

**TOWN OF WINCHENDON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING AGENDA
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2021 6:30 P.M.
Town Hall, 2nd Floor Auditorium, 109 Front Street, Winchendon, Mass.**

Present – Selectmen:

Rick Ward, Vice Chair
Amy Salter
Barbara Anderson
Danielle LaPointe

Justin Sultzbach, Town Manager
Linda Daigle, Executive Assistant
Taylor Tower, Administrative Assistant
(Remote participation)

Absent –

Audrey LaBrie, Chair

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- National Grid’s Happy Hollow Road Pole Petition No. #30410032 (filed)
 - September 2, 2021 Memo from DPW Director to BOS Regarding Pole Petition (filed)
 - September 15, 2021 Abutter’s Notice (filed)
- September, 2021 Notice of Vacancies (filed)
- Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust Entertainment Permit Application and Special One Day Liquor License Application for October 2, 2021 “35th Annual Meeting Celebration” (filed)
- Harbour Restaurant Special One Day Liquor License Application for October 9, 2021 “FallFest” (filed)
- Board of Selectmen Schedule of Annual License Renewals for 2022 (attached)
- Memo from Tracy Murphy, Director of Planning & Development re: FallFest 2021 (attached)
- ARPA Funding Update (attached)
 - September 23, 2021 Memo from DPW Director to Board of Selectmen re: ARPA Funding Requests (attached)
- September 27, 2021 Memo from Town Manager to Board re: Signage Bylaw (attached)
- National Grid Grant of Easement Request for 86 Ingleside Drive (filed)
- Draft Special Town Meeting Warrant for November 8, 2021 (filed)
 - September 23, 2021 Memo from Planning Agent re: Madison Avenue (filed)
- September 27, 2021 Town Manager’s Report (attached)

Vice Chair Ward called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance. Ward announced the very tragic passing of Rick LaBrie, and asked that Town Hall and all Board members send prayers. A moment of silence was held for Mr. LaBrie.

1. SELECTMEN’S COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1.1 Halloween Trick or Treat - The Board voted in 2019 that Trick or Treat in the Town of Winchendon would always occur on Halloween Day, October 31st from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. This will be reviewed again at the Selectmen’s meeting on October 18th to determine what would be appropriate with the current COVID-19 pandemic numbers in Town.

Ward wished to shout out Michelle Comeau at To Each His Own Design for the 30th anniversary celebration held this past weekend. He thanked all those who came and supported this local business.

He also reminded all in attendance of the 108th anniversary celebration of the Beals Memorial Library to be held Saturday, October 2nd. At 10:00 a.m., a memorial bench will be dedicated in honor of Barbara LaFrennie who had devoted years of her life to the library.

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2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** This item was visited after item 9.1. Tina Santos of Mill Street came forward to express her frustration with the signage Bylaws and their enforcement.

3. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

3.1 National Grid Pole Petition No. 30410032 – Happy Hollow Rd - Ward read into record the Public Hearing notice for the Pole Petition that was mailed to abutters within three hundred feet. National Grid is looking to install one Single Owned pole on Happy Hollow Road.

Anderson moved to open the Pole Petition Public Hearing, seconded by LaPointe. With a vote of all aye, the public hearing was opened.

Matt Viera of National Grid was present on behalf of the petition. He explained they are proposing one new pole on the public right of way and four poles on private property. Referring to the map presented by National Grid, Sultzbach asked if it was not an option to just extend off existing pole P13, to which Viera answered the angle would cause significant tension and pull the other poles. A support pole on 12-51 would also not be feasible. Ward noted that DPW Director, Brian Croteau, finds the request acceptable and no concerns were heard from abutters.

Anderson moved to close the Pole Petition Public Hearing, seconded by LaPointe. With a vote of all aye, the public hearing was closed.

Anderson moved to approve the Pole Petition for one Single Owned pole on Happy Hollow Road, Plan No. 30410032 as presented this evening, seconded by LaPointe. With a vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.

4. **APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS:**

4.1 Board of Selectmen Appointed Committees and Boards List of Vacancies – Ward skimmed through an updated list of vacancies on the Boards and Committees appointed by the Selectmen. He asked if anyone is interested in serving on any of these Boards/Committees, please reach out to the Town Manager's office.

5. **PERMIT/LICENSE APPLICATIONS:**

5.1 Entertainment Permit/Special One Day Wine and Malt License – Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust 35th Annual Meeting Celebration October 2, 2021 – James Holcomb was present on behalf of his application before the Selectmen this evening for this event to be held at 106 Elmwood Drive (Captain's Farm) from 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. on October 2, 2021. He is seeking an Entertainment Permit and a Special One Day Liquor License. Alcoholic beverages will be delivered by local distributors and servers will be TIPS certified. Holcomb advised the Board they are anticipating 100 guests and there will be a tent to serve wine and beer behind the house.

Anderson moved to approve the Entertainment Permit and Special One Day Malt and Wine License for Mt. Grace Land Conservation Trust for their 35th Annual Meeting Celebration to be held on October 2, 2021 at 106 Elmwood Drive as presented this evening, seconded by LaPointe. With a vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.

5.2 Harbour Restaurant Special One Day Liquor License Application for Oct. 9, 2021 – Mark and Melissa Hagemeyer are looking to serve food and malt beverages at Fall Festival. They have been in touch with the Planning Office organizing the event. The Police Department advises all rules and regulations are followed regarding serving patrons and also advise restricting patrons from leaving the designated area set up. Servers will be TIPS certified. The second one day license is to allow the Harbour to bring in their beverages the night before if requested.

Anderson moved to approve two Special One Day Malt Licenses for October 8th and October 9, 2021 for the Harbour Restaurant for Fall Festival to be held on October 9, 2021 with the location being between the GFA and laundromat in the parking lot off of Central Street as presented this evening, seconded by LaPointe. With a vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.

5.3 Board of Selectmen License Renewal List for the Period beginning January 1, 2022 – The Selectmen were provided a schedule of licenses up for renewal in 2022. Ward noted that they will be addressing the renewals at their first meeting in

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December. Renewal paperwork for license holders will be mailed out to them soon and Department Heads will receive their copy for their part in the license renewal process.

Anderson questioned the Class II licenses and asked should one of the properties be a nuisance property for the Town, should that be addressed before December? Sultzbach responded that when the renewal paperwork is sent out, that is by design the Town's time to review it. The Board can set approval of the license aside before that issue is resolved.

6. BOARDS/COMMISSIONS/COMMITTEES/DEPARTMENTS:

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 Fall Festival Oct. 9, 2021 Update –Director of Development, Tracy Murphy, and Nicole Roberts, Land Use Coordinator were present to speak with the Board about the upcoming Fall Festival on October 9, 2021. Roberts provided the following memorandum to the Board.

Re: Fallfest 2021, COVID-19 safety measures

Please accept this memo as information regarding COVID-19 safety measures that have been put into place for the upcoming FallFest celebration being held October 9, 2021 from 10-11, pm. We respectfully request the Board's input regarding the event being held as planned.

Attached you will find correspondence from Keith Kent, Chairman of the Winchendon Board of Health outlining their recommendations for FallFest that were discussed at their September meeting. Included is an email from Mr. Kent describing their intent to provide hand sanitizing stations and masks, where they will be located and the time that they will focus on their distribution.

Also attached you will find contents of the vendor packet that includes the recommendations from the Board of Health as well as a mask placard intended to be displayed at each vendor space. The events flyer includes the message regarding suggested mask usage. (Also attached)

At this time, there are 177 vendors registered for the event. As comparison, 210 vendors were registered in 2019. Weather dependent, it appears that this year's event will mirror, if not exceed the size of previous years.

We welcome any input you have and are happy to answer any questions you may have.
Thank you.

She added that Walgreens has been working with the Board of Health Agent. They will have a table in front of their pharmacy directing attendees to the opportunity to receive a COVID-19 vaccine on the spot. There will be lots of fun activities for kids and it's shaping up to be a great day. Ward said that this is the most exciting event we have in Town and it goes above and beyond promoting Winchendon. He thanked Murphy, Roberts and all staff involved in planning this inspiring event.

7.2 ARPA Update – The Town Manager and DPW Director Brian Croteau provided the Board with an update on ARPA funding. A spreadsheet noting these expenses can be obtained by contacting the Town Manager's Office. Croteau also provided the Board with the following request.

Waste Water Treatment Plant:

The waste water treatment plant is approximately twenty years in age and is starting to experience some slow down and issues with the computer system that runs the controls for the plant. The following upgrade will install new computer control systems on both the PLC and SCADA side of the computer system for the plant. These controls are crucial for the

proper operation of the plant and making sure the water is processed according to our state and federal permit. The \$300,000 is a budgetary number with a do not exceed. With approval of the board we will work with our vendors to secure the proper pricing for the materials for this project. This project would normally be funded at the expense of the rate users. The language within ARPA allows us to use this funding offsetting the cost to our end users. I will be present at the meeting for any questions or concerns on this matter.

Water Treatment Plant:

The water treatment plant has a fiberglass tank that holds chemicals which helps to treat our water before delivery. The tank is a little over twenty years old and has failed. I have attached a picture of the tank in this letter. The tank is used by both the Town of Winchendon and the Town of Ashburnham. The cost will be split according to the current agreement between the two Towns. The total cost for the project is anticipated to be around \$30,000 with a direct cost of \$18,000 to the Town of Winchendon. The plant carries a very tight maintenance budget of \$30,000 per year for unexpected repairs. By using that account it would be empty for the remainder of the year. By allowing the use of ARPA Funding it will allow other potential issues to be addressed throughout the remainder of the year. At this time they are purchasing the necessary chemical through plastic drums which cost more to purchase because we are not buying in bulk.

Anderson confirmed capital replacements are put out to bid. Croteau discussed money-saving tactics he will utilize, such as having Town staff help with the dismantling of the tank. If needed, he will get other quotes. Salter expressed support and Ward said a big plus is that the users do not have to pay for this.

7.3 Sign Bylaws – The Town Manager provided his following memorandum regarding the Town’s Signage Bylaw.

There have been several incidents over the past year regarding signage in town, ranging from political signs, signage for events, and temporary signs for businesses. These issues stem from outdated and seemingly conflicting language in our zoning bylaws. Our regulations are a crucial tool that allows our community to govern signage in town and must be periodically reviewed and improved upon. This is not an issue of inconsistent enforcement – but rather inconsistent language.

An update is needed for many aspects of our rules and regulations, and our Planning & Development team has been working to review these documents in an effort to identify opportunities for remedies in the language. We will also coordinate with Legal Counsel to ensure all bases are covered. These regulations as currently written are monitored by our Code Enforcement Officer – a role held by Building Commissioner Geoff Newton who is graciously joining us this evening to help us kick off the discussion.

Conflicts surrounding signage in town have consistently been traced back to conflicting language which makes interpretation and implementation extremely difficult. Despite this, our staff has done an excellent job of working with the rules that we have and I commend them for their efforts. It is my recommendation that as a community we take the time to review these zoning documents and bring them to our Annual Town Meeting for review and approval from our citizens. This process would typically be steered by our Planning and Zoning Boards. The conversation this evening is intended to kick off this public discussion that will carry through next May.

LaPointe and Anderson expressed significant frustration with the enforcement of the signage bylaw and Anderson is concerned allowing a resident to assist in removing signs. Geoff Newton, Zoning Enforcement Officer, and Sultzbach explained that staff cannot be omnipresent. Newton described his priority as inspecting new construction, framing, foundations and more. He enforces signage bylaw as time allows and does the best he can. Sultzbach said that there should not be room for interpretation in these bylaws. The documents are outdated and flawed, and as a community, we can review that and remove the opportunity for multiple interpretation. He explained that revisions to this bylaw are actually the purview of the Planning Board, and appeals to decisions made regarding signs would go through the Zoning Board of Appeals.

7.4 National Grid Easement for 86 Ingleside Drive – National Grid is requesting a “Grant of Easement” pertaining to the overhead electric system at 86 Ingleside Drive. Anderson confirmed that this cost is incorporated into the grant received by the Robinson Broadhurst Foundation for the Community Park project and that there is no cost to tax payers.

Anderson moved to approve executing the “Grant of Easement” to Massachusetts Electric Co. and Verizon New England, Inc. for 86 Ingleside Drive as presented this evening, seconded by LaPointe. With a vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.

7.5 Presentation and Review of Draft Special Town Meeting Warrant – The Town Manager prepared the Special Town Meeting Warrant in draft form to review with the Board this evening. The Board will be voting to finalize the warrant at the **Tuesday, October 12th meeting at 6:00 p.m.** prior to the Finance Committee having their public hearing. They will vote their recommendations for each article at the Monday, October 18th meeting.

8. OLD BUSINESS:

9. TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT:

Financial Updates-

- a. Our team has reviewed the August year to date reports and spending is on target for FY22. We will continually monitor the budget throughout the year.
- b. Preparation for our tax rate classification is ongoing, with a hearing expected to occur following the Special Town Meeting.
- c. I met with DPW Director Croteau, representatives from Ashburnham, and Veolia last week. At our request we are reviewing capital needs for the water plant. Once a number is finalized we will be able to better plan future repairs over the next decade in an effort to minimize costs to the rate payers. Director Croteau and I will review the results of these efforts publically with the Board of Selectmen once available to continue to encourage a culture of transparency.

Personnel Updates-

- a. Preliminary interviews were held for the Administrative Assistant position in the Town Manager’s office. A second round will be held this week.
- b. Alison Manugian, our Planning and Conservation Agent, has accepted a role with the Town of Dracut. The position has been posted internally for this week. Congratulations and best of luck to Alison!

Project Updates-

- a. Railing repairs along Front Street at Town Hall are complete, with remaining masonry repairs to occur this week.

- b. The scope of work for OPM services for the Old Murdock project is complete, with an RFP to appear on an upcoming agenda.
- c. Bids for the Central Street construction came back on target, with the Water/Sewer infrastructure portion coming in 100k less than anticipated. This number may decrease once the contractors get into the road next spring.
- d. TEC Engineering will be meeting with our team this week to review preliminary results from the Blair Square study. We will be working to develop some recommendations through this fall into the winter.
- e. Work at the Gateway Park (Beech St & Spring St) is slated to begin in the coming weeks. Sidewalks and plantings will be installed this fall, with granite curbing and road work to be finalized this spring.
- f. I will be meeting with the Fire Chief and architects for the Fire Station project to review the existing plans for potential efficiencies. We will be "re-booting" the project in an effort to curb costs and solicit additional public input.

Miscellaneous Updates –

- a. The Bud Barn has officially received signatures for their building permit. This allows them to finalize their permitting process with the CCC.
- b. As a reminder, the Special Town Meeting has been scheduled for Monday, Nov. 8th at 7:00pm at Murdock High School. Being a school building, masks will be required for all participants and social distancing will be observed.

Ward said Manugian is a very knowledgeable person and he hates to see her leave, but he wishes her well.

10. MINUTES: There are no minutes on the agenda this evening.

11. COMMUNICATIONS:

12. AGENDA ITEMS: The Board's October meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, October 12th at 6:00 p.m. to finalize the STM warrant; Monday, October 18th and 25th at the regular time of 6:30 p.m.

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION: There was no Executive Session planned for this evening.

14. ADJOURNMENT: LaPointe moved to adjourn, seconded by Anderson. With a vote of all aye, the meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Taylor Tower
Administrative Assistant