

Board: Board of Selectmen/ Water Commissioner's Meeting
Date: Monday, March 23, 2020
Location: Online Video/Audio Conference Pursuant to Governor Baker's Executive Order in Response to the COVID-19 State of Emergency

Selectmen Present: William Bembury, Peter Sanders, Jacob Smith
Finance Committee: Benjamin Fellows, Debra Smith
Also, Present: Bryan Smith, Barbara Friedman, Richard Newton, Michael Shaffer, George Moonlight Davis, Jeffrey McCollough, Philip Wonkka, Mariah Kurtz, Laurie Scarbrough, Beth Giannini
Press: Kathleen Nolan, Montague Reporter

At 6:03 PM **Chairman Smith** called the meeting to order.

Chairman Smith explained that the meeting is being recorded and provided an overview of the functions of the video/audio conferencing platform.

Discussion Regarding Town Response to COVID-19

Chairman Smith provided the Board with an overview of the COVID-19 situation and actions taken by the Town to date. **Chairman Smith** explained that Governor Baker declared a state of emergency for the State on Tuesday, March 10, 2020 and that **Chairman Smith** declared a state of emergency for the Town of Erving on Friday, March 13, 2020. With the declaration on March 13, 2020 all non-essential offices have been closed, Town of Erving facilities have been closed to the public, all programs and non-essential meetings have been cancelled until March 30, 2020. Employees that can work remotely are and essential staff have been instructed to stay home if they feel sick. The Board discussed the new order from Governor Baker that extends the closing of non-essential services until April 7, 2020 and whether to align the Town's guidance with the new date. **Chairman Smith** expressed his appreciation to all Erving staff members, especially essential staff, for the continued efforts to care for the community during the state of emergency. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to keep all non-essential offices closed through April 07, 2020. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Discussion Regarding Almost Anything Goes: **Chairman Smith** asked the Board to consider if there will need to be a delay with the Almost Anything Goes bulky waste collection program this year as it relates to COVID-19. The Board agreed to address this topic at the March 30, 2020 meeting.

Discussion Regarding Annual Town Meeting and Annual Town Election: **Chairman Smith** explained that the concerns with COVID-19 would have an impact on the Town's Annual Town Meeting and Town Election scheduled for the beginning of May. **Chairman Smith** discussed wanting the Board to decide within the next two (2) weeks about whether or not the dates needed to be postponed. **Selectman Bembury** asked for an explanation of the impact of delaying the Town Election on the elected officials that are up for election. Richard Newton, Town Clerk, explained that the State legislature has passed legislation that will allow the Board of Selectmen to vote to move the date of the Town Election to a date before June 30, 2020 because of the state of emergency. Richard added that the current elected officials would continue to serve in their capacity until the date of the new election. Richard explained that the Town would promote the early voting option for registered voters. Richard explained that he would like the Board to consider reducing the polling hours to four (4), which is the minimum required by law. The Board agreed to revisit this topic at their March 30, 2020 meeting.

Review of 2019 Annual Report from Town of Orange Services

Philip Wonkka, Fire Chief, joined the Board to discuss the 2019 annual report from the Town of Orange for Ambulance Services. The Chief explained that there have been no service issues with the Orange Ambulance Services. The Board expressed no concerns about the report as presented.

Chief Wonkka explained that he would like the Board to consider ambulance service coverage for Ervingside during FY2021. Chief Wonkka explained that Ervingside is serviced by AMR out of Greenfield and that while the coverage is provided at no direct cost to the Town, the coverage has been less than desirable. Chief Wonkka explained that he may want the Board to consider having Orange Ambulance cover all of Erving and that a preliminary assessment would be \$63,000 for the year which would be an increase of approximately \$18,000 from the current assessment. **Selectman Bembury** asked about the response time for Orange Ambulance to Ervingside. Chief Wonkka explained that the response time to Ervingside has been estimated to be approximately 19 minutes while the response time to Erving Center is approximately 10 minutes. Chief Wonkka added that the response time from AMR to Ervingside is approximately 15 to 20 minutes. The Board agreed to revisit the option during the FY2021 budget review process.

Review of the Regional Fire Grant MOU

Chief Wonkka reviewed the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Deerfield Fire District, Town of Erving, City of Greenfield, South Deerfield Fire District, and the Turners Falls Fire District to apply for the FY2019 Assistance for Firefighters Grant program. Chief Wonkka explained that the grant application proposes to replace all of the air packs owned by the five (5) participating towns. The Board expressed support for the grant application and the five (5) town partnership. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to sign the memorandum of understanding between the Deerfield Fire District, Town of Erving, City of Greenfield, South Deerfield Fire District, and the Turners Falls Fire District relative to an application for grant funding to the FY2019 Assistant to Firefighters Grant Program. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

COVID-19 (revisited)

Chief Wonkka discussed the local and regional response to COVID-19, noting the guidance for distancing of at least six (6) feet and working to minimize extended exposure of staff to other individuals. Chief explained that requests for additional personal protective equipment (PPE) have been requested through the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to help augment the Town's inventory while supply orders to the private market are being processed. Orders include hand sanitizer as well as disinfectants for facilities and workspaces. Chief Wonkka reminded the Board members that the situation continues to evolve, and the Town will reassess as supplies are received and information evolves. **Selectman Bembury** asked about ensuring priority protection for first responders and public safety staff. Chief Wonkka expressed agreement and noted that PPE and sanitation equipment is being prioritized for essential staff. **Chairman Smith** added that Town departments will continue to assess ways to provide services to citizens in a safe manner and noted the meal availability services through the School Department and the Senior & Community Center.

Review of Complete Streets Prioritization Plan

Beth Giannini and Laurie Scarbrough from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments joined the Board to present the draft Complete Streets Prioritization Plan. The draft prioritization plan lists the following projects in ranked order of priority:

Rank	Project Name
1	River Street Sidewalk Rehabilitation
2	Strachan Street Sidewalk Construction
3	Central Street Sidewalk Rehabilitation
4	Park Street Sidewalk Rehabilitation
5	Pratt Street Sidewalk Rehabilitation
6	Gunn Street Sidewalk Restoration
7	Pleasant Street Sidewalk Improvements
8	Riverfront Park Access Improvements
9	North Street Sidewalk Improvements
10	Church Street Safety Improvements
11	Church Street Sidewalk Widening
12	Erving Center Curb Ramp Improvements
13	Traffic Calming for Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety
14	West High Street Sidewalk Rehabilitation
15	Union Street Sidewalk Construction
16	Forest Street Sidewalk Repair
17	Prospect Street Pedestrian Crossing
18	Papermill Road Sidewalk Construction
19	New England National Scenic Trail Crossing Safety
20	Maple Street Sidewalk Construction
21	Lillian's Way Sidewalk Rehabilitation
22	Farley Ledges Pedestrian Safety
23	Erving Center Pedestrian Safety

Beth explained that the plan is meant to guide work for five (5) years with MassDOT. **Selectman Bembury** advocated to promote the projects along Route 2 for pedestrian safety to allow crossing from North Street to Arch Street and at Church Street even though it is MassDOT's property. The Board expressed agreement. **Chairman Smith** spoke to the importance of improving sightlines on Route 2 to improve visibility of pedestrians. Beth and Laurie agreed to revise the draft prioritization plan and return to the Board for consideration on March 30, 2020. Bryan explained that the deadline to submit the plan and be considered by MassDOT for funding this spring is April 1, 2020.

Library Construction Project Update

Bryan explained that most of the site work had neared completion prior to the Governor's orders and that at this time work on the interior of the facility has been halted. Bryan explained that the final exterior work for the PV array and fencing may continue following the appropriate guidance from the CDC. Barbara Friedman, Library Director, explained that furniture purchasing, and similar work is continuing remotely.

Joint Meeting with Finance Committee- Review of FY2021 Budget Draft & Review of the Annual Town Meeting Warrant

At 7:02 PM Benjamin Fellows and Debra Smith of the Finance Committee joined the Board of Selectmen to review the budget summary and the draft Annual Town Meeting warrant.

Review of the FY2021 Budget Summary Draft

The Board and the Finance Committee reviewed the revised FY2021 budget summary table. Bryan explained that he had originally prepared the budget summary with a placeholder for the Erving Elementary School budget with a 2.5% over the FY2020 budget as instructed by the Board and the Finance

Committee. Bryan explained that the School Committee has approved a revised budget request for the Erving Elementary School budget that requests a 3.6% increase. The Board and the Finance Committee discussed support for increasing the line item for ambulance services from \$45,000 to \$63,000 to allow the Board to consider expanding the service coverage from Orange Ambulance. **Chairman Smith** asked if the budget for solid waste disposal had been amended to reflect the recent procurement. Bryan explained that the budget has been amended to an estimated cost of \$147,000 to cover the increased cost in collection as well as the new costs of recycling disposal. Benjamin asked for an explanation of the terms for the new collection contract with Casella Waste Management. **Chairman Smith** explained that the agreement was for a term of three (3) years with fixed costs as well as an option for two (2) one-year extensions.

The Board and the Finance Committee members discussed whether or not to support the 3.6% increase request from the School Committee. The Board and the Finance Committee discussed the guidance that was given to all departments to level fund budget requests and acknowledged that the revised request is an improvement from the initial request. **Selectman Sanders** discussed his support for the revised request. **Selectman Bembury** discussed the need to get the School and the Town on the same understanding of how to approach the budget for FY2022 now. **Selectman Bembury** explained that he would be in support of the revised request of 3.6% this year but would not be in support of a similar request next year. **Chairman Smith** expressed his understanding of the different viewpoints and reflected on the budgeting conversations with the School Department during the FY2020 budget planning process. **Chairman Smith** expressed agreement with the need to begin to work with the School now on preparing the FY2022 budget. The Board expressed agreement.

Bryan will work on a revised draft of the FY2021 with these changes for review.

Employee Compensation Adjustments

Chairman Smith explained that the Board and the Finance Committee originally approved employee compensation rates to be adjusted in accordance with the compensation and classification plan effective April 6, 2020. **Chairman Smith** explained that after a review was conducted by the Treasurer's office it was realized that the effective date would fall in the middle of a pay period. **Chairman Smith** suggested changing the effective date of the approved changes to March 30, 2020. The Board of Selectmen expressed agreement. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to move the implementation of the grade and step system to March 30, 2020. **Selectman Sanders** seconded. **Vote:** unanimously approved.

Review of the Annual Town Meeting Warrant Draft

The Board reviewed the draft Annual Town Meeting warrant draft.

Article 5: Amended FY2020 Elected Official Compensation

The Board reviewed the new proposed article to amend the compensation for the Tax Collector, Town Clerk, and Treasurer in accordance with the compensation and classification plan, for FY2020. **Chairman Smith** asked if the Water Department stipends were also going to be amended. Bryan explained that because they had not been specifically discussed during the project they had not been amended. The Board expressed no concerns with the article as presented.

Article 8: FY2021 Erving Elementary School Funding

Bryan explained that the article had been prepared with the 2.5% placeholder increase for the Elementary School budget. The Article will be revised to reflect a 3.6% increase.

Article 14: Raise & Appropriate for Capital Improvements

The Board reviewed the revised article which merges network upgrades with the server maintenance line item. **Chairman Smith** suggested breaking this project out as a FY2020 special article to be funded from Free Cash to allow the project to begin prior to July 1, 2020. The Board expressed support for the proposal. Bryan will break the project out as a separate article for consideration.

Article 11: FY2021 Water Department Enterprise Fund & Article 12 Wastewater Department Enterprise Fund

The Board reviewed the revised articles and expressed no concerns. Bryan explained that Town Counsel had provided feedback that encouraged the Board to include a greater breakdown of the revenue and expenses for each enterprise fund. The Board discussed the recommendation and noted that the Town provides a detailed expense plan for both enterprise funds with the budget document that is mailed to all residents. **Chairman Smith** and **Selectman Bembury** expressed support for keeping the articles as presented unless Counsel has a concern not addressed by the budget book.

Article 20: Rescind Town Meeting & Election Warrant Posting Order & Article 21: Create Town Meeting & Election Warrant Posting Bylaw

The Board reviewed the proposed warrant articles from Town Clerk Newton. The Board discussed the proposed bylaw that would allow the warrant to be posted by the constables, Town Clerk, or Administrative Assistant. Bryan explained that the Town Clerk had researched the options and that the statute allows for a Town official to post the warrant if the Town's bylaw does. **Chairman Smith** asked the Board to consider the changes to posting locations and delivery. **Selectman Bembury** and **Selectman Sanders** expressed support.

Article 23: Driveways and Curbscuts

The Board reviewed Article 23. Bryan explained that Town Counsel would like the enforcement of the bylaw to be assigned either to the Chief of Police or the Building Commissioner because the positions have enforcement authority while the Highway Superintendent does not. The Board agreed to amend the proposed bylaw to have the Building Commissioner enforce. Regarding penalties, The Board agreed to set the first fine at \$100 and \$10 every day after. Bryan will revise the warrant for the Board's review.

Review of Reconciliations Policy Draft- 1st Reading

The Board conducted a first reading of the Reconciliations Policy draft. Bryan explained that Deborah Mero, Town Account, prepared the policy and noted that the policy largely represents current financial practices. Bryan explained that this draft policy proposal is part of the Town's response to the past financial audits that encouraged the Town to document procedures. The Board expressed no concerns and agreed to conduct a second reading on March 30, 2020.

AT 8:06 PM the Finance Committee members in attendance left the meeting. **Chairman Smith** discussed scheduling a follow up joint meeting between the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee for March 30, 2020 at 7:00PM.

Review of FY2021 Heating Oil Bids

The Board reviewed bid results for the FY2021 heating oil procurement. Bryan explained that the Town procures heating oil through the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative and that the Town is considering an award to the responsible and responsive bidder for the lowest price for FY2021 with the option to extend the contract for two (2) one – year extensions. Bryan explained that the Town received the lowest bid for trailer transport delivery from Roberts Energy, LLC. Of Springfield, MA and the lowest

bid for metered pump truck delivery from Sprague Operating Resources, LLC of Portsmouth, NH. The Board expressed no concerns with the bid results.

Chairman Smith made a motion to award the FY2021 trailer transport delivery contract for #2 heating to Roberts Energy, LLC of Springfield, MA, with 2 one-year extension options. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Chairman Smith made a motion to award the FY2021 meter pump truck delivery contract for #2 heating to Sprague Operating Resources, LLC of Portsmouth, NH, with 2 one-year extension options. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Review of Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2020

The Board reviewed meeting minutes for Monday, January 27, 2020. **Selectman Bembury** made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for January 27, 2020 as written. **Selectman Sanders** seconded. **Vote:** unanimously approved.

Review of Meeting Minutes of February 10, 2020

The Board reviewed meeting minutes for Monday, February 10, 2020. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for February 10, 2020 as written. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Review of Meeting Minutes of February 24, 2020

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Review of Meeting Minutes of March 02, 2020

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Review of Tree Planting Policy Draft

Mariah Kurtz, Assistant Town Planner, joined the Board to review the draft Tree Planting Policy. Mariah explained that the draft policy was developed in collaboration with the Michael Gordon, Tree Warden. Mariah explained that the goal of the draft policy was to serve as guide for residents and the Town on public tree planting to ensure that the Town supports the planting of native species and avoid invasive species, as well as considering the safety, maintenance costs, and ecological issues. Mariah explained that the guide was divided into categories for small, medium, and large planting areas with definitions. Mariah noted that most of the available planting areas adjacent to Erving's municipal streets are narrow and barely meet the dimensional requirements for a small planting area.

Mariah explained that the plan is to work with the Tree Warden to plan spring and/or fall plantings that the public can anticipate, noting that the Tree Warden needs to determine if the requested site is appropriate for tree planting as it relates to the roads, sidewalks, powerlines, clear sight at intersections, and underground utilities. Mariah added that the next phase of this project is to develop a Town-wide inventory of public shade trees under the Tree Warden's jurisdiction for maintenance and planning purposes. **Chairman Smith** asked about responding to citizen concerns about the loss of shade trees in areas that do not have sufficient space for planting. Mariah explained that there may be alternative ways to address these concerns and discussed the examples from Montague, Greenfield, and North Adams where trees are planted on private property.

Selectman Bembury discussed his support for more tree plantings. **Selectman Bembury** discussed the loss of public shade trees on Church Street and a desire to see them restored. **Chairman Smith** also discussed his support for the draft tree planting policy and the plan for regular tree planting and maintenance. The Board discussed the importance of having staff decisions work within the guidance of the tree planting policy. Mariah will post the plan on the Town website.

IP Mill- Hazardous Materials Clean-up Project Update

Bryan provided the Board with an update regarding the IP Mill asbestos & hazardous materials abatement project and the procurement. The Board will revisit the agenda item at the next meeting.

Discuss of Re-use of Former Library Building

The Board passed over this agenda item and agreed to revisit the topic in July 2020 with the Recreation Commission, Union 28 School District, and the Town's public works departments.

Review of the Highway Superintendent Position Description

The Board passed over this agenda item and agreed to revisit the topic on March 30, 2020.

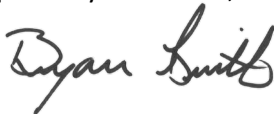
Bill Warrant

The Board reviewed the accounts payable warrant dated March 26, 2020. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to approve warrant #19 in the amount of \$110,452.98. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Adjournment

At 8:57 PM **Chairman Smith** made a motion to adjourn. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Bryan Smith
Administrative Coordinator