



**TOWN OF
BROOKLINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE
SELECTBOARD**

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*Minutes
Selectboard
Monday, October 19, 2020*

Selectboard members present via Zoom: Brendan Denehy, Eddie Arnold, Drew Kellner and Dana Ketchen along with Town Administrator Tad Putney.
Also present; Brian Rater, Matt Mailloux, Dennis Comeau, Bill Quigley, Rich Vertullo and Cindy LaCroix.

6:30pm Brendan opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and said we are meeting under Executive Order #2020-04 and Emergency Meeting Orders #12 and #23, which allow for remote meetings. Selectboard members all stated they were at their homes, alone in the room, and were participating remotely due to social distancing.

Public Input

None.

Approve Minutes

Dana asked for the Monday, October 5th public meeting minutes to include the percentage increase in the proposed Fire Department budget, which includes the lease payment for the new fire truck. **Eddie** asked for the same minutes to reference the straw poll vote taken by the Board regarding the pick-up truck. **Eddie moved, seconded by Dana, to approve the minutes from the Monday, October 5th meeting as amended; Roll Call Vote Yes 4-0.**

Approve Warrants for Payment

Eddie moved, seconded by Drew, to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #41 in the amount of \$78,577.46, Payroll Warrant #42 in the amount of \$63,804.18, and Police Detail in the amount of \$945; Roll Call Vote Yes 4-0.

Review and Sign MS-535

Tad explained the MS-535 document captures final figures for 2019, was prepared by the auditors, and is utilized for the tax rate setting process. **Eddie moved, seconded by Drew, to approve the MS-535 Financial Report of the Budget for the period ending December 31, 2019 as prepared; Roll Call Vote Yes 4-0.**

Review Year-to-Date Expenses and Revenues

Tad said through the end of September we were 75% of the way through the year and had spent 63% of the operating budget. He said Public Works has expended 37%, but

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that will change due to resurfacing that is happening this week. **Tad** pointed out that the Welfare budget has expended 76% of its budget, so the need for direct assistance has slowed from earlier in the year. He said year-to-date revenues have come in at 49% of the year's estimate, but that is misleading because we are expecting about \$271,000 from the state for meals and rooms tax in December. He said we also received a state aid payment of about \$46,000 this month, so the percentage will look better at the end of October. **Tad** also reviewed unexpected savings to date, which are just over \$100,000 versus unplanned expenses which are about \$42,000. He said this leaves us about \$60,000 under budget for expenses to date.

Discuss Approval of Melendy Pond Addendum to Lease - 2 Seventh Street

Drew moved, seconded by Eddie, to authorize Brendan to sign the Melendy Pond Addendum to Lease for 2 Seventh Street, allowing the transfer of the new updated lease, signed in 2019, to the new owners; Roll Call Vote Yes 4-0.

Review Annual Town Report Printing Bids

Tad said we received only one bid by the Friday deadline. He said it was from The Country Press in the amount of \$2,156.04. He said they are the printing company we have used for the past four or five years with great success. **Tad** said we ran out of reports this year, so he increased this year's printing request by two boxes. ***Eddie moved, seconded by Drew, to accept the Country Press bid in the amount of \$2,156.04 for 250 pages, and \$7.88 per page over 250; Roll Call Vote Yes 4-0.***

Review Proposed 2021 Mason Ambulance Contract

Tad said he and acting Ambulance Chief **Jan Watt** met with Town of Mason representatives to review the proposed 2021 contract. He said the contract amount is based on a five-year average of the percentage of ambulance calls to Mason. He said that percentage is now 22% and is down from 24% at this time last year. He said we have proposed a cost of \$71,536 for 2021 and they accepted the terms. ***Eddie moved, seconded by Drew, to accept the proposed 2021 contract with the Town of Mason for ambulance services provided by the Town of Brookline; Roll Call Vote Yes 4-0.***

Review General Election Schedule

Tad reviewed a draft of the general election schedule with the Board and discussed the schedule and coverage. It was noted that the role of the Selectboard members will be very similar to that of the primary.

Discuss Holding Annual Town Meeting on a Saturday

Tad said in 1999 Brookline held its annual town meeting on a Saturday and the data shows a reduced number of the total hand-vote counts at that meeting compared to meetings in years before and after 1999. **Tad** said he reached out to the Town of Hollis who has made the move to Saturday town meetings and they said that voter turn-out has increased since doing so. **Drew** and **Eddie** both said they feel the meetings would run longer if held on a Saturday. **Brendan** said he would rather not address this now since we do not know what public meetings are even going to look like in March.

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Discuss TAP-2 Project Email from Resident

Brendan said he received an email from a resident expressing concerns about the TAP-2 project on Mason Road and the effect it will have on parking on and around Potanipo Hill Road and Mason Road. **Eddie** said he has heard complaints as well, but said he does not think there is anything we can do given the progress that has already been made on this project, except make other residents aware of the communication we have received. **Drew** said there is one thing we can do to address these concerns. He suggested having a parking ban on Potanipo Hill Road per order of the Selectboard, which is fairly common in other towns. **Eddie** said he thinks that would appease a lot of residents. **Drew** said if we do pass a parking ban, the police could then ticket the offenders and perhaps cut down on the people doing it. **Rich** informed the Board that the Recreation Commission is currently evaluating the expansion of the Grove parking lot as well.

Discuss Adopted 2021-2026 Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)

Brendan said the Planning Board approved the 2021-2026 CIP at their last meeting with no changes. He said it was a good plan and he is pleased to have it available at this point for budgeting, but he has encouraged having it ready in September next year – for the start of the budgeting process. **Brendan** also noted that the CIP does not include projected staffing additions.

Preliminary 2021 Budget Reviews

Police Department – Chief Quigley proposed a 2021 operating budget of **\$947,647**, an increase of 5.5%. He also said the Police Department is seeking two warrant articles:

- Radio upgrades - proposed 2021 warrant article for **\$60,000**.
- Police union contract - proposed 2021 warrant article with the amount **TBD**.

Pest Control – Chief Quigley proposed a 2021 operating budget of **\$200**; level funded.

Recreation Commission – Rich Vertullo proposed a 2021 operating budget of **\$41,350**, an increase of 4%. He noted increased costs for portables and more frequent dumpster pick-ups. **Drew** said they are not there yet in terms of manpower, but suggested we could move toward removal of trash by the DPW in the future. **Rich** said he would certainly be on board with that. He also said he has not expended all of his 2020 recreation budget and will be returning the balance to the general fund, but the amount is not clear at this time.

Executive – Tad Putney proposed a 2021 operating budget of **\$248,375**, an increase of 2.9%. *Dana moved, seconded by Drew, to remove \$3,000 for GASB 75 analysis for retiree health insurance; Roll Call Vote Yes 4-0.* The motion reduced the proposed budget to **\$245,375**.

Cable Access Fund – Tad Putney proposed a 2021 operating budget of \$33,095, an increase of 19.1%, which is driven by the costs to wire the upstairs of the town hall for broadcasting meetings, if desired. **Tad** also noted a desire to seek a warrant article to

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change annual cable franchise funding so a portion goes to the Cable Access Fund to cover annual operating costs of channel 192 and preserve funds for future capital costs. **Drew** suggested looking into the cost of mobilized audio/video equipment for broadcasting from not only the upstairs of the town hall, but also the fire station meeting room. **Tad** will look into options for further discussion on November 16th.

Communications – **Tad Putney** proposed a 2021 operating budget of **\$125,312**, an increase of 2.8%.

Estimated Revenues

Tad reviewed year-to-date revenues through September. **Brendan** advised that we still need to be conservative given uncertainties for the coming year.

Discuss Land Use Change Tax (LUCT)

Tad said over the past 25 years the Brookline Conservation Commission has made significant progress toward its goal of acquiring 25% of the town's land. He said land purchases have largely been financed by either bonds or land use change tax (LUCT) funds, which are payments made by individuals or developers when they take land out of tax-favored "current use" status. **Tad** said in 2000 town meeting increased the portion of LUCT payments going into the town's Conservation Fund from 50% to 100%. He said prior to this, the balance had gone to the General Fund to reduce taxes. **Tad** said in 2012 a warrant article was proposed to have 100% of LUCT funds go to the General Fund, but it failed. **Tad** said Brookline's current approach of having 100% of LUCT funds put in the Conservation Fund is not rare in New Hampshire. He said according to the Department of Revenue Administration data from 2018, we are one of 57 NH towns who do this. **Tad** said it is important to note the LUCT payments can be unpredictable year to year. **Drew, Eddie** and **Brendan** stated they are not in favor of changing the current approach for a number of reasons.

Discuss Solar Committee Report and Update

Brendan updated the Board on the Solar Committee's work and said their report has been sent to the Selectboard for their review.

Mail Folder

The Board reviewed the mail folder.

Next Meeting Agenda

Tad said given the next meeting is the night before the election, he recommends moving the follow-up budget discussion items to the November 16th meeting. Members agreed.

Brendan moved, seconded by Eddie, to go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (c) reputation and immediately adjourn upon coming out of non-public session and sealing the minutes; Roll Call Vote Yes 4-0.

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Adjourned 9:10pm.

Minutes submitted by Sharon Sturtevant.

Brendan Denehy

Eddie Arnold

Drew Kellner

Dana Ketchen