

Approved: 2/22/2021

**TOWN OF WINCHENDON  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2021  
Conducted by Remote Zoom Meeting**

**Present:**

Michael Barbaro, Chair  
Rick Ward, Vice-Chair  
Amy Salter  
Barbara Anderson

Stephen Delaney, Interim Town Manager  
Linda Daigle, Executive Assistant  
Taylor Tower, Administrative Assistant

**Absent:**

Audrey LaBrie

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**List of Documents Presented at Meeting:**

- Introduction to Remote Meeting (filed)
- Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §20 (filed)
- Designation of Environmental Certifying Officer (ECO) Authorization to be Signed by Selectmen (filed)
  - Excerpt from Mass CDBG Implementation Manual Outlining the Charge of the ECO (filed)
- February Notice of Vacancies (filed)
- Annual Department Update of the Town Clerk (attached)
- Draft Letter of Support to MRPC Unified Work Planning Assistance for Feasibility Study to Connect Bike Paths (attached)
- Draft Request for Proposals for the Provision of a Food Truck Vendor at Grout Park (attached)
- Draft Amended Community Host Agreement with Toy Town Project, LLC (attached)
- Draft Town Manager Position Statement Prepared by Community Paradigm Associates (attached)
- Minutes approved:
  - Monday, January 25, 2021 Tri-Board Meeting

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*Due to Governor Bakers recent Executive Order and state of emergency declaration with the outbreak of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), this meeting was conducted remotely through Zoom Meeting. The public was notified how to join the meeting through instructions noted on the agenda.*

Chair, Michael Barbaro, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Barbaro confirmed members present and persons anticipating to speak by calling their name and asking for a response in the affirmative: Ward, yes; Anderson, yes, and Barbaro, yes. Staff members present and responding in the affirmative were Stephen Delaney, Interim Town Manager, Linda Daigle, Executive Assistant, and Taylor Tower, Administrative Assistant.

Salter joined at 6:32 p.m.

Barbaro asked each speaker this evening to please state their name before each presentation, comment or question and said that all votes would be taken by roll call.

Barbaro read the "Introduction for Remotely Conducted Open Meetings" which noted Governor Baker's recent Executive order of March 12, 2020 and outlined the guidelines and ground rules for the meeting this evening.

Barbaro advised all participants that the meeting was being recorded and cautioned screen sharing. When asked if anyone besides the Town was video or audio recording the meeting, there was no response.

1. **SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Barbaro reminded all that there is currently a winter parking ban in Town and he thanked the DPW for their countless hours spent clearing the roads with all the recent snow storms.
2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** David Watkins of 235 Mellen Road said that in his brief research on the web, it looks like the State offers a whole slew of Chapter 90 funding for repairing roads. He asked if we have really tried to utilize this funding with regard to paving equipment, such as a refund for our recently purchased hotbox or the purchase of a crack sealer. He noted that Mr. Croteau, Director of Public Works, is busy enough as is and said that other towns have a staff person devoted solely to filling out the necessary paperwork for Chapter 90 funding. Delaney noted that he had already had a number of conversations with Croteau regarding funding and that they are on top of it as best they can be. Croteau said that the Town is typically awarded about \$456,000 from Chapter 90 every year, and from what he has heard, that will be level-funded. He explained that when purchasing equipment through Chapter 90, it takes money away from paving. The DPW did apply for a hotbox, which was denied by Chapter 90. Watkins reiterated that he would like to see other staff help with making sure the Town receives every bit of funding that we can; to which Delaney responded that there has been a pretty significant email chain between Tracy Murphy, Director of Planning and Community Development, Delaney, Croteau, Police and Fire regarding grants. From what he has seen, Winchendon staff has been aggressive in pursuing whatever grants possible. Marc Dorwart of 245 Mellen Road argued the eligibility of equipment under Chapter 90, telling Croteau that he was wrong and it does not mean the Town is eligible for less funding for paving. Murphy, who is responsible for many of the grants obtained for the Town, confirmed that Croteau was correct in his assertion. Barbaro said new equipment has been purchased through capital funding.

Inanna Arthen of the Winchendon Courier asked if the Selectmen have had the opportunity to investigate any of the issues regarding the sale of the Mabardy Landfill on River Street. Barbaro replied that the Board had been notified that the property was sold, and assured Arthen that any of the rules and regulations mandated by the DEP will transfer to the new owner. The DEP monitors the site and the fill hauled in, and they control the site. Arthen asked if this includes the specific agreements with the Town, to which Barbaro answered "absolutely".

3. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:** There were none scheduled tonight.

4. **APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS:**

- 4.1. Designation of Environmental Certifying Official – Prior Town Manager, Keith Hickey, served in this position. This designation must be filled as part of the CDBG application / grant process and Mr. Delaney, Interim Town Manager, has indicated that he is willing to fill this important position. Mr. Hickey was authorized to sign grant documents and it is being requested by the Planning and Development office that the Board also consider authorizing Mr. Delaney to do the same.

**Ward moved the Board of Selectmen designate Stephen Delaney as the Environmental Certifying Official for the Town of Winchendon and to authorize the Interim Town Manager to execute any grant documents on behalf of the Board of Selectmen, seconded by Salter. With a roll call vote of Salter, aye, Anderson, aye, Ward, aye and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.**

- 4.2. Joint Water Authority Appointments - Also with the departure of Keith Hickey, the Town's representative to the JWA with the Town of Ashburnham needs to be filled. Delaney said this designation is important not only for a representative to attend the meetings, but also to represent the town in case of emergency. Ward asked if the Board could be kept informed of meetings, especially if they are on Zoom, should they want to attend.

**Ward moved the Board of Selectmen delegate Interim Town Manager Stephen Delaney as the Joint Water Authority Representative for the Town of Winchendon, seconded by Salter. With a roll call vote of Salter, aye, Anderson, aye, Ward, aye and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.**

- 4.3. Board of Selectmen Appointed Boards and Committees Vacancies – Barbaro read aloud a list of the Board of Selectmen appointed Boards and Committees vacancies, and asked anyone interested in serving to reach out to the Town Manager's Office.



5. **PERMIT/LICENSE APPLICATIONS:** There were no permits or license applications this evening.

6. **BOARDS/COMMISSIONS/COMMITTEES/DEPARTMENTS**

6.1. Department Update from Town Clerk, Wendy Stevens – Town Clerk, Wendy Stevens was before the Board to provide an annual update for her department. She said that the 2021 Town Census has been mailed and her office is starting to receive responses. Dog licenses are now available as well as election nomination papers, which will be available through March 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. Town Election is scheduled to be held May 3<sup>rd</sup>. The last day to register for the Town Election is April 13<sup>th</sup>, and the deadline to register for Annual Town Meeting to be held on May 17<sup>th</sup> is April 27<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 p.m. Stevens informed the Board that she sent out the voting machines to be serviced after the Election. With this year's budget, she purchased a new voting machine, bringing the total up to five and allowing for a spare in case of the breakdown of another machine. The Vital Records Book dated 1850 – 1900 has been sent out for preservation. The State sent a partial reimbursement in the amount of \$1,011.56 for postage used to mail out ballots for the recent Presidential Election. The Center for Tech and Civil Life (CTCL) sent a \$5,000 grant that was spent on additional staffing, hand sanitizer stations and trolley bags to transport PPE. She expressed that she was very grateful for that extra money that did not have to come out of her budget.

In anticipation of the upcoming Town Election, Anderson asked what precautions will be made with regard to COVID and asked if there will be mail-in voting. Stevens answered that the State is still working on that, and as of right now, any election held before March 31<sup>st</sup> will require early voting. Certainly absentee voting can be done, anyone can request to receive the ballot by mail. Anderson also asked about Town Meeting and wonders if we should be considering another alternative. Stevens said she is certainly open to any suggestions, and that the Town Meeting last fall went very smoothly. It was held in the gym with seating six feet apart. Anderson asked if there is a "plan B", saying it is always good to have one. Stevens said there is currently no "plan B" but again, she is certainly open to suggestions. Delaney said that we are starting to think about an alternative plan, but he has a hunch that the Governor's office will provide more guidance in the coming days.

Ward wanted to inform everyone that there are two three-year terms available on the Board of Selectmen, two three-year terms on the School Committee, two three-year terms and one-two year unexpired term on the Board of Health and one five-year term for the Housing Authority. The deadline is March 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. and all you need is the signature of 36 registered voters. If you really want to make a difference and help out with the Town, take out papers and run.

Barbaro thanked Stevens, telling her he is aware that she walked into this position and immediately had to face the challenges presented by COVID and make all sorts of adjustments. In voting, he said her staff did an excellent job making it as safe as possible. He thanked her again for coming to the meeting this evening and wished her the best as we continue to move forward.

7. **NEW BUSINESS:**

7.1. MRPC Unified Work Program Planning Assistance Support Letter for Feasibility Study - The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) is offering planning assistance to its member communities. Tracy Murphy, Planning and Development Director, suggested they help the Town do a feasibility study to connect the North Central Pathway to New Hampshire and points west in Massachusetts. In order for them to consider taking on this project, they need a letter requesting the work from the Board of Selectmen. Murphy informed the Board that New Hampshire has reached out to Winchendon with interest in connecting the bike paths, and they have had a few meetings already. Ward added that the Cheshire Rail Trail has a ten-year project with the objective of moving the bike trail from Keene to Fitzwilliam, and he thinks the opportunity to connect to this trail would be great. This will allow residents to ride their bikes from Winchendon to Keene. Anderson said that right now, she could ride her bike to Gardner and asked why we need to commit to this project over other important projects. Murphy answered that New Hampshire is motivated, they have funding, and there are many trail grants the Town could apply for if a feasibility study is done first. She further expanded, explaining that you will find in the Master Plan that recreation has been pushed as a new economic development driver; this could bring people into Town.



**Ward moved the Board send the draft letter to MRPC requesting assistance through the Unified Work Program to perform a feasibility study to connect the North Central Pathway to New Hampshire and points west within Massachusetts, seconded by Salter. With a roll call vote of Salter, aye, Anderson, aye, Ward, aye, and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.**

- 7.2. Request For Proposal For the Provision of a Food Truck Vendor at Grout Park – Murphy explained that in the past, the Redevelopment Authority owned this parcel of land and was responsible for the solicitation of a food truck. Now that it is owned by the Town, it has to go through a Request for Proposals (RFP). It is not a price proposal, but more so a quality proposal with transparency and an open, selective process. Delaney said that one thing that has been struggled with is the possibility of having three great vendors, how to fairly select one. Realistically, there may be two or three very qualified candidates. There is interest in coming here, and it will be a nice addition to that section of the trail. He said he is excited to see the process and will keep the Board posted on how it goes.

Ward asked to see consistent hours, noting that a long time ago, there was a vendor that was open some days and not others, making it difficult for people to know when they were going to be open. With all things being equal, he hopes to see preference given to Winchendon residents. Murphy clarified that under “terms of service”, it was specified that hours of operations will be established after the award, and it does say applicants with residency will be given priority.

**Ward moved the Board authorize the Town Manager to move forward with the Request for Proposal and selection process for the food truck vendor at Grout Park, seconded by Salter. With a roll call vote of Salter, aye, Anderson, aye, Ward, aye and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.**

Barbaro said that we had a great vendor there last year, and he is looking forward to seeing someone here again.

- 7.3. Toy Town Project LLC, d/b/a Toy Town Alternative Health Community Host Agreement Amendment - Mark Hagemeyer from Toy Town Alternative Health has requested an amendment to their Community Host Agreement due to a change in partners. Murphy explained that Mr. Hagemeyer asked her for a copy of the agreement, at which time she informed him that if Mr. Corboseiro was not a party to this venture anymore, they would need a new signatory. It is just Mark and his wife, Melissa now and they also updated their mailing address.

**Ward moved the Board approve a new revised Community Host Agreement with Toy Town Project LLC, d/b/a Toy Town Alternative Health reflecting the signatory change and authorize the Interim Town Manager to sign the document on behalf of the Town of Winchendon, seconded by Salter. With a roll call vote of Salter, aye, Anderson, aye, Ward, aye and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.**

- 7.4. Authorization for the Interim Town Manager to Sign Documents on the Board’s Behalf - Mr. Hickey had been authorized to sign documents on the behalf of the Board, but with his Departure, it is asked if the Board wishes to authorize Mr. Delaney to do so. Anderson asked to have the warrants emailed to the Board for authorization. Delaney answered that makes sense for transparency and establishing a paper trail. It is not something he can sign without authorization and this will provide a critical trail for an audit. He will look into it and at least put the warrants in the Selectman’s Dropbox.

**Ward moved the Board authorize the Interim Town Manager to sign warrants for payment of Town funds on behalf of the Selectmen if signatures are needed during the current COVID-19 Pandemic, seconded by Salter. With a roll call vote of Salter, aye, Anderson, aye, Ward, aye and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.**

- 7.5. Town Manager Search

7.5.1. Position Statement / Posting – Barbaro thanked everyone for doing the survey, and noted a Town Manager Position Statement will be made available to the public. In regard to the criteria for five years of



experience, Anderson said she is not sure that we want to limit ourselves. Barbaro said the survey results indicated that residents would like to see someone with more experience. Ward said that like any job application, while it does say we would like to see five years of experience, a motivated candidate will likely apply anyway. Anderson said she would hate to limit the pool; to which Salter said if someone without the experience believes they are qualified, they are going to apply. It is a general guideline.

**Ward moved the Board approve the Town Manager's Position Statement developed by Community Paradigm Associates as presented this evening and to post the position in recruitment for the Town's next Town Manager, seconded by Salter. With a roll call vote of Salter, aye, Anderson, aye, Ward, aye and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.**

- 7.5.2. Announcement of Screening Committee - The Board will be creating a Town Manager Screening Committee in the near future. In the past, it had been a seven member committee. Barbaro has suggested that one member be a Finance Committee member and one member be a School Committee member; with the remaining five members to consist of Winchendon citizens. The Committee will be charged with reviewing a confidential list of eight to ten qualified candidates presented by Community Paradigm Associates, and with the advice and assistance from the consultant, select and interview in Executive Session seven to nine candidates. At the completion of the initial interviews, the Committee will determine which three to four candidates should be forwarded to the Board of Selectmen as finalists. Ward agrees with the designation of a Finance Committee member, and said he would like to see the Town Moderator be involved as an elected position, with the last four positions comprising of citizens. Anderson disagreed and said she would hate to stack the committee with Town Hall employees and elected citizens. Salter agreed, saying last time the committee consisted of very knowledgeable citizens, some in HR and VP positions. She would like to keep it open to that pool. Barbaro found it understandable to keep it more citizens to give more representation. He asked to have a Finance Committee and a School Committee representative since the Town Manager will have to work closely with them. Ward asked if there is a plan if we cannot get five interested citizens; to which Barbaro and Salter said they don't anticipate that being an issue.

Barbaro asked anyone interested in serving on this committee to send an email/letter of interest noting their background and why they wish to serve on this committee to Chairman, Mike Barbaro at [mbarbaro@townofwinchendon.com](mailto:mbarbaro@townofwinchendon.com) or mail to the office of the Board of Selectmen, 109 Front St., Winchendon, Mass. The deadline to submit the letter of interest is Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup>.

Ward asked to have this publicized on Facebook and the website tomorrow and asked what the plan is if there are more than five candidates. Barbaro answered that last time, each Selectboard member sent a list of their preferred five candidates, of which the top five will be selected. He asked the Board members to have their list to him by February 18<sup>th</sup> so that he can read off the chosen candidates at the February 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

Daigle confirmed that the Board wants to see one Finance Committee representative, one School Committee representative and five citizens.

**8. OLD BUSINESS:** There was no old business this evening.

**9. INTERIM TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:**

9.1 Financial Updates; Personnel Updates; Project Updates; Miscellaneous Updates - Delaney said that this is the beginning of his third week, and he has made an effort to get to know all the staff and review each department and their operations. He's had wonderful conversations with Tom Kane, the Chair of the Finance Committee, to get ready for the budget presentation in March. Delaney attended a Zoom meeting on the Community Park with respect to getting some of those pieces together, including long-term removal of the house on the property. He noted that Murphy has a lot on her plate, with grants she is coordinating and trying to quickly bring all that together.

Barbaro noted that Town Hall will be closed for Presidents' Day on Monday, February 15<sup>th</sup>.

10. **MINUTES:**

10.1 Monday, January 25, 2021 Regular Meeting/Joint Meeting with Finance and School Committees – Ward moved the Board of Selectmen approve the minutes of Monday, January 25, 2021 as presented this evening, seconded by Salter. With a roll call vote of Salter, aye, Anderson, aye, Ward, aye and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.

11. **COMMUNICATIONS:**

12. **AGENDA ITEMS:**

13. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** There was no executive session scheduled this evening.

14. **ADJOURNMENT:** Ward moved to adjourn, seconded by Salter. With a roll call vote of Salter, aye, Anderson, aye, Ward, aye and Barbaro, aye, the meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Taylor C. Tower*

Taylor Tower  
Administrative Assistant