

Approved: 12/28/2020

TOWN OF WINCHENDON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2020
Conducted by Remote Zoom Meeting

Present:

Michael Barbaro, Chairman
Rick Ward, Vice-Chairman
Barbara Anderson
Audrey LaBrie
Amy Salter

Keith R. Hickey, Town Manager
Linda Daigle, Executive Assistant
Taylor Tower, Administrative Assistant

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)
- 2021 License Renewals
 - List of 2021 License Renewals Sorted by Company (filed)
 - List of 2021 License Renewals Sorted by Category (filed)
 - ABCC Renewal Certification 2021 (filed)
- Bullspit Request to Purchase 4 Summer Drive (filed)
- Update on Adult Use Marijuana Establishment
 - December 1, 2020 Letter from Town Manager to Not Grampa's Tobacco, Inc. re: Adult Use Marijuana Establishment (filed)
 - December 1, 2020 Letter from Town Manager to Toy Town Project, LLC re: Adult Use Marijuana Establishment (filed)
- Consideration of Brownsfield Tax Abatement Agreement – Mill Farm Initiative, Inc.
 - December 9, 2020 Memo from Town Manager to Board of Selectmen re: Brownsfield Tax Abatement Agreement (attached)
 - Town Counsel Recommended Draft Brownsfield Tax Abatement Agreement December 2020 (attached)
 - Chart of Mill Farm Initiative Property Taxes Due as of November 30, 2020 (attached)
 - Excerpt from the Bylaws of the Town of Winchendon – Brownfield Tax Abatement (attached)
 - Bonville and Howard Lien on Property (attached)
 - Cooperstown Environmental, LLC Lien (attached)
 - Ramboll Environmental Lien (attached)
 - May 2019 Tax Payment Agreement between Town and Brandywine Farms, Inc. (attached)
 - Miscellaneous Emails from Brandywine's President (attached)
 - Brandywine's Version of Brownfield Tax Abatement Agreement (attached)
 - 2015 Brandywine's Farm Brownfield's Abatement Agreement (attached)
- December 10, 2020 Memo from DPW and Town Manager re: Meter Replacement Program (attached)
- Draft Timeline to Special and Annual Town Meeting (filed)
- December 14, 2020 Town Manager's Report (attached)
- Minutes to be Approved:
 - November 23, 2020 REGULAR MEETING
 - November 23, 2020 EXECUTIVE SESSION

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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.

Chairman 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, LaBrie, yes, Salter, yes, and Barbaro, yes. Anderson did not respond when called. Staff members present and responding in the affirmative were Keith Hickey, Town Manager, Linda Daigle, Executive Assistant, and Taylor Tower, Administrative Assistant.

Barbaro read the "Introduction for Remotely Conducted Open Meetings" which noted Governor Baker's 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.

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- 1.1. Christmas Holiday Hours - Barbaro announced that Town Hall will be closed Wednesday and Thursday, December 23rd and 24th for the Christmas Holiday. The Transfer Station will be closing at noon on Thursday, December 23rd and will be closed all day Friday, Christmas Day, and will resume normal hours on Saturday, December 26th from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

LaBrie briefly left the meeting at 6:36 p.m. due to technical difficulties.

Barbaro reminded everyone that the winter parking ban is currently in effect; and with the incoming snow storm, he asked all to keep their vehicles off the road so that the plows can do their job.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: Marc Dorwart of 245 Mellen Road expressed frustration with Public Comment only being allowed at the beginning of the meeting.

Anderson joined the meeting at 6:38 p.m. LaBrie rejoined at 6:38 p.m. as well.

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- 3.1. 6:35p.m. - National Grid Pole Petition – No. 30082011 Lakeview Drive – At the homeowner's request, this item was passed over.

4. APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS: There were none scheduled.

5. PERMIT/LICENSE APPLICATIONS:

- 5.1. 2021 Annual License Renewals – Barbaro noted the license fee decrease that had been previously voted upon by the Board in an effort to assist businesses during these tough times. Due to the current restrictions placed by the Governor, Toy Town Pub and Chick's Tavern have been closed since the beginning of the pandemic. Barbaro asked if these establishments are still viable and will be opening again, to which Daigle answered that they are interested in opening as soon as they are allowed to.

Ward moved the Board of Selectmen approve the renewal of the 2021 licenses as presented this evening (with listing the expiration date for one Lodging license, Tameseta Real Estate, dba Camelot Farms, to expire on June 30, 2021 at which time the license will be further reviewed);

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Ward further moved to execute the “Renewal Certification 2021” form to the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission and to authorize the Town Manager to sign on the Board’s behalf. This was seconded by LaBrie. With a roll call vote of Ward, aye, Salter, aye, Anderson, aye, LaBrie, aye and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.

LaBrie moved to authorize the Town Manager to execute the approved 2021 renewed licenses on behalf of the Board of Selectmen, seconded by Ward. With a roll call vote of LaBrie, aye, Anderson, aye, Salter, aye, Ward, aye and Barbaro, aye the motion carried unanimously.

6. BOARDS/COMMISSIONS/COMMITTEES/DEPARTMENT: None were scheduled this evening.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

7.1. Award of RFP for the Sale of the 4 Summer Drive Property – Hickey introduced Keith Kopley and Jim Hunt of Bull Spit Brewing. The property at 4 Summer Drive was advertised for sale with responses due to the Town on December 7th. One bid was received from Bull Spit Brewing Company who is interested in redeveloping the property into a microbrewery and tasting area for patrons and guests. Hickey believes this to be a great opportunity for the Town, bringing revenue and employment. Bull Spit currently has an aggressive timeline, with the plan to open in spring 2021. Kopley explained that Bull Spit Brewing has been in business for a little over a year and they currently need to expand. They are extremely excited at the prospect of opening in Winchendon. Hunt said that they did a lot of research in area communities and they thought that the property at 4 Summer Drive and the community itself would be a great fit for what they hope to accomplish. Barbaro said that the proposal was very comprehensive and he noted the aggressive timeline. LaBrie said that it’s a wonderful property located right on the pond, and after looking through the proposal, she thinks it will be a wonderful addition to the area that will allow the public to access and enjoy. Kopley explained that their business is kid, family, and dog friendly; not a night club by any means. Ward was impressed by the presentation and said that he is very excited about the possibilities for the town. He asked if there will be both indoor and outdoor stages; Kopley answered that there will be a taproom inside that he hopes to have done by the fall of 2021. The outdoor dining and music area will hopefully be done by spring. Ward asked if there will be food provided by Bull Spit’s own kitchen or if it would be a food truck. Kopley answered that for budgeting purposes, there will be a food truck to begin but they hope to eventually offer kitchen type items out of their own kitchen at some point. Ward noted that the spring 2021 anticipated timeline does depend on removal of contaminants, and that the Town does have some responsibility there. He asked if this can be accomplished in a timeframe that would allow Bull Spit to remain on their schedule. Tracy Murphy, Director of Planning and Community Development, said she has been working with the grant opportunities available. She had met with the site engineer and representatives from Mass Development earlier today, and they had forwarded the application for the Brownsfield Grant to her. As soon as she receives the cost for remediation, she will submit the application. Mass Development feels that their turnaround is about two to three weeks; Murphy said they are excited as we are for this opportunity.

Ward moved to authorize the sale of the town owned 4 Summer Drive property to Bull Spit Brewing Company in the amount of \$5,001, seconded by LaBrie. With a roll call vote of LaBrie, aye, Anderson, aye, Salter, aye, Ward, aye, and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.

7.2. Update on Status of Adult Use Marijuana Establishment License - Letters were sent by the Town Manager to the two groups identified below requesting their attendance at tonight’s meeting to provide an update on the status of obtaining their approvals with the Cannabis Control Commission (CCC).

7.2.1. Not Grampa’s Tobacco, Inc. Adult Use Marijuana Establishment Update – Tiffany Parkhurst of Not Grampa’s Tobacco, Inc. said that they had received a review back from the state that mandated that they had to fix some things. They just received a second review, they are making the necessary adjustments and will report back to the CCC shortly.

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7.2.2. Toy Town Project, LLC Adult Use Marijuana Establishment Update – Mark Hagemeyer from Toy Town Project, LLC informed the Board that they have gone past their first review, and that they are pretty much right on top of working together with the CCC to open. The license is in the waiting zone, the facility is in good shape, and the applicants have done a lot of work. Hagemeyer said that once the approval is granted, they should hopefully be ready to open within 90 days.

7.3. Consideration of a Brownfields Tax Abatement Agreement between the Town of Winchendon and Mill Farms Initiative Inc. – Representatives from Mill Farms Initiative were in attendance to present their request for a Brownfields Tax Abatement. Mill Farms is seeking to abate all of their outstanding taxes to date. As of November 30, 2020, the outstanding property tax balance was \$90,371.91. John and Amelia Giovanoni of Mill Farms Initiative and Brian Falk, Mill Farm's legal counsel were in attendance representing their abatement request. Mr. Giovanoni read a prepared statement that stated the Mill Farm Initiative has submitted a draft contract and that the tax title is in land court. He said that Brandywine Farms as an entity no longer exists, it was simply a holding account for tax credit purposes, and that all business has been done under the non-profit. The non-profit purchased all rights, privileges, credits and liabilities of Brandywine, including the TIF. He said that they agree with Barbaro that all legal issues should be cleared before the negotiations proceed, and that if they are not able to find common ground, the court will decide. The tax abatement is before the land court on January 5, 2021. He proceeded to say that they have submitted a property tax abatement form and have not received a reply, and claimed that they have paid \$25,000 in taxes. He said there will be over \$10 million generated in revenue over a fifteen-year period, should this project reach completion. He described the project as designed as an economic development impact project designed to pay property taxes and promote agricultural tourism, in addition to providing jobs, senior and ADA-compliant housing. Mr. Giovanoni continued to say that 25% of the property will be designated for community use, citing many Winchendon residents coming forward to volunteer to bring these ideas to fruition. Among these ideas are hiking trails, a dog park, ski park, bike trails and events to promote all. The land will be designated by deed restriction and Mr. Giovanoni said that they have the land and the know-how to make it work. He said that it is an opportunity for residents to participate in the property and decide what will be done with the land. He asked the Board to abate the property taxes.

LaBrie said she has followed this project since the very beginning, the prospects are exciting and the property is a wonderful asset. Her concern comes into the tax abatement. She clarified that in the past, there have been TIF agreements, which is a form of tax abatement that had to be approved at Town Meeting. With a substantial tax abatement granted for one company, the cost must be absorbed by all the other residents in Town. She explained that it is great to see that Winchendon residents are involved and volunteering, however, she feels that the voters should be the ones to approve or deny this abatement. Anderson said that the Town has been more than generous in the past regarding tax on this property, and to move forward with this would be setting ourselves up. Salter concurred, and said that the Board has done all they can and it should be a Town decision, and to let the voters decide. Ward said that he was not a Selectman in 2015 when this project was first proposed, and had he been, he would have supported the project initially. He likes the vision of where the project was supposed to go. He raised concern about the amount of past-due taxes, citing the Bylaws of the Town that state the Board can approve tax abatements under \$100,000. Anything over that must go to Town Meeting. With the amount of past-due taxes increasing each month, he does not feel comfortable supporting this abatement.

Ward moved that the Board deny the applicant's request for a Brownfield Tax Abatement as set forth in the draft agreement submitted to the Board for review on the basis that the applicant has failed to meet its burden under Section 27.4 of the Town's Bylaws. In particular, the applicant has failed to provide a detailed statement and supporting credible evidence that demonstrates there is adequate financing available to accomplish clean-up of the contamination or hazardous materials, and that the reduction in outstanding taxes, interest or penalties is reasonably necessary to complete the clean-up. This motion was seconded by Anderson.

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Alex Weisheit of Town Counsel asked if the applicant's counsel, Brian Falk, had anything to add prior to a vote being taken. As counsel knows, the draft agreement requires submission of a detailed remediation plan, a financing plan, as well as a summary of how the taxes will be paid. Falk said that the remediation plan is the same as what has previously been submitted to the Town. He knows that it was noted that anything under \$100,000 is within the Board of Selectmen's authority. He understands the concern raised that this is essentially a waiver of taxes and that the Town will be giving up on collecting that money. He said that they view this as the Town's investment in the project, and if the project is successful, it will bring in millions of dollars in economic development and growth to the Town. The abatement allows the project to begin because it allows the site to be cleaned up. They need it to become viable in order to get the project underway. He said that difference between this abatement and the TIF is that a TIF is a reduction in future taxes, and this is an abatement of prior taxes that are essentially tied to the condition of the property. Weisheit wanted the Board to be aware that there is a lien recorded against the property that was recorded by the prior LSP who had done work. This lien exceeds \$250,000; it would behoove the Board to want to see some type of evidence of the ability to pay that lien. Ms. Giovanoni said that the Town was notified three years ago that the property was released by the DEP and that the records are available through the DEP website. She said the remediation plan was never changed, the only change was the financing agreement accepted in 2015. She continued to say that the Board was supposed to vote on August 31st, but that never happened. The same contract for financing was to be enacted per the previous LSP, and the reason why they have been patient for their funds is that the Brownsfield is 50% rebate from the State and 50% rightful. She said that the funding was accepted before, the documents were submitted to the Town Manager and they did not receive a vote. Before a financing agreement is entered into, Mill Farm wants a contract this time. They will take credits. They cannot do it before a contract because they will be bound to another four years. She disputed the amount of taxes owed, saying that back taxes were \$55,000 for everything. She claimed that they have paid \$25,000, and that \$75,000 is comprised of interest and penalties.

With a roll call vote of Ward, aye, Salter, aye, LaBrie, aye, Anderson, aye, and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously. Barbaro said that based on the past history of this project and the property, until Mill Farm can come forward with a solid plan in terms of development, this matter is closed.

Ward moved to move up to item 7.5., seconded by LaBrie. With a roll call vote of Ward, aye, Salter, aye, LaBrie, aye, Anderson, aye, and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.

7.5. Presentation on the Replacement of Municipal Water Meters – This item was taken out of order. Director of Public Works Al Gallant and Town Manager Keith Hickey presented a proposal to replace/upgrade all of the water meters throughout town. This proposal is being presented now due to the impending departures of Mr. Gallant and Mr. Hickey. Hickey explained that throughout town, there are many water meters that are twelve years old. The typical life span is about ten years. The older the meters get, the less accurate they become, and in many cases, meters are breaking and needing to be replaced. In the case of housing selling and final water meter readings being conducted, there have been many instances in which the final reading is wildly different because the meter in the basement of the house and the remote on the outside of the house are not matching. Of the 2,050 water meters in town, 816 have been repaired in some form over the past twelve years. Depending on the type of repair that has occurred, Hickey and Gallant are proposing three steps in repair. The first step is to entirely replace the meter and electronics that have not been repaired or replaced yet - a total of 1,234 meters. These are T2 meters and the manufacturer no longer supports the software. The second step pertains to RTR meters, which have been replaced during the past five years and are not proposed to be replaced now. The supporting electronics (remote reader and antennae) would be installed; there are currently 439 of these units. The HR meters, of which there are 377 currently, only the antennae would be upgraded.

The installation of these new meters come with many benefits, including an increased life expectancy, consistent make/model, electronic meter readings, daily meter readings that will raise the alarm to leaks immediately, a warning will be send to the office if the meter is tampered with, and an app that allows residents

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to check their water usage whenever they want. Hickey said the total cost for the project is estimated at \$804,450, which he proposes to source from savings in existing line items due to the efficiencies of the new meters. This will allow a Water Department position to be eliminated, since the meters can now be read remotely, resulting in savings of approximately \$65,000 annually. The installation of the meters will be outsourced, allowing the meters to retain their warranty in the case of any issues.

Hickey said that he understands that this discussion might be a little premature within the budget process, but due to his and Gallant's imminent departure, they thought it would be appropriate to bring it forward while they are both here and not lay it on the new staff.

LaBrie said that she thinks it is fantastic that there will be a new app that homeowners can check. She said that as we know, there are often abatement requests before the Board due to leaks that went undetected. Anderson agreed that it is great to be notified of leaks early, but said that she is skeptical by being told eventually it won't cost anything. Gallant said that these new meters will increase revenue, as the old meters slow down and are not accurate. Ward voiced support for this initiative, saying that the meters are aging and that the Town keeps delaying infrastructure improvements. If we can be ahead of this, it can be of great benefit to the residents. He is also excited about the app. Barbaro was also excited about this prospect, and that it is an investment into the infrastructure. He made note to the Board and the community that this is Gallant's last meeting, and he thanked him for his service. He introduced Brian Croteau, the new Director. Brian was an internal candidate and has worked for the water department.

LaBrie moved the Board instruct the Town Manager to include the water meter replacement project in the Town Manager Recommended FY22 budget, seconded by Ward. Anderson opposed this initiative, saying she thinks this is not the time and that we need to slow down and see what happens in the next six months. Gallant said that the Water Department is currently running on one operator, which is scary. If this were to move forward later on, they would have to lay that person off after the hire. **With a roll call vote of LaBrie, aye, Anderson, no, and wished to say that she hates ultimatums, Salter, aye, Ward, aye, and Barbaro aye, the motion carried 4-1.**

- 7.4. Discussion on Town Manager Replacement Process with Community Paradigm – This item was taken out of order. Town Manager, Keith Hickey, is leaving his post as of January 28, 2021. Bernie Lynch of Community Paradigm was present to discuss the Town Manager replacement process. Lynch noted that this is the last meeting that DPW Director, Al Gallant will be in attendance due to his retirement. He congratulated Mr. Gallant and thanked him for the hard work he put in when Lynch was the Interim Town Manager in 2015. Upon the Board's acceptance of the resignation of Town Manager, Keith Hickey, Barbaro reached out to Bernie Lynch. Mr. Lynch served as the Interim Town Manager and brought Mr. Hickey to Winchendon in 2015. Lynch explained that he is certainly familiar with Winchendon. His search firm, Community Paradigm Associates, has been involved with recruitment and searches for 60 to 65 managers across the Commonwealth. They have a great track record in bringing quality managers to communities. He noted that the market is still tough, with many people retiring and not many people out there to fill these positions. He said that he has fond feelings toward Winchendon and the success it has enjoyed in recent years. He noted that Hickey is leaving at the end of January and that we will need some type of interim arrangement to fill in the role of Town Manager. He said he could advertise the position right away and begin to line up candidates. He explained that there are a few different ways that communities typically handle an interim Manager. In some cases, they contact Community Paradigm and ask for people to present names to them as possible candidates. Some communities are now actually advertising for an Interim Manager. Lynch said he is aware of many potential candidates and in preparation for tonight's meeting, he reached out to some that he thought might be interested. He is happy to bring them in for interviews if it's something that the Board is interested in. He explained that the issue is having a permanent role in place before Hickey's departure, something Lynch explained is not realistic. He said that the normal process for hiring a permanent manager is anywhere from 14 – 16 weeks, in addition to a thirty to sixty-day period in which the chosen candidate would have to give notice to their employer. He suggested immediately advertising for an Interim Manager, while working on compiling pertinent information such as

Town issues and background information that a permanent manager should be aware of as well as deciding what the Board wants from a permanent manager. He noted that the Town Charter calls for a Town Manager Search Committee to aid in the process.

Anderson asked what would happen if an Interim Manager was chosen, who was then interested in applying for the permanent Town Manager position. Lynch said it is certainly possible and it has happened in other communities. He explained that it's a little more delicate if the Town is not ready to move forward, as we would want to avoid hurting our pool of candidates. Lynch is happy to work with the Town and make sure that we do not box ourselves in and can still maintain the flexibility. LaBrie said that she does not want to rush. She had the privilege of serving on the 2015 Search Committee. As much as she would like to see somebody in here as quick as possible, she wants to see the Town do it right and hire a quality manager. Barbaro would like to see an Interim Manager as soon as possible and then move forward with full community support in a more detailed search, such as when Hickey was hired. LaBrie asked where the funding for a Town Manager's search would come from; to which Hickey explained that there are unexpended funds in the Town Manager's budget and in the Finance Committee Reserve Account.

LaBrie moved the Board of Selectmen authorize the Board Chair to enter into a contract with Community Paradigm for the purpose of conducting a Town Manager Search, seconded by Ward. With a roll call vote of LaBrie, aye, Anderson, aye, Salter, aye, Ward, aye and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.

Lynch confirmed that he will begin advertising for an Interim immediately. From there, he will work with the Town to identify the qualities and attributes that we would like to see from our next Town Manager. He will bring a list of three to five qualified interim candidates to the January 11th Board of Selectmen meeting.

LaBrie moved that a part of the contract with Community Paradigm is that when they get the results of the advertisement, they look through them and present to us their best three to five recommendations, seconded by Ward. With a roll call vote of LaBrie, aye, Anderson, aye, Salter, aye, Ward, aye and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.

7.6 Review of Proposed FY22 Budget Timeline – Barbaro asked Hickey to prepare and present a recommended FY'22 budget prior to his departure, as such, an amended timeline for the May 2021 Town Meeting was presented to the Board. Hickey explained that the top third of the page differs from what would normally be seen, just because of timing. He informed the Board that Department Heads are currently working on their budgets, with a deadline to submit to Mr. Hickey at the end of this week. As such, Hickey is proposing to present the budget to the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee on January 25th. He has mirrored past schedules in regards to the opening of the warrant, close of the warrant, date of Town Meeting, public hearing for the Finance Committee, etc. He explained that the numbers will be conservative because the State revenue is not out yet. Barbaro said that he does not think it would be fair to saddle a new Town Manager with this budget, and that the budget can be revised as need be. Ward agreed; he does not want to have an Interim Town Manager start with new figures that they would have to create. Salter said she thinks this is a good use of Mr. Hickey's last month with the Town. Anderson said that the new Town Manager will know how to make a budget, and she would rather see Mr. Hickey work on grants during his time left; to which Mr. Barbaro said that responsibility lies within the Planning & Community Development Department. LaBrie expressed support in having Mr. Hickey devise the FY'22 budget. Barbaro informed the Board that the Capital Planning Committee had their first meeting with submissions from each Department Head, there were some very creative ideas and he is looking forward to accomplishing some goals. He asked Anderson if she had reformed the Fire Department Building Committee to address the necessary repairs; Anderson answered that ties back into needing to source grants.

Ward moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the May 2021 Town Meeting Schedule, seconded by Salter. With a roll call vote of LaBrie, aye, Anderson, no, Salter, aye, Ward, aye and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried 4-1.

8. OLD BUSINESS: There is no old business this evening.

9. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

1. Financial Updates-

Town Accountant Joanne Goguen will review the FY21 finances six months through the fiscal year at the Board's January 25th meeting

2. Personnel Updates-

The Treasurer/Tax Collector position has been advertised. The deadline to submit an application is December 29th.

Public Works is currently advertising for an Operator and Mechanic.

3. Project Updates-

The hotbox is now being used by Public Works. Employees are very pleased with how much better the hot mix is compared to the cold patch previously used.

I have been working with Legrand Masonry, Inc. to have temporary repairs made to the Senior Center clock tower. Legrand has been on site several times to determine the most appropriate repair to make. I anticipate a formal quote to be submitted to me during the week of December 14th. I was told to expect the price to be around \$60,000. I plan on funding the temporary repairs from the savings in the in town bus savings.

4. Miscellaneous Updates –

I have no miscellaneous updates.

Hickey said that there is currently a spike in COVID-19 cases in Town, with no specific event that it can be traced to. There is a rise in the State as well as the Town. The Health Agent, Jim Abare, is doing everything he can to make sure people are as informed as possible about what steps can be taken. Unfortunately, Hickey said, as he travels through Town he consistently sees people not abiding in wearing a face covering. If we could get people to be a little bit more aware that they need to be sensitive to wearing a face covering, it would be a great help to everyone in the area.

LaBrie asked Hickey to provide the Board with an updated spreadsheet on debt exclusion and borrowing.

Anderson asked if anybody has been looking into grants for the Senior Center. Hickey answered yes, he received some information today that said there would be grant opportunities available for older buildings, like the Senior Center, that are on the Historic Register. As such, Hickey began compiling an application to the State to apply for said grants. Hickey said that the grant money is not indicated, rather, it is a pool of money for eligible individuals. There is not a lot out there for maintenance of buildings. There were some approved grants lined up to supplement funding of the repairs to the Senior Center, but because the repairs were not approved at the Town Meeting, the grants were relinquished to other communities. Hickey said that Tracy Murphy, Director of Planning & Community Development, has found some potential grants for the Fire Department, and is currently looking into those.

10. MINUTES:

10.1 Monday, November 23, 2020 Regular Meeting – LaBrie moved to approve the Board of Selectmen minutes of Monday, November 23, 2020 as presented this evening, seconded by Ward. With a roll call vote of LaBrie, aye, Anderson, aye, Salter, aye, Ward, aye and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.

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10.2 Monday, November 23, 2020 EXECUTIVE SESSION – Ward moved to approve the Board of Selectmen Executive Session Minutes of Monday, November 23, 2020 as presented this evening, seconded by LaBrie. With a roll call vote of LaBrie, aye, Anderson, aye, Salter, aye, Ward, aye and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.

LaBrie moved to release the Board of Selectmen Executive Session Minutes of Monday, November 23, 2020 as presented this evening, seconded by Ward. With a roll call vote of LaBrie, aye, Anderson, aye, Salter, aye, Ward, aye and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.

11. COMMUNICATIONS:

12. AGENDA ITEMS: Barbaro noted that the next meeting is a special meeting scheduled next Monday, December 21st and consist of the Community Outreach Meeting for the Marijuana Cultivation – CNA Stores, Inc., West St. LaBrie said that she would like to see as much information as possible disseminated to the public so that they are aware of what is being proposed at that location and they'll have some of the backstory. If they wish to speak at the meeting, they will have that knowledge. Hickey said he has already received some background information from the developer; as soon as the rest of the information is received, it will go up on the website. Barbaro said he is an abutter of the property and he has received a letter from the developer.

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION: LaBrie moved to enter into Executive Session under Exemption #3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares.

The Chair states he so declares.

The motion was seconded by Ward and with a roll call vote of LaBrie, aye, Anderson, aye, Salter, aye, Ward, aye, and Barbaro, aye, the Board entered into Executive Session at 8:19 p.m.

14. ADJOURNMENT: Regular session adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Taylor Tower
Administrative Assistant