

**MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD MEETING  
MONDAY, JANUARY 10, 2022**

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Chair Manupelli called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. via in person and remote participation. Participating members were Ms. Gonzalez, Mr. Wallner, Mr. Stuto, Mr. O'Leary, and Town Administrator, Michael Gilleberto.

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSES OF SUBSECTION 2 - TO CONDUCT STRATEGY SESSIONS IN PREPARATION FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH NON-UNION PERSONNEL OR TO CONDUCT COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SESSIONS OR CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS WITH NON-UNION PERSONNEL.

SUBSECTION 3 - TO DISCUSS STRATEGY WITH RESPECT TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND LITIGATION IF THE CHAIR DECLARES THAT AN OPEN MEETING MAY HAVE A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE POSITION OF THE TOWN (SECONDARY SCHOOL BUILDING LITIGATION; 20 ELM STREET; NORTH READING POLICE – MASS COP 456)

SUBSECTION 6 - TO CONSIDER THE PURCHASE, EXCHANGE, LEASE OR VALUE OF REAL PROPERTY IF THE CHAIR DECLARES THAT AN OPEN MEETING MAY HAVE A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE NEGOTIATING POSITION OF THE PUBLIC BODY.

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)

Members recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

**First order of business**      **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No one in attendance wanted to speak in public comment. Chair will revisit when Ms. Dymont joins meeting.

**Next order of business**      **COVID UPDATE**

The Town Administrator provided a verbal update and included a copy of the recent public message in the Select Board meeting packet. He added the Town anticipates that due to COVID-19 related staffing

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shortages experienced by JRM, extended wait times at the trash disposal facility, and the reduced number of daylight hours during the winter months, trash and recycling collection will take more than one day in the upcoming weeks. Residents are advised to leave trash and recycling curbside overnight for collection the following day. If your trash has not been collected by 2:00 p.m. the day after scheduled collection, please contact the Department of Public Works at 978-357-5260. Lastly the Board of Health will also meet on January 12<sup>th</sup> and they are also working in setting up a Covid testing facility here in North Reading at no charge to town or residents.

Mr. O'Leary echoed many of the update provided by Mr. Gilleberto and the Board of Health is doing their best to keep the public updated and safe. He also added that the state average has gone from 4,400 a day to 20K.

Mr. Stuto added that he sees a "silver lining" with the survival rate of the entire population. That it is becoming a mild disease with those that are vaccinated.

Chair Manupelli added that the vaccination is doing what it is supposed to be doing and wondered if the Town Website could add a ticker tape on its front page with Board of Health information as it seems to be difficult to navigate at this time.

Ms. Gonzales also agreed with Mr. Stuto that it is not all gloom and doom and the numbers have gone down over the last 2 years. This strain is an easier strain.

Mr. Wallner asked if there was a way to do a reverse 911 to send a positive message out to residents.

Ms. Hurlbut noted to be careful for calling it a mild disease that just because the mortality rate is low the hospital cases are very high. She warned that we don't want to play catch up on a global sense if people think it has passed the danger point.

**Next order of business      Presentation: North Reading Community Connect Program**

Chief Stats provided an update on the new North Reading Community Connect Program. He stated that this voluntary program helps the NRFD in times of emergency. This program gives the power to the community to provide information to collect and use on a response to a home. Residents can share that a residential address has special needs, pets or other risks they think the NRFD should be aware of.

Chair Manupelli asked if this program was voluntary.

Chief Stats answered yes.

Chair Manupelli asked what kind of specifications people can add, physically disabled, and special medical conditions and asked how they will protect people's information.

Chief Stats stated people can share anything they want and that the program uses bank level encryption and will not be shared.

Mr. Wallner asked if they would share the info with the NRPD.

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Chief Stats said that currently they are just adding to the new software that is under one user profile for the NRFD only. There is a possibility for adding other department profiles down the line like Water Dept.

Mr. Wallner said it would be good to set up multi-site integration. He then asked if they will check back periodically to see if the information is up to date.

Chief Stats said he can do an email blast to remind people to check their profiles for updating. So far 165 residents have signed up. He asked if the town and school committee could add to the website as well.

Ms. Gonzales asked if people can show a picture of their house so the NRFD know where go to emulate days of the fire window stickers of the past.

Chief Stats said yes you can upload pictures. He added again the info is not sold and only used by them. Please sign up and use it.

**Next order of business                      Return to PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Judy Dymont, liaison for the Northeast Metro Tech School wanted to remind all that could hopefully come out to vote on January 25 at Saint Theresa's from 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. This is a one-time deal and all the 13 towns effected will need vote to pass this incredibly important opportunity and it will be by majority vote so please know that every vote counts. It's a one-time deal and if it does not pass it will not happen.

Mr. O'Leary reminded that North Reading already supported this at town meeting and it's important for all of the Town of North Reading to attend and vote.

Ms. Hulbert asked if it was all in person voting.

Ms. Dymont said you can get an absentee ballot. Mr. Gilleberto concurred.

**Next order of business                      VOTE TO ESTABLISH PUBLIC SERVICES DIRECTOR POSITION**

Chair Manupelli reminded that this recommendation came from Mr. Wallner at the Strategic Planning meeting as it was identified that this position was allowed in the town charter and the Select Board was in full agreement that it was necessary. This person would be in charge of all human services.

Mr. Gilleberto reiterated that this was decided at the Strategic Planning meeting in November as a follow through on the commitment to the Age Friendly AARP study. This was important due to the recent turnover in Elder Services. There are four divisions in the town charter Finance Director, Public Works, Public Safety and General Government Service Director Division that cover the Clerks dept., Library, Recreation, Veterans dept. or others assigned by law.

Mr. Wallner said the town is experiencing major demographic shift and this is important going forward

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MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO ESTABLISH THE POSITION OF PUBLIC SERVICES DIRECTOR EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 14, 2022.

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)

Mr. Gilleberto said the next steps is to finalize the job description and place an Ad. They will also put an Ad out for grant writer. He hopes to fill as soon as possible. They will need additional funding and are working on that.

**Next order of business**      **LEGAL BILLS**

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO APPROVE LEGAL BILLS FOR NOVEMBER, 2021 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$16,487.65 AS FOLLOWS:

GENERAL	\$ 5,648.15
LABOR	\$ 4,243.50
20 ELM STREET	\$ 2,193.50
GIS CONSULTING (20 ELM STREET)	<u>\$4,402.50</u>
TOTAL	

MOTION BY: MR. STUTO  
SECONDED BY: MR. O'LEARY

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

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

**FURMAN GREGORY DEPTULA**

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO APPROVE INVOICE #11421 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$83,566.32 TO FURMAN GREGORY DEPTULA FOR LEGAL SERVICES FOR THE SECONDARY SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT LITIGATION.

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)

Chair wanted to make sure there are enough funds in the appropriations for this payment and Mr. Gilleberto answered yeas and he will get a balance to the Board soon.

**Next order of business      TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

Mr. Gilleberto reported that Representative Brad Jones contacted him to inform that the special legislative in regards to the cell towers and revenue received from them has been enacted and laid before the governor on the day of the meeting. He expressed his pleasure on how effective Rep. Jones has been with putting North Reading in front of the Department of Revenue and help to avoid problematic changes to the bill that was being considered by the legislature.

The State Department of Housing and Community Development has released multifamily zoning guidelines. The law, passed in 2020, requires so-called "MBTA communities" to have or adopt a multifamily zoning district that meets the state standard. While North Reading is not a community with direct MBTA service, our status as an abutter to communities with service requires that we comply with

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this law in order to continue to be eligible for many state grant funding sources, including MassWorks. The Town Planner is working with Town Counsel to determine if the zoning at Edgewood complies, however if it does not the Community Planning Commission will begin working on a zoning bylaw amendment to ensure we comply. I have attached an MMA article and guidance from KP Law.

The Fire Chief has been working to update the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan. The following link will direct you to the draft plan, which is also on the Town website:

[https://www.northreadingma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif3591/f/uploads/north\\_reading](https://www.northreadingma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif3591/f/uploads/north_reading)

In Regards to the Wastewater update is they are still meeting every few weeks and most notably they have reached the end of the procurement process for a consultant to come and help with financial modeling and projecting the growth in the community. They identified a qualified and capable firm. They are pleased however they were budgeted for \$100K and the proposal was for \$219K. They discussed some savings. The town had a buffer and can work with them around \$210K with removing the title 5 review. The community will see activity soon.

**Next order of business                      BOARD MEMEBER REPORTS**

Mr. Stuto said none

Ms. Gonzalez said none

Mr. Wallner said the Forrest Committee found a consultant near the Cape. They are planning a walk through with that person on January 21<sup>st</sup>. There is not a lot of mapping and that is something they will be working on. He is hoping to get state funding.

Mr. O'Leary enjoyed the sendoff for Mary Prenney. DPW did a wonderful job with the storm. He also sent his condolences for Mr. Neal Rooney who was a public servant and recently passed.

Chair Manupelli asked the Select Board about rescheduling the Strategic Planning meeting. A decision was not made at that time.

**Next order of business                      OLD AND NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Stuto see Board Member Report  
Ms. Gonzalez see Board Member Report  
Mr. O'Leary see Board Member Report  
Mr. Wallner see Board Member Report  
Chair Manupelli see Board Member Report

**Last order of business                      ADJOURN**

MADAM CHAIR, I MOVE TO ADJOURN.

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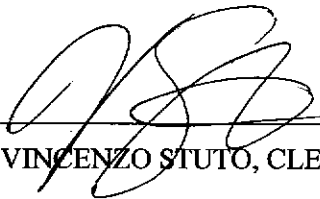
MOTION BY: MR. STUTO  
SECONDED BY: MR. O'LEARY

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

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS)

ADJOURN: 8:38 P.M.

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DATE

  
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VINCENZO STUTO, CLERK