Mr. O'Leary - would like to hear from the committee that researched and also the Town Administrator's position. Part of the problem is not just the cost, but also the perception of fairness. Is there a way to address this?

Mr. Stuto agreed with Mr. O'Leary and Mr. Wallner. He spoke with someone who gave him a history of the issue. Based on what is seen in other communities, is there a better way? Going forward, the gradual increases should never be stopped even when we have a good year. A lot of towns do not plan for inflation. A lot of the anxiety has come from "sticker shock" when a large increase comes all at once. It's got to go up every year little by little

Mrs. Gonzalez was on the researching committee with Mr. Clark. They did a great deal of research as well as comparisons with other Towns. It was determined that we're getting a good deal. They reviewed privatized towns as well. Some towns have trash collection every other week and still pay more than North Reading. The bottom line is that we're getting a good deal. Mrs. Gonzalez would be happy to be a part of a committee to look at limits and how to handle this going forward.

Mr. Stuto mentioned a phone call from a resident that offered a good suggestion. Education for new residents on the trash procedures. New people moving into town may not know there is a limit.

Mrs. Manupelli noted that when her family moved to North Reading they put out too much trash and received a warning. She isn't aware of what neighborhoods are abusing the system and has not observed it herself. The board does know that the amount of fee we take in is not enough to pay for service. We're not the only community that is experiencing this and we were given ample warning of the changes that were coming. This is not a new topic. Mrs. Manupelli agrees with Mr. Stuto that we need to keep with cost and not do sudden market increases. Mrs. Manupelli continued that the sympathy lies with the citizens that are not in town for a portion of the year. Do we offer a waiver? How does the hauler know which houses to collect from and which to skip? That would be hard to police. There isn't an easy one size fits all solution, other than one fee fits all.

Mr. Gilleberto mentioned that the feedback from the hauler that the more significant challenge is recycling and contaminated recycling. The North Reading contract with the hauler does not subject us to additional fines that other communities are having. In planning, the town looked at the system that was there, at what worked and the value. All involved were comfortable with the recommendation put forth to the board. There has been feedback from residents with issues of not uniform enforcement. In response, the Town is planning a 2-pronged approach. 1. Education for all residents utilizing the Town website and social media pages. Hopefully that alone will help. The Town will also speak with hauler about restrictions and consistency.. Want to avoid something left at the curb if we can, but that can be what it takes. The plan is to push the message in the coming weeks. Mr. Gilleberto continued to discuss the other models for collection that are an option. There has been quite a bit of feedback that the sticker program was not a good fit. A two-tier system of family collection vs small household would require totes which are expensive.

Mr. Wallner inquired if there was anything to report on the schools and departments getting free trash? Mr. Gilleberto stated that he couldn't speak for how the program was initially set up. The history of the program has been to set the fee at the total cost. By not increasing the fee, the general fund has absorbed the difference after the first year. The town does not send bills to

departments. There has been a subsidy that is occurring in the form of the general fund after the first year. That would not be the case with the funding schedule presented.

Mr. O'Leary asked that Mr. Gilleberto address some of the comments made. Mr. O'Leary stated that the schools, Town Hall, Parks and Recreation, we all own that. It's just a shell game. These are the operations of the community. It would be subsidized through taxes or through the rates. Town departments should not be charged. Mr. O'Leary is not aware of anyone who gets a cut rate on the trash fees. Some people opt out when they can prove the use of a private hauling service. Mr. Gilleberto interjected that the community has two tiers, residents who are charged for the use of the services and those who have an alternative collection in place. Mr. Mark Clark did comment that one additional group that receives an alternative rate. If people qualify for a real estate exemption there are given a 50% trash rate reduction. People apply for the exemption. When they qualify, the Assessor's office sends the DPW a list. Applicants have to apply annually for the exemption on their real estate; the rules automatically give them the exemption on trash.

Mrs. Manupelli asked does any other community charge for the hauling of the school or municipal trash? Mr. Clark responded that he does not know of any community that does this. Mrs. Gonzalez commented that in the privatized communities, the school would have its own bill. Mr. Clark did note that the schools do get a bill for special collection (i.e. disposal of piano).

Mr. Daniel Greenberg from the Recycling Committee spoke. Every pound of solid waste that is moved from the barrel to recycling, saves the town money because you do not pay a tipping fee. There are a number of issues at play. The contract with JRM - how do you add up the cost of solid waste and distribute to residents? There is also the issue of enforcement. The committee that negotiated with JRM did a terrific job. Mr. Greenberg feels it is a great deal and he fully supports it. Once you determine the cost between JRM and Covanta, it becomes a question of budgeting. The resident letter brought up points that need to be investigated. The Recycling Committee intends to investigate at their next meetings. How do you equitably share the cost of solid waste among residents. We need to look into pay as you throw. 43% towns in MA do pay as you throw. In general, this program tends to move approximately 30% from waste to recycling. Cost to the town goes down by a large percent. Mr. Greenberg would like the town to keep an open mind on pay as you throw. The motion should be passed, but we have a lot of work to do to make removal of solid waste in North Reading a more equitable program. People who use it the most should pay most and people who use it the least should pay the least.

Mr. Tony LoRe - 21 Strawberry Lane - The current system isn't working and the numbers show that. In 2013 there was a 3 barrel limit and in 2014 we went to a 2 barrel limit. Between 2013 and 2016 our total trash quantity went down 12%, about 450 tons. Between 2017-2019 trash has gone up 9%. There was enforcement and the town has got away from that. Mr. LoRe requested to share photos. Mrs. Manupelli commented that she did not feel the photos were a good idea without prior review. She would like to hear from the committee about the costs and what that is related to. The board was presented with the reasoning for the increase being the cost of the recycling program. Mrs. Manupelli asked if the costs were increasing due to people throwing away 3 barrels rather than 2. She asked for input from the committee. Mr. Greenberg responded that a tremendous amount of the increase is because China will no longer take contaminated

recycling. Mr. Greenberg continued that the interesting thing about the JRM contract is they are not imposing additional cost for contaminated recycling. This is unusual in the current contractual environment. The team has negotiated a fantastic deal. It's a great contract. .

Mr. Stuto stated that he feels we should look at alternatives. There will always be outside factors, much bigger than North Reading, Massachusetts or even the United States. We need to take that into account. Mr. Stuto would like a study reflecting if we had 100% compliance with the 2 barrel, how much would costs go up or down. That is an important thing to know for the conversation. A lot of the cost increases that are coming have little to do with North Reading. A lot is outside our control right now. Mrs. Manupelli commented that in previous contracts, JRM used to make money off recycling and now they are losing money. Now it is costing them money and they are going to the various cities and towns. Mrs. Manupelli agrees that the committee has done a lot of work investigating and researching this issue.

Mr. Gilleberto commented that the per ton rate for disposal is going up substantially July 1, 2021. This is not unique to North Reading. A number of communities in our region are subject to these increases. The volume is variable. Over the past 14 months there has been an uptick in disposal. People have been home and increasing their disposal. The DPW has been working on ways to remind folks of the restrictions. That could drive costs down from projections. The biggest single driver of the costs is the contract rate going up.

Mr. O'Leary stated that, in relation to the proposal before us tonight, we need to act on it. It's a reasonable approach but it is also important to revisit how we are operating. Pay as you throw is something that should be looked at and considered. We should be able to take the best practices from other communities using pay as you throw and determine how it would fit for North Reading. If it wouldn't work for us the public, we would need to understand why we are not looking at that option. We need some consistency in enforcement and need to do a better job educating the public. People would feel better about fairness if everyone were playing by the same rules.

Mr. Tony LoRe commented on town wide obligations and the municipal properties. The municipal collection should come out of the general fund. Those receiving the 50% discount should also be absorbed by the general fund. It shouldn't be put on the backs of those paying the trash fee. Special collections and DPW staff costs for special collections, shouldn't be something that is borne by a subset of residents. By my estimate \$150,000-\$200,000 should come out of general fund then you calculate the trash fee.

Mr. Wallner stated that he agreed with Mr. Greenberg's comments. The contract is a good contract and the pricing is right. Mr. Wallner also invited Mr. LoRe to join the Recycling Committee given his knowledge on the situation. Your letter did a good job of articulating the issues. Mr. LoRe responded that he was on the Recycling Committee in 1990-2004 and he left when the board went to a flat fee without consulting the committee. Mr. Wallner stated that he can't speak for then, but it is people who care about this and that understand it that make the change. Mrs. Manupelli added we do listen to our committees, it's really important in informing our decisions as a board. Mrs. Gonzalez spoke as the liaison for Recycling Committee and feels they are very transparent. We would welcome you back.

Mr. O’Leary noted that Mr. LoRe made good points. We spoke earlier about the schools and town departments not paying a fee. Mr. LoRe is correct, those costs should be borne by the general fund. Those costs should be borne by the entire community and not just those paying the user fee. It is a legitimate point and we should be looking at to see what we can do. We should look at everyone sharing the cost of supporting municipal government. Mrs. Manupelli added that she feels we need facts; the user fee is to pay the contract for JRM. We need to compile a list and need to do research. We need to cover the cost of hauling service. Mr. O’Leary intends on supporting what is being proposed, but feels it is important to look in the short term at costs and what can be shifted appropriately. Mr. Gilleberto stated that we can look at things that have been brought up in the discussion with the Financial Planning Team. The fee will be looked at annually and can make adjustments.

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO APPROVE TRASH AND RECYCLING FEES FOR FY2022 AT \$75.00 QUARTERLY.

MOTION BY:	MR. STUTO	
SECONDED BY:	MR. O’LEARY	
VOTED BY:	MR. STUTO	AYE
	MRS. GONZALEZ	AYE
	MR. WALLNER	AYE
	MR. O’LEARY	AYE
	MRS. MANUPELLI	AYE

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

REVIEW UPDATED FY2022 REVENUE/EXPENSE PLAN

Mr. Gilleberto presented the update. He shared his screen referring to a spreadsheet from the meeting packet. It was reviewed at the Financial Planning Team meeting last week. We added FY23 and FY24, two additional years of projections. We are trying to project, for the Financial Planning Team, where we may be headed in terms of additional revenue and fixed costs. Mr. Gilleberto highlighted a couple of items for FY2022 including the motor vehicle excise number. It has been busy over the past year, but it is slowing down. We will be keeping an eye on for this year as well as upcoming fiscal years. Payments in lieu of taxes increased from \$300,000 to \$325,000 to more accurately reflect what collections are. Updates have been made to the license and permitting software. There has been lots of discussion around investment income. Mr. Gilleberto was called away and not present for those discussion at the last Financial Planning Team meeting.

Mr. O’Leary inquired about the in lieu of taxes and the \$100,000 increase. Where would it be coming from? Mr. Gilleberto responded that it was based on trends. The source is not new. An example cited was the RMLD agreement with the DPW. That number has increased. The projection was updated to reflect that.

Mr. O'Leary continued in relation to the solar panels for the roof of the schools, Where in budget is that reflected? Mr. Gilleberto answered that it was reflected as school revenue in their budget.

Mr. Gilleberto continued that there were no changes in other financing sources. We are aware there is additional revenue out there through the American Rescue Plan Act, but the town is not forecasting the use of those funds as part of the FY 2022 budget. There is a substantial amount of funding that is earmarked for the town of North Reading. We are expecting guidance from the Treasury Department in the coming weeks.

Mr. Gilleberto continued that there were some updates regarding the assessment for regional schools and for a debt service non-exempt. There was an additional notification from Northeast Tech regarding their school building project. They are at a stage where they are looking to advance the project forward. It has not yet been discussed with the Financial Planning Team. There will be more discussion.

Mr. Gilleberto continued that the debt service number has been adjusted and we may be looking at long-term borrowing. That number may need to be further adjusted. The snow and ice deficit is projected to end around \$325,000. We do not have the final bills in yet. We will look to free cash if needed to balance. There is an increase in municipal and school general liability insurance. For school and municipal health insurance, the board voted on a 5.5% increase. This is seen as savings from the budgeting number of 7.5%. This is favorable for us. In terms of allocation, we are utilizing percentages from last fiscal year. There is a projected deficit of \$431,000 for the municipal operations and \$494,000 for school department operations. The adjustment in the trash fee will help offset some of the shortfall. The School Committee is participating in a budget workshop. Town Administrator and Finance Director will recommend steps to balance the municipal budget at a meeting in two weeks. There is work to be done. There has been a good amount of progress. We hope to be balanced or close to by the April 26th meeting.

Mr. O'Leary inquired about federal funding sources that are listed as zeros. What has the discussion been at the Financial Planning Team level? It is Mr. O'Leary's understanding that if you don't use the funds for operating it may not be available in a year or two. It seems we can offset some of the salary and other costs incurred due to the pandemic from the general operating budget. It is not recurring revenue. What has the discussion been and what's the philosophy on the use of those funds. Mrs. Manupelli responded that we are waiting for guidance on its use. Mr. Gilleberto confirmed that is accurate. One of the uses is revenue replacement. We need treasury department guidance. Mrs. Manupelli stated that it seems to be more general, less restriction than the previous infusion of funds. Potential uses for maybe capital acquisitions, capital projects, water/sewer. Guidance has not come out yet. If you don't use it, it goes back to the treasury. Mr. Gilleberto stated that guidance was expected the 2nd week of May, but hopeful for sooner.

Mrs. Hurlbut, a representative of the Financial Planning Team, and Finance Committee spoke. The general consensus on the funds is a one-time occurrence. The types of things we should be using money for is seed money for projects that partial funding from another source for example state funding like the Park Street bridge project. Mrs. Manupelli noted that the issue with the

funding is there is a first infusion in six months another at twelve month. Mrs. Hurlbut clarified her point that this money should be used for long lasting one time things rather than recurring expenses.

REVIEW DRAFT WARRANT – JUNE, 2021 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Mr. Gilleberto presented and noted that he would focus on articles that are non-financial in nature.

The draft warrant is for the Spring Annual Town Meeting to be held on Saturday morning June 5, 2021 at 9am at 189 Park Street outdoor on the Turf Field.

Article 15 - Establishment of a cell town reserve fund. This is recommended by the State Department of Revenue. Mr. Gilleberto noted that he is working with Town Counsel on this article. This was flagged as something to be looked at by the DOR. This is not new; it goes back to 2011. Mr. O’Leary noted that there was discussion at the start of this relationship. Where should the funds go, should it go to the general operating budget or should it go to special projects. Initially discussion was had as to reserving those funds for sidewalk expansion and maintenance. Mr. Gilleberto stated that it has annually been a general fund revenue in the budget. Mr. O’Leary inquired if the Town was anticipating a decrease in this revenue source as technology changes? Mr. Gilleberto stated that was certainly a possibility. There was one terminated lease in 2015. That didn’t materialize as a trend. He could talk to RMLD to see what they are hearing from the utilities. Ms. Manupelli noted the provision listed in the warrant, 40 13E, pertains to schools. Mr. Gilleberto acknowledged that the wrong statute could be in the draft. Ms. Manupelli asked what was flagged by the DOR for cell tower? Mr. Gilleberto responded they asked if there had been legislative approval establishing a vehicle for cell tower receipts. That prompted the town to try to work through what needs to be done. It has been 10 or 11 years and we were surprised that this was flagged. There will be more to come on that.

Article 16 - Authorize Compensation for elected officials. This was discussed on March 15th. The Town has looked into the matter since last meeting and this would encompass a change to the town’s Charter relative to being able to compensate elected boards. There would need to be a discussion on what compensation would be. There were questions in regards to eligibility of benefits. The article is drafted as a change to the Charter that would have an accompanying petition to the legislature to approve an amendment.

Mr. Stuto asked if you could approve this as the ability to do it and then at a later Town Meeting recommend compensation? Mr. Gilleberto stated that the language in the draft was modified from saying “shall” be compensated to “may” be compensated so that it would not be binding. Mrs. Manupelli asked if the board should be discussing this, it affects all 5 members directly. Mr. Gilleberto responded that he checked with Town Counsel and the forum is correct. Mr. O’Leary asked about the information regarding benefits. Mr. Gilleberto responded that municipal employees with 20 or more hours are eligible for health insurance. Elected officials eligibility is determined by the Select Board. Being paid is a key factor, not being paid is not eligible for benefits. Doing this would require a change to the Town charter. The board could attempt to restrict benefits in the language of the special act. In order to be able to contribute to the retirement system, the stipend would need to be \$5000 or greater.

Mrs. Gonzalez stated that her intention was just for the stipend, not insurance or retirement. Most towns that do this keep under \$5000 so that it does not include benefits. She has researched other communities. Most neighboring communities get a stipend. Amounts vary from Town to Town. Mrs. Manupelli noted that if the Board was looking to add an article, we should really have the details flushed out. Mrs. Gonzalez feels this is a rushed situation for the upcoming Spring Town Meeting. There is potential consideration for the next warrant.

Mr. Wallner agreed that more information is needed. Given the outdoor Town Meeting, the board prefers to get through as quickly as possible.

Mrs. Gonzalez, Mr. Stuto, Mr. Wallner and Mr. O'Leary agreed to postpone the article. Consensus is to get more information and revisit for the next town meeting.

Article 20 - Transfer funds to School District reserve fund. The article was submitted by the School Committee. They are proposing that a transfer be made and are discussing that with the Financial Planning Team. Mr. Gilleberto expects that it will be a transfer from one time funds probably from free cash to bolster the balance of that account. He will report back once a recommendation has been made.

Mr. Buckley from the School Committee added that the fund was set-up because out of district placements are very expensive. They can budget now for next year's students. A few years ago the school department had an expensive case move into town. The concern would be if you set the budget and then a high expense case moves into town, what would we do? The idea was to set up a reserve fund. There would be a vote by the School Committee and Select Board to even use the funds. The idea is to put a little in every few years to deal with unexpected expenses. Mrs. Manupelli asked about the balance. Mr. Buckley responded that it was created with \$100,000 and nothing else has been put in and nothing has been used. Schools and Select Board would have to vote to use it. Mrs. Manupelli asked about the proposed amount for the transfer. Mr. Buckley responded that the Financial Planning Team discussed this. Mr. O'Leary commented that he is in support of this idea. In the past, the school department has had someone move into town that has been unanticipated. The Financial Planning Team should establish a goal. We should just get on course to appropriate an amount each year until we reach a certain level.

Article 27 - Add School Rental Revolving Fund. This was established at last year's spring Town Meeting and needs to be incorporated into the by-law. Mrs. Manupelli asked for clarification that right now any funds the school receives from leasing does not go to the general fund. This would set up a revolving fund. Mr. Buckley is not as familiar with where the funds go right now. Mr. O'Leary commented in support. He stated that it was always the plan that the revenue from the solar panels would go to the school department. Revenue from that source would go to the schools to offset the cost of maintenance of school buildings. The Town has authorized them to lease space but have not established a fund for the revenues. More clarification is needed. Mr. Gilleberto to ask Mr. Connelly and Dr. Daly to attend the next meeting to discuss details. Article 28 is related to this article. That article would set the dollar amount for Article 27.

Articles 30-33 have involvement from the planning commission. The Town Planner, Danielle McKnight is in attendance as is a petitioner of one of the articles as well.

Article 30 - Small Cell Wireless Facilities. Town Planner, Danielle McKnight gave an update on the intent of the article. Ms. McKnight stated that the article would regulate small cell wireless on private property outside rights of way. She has been working with Town Counsel on a policy intended for the Select Board that would allow the board to regulate utility and small cell wireless installations within rights of way and part of the policy is an aesthetics policy. Another part of the policy, through the CPC, is a zoning policy. This would be the Town's only mechanism for regulating those installations on private property. It would require new applications to be made that would undergo a short and simplified site plan review by the Planning Commission. KP Law has recommended this procedure.

Mr. Gilleberto asked Mrs. McKnight to explain the reasoning for the action. Mrs. McKnight responded that small wireless are coming to communities, not North Reading yet, but we would like to be ready. RMLD encouraged an aesthetic policy. They believe interest will come to the RMLD poles on Route 28. This is based on trends and conversations. The Town of Reading has received inquiries. Mrs. McKnight should have a sample policy for the board soon. The policy is to include heights, pole diameters, distance from homes. RMLD is working to offer guidance. Mrs. Gonzalez sat in on the meeting and it was very enlightening. She is pleased that we are planning ahead.

Mr. O'Leary thanked Mrs. McKnight for being proactive. Technology is changing and it is going to have an impact on our community.

Mrs. Manupelli feels that it needs to be flushed out beyond what is currently in the warrant article. It's not quite there yet. We need to have a fee to apply, emissions standards and reports, guidance or guidelines beyond what we get from RMLD. Mrs. Manupelli would like to add a provision that if it's one of our polls or our street, we would have a licensing agreement. It is fantastic to put this on, but it needs more detail to it. Mrs. McKnight responded that policy is separate from the zoning. So anytime we make changes we do not have to go through Town Meeting. The policy itself and guidelines will be much longer. They do not have to be passed at the same time. Mrs. Manupelli asked why it would need to be a zoning bylaw rather than just a regular bylaw. Mrs. McKnight clarified that zoning bylaw governs what goes on private property. Mrs. McKnight will share the CPC policy with the Select Board.

Article 31 - Senior Overlay District (Wheeler property). This is a zoning bylaw that would create an overlay district on 3 parcels - 146, 148 and 150 Park Street. Those are currently zoned local business. This zoning overlay would add to the uses allowed in the underlying local business and would enable age restricted multi-family housing with an affordability component required. Mr. Wheeler and his team have been working with the CPC and has done some workshop discussions. They have proposed zoning that would enable a maximum of 50 units on the total site with 8 units being affordable. The CPC decided to sponsor the article at Town Meeting. The applicant also met with the Historic District Commission. The plan would be for condominiums with the historic building remaining onsite. We would lose Lew's Automotive and a steel products company. Mrs. McKnight described the site. Plans would not disturb the site any

further. The project would need a site review and a special permit that this bylaw would provide. This project was developed and bylaw written tailored to this project.

Mrs. Manupelli noted that the developer did come to a board meeting to discuss. She feels that the Board was left with some questions and the expectation was that they were to receive additional information. The Board was looking for more detail than what they saw. There were also questions with the proximity to Ipswich River.

Mr. Stuto asked what the environmental impact would be and would it be appropriate to put some sort of restrictions under the dimensional design regulations? The environmental impact has not been discussed at this point in CPC.

Mrs. Manupelli interjected that the topic is supposed to be a review of warrant articles but the discussion is veering off to environmental impacts and a specific development. This topic should be discussed at a meeting when the topic is posted. It should put on another agenda for further follow-up. It seems like there are a lot of unanswered questions.

Mr. O'Leary asked what are the plans of the Planning Commission to expand senior housing overlay districts? It's spot zoning. It's specific to a proposal that is being put forth. Why wouldn't we be looking broader, looking at more locations to consider? This bylaw is specific to 3 parcels and just one project. Mrs. McKnight responded that it is possible to put additional parcels into this overlay. She does not know how large an area we would want or need it to be. We have other plans for senior housing in town. The CPC has not identified any other properties that it would look at for senior housing. There are provisions in bylaw that would require close proximity to certain facilities. There are lots of locations around town center where it could be possible to expand this district. The CPC would be open to discussion about expanding further. Mr. O'Leary explained that his apprehension is due to it being project specific rather than global thinking. What are we looking to do and where do we want it to happen? This is so specific to a proposal rather than the other way around. Mrs. McKnight acknowledged that it was not identified as a site previously, it just was not thought of. It is not in the Housing Production Plan.

Mrs. Manupelli also had concerns with a developer identifying areas. We have a need for senior housing, but affordable senior housing. It wasn't incorporated into the plan probably because it's right on the river. That a concern we should delve into more deeply. How did CPC arrive at 15% for the affordable units. Mrs. McKnight stated that initially there were no affordable units. The CPC requested that the developer add affordable units. The 15% is the max that is financially feasible for the scale of the project.

Stephen Valenti - 6 Hayward Farms - A member of DIRC, Mr. Valenti thanked the Board for the transparency. This project is close to the river. Will there be more studies done on the environmental impact? Or will there be checks and balances with the sewage treatment? Who's watching that? Mrs. Manupelli responded that these details are important to get some more information from the developer. Ms. McKnight added that the CPC has met with the developer 5 times. Mrs. McKnight shared her screen to show the site plan and location of the septic system in

relation to the wetland line. It would be a septic system and not a treatment facility. It would go through Board of Health permitting and not DEP.

Mr. Chris Latham, attorney for the applicant. Mr. Latham mentioned that members of the team were in attendance. To address whether this is spot zoning, it consists of three separate lots and is consistent with the Master Plan and the Housing Production Plan. Mentioned in the plan were locations for cluster housing or mixed use and references the historic town center. There is a public need for senior housing and this is consistent with the master plan. The development is outside of the riverfront. Massachusetts law offers a zone of protection on either side of the river. The septic system as proposed is 405 feet away from the riverfront. Mrs. Manupelli commented that the topic is not posted on the agenda. The conversation is a review of warrant articles. Mr. Latham clarified that the property is now all under one owner but is 3 separate tax parcels. Mrs. Manupelli asked the board to concur that we need to hear back from the applicant at a future meeting. Mr. O'Leary to Mrs. McKnight and the Planning Commission; if we rezone for this purpose, and doesn't turn out to be economically feasible, what does it do if property lies dormant in a new district? Mrs. McKnight responded that the property would still be eligible for general business zoning. That does not change, this zoning is added. The local business underlying zoning remains. Mrs. Manupelli would like to put this item on the agenda for a future meeting.

Article 32 - Citizen Petition for Concord Street. Mr. Coviello is the sponsor. When he purchased the property, he proposed that it be used for his electric business. The parcel would need to be rezoned.

Article 33 - if article 32 passes this would be a map update.

Mr. Wallner asked a question about article 25. He was surprised to see it on the warrant. Ms. Manupelli responded that we always have it at every Town Meeting. If it is not needed it will be passed over.

Mrs. Manupelli commented with a suggestion regarding the extra funds anticipated. It seems we may not have a lot of time to spend. Do we need some sort of pre-authorization to spend it? Would we be left to a Special Town Meeting to appropriate the funds? Mrs. Manupelli would like to consider an article for this purpose. If you don't use the money you lose it. We should have a plan, a placeholder warrant article. Mr. O'Leary you can't use some of this money towards debt service, so it will have to be used for capital outlay. We could use some for payroll and that would free up cash for one time capital outlays. For the most part our revenues have still been consistent and we've been fortunate. It should be used for projects that need a one-time infusion of funds because the money will not be there later.

AMERICAN ARBITRATION ASSOCIATION

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF A \$325.00 FOR INVOICE #01-21-0002-1457-2-LC DATED MARCH 14, 2021 TO AMERICAN ARBITRATION ASSOCIATION.

MOTION BY: MR. STUTO
SECONDED BY: MR. O'LEARY
VOTED BY: MR. STUTO AYE
MRS. GONZALEZ AYE
MR. WALLNER AYE
MR. O'LEARY AYE
MRS. MANUPELLI AYE

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

MINUTES

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO APPROVE THE **DECEMBER 21, 2020** EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

MOTION BY: MR. STUTO
SECONDED BY: MR. O'LEARY
VOTED BY: MR. STUTO AYE
MRS. GONZALEZ AYE
MR. WALLNER AYE
MR. O'LEARY AYE
MRS. MANUPELLI AYE

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO APPROVE THE **JANUARY 11, 2021** REGULAR SESSION MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

MOTION BY: MR. STUTO
SECONDED BY: MR. O'LEARY
VOTED BY: MR. STUTO AYE
MRS. GONZALEZ AYE
MR. WALLNER AYE
MR. O'LEARY AYE
MRS. MANUPELLI AYE

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO APPROVE THE **JANUARY 25, 2021** REGULAR SESSION MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

MOTION BY:	MR. STUTO	
SECONDED BY:	MR. O'LEARY	
VOTED BY:	MR. STUTO	AYE
	MRS. GONZALEZ	AYE
	MR. WALLNER	AYE
	MR. O'LEARY	AYE
	MRS. MANUPELLI	AYE

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO APPROVE THE **JANUARY 25, 2021** EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

MOTION BY:	MR. STUTO	
SECONDED BY:	MR. O'LEARY	
VOTED BY:	MR. STUTO	AYE
	MRS. GONZALEZ	AYE
	MR. WALLNER	AYE
	MR. O'LEARY	AYE
	MRS. MANUPELLI	AYE

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO APPROVE THE **MARCH 15, 2021** REGULAR SESSION MINUTES AS AMENDED.

MOTION BY:	MR. STUTO	
SECONDED BY:	MR. O'LEARY	
VOTED BY:	MR. STUTO	AYE
	MRS. GONZALEZ	AYE
	MR. WALLNER	AYE
	MR. O'LEARY	AYE
	MRS. MANUPELLI	AYE

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO APPROVE THE **MARCH 15, 2021** EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

MOTION BY:	MR. STUTO	
SECONDED BY:	MR. O'LEARY	
VOTED BY:	MR. STUTO	AYE
	MRS. GONZALEZ	AYE
	MR. WALLNER	AYE
	MR. O'LEARY	AYE
	MRS. MANUPELLI	AYE

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Gilleberto began by noting the yard waste drop-off center is open for the season on Saturdays 8am to 4pm. Attached is a public safety advisory from the fire department regarding the proper disposal of smoking materials. It also included updates on the department's safety and survival training, national 911 participation and NRPD grant received.

Congressman Moulten's office solicited potential community and infrastructure projects for potential federal funding. The Town Administrator submitted a series of projects for consideration including the fire department expansion and renovation, IRP maintenance and parking improvements, Turf Field, Park St bridge, Main St/Route 28 improvements, Central St sidewalks, waste water collection system or sewer. Mr. Gilleberto believes that the ability to obtain funds would be limited. Mr. Gilleberto put the projects forth to make the congressman's office aware of what the town is working on in the future.

Mr. Gilleberto also provided an update on the COVID-19 case numbers update. There were a total of 1271 cases. Monitoring number is down from 84 to 55 cases.

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Wallner: A special request from the Forest Committee. They are asking for in-person meetings as soon as we can. Zoom does not work for them. Phil Hertz, who has been working on the bike rail trail, had a meeting with Massachusetts DOT. Meeting provided sobering new information. Our neighboring towns have petitioned to work a trail together - Middleton, Peabody and North Reading. Each town has written to create regional trails. Massachusetts DOT advised to get 4 towns to agree to a plan to help the project and that is exactly what happened. The project is back on track. Mr. Gilleberto added that the town of Lynnfield has a first right of refusal to buy land just over the border in Lynnfield. This would have an impact on a bike trail connection for North Reading towards the Independence Greenway in Peabody. There are still challenges in North Reading, but would have an avenue to connect to existing trail.

Mr. O'Leary: Hillview is open. Administration working with the Commission to get someone to open the pub on a temporary basis. That would be helpful to offset the costs of maintaining the building.

Mrs. Manupelli asked about the solicitation, advertising or an RFP? Mr. Gilleberto responded that it was advertised as a one season license agreement. Q&A sessions have been conducted with four interested parties. The focus is the temporary operation of the pub, does not include function space. Mrs. Manupelli inquired about reaching out to businesses in the community. Plenty of people who could be interested. Mr. Gilleberto responded that there is quite a bit of interest even before the advertisement. The Commission focus has been on providing community amenity in the pub. Mr. Gilleberto said that we can post on North Reading website. Mrs. Manupelli feels that we should be looking at people in our own community to make it work.

Mr. Stuto: He agrees with Mr. Wallner about in-person meetings. Guidelines from the Governor come so quickly, Mr. Stuto would prefer to have a plan. The warrant article discussion took care of most of the CPC update. The Concord St article - there was a concern by some that came to the CPC, that this change would create more traffic. 5G was discussed by the Town Planner. Economic Development Committee update - there is a grant being applied for by Reading/North Reading to fund marketing, digital advertising with a peer to peer outdoor event in June. EDC wants to help businesses take advantage of reopening momentum. People are excited to get out. More updates to come.

Mrs. Gonzalez: spoke on the Housing Authority. Mrs. Gonzalez was away, so she does not have all the details. A grant has come up to share resident services coordinator with Reading. Mr. Gilleberto has not heard details yet, but did see the item on their agenda. Mrs. Gonzales and Mrs. Manupelli attended the retirement party for Deb Pothier from the Assessor's office. She had 32 years of service to the Town. It was a nice way to thank Deb for her many years of service.

Mr. O'Leary added that he heard from a member of the Hillview Commission and an update will go out applicants clarifying the pub only. The plan is for an RFP to go out in Fall for a 5 year plus 5 year option. Mr. Stuto asked about rental of the space. Mr. O'Leary responded that if there is a need for the facility the Commission can discuss. The Chairman of the Hillview Commission offered the space to the Town for use as a vaccine site. Mr. O'Leary continued and described the history of the Hillview space for the board. When considering a partnership, the objective of the commission has always been to cover the costs of maintaining the building. The overhead costs for the facility are outside of the norm for a restaurant because of the building itself.

Mr. O'Leary inquired about Mill Street. Mr. Gilleberto responded that he had a conversation with the Water Superintendent. Mr. Gilleberto will check back and see where it stands. Mr. O'Leary noted that it would be a good time to sell off the parcel given the real estate market.

ADJOURN

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO ADJOURN.

MOTION BY: MR. STUTO

SECONDED BY:	MR. O'LEARY	
VOTED BY:	MR. STUTO	AYE
	MRS. GONZALEZ	AYE
	MR. WALLNER	AYE
	MR. O'LEARY	AYE
	MRS. MANUPELLI	AYE

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

ADJOURN: 10:50 P.M.

DATE

VINCENZO STUTO, CLERK