

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

July 18, 2022

Chairman Judith L. O'Connell called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in Room 9 of the Town Hall. Present were Selectmen Gregory B. Bendel, Kevin A. Caira, Gary B. DePalma and Lilia Maselli.

Chairman O'Connell asked those present to rise and she led the pledge of allegiance.

TREASURY WARRANTS

Chairman O'Connell asked for a motion to accept the Treasury Warrants. A motion was made by Selectman DePalma, seconded by Selectman Bendel and by the affirmative vote of all, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Selectmen accept Treasury Warrants 202253, 202253WIRES, 53A, 202301, 202301WIRES, 54A, 202255, 202255WIRES, 202302, 202302WIRES & 2A

MINUTES

A motion was made by Selectman Caira, seconded by Selectman Bendel and by the affirmative vote of four with Selectman Maselli abstaining, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Selectmen approve the minutes of their meeting held June 27, 2022 and all actions taken are hereby ratified and confirmed.

WILLIAM CAVANAUGH, FIRE CHIEF, RE: TEMPORARY STAGING OF FIRE PERSONNEL DURING ROUTE 62 CULVERT CONSTRUCTION

Chairman O'Connell noted that the Town has had a closure of Route 62 in the area of the culvert, just past Elia's Country Store travelling in the easterly direction. She stated that the Police Department has been working with the Town Manager and the Department of Public Works to establish the detour. She acknowledged there are navigation routes that are longer than the straight path and of primary concern is the health and safety of residents and businesses located in the immediate area.

Chairman O'Connell stated that in discussion with the Town Manager members are aware there have been weeks of preparation leading up to the closure and the Board felt it is important to learn the Chief's specific safety plan and how the town is being covered.

Chief Cavanaugh stated that, when he became aware of the project approximately a year ago, it was made clear to the state it would be necessary to stage a piece of equipment on that side of town. He advised that Engine 4 has been located behind the Harnden Tavern and the department is making it as comfortable for the employees as possible. One officer and two fire fighters, working on an overtime basis, are assigned to cover that section of town.

Chairman O'Connell clarified that there are extra personnel hired to cover the shifts and the Chief confirmed. He advised that hiring the extra personnel on overtime is done so as not to affect the shift coverage strength at the main station.

Chief Cavanaugh provided information on how calls for assistance are being handled. He stated that today was the first day of the closure and it went as planned.

Chairman O'Connell asked Chief Cavanaugh to speak regarding mutual aid. He advised the Board of the arrangements that have been made. Abutting towns have been made aware of the road closure. He stated there will be automatic mutual aid for certain calls.

Chairman O'Connell asked Chief Cavanaugh if he believed he had adequate staffing to cover the town and he confirmed.

Town Manager Hull thanked Chief Cavanaugh and others who have been instrumental in this project including the Department of Public Works, specifically Jamie Magaldi, Town Engineer Paul Alunni, the Police Chief and members of the Police Department.

Town Manager Hull stated that the culvert replacement project is a major undertaking which impacts a major artery. Efforts will be made to encourage drivers to stay on the detour route.

Chairman O'Connell reaffirmed that the Town communicated with businesses to ensure they were aware of the project and that signage has been posted.

Chairman O'Connell asked if there were any questions or comments from the Board. Selectmen Bendel acknowledged that the road closure is an inconvenience for some residents and asked Chief Cavanaugh to describe the set up. Chief Cavanaugh advised that there is a 36 foot recreational vehicle. A trailer has been brought on site to provide restroom and shower facilities as well as the training trailer to store their gear.

Selectman Maselli stated that there is a sense of relief that there is fire equipment on the north side of the road closure. She advised there were some hiccups with trucks traversing on her street and those were corrected immediately.

JOSEPH DESMOND, POLICE CHIEF, RE: NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

Chief Desmond stated that today is the first day of the road closure and it often takes 3 to 4 days before drivers adhere to the detour. If residents have traffic concerns, he encouraged them to contact the Police Department.

Chief Desmond noted that, as members of the public are aware, there is a bear that has been spotted in Wilmington. He reminded residents that the best thing to do is leave it alone and do not attempt to approach it. Chief Desmond stated the bear is probably looking for food and will likely leave the area on its own. Residents are encouraged to remove food sources including garbage barrels and bird feeders.

Chief Desmond stated that the Police Department appreciates the Board's support at past events and this year's National Night Out is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, August 2 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. The department is encouraged by the attendance at the recent Fourth of July festivities and believe residents are looking to get out. He noted that Red Heat Tavern will be providing food. Chief Desmond advised that due to the logistics in scheduling multiple agencies, there will not be a raindate for this event.

Chairman O'Connell asked if there were any questions or comments from members of the Board. Members of the Board expressed their appreciation to the Police Chief and members of the Police Department for hosting this event. Each encouraged residents to attend as it is an opportunity to meet members of the Police and Fire Departments.

Chairman O'Connell stated that the event is important for many reasons as it is not an easy time to be a police officer.

Chairman O'Connell stated that, provided there were no objections, she would like to entertain items 6 and 7 of the agenda as Police Chief Desmond is referenced. There were no objections.

BOARD TO CONSIDER REQUEST OF JOSEPH DESMOND, POLICE CHIEF, TO AUTHORIZE SILVER WINGS PARACHUTE TEAM TO CONDUCT A DEMONSTRATION DURING NATIONAL NIGHT OUT ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 2, 2022

Town Manager Hull stated that the Director of Veterans Services had been in communication with the Police Chief regarding the prospect of having the Silver Wings Parachute Team at the National Night Out event. He stated that Chief Desmond advised him earlier in the day that, due to a scheduling conflict, the group is unable to attend.

BOARD TO CONSIDER REQUEST OF ELIZABETH LAWRENSEN, TOWN CLERK, THAT THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN VOTE TO AUTHORIZE POLICE CHIEF JOSEPH DESMOND TO ASSIGN OFFICERS AT POLLING LOCATIONS FOR THE YEAR 2022

Town Manager Hull noted that legislation passed within the past couple of months and was brought to his attention by the Town Clerk. One of the provisions requires that the Board of Selectmen authorize the appointment of officers, or delegate the responsibility to the Police Chief for the deployment of officers, during elections in September and November. Historically, the Police Chief would designate officers at each polling location. Chairman O’Connell asked if there were any questions, comments or a motion. A motion was made by Selectman Bendel, seconded by Selectman DePalma and by the affirmative vote of all, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Selectmen authorize Police Chief Joseph Desmond to assign officers at polling locations for the year 2022.

COMMUNICATIONS

Town Manager Hull reviewed his memorandum advising that Massachusetts will receive over \$500 million as part of a settlement with opioid distributors and Johnson & Johnson which manufactured and marketed opioids. The Attorney General’s Office has established an Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund which will direct proceeds to be expended on “harm reduction, treatment and prevention.” The Town was notified that, as a participant in the multi-district litigation and having executed a Massachusetts State Subdivision Agreement for Statewide Opioid Settlement, it will receive settlement proceeds estimated to total \$518,824. Town Manager Hull advised that he is convening a group including the Police Chief, Health Director, Health and Recovery Coordinator, Finance Director and a school representative to develop a plan for expenditure of these funds.

Selectman Caira suggested including the Director of Veterans’ Services and Chairman O’Connell suggested the Town Manager speak with the Elderly Services Director.

Town Manager Hull reviewed his memorandum regarding his appointment of Pennilyn Dudley to the position of Acting Treasurer/Collector. Ms. Dudley has over six years of experience in various roles within the department including Deputy Treasurer/Collector and Assistant Treasurer. In addition, her previous experience includes multiple years supporting Assessor and Collector departments in Stoneham and Reading.

In light of the recent challenges in recruiting for the Treasurer/Collector position, the Town was able to work with the exiting Treasurer/Collector, Pamela MacKenzie, to develop a plan which will assist Ms. Dudley in the rapid advancement. Ms. MacKenzie has agreed to work on a part-time basis during the transition. Ms. Dudley’s current job as Deputy Treasurer/Collector will not be filled for a period of six months. The expectation is that at the end of a six-month period, a determination will be made whether Ms. Dudley will become the permanent Treasurer/Collector or return to the role of Deputy Treasurer/Collector. Town Manager Hull advised that Ms. Dudley was not available to attend this evening’s meeting, but he would invite her to a future meeting.

Town Manager Hull reviewed his memorandum advising that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has received American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds that are being made available for specific municipal projects throughout the state. Thanks to the efforts of the state legislative delegation, the Town is receiving \$50,000 in ARPA funds to be utilized toward investigating the feasibility of sidewalks along Andover Street. The funds will be utilized for 25% design of the entire 3,200 linear foot stretch between Route 62 and Emerald Avenue. The ARPA funds will only pay for a portion of the cost for engineering services. Construction of sidewalks along Andover Street are several years away given the other sidewalk projects scheduled to occur in advance of this location.

Town Manager Hull reviewed his memorandum which provided an update on the Senior Center Building Committee. The Committee met on July 6 to review the schematic design plan and narrative for the project. Both documents are more technical in nature than previous documents reviewed by the Committee and they will be submitted to a cost estimator to develop an expected project cost which will be brought to a Special Town Meeting. At this point the feasibility study and schematic design phase are drawing to a close. Town Manager Hull advised that Mr. Morrisette, architect with Dietz and Company Architects, Inc., highlighted the description of interior finishes and the building envelope, the mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems within the building and fire protection systems. Another element of the project description to be provided to the cost estimator is the site plan narrative. Detailed specifications and drawings will be part of the bid documents which will be available to interested contractors upon advertising of the project. Town Manager Hull advised that discussion took place about various elements to be incorporated into the project scope including an emergency generator and lighting of pickleball courts. Some of the features may be considered as alternates so that the Town retains the ability to remove features if needed in an effort to keep project costs within budget. The Committee was informed that August 8 is tentatively scheduled as the date to update the Board of Selectmen on the progress of completing the schematic design.

Selectman Caira asked about the size of the administrative offices and asked if the Town was increasing staff and, if not, why the space would be wasted. He stated that when he was at the Senior Center a concern was that the woodworking shop was located in the basement and no longer accessible to use. He asked if there was space dedicated to woodworking.

Town Manager Hull stated that the Town is not hiring additional staff and stated that the buildings are designed for a measure of growth but noted the issue raised by the Director of Elderly Services is the lack of areas to have confidential meetings. Selectman Caira reviewed locations that he believes confidential meetings could be held and believes the space could be utilized in a different way. Town Manager Hull stated that he believes there is a rationale for the space and acknowledged the need to better articulate the reason.

Chairman O'Connell noted that she has discussed with the Town Manager to have both committees provide a presentation to the Board. Town Manager Hull stated that the Senior Center Committee and Town Hall / School Administration Building Committee are tentatively scheduled for August 8.

Selectman DePalma asked whether the Board will be provided with cost estimates at that time. Town Manager Hull advised that it is too early in the process.

Selectman Caira reviewed his memorandum which provided an update on the Town Hall / School Administration Building Committee. The Owners Project Manager (OPM) Dan Pallotta confirmed that a recommendation is forthcoming for UTS of Massachusetts, Inc. to perform soil borings at the Swain parking lot site. The borings are intended to identify ledge or unstable conditions in the

soils and will be performed within the building footprint and, to a limited extent, outside of the building footprint. A brief review of the floor plans for each of the three floors was followed by an extensive discussion about the exterior building form. Committee members in attendance agreed that the meeting rooms should be on the School Street side of the main building as the lower roof line would be less imposing on the neighbors across the street. They were most impressed with so-called option 7 which included 4 bays across the front of the building and a “hip” roof over the meeting rooms. The request was made for design at the next meeting to show the main building with a flat roof and another version with a sloped roof. Members believe that the design of the rear of the building remains incomplete. The latest newsletter has been published providing an update on the Town Hall / School Administration Building. Information was issued on June 24 via social media announcing the June 29 meeting and the July 13 open house and informational forum at the Town Hall. A report on the Committee’s progress and notice of the upcoming meeting was also included in the July to September issue of *Town Topics*. Town Manager Hull advised the committee that a Special Town Meeting has not yet been set but will likely be recommended for November 19th after free cash is certified but prior to the setting of the tax rate. In light of feedback from residents, it appears most appropriate to hold the meeting on a Saturday.

Town Manager Hull reviewed his memorandum providing an update on the Town Hall / School Administration Building Committee meeting held Wednesday, July 13, 2022. The OPM, Dan Pallotta, reported that test borings are planned to occur within the next couple of weeks to confirm condition and characteristics of the soils above which the building will be constructed. Mr. Pallotta reported that information from schematic design will be provided to the cost estimator in mid-August with the expectation that a building cost estimate will be provided by mid-September. Mr. Phil O’Brien, architect with Johnson Roberts Associates, reviewed the exterior building design along with the interior layout for each of the three floors. Committee members commented that the front entrance needs to be further modified to capture the prominence that should exist for the main entrance of the Town’s municipal administration building. Discussion also centered around the type of roof features including a hip roof to conceal mechanical equipment to be located on the roof or potential screening. Town Manager Hull advised that the question was also raised about whether the building should have an emergency generator and, if so, the appropriate size. Chairman Hooper noted that it may be advisable to have a generator as the large conference room could be used as a warming shelter in an emergency.

Town Manager Hull reviewed his memorandum relative to a Special Town Meeting. He advised that in an effort to honor the commitment that has been made to schedule a fall Special Town Meeting to seek funding for construction of a Senior Center building and Town Hall / School Administration building, the Board is being provided with a proposed schedule and recommendation to hold a Special Town Meeting. The Board is being asked to call for the Special Town Meeting at its August 8, 2022 meeting. Considerations influencing the date of the Special Town Meeting are certification of free cash, state elections, setting of the tax rate and feedback for holding a Saturday meeting. Town Manager Hull advised it will be his recommendation to utilize free cash to fund a portion of the estimated cost for the two building projects.

Town Manager Hull reviewed his memorandum advising the Board that the electric charging stations authorized to be located at the Town Hall and Wilmington Memorial Library parking lots were activated on June 15th. Each charging station has two charging units that can be deployed. Residents seeking to use the chargers can scan the QR code that is located on a sign affixed to the utility poles or use a mobile app such as AMPUM. The charger, which is located several feet up on the utility pole, will descend to be plugged into the vehicle. The costs of the equipment associated with the charging stations were funded through a Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection grant obtained by Reading Municipal Light Department.

Selectman Maselli asked whether the Town will receive a report that the Board can review and see if people are using the charging stations. Town Manager Hull advised that he spoke with the new General Manager and there is a report that can be made available.

Selectman Cairra asked whether the stations are pay stations or are they free. Town Manager Hull stated that the user pays.

Town Manager Hull reviewed a notice from the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) advising of service changes as North Station work begins. The MBTA will perform critical signal work as part of the North Station Terminal Area Signal System Improvement Project and the Commuter Rail Automatic Train Control Project. The Commuter Rail lines that operate out of North Station will experience some service changes this summer, affecting riders on the Newburyport/Rockport, Haverhill, Fitchburg and Lowell Commuter Rail Lines.

Town Manager Hull reviewed a memorandum from Michael Woods, DPW Director, regarding trash and recycling collection procedures. Specifically, information was provided relative to trash collection, recycling collection, disposing of TVs, monitors and white goods, disposing of bulky material, obtaining overflow bags for trash collection, ordering additional barrels and information was provided for the Household Hazardous Waste Day. Mr. Woods advised that residents are allowed to dispose of one bulky item per week at no extra cost. Bulky item collection usually happens on Tuesdays and the specific date will be given to the caller. Due to the high volume, there is a delay of approximately two weeks before the item is picked up.

Selectman Maselli asked whether MacKinnon's will continue to sell the bags where they bought Lucci's. Town Manager Hull stated that he believes they would sell the bags but he would have to confirm it. Selectman Maselli asked why the Town does not recycle every week as opposed to every other week. Town Manager Hull stated that they looked into changing to collecting recycling each week but there was a significant cost increase.

BOARD TO CONSIDER REQUEST OF JOSEPH DESMOND, POLICE CHIEF, TO AUTHORIZE SILVER WINGS PARACHUTE TEAM TO CONDUCT A DEMONSTRATION DURING NATIONAL NIGHT OUT ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 2, 2022

This agenda item was acted upon under Appointments.

BOARD TO CONSIDER REQUEST OF ELIZABETH LAWRENSEN, TOWN CLERK, THAT THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN VOTE TO AUTHORIZE POLICE CHIEF JOSEPH DESMOND TO ASSIGN OFFICERS AT POLLING LOCATIONS FOR THE YEAR 2022

This agenda item was acted upon under Appointments.

BOARD TO CONSIDER REQUEST OF JULIE BLACKLEY, COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER, READING MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPARTMENT, TO CONDUCT AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE CAR SHOW ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 14, 2022, 9:00 A.M. TO 2:00 P.M. IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE WILMINGTON FARMERS MARKET AND FURTHER TO AUTHORIZE ADVERTISING LAWN SIGNS TO BE PLACED ON THE TOWN COMMON (TWO ON EACH SIDE) FROM AUGUST 1 THROUGH AUGUST 14, 2022

Chairman O'Connell asked if there were any questions, comments or a motion from the Board. A motion was made by Selectman Cairra, seconded by Selectman Bendel and by the affirmative vote of all, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Selectmen approve the request of Reading Municipal Light Department to conduct an Electric Vehicle Car Show on Sunday, August 14, 2022 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in conjunction with the Wilmington Farmers Market and to place advertising lawn signs on the Town Common (two on each side) from August 1, 2022 through August 14, 2022.

BOARD TO CONSIDER REQUEST OF SHERI PALMISANO FOR RESIDENTS OF LUCAYA CIRCLE TO HAVE A NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2022 FROM 12:00 P.M. TO 10:00 P.M. RAINDATE: SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2022 FROM 12:00 P.M. TO 10:00 P.M.

Town Manager Hull advised the request has been made over the past few years and noted applicable town departments had no concerns with the request. A motion was made by Selectman Bendel, seconded by Selectman DePalma and by the affirmative vote of all, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Selectmen grant the request of Sheri Palmisano for residents of Lucaya Circle to have a neighborhood block party on Saturday, September 17, 2022 from 12:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., with a raindate of Sunday, September 18, 2022 from 12:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

BOARD TO CONSIDER WHETHER TO DISCONTINUE THE PUBLICATION OF QUARTERLY *TOWN TOPICS*

Town Manager Hull noted that *Town Topics* has been a long-standing feature provided to residents, first published in October 1995. Social media has taken a more prominent role in providing information to residents. The question has arisen as to whether the Board wishes to continue publishing *Town Topics*. With the use of the website, Twitter and Facebook, information is disseminated quicker than the quarterly newsletter. The Town recognizes that not everyone is connected to social media. He stated he would like the Board to begin considering the request, noting that he is not looking for a decision this evening.

Chairman O'Connell stated that when the Town Manager mentioned this topic to her, she advised to place it on the agenda to have a discussion. She understands that the newsletter has been published for many years and expressed concern for those residents who do not have access to a computer or online services or are on a fixed income and do not have a subscription to the Town Crier. Residents have the ability to contact Town Hall to ask questions. Chairman O'Connell stated that, through her occupation, she sees the newsletter posted on refrigerators indicating they use the document for information. She said when she thinks about communication, she thinks about how to reach the total population and wonders what the impact will be if publication is stopped.

Chairman O'Connell asked if there were questions or comments from the Board. Selectman Maselli opined that it will be the population that does not have access to social media that will be at a loss. She inquired whether it would be worthwhile to include a survey in the next issue. She noted there are pros to stop printing the newsletter citing the volume of paper used.

Selectman Caira stated that he is in favor of continuing to publish the newsletter and commented about the phone numbers that are included on the back page. He opined that conducting a survey is not a bad idea if residents are inclined to respond.

Selectman Bendel stated that he also would like to continue and suggested an article be included in a future issue indicating other avenues available to obtain information, including Instagram.

Selectman DePalma indicated that the newsletter was a way for residents to stay connected.

A motion was made by Chairman O’Connell, seconded by Selectman DePalma and by the affirmative vote of all, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Selectmen continue publishing the quarterly newsletter *Town Topics*.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Selectman Bendel thanked members of the Fourth of July Committee, nonprofit clubs and organizations who participated. He stated it was a fantastic event and he has received positive feedback.

Selectman Caira agreed and asked that a letter be sent to Patrick Giroux, Chairman of the Fourth of July Committee. He noted that nonprofit groups that participated fared well during the event.

NEW BUSINESS

Selectman Caira requested signage at each end of the Route 62 culvert replacement construction area to indicate the business district is open. Chief Cavanaugh indicated it would be beneficial on the Federal Street side but may not be necessary on the High Street side. A brief discussion took place regarding the location of various businesses. Board members were in agreement that the Town needed to be cognizant not to have too many signs. Chief Cavanaugh stated that it may be beneficial for a sign to be placed on the High Street side indicating to access business district, follow detour.

Chairman O’Connell noted that this evening was the deadline to provide evaluation compilation to the Town Manager. She advised that she had it with her and would provide to the Town Manager after the meeting. She thanked Board members for providing their evaluation on time and reminded them that they will not receive a copy until it is discussed in open session.

IMPORTANT DATES

Town Manager Hull reviewed important dates including:

Sundays Through

October 2 – Farmer’s Market – Town Common Parking Lot – 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

July 20 – Concert on the Common – 6:30 p.m.
Ball in the House

July 27 – Town Hall / School Administration Building Committee
Town Hall – Room 9 – 6:00 p.m.

July 27 – Concert on the Common – 6:30 p.m.
Joe Leary

July 30 – Household Hazardous Waste Day – West Intermediate School Parking Lot
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

August 2 – National Night Out – Rotary Park

August 3 – Senior Center Building Committee – Town Hall – Room 9 – 6:30 p.m.

- August 3 – Concert on the Common – 6:30 p.m. (RESCHEDULED FROM JULY 13)
Jimmy & the Jesters
- August 7 – Purple Heart Day
- August 8 – Board of Selectmen – Town Hall – Room 9 – 7:00 p.m.
- August 10 – Brush Drop-Off – Old Main Street – 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- August 11 – Library Summer Bash – Swain Green – 5:30 p.m.
- August 13 – Brush Drop-Off – Old Main Street – 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- August 27 – Last Day to Register to Vote in State Primary
Town Clerk’s Office Open 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- August 27 – Early Voting – Town Hall – Auditorium – 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- August 29-
- September 2 – Early Voting – Town Hall – Auditorium – 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- September 6 – State Primary Election – Polls Open 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

SALUTE TO SERVICE

Selectman Bendel recognized William J. Kent, III. Mr. Kent served as a Combat Engineer in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom from 2007-2008. He was awarded many awards, medals and ribbons including the Combat Action Badge, National Defense Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, and the Army Good Conduct Medal just to name a few. Will continues his service to his country and our community on the Wilmington Fire Department and assisting young veterans when they return home and discharge from the military. Mr. Kent is the epitome of what it means to be an Army Veteran.

There being no further business to come before the Board, a motion was made by Selectman DePalma, seconded by Selectman Bendel and by the affirmative vote of all, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Selectmen adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Recording Secretary