

Board: Board of Selectmen/ Water Commissioner's Meeting
Date: Monday, November 09, 2020
Location: Online Video/Audio Conference Pursuant to Governor Baker's Executive Order in Response to the COVID-19 State of Emergency

Selectmen Present: Jacob Smith, William Bembury
Also, Present: Bryan Smith, Robert Holst, James Loynd, Kelly Loynd, Glenn McCrory, Natane Halasz, Michael Gordon
Press: Katherine Nolan, Montague Reporter

At 6:35 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.

Letter of Commendation – Officer James Loynd

Officer James Loynd and Sergeant Robert Holst, Acting Chief of Police, joined the Board. **Chairman Smith** explained that a letter for commendation has been submitted for Officer James Loynd by Sergeant Holst to recognize his brave service in an incident at the French King Bridge. **Chairman Smith** read the following into the record:

On November 1, 2020 at approximately 1338 hours, Officer James Loynd of the Erving Police Department responded to the French King Bridge. There were several 911 calls reporting of a male subject on the wrong side of the railing who appeared to be getting ready to jump. As Officer Loynd arrived on scene, he located the individual on the northside of the bridge. Along with a few Good Samaritans who had stopped to assist. The individual was found to be on the other side of the railing, facing the water and holding onto the railing with his hands. Officer Loynd attempted to engage in conversation with the individual and while doing so the individual turned and faced the bridge, now with his back to the water. While Officer Loynd and the Good Samaritans continued to try and communicate with the individual he turned back around facing towards the water. Without hesitation Officer Loynd grab ahold of the individual placing himself in danger of being pulled over the railing had the individual decided to jump. With the assistance of the Good Samaritans they were able to pull the individual back over the railing to safety and Officer Loynd was able to handcuff the individual to the railing to avoid any further struggle or attempt to jump. The individual sustained no documented injuries and was later transported to Baystate Franklin Medical Center for a full mental health evaluation.

I commend Officer James Loynd for staying calm during a very intense situation, relying on his training and experience to resolve this situation and maintaining professionalism throughout the entire call. Officer James Loynd placed the safety and welfare of the individual above his own and as a result possibly saved the individual life had he decided to jump. Suicidal calls to the he French King Bridge are unfortunately a common call for Officer of the Erving Police Department. However, it is not common to respond and find yourself faced with an active individual prepared to jump.

Chairman Smith thanked Officer Loynd for his bravery and service to the Town of Erving. **Chairman Smith** discussed the challenges with the presence of the French King Bridge and the commitment that Officer Loynd demonstrated to protect the public. **Chairman Smith** discussed the continued efforts to make the installation of the suicide prevention barriers at the bridge a priority, so that no other Officers have to be

faced with this situation. **Chairman Smith** thanked Sergeant Holst for issuing the letter of commendation to Officer Loynd. **Selectman Bembury** discussed the impressive service of Officer Loynd and the dedication that he has to the Erving Police Department. **Selectman Bembury** discussed the role of an Officer to protect life and property. **Selectman Bembury** noted that Officer Loynd has received two (2) letters of commendation for risking his life for the good of the public. **Selectman Bembury** expressed the support that the Board has for Officer Loynd. **Selectman Bembury** thanked Sergeant Holst for recognizing the sacrifice that Officer Loynd has made.

Selectman Bembury recommended that a copy of the letter of commendation is sent to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) District 2 office so that they can see examples of the dangers that the Town's Officers face and the high quality of work that they perform. **Selectman Bembury** added that the letter would help communicate the serious need for the prevention barriers at the Bridge so that other public safety officers are not put at risk. **Selectman Bembury** also asked that a copy of the letter is sent to Senator Jo Comerford. **Chairman Smith** expressed agreement with sending copies of the letter to MassDOT and Senator Comerford. **Chairman Smith** extended the Town's appreciation to Officer Loynd's family noting the incredible support that they provide him.

Sergeant Holst discussed sending the most recent statistics regarding incidents at the Bridge to Mariah Kurtz, Assistant Town Planner, to keep the report current. Mariah joined the Board and explained that the report is updated with current statistics each time she receives a new report from the Police Department. The Board expressed appreciation for this work and asked to have the updated report sent with the copies of the letter.

Selectman Bembury asked if Sergeant Holst could provide the Board with the names and contact information for the citizens that assisted in the incident so that the Town could send a letter of appreciation. Sergeant Holst explained that he has already prepared the letters to send to the good Samaritans. **Selectman Bembury** asked to review the letters at the next Board meeting.

Chairman Smith made a motion to accept the letter for commendation for Officer James Loynd and to place a copy in the personnel file. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Review of Patrol Officer Position Description and Advertisement

The Board reviewed the draft job advertisement for the full-time Patrol Officer position. The Board agreed to change the position title from Patrolman to Patrol Officer. Position description also is identified as an essential position and a member of the union. The Board approved of the position advertisement. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to approve the Patrol Officer position description as amended. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Bryan will begin advertising the opportunity on the Town website and in the newspaper this week. Sergeant Holst will promote the opportunity to CJIS and Police Training Academy.

Discussion Regarding Creating a Screening Committee

The Board discussed establishing a preliminary screening committee for the Patrol Officer position. Sergeant Holst discussed wanting to find a role for all Erving Officers to participate in the search process. Sergeant Holst and Bryan will work together on a proposal for the Board's review. The Board will review at the next meeting.

Discussion Regarding Town Response to COVID-19

Chairman Smith explained that the Board's Office issued guidance today, to all Town staff, regarding the Executive Order issued by Governor Baker the week before. **Chairman Smith** explained that the Executive Order limits the hours of operations for several business sectors and includes a stay-at-home advisory for residents between the hours of 10:00 PM and 5:00 AM. **Chairman Smith** added that the Order expanded the mask mandate requiring the use of a mask when in public at all times. **Chairman Smith** explained that the guidance states that all employees must wear masks at all times while at work with the exception of Firefighters responding to a fire using Department issued breathing equipment. **Chairman Smith** asked if meeting attendees had questions. **Selectman Bembury** asked if the mask mandate applies to employees within buildings. **Chairman Smith** explained "yes" and that the ability to socially distance at least 6' is no longer a determining factor in mask requirements. **Selectman Bembury** asked about implementation of the curfew and how law enforcement was to implement. **Chairman Smith** explained that the stay-at-home order is issued under the health regulations and local Boards of Health and Police Departments have been empowered to enforce. **Chairman Smith** explained that gathering sizes have also been reduced. Bryan explained that the Town's focus has remained on education and information sharing and to-date the Town has not had to enforce with citations. Bryan explained that the Town has distributed masks in the past.

Library Construction Project Update & Review of Change Order Requests

Bryan provided the Board with a project update. Bryan explained that the solar array installer and Eversource have been working on the final system adjustments to complete the interconnection of the array with the electric grid. Bryan explained that he expects the array to be online within the coming weeks. Mariah explained that she has worked with Wayne Griffin Electric as well as ChargePoint to obtain the necessary access to the electric vehicle charger that was installed at the Library site. Mariah explained that the account will allow the Town to manage each charging station that is installed within the Town. Once the Board of Selectmen sets the use rate the charger can be activated.

River, Warner & Strachan Street Project Update & Change Orders

Bryan explained that the Town has not yet received a proposal from the contractor for the Board to consider in regards to the deviations from the specifications and the drawings. Bryan explained that a pay requisition has been received but it includes the work that the Town is not prepared to accept so the engineer is working with the contractor to amend the pay requisition for only the work that was done satisfactorily. **Selectman Bembury** asked Bryan if the Town has maintained communication with the contractor. Bryan explained that the Town has been very clear about the issues that are observed, having documented the issues with the Town's engineers and having conducted a site walk with the contractor to discuss all of the issues. Bryan explained that the Town is now awaiting a response from the contractor regarding the proposed corrective actions.

Discussion Regarding Chief of Police Position Search

Chairman Smith explained that Chief Christopher Redmond from the Town of Gill is willing and able to serve on the Chief of Police Screening Committee. **Chairman Smith** spoke to the relationship between the towns of Erving and Gill and expressed his support for appointing Chief Redmond to serve on the Committee. **Selectman Bembury** discussed support. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to appoint Chief Christopher Redmond, Chief of Police for the Town of Gill to the Chief of Police Screening Committee. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Chairman Smith explained that the procurement for a consultant to assist with the search process went live this week with quote submissions due the week of Thanksgiving. **Chairman Smith** explained that the tentative review of submissions could occur on November 30, 2020.

Review of Streetlight Installation Project Procurement

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Appointment to the Conservation Commission

Bryan explained that the members of the Conservation Commission have reached out to both community members that submitted letters of interest in the vacant Commission seat and conducted interviews at a recent meeting. Bryan explained that the Conservation Commission members voted to recommend the appointment of Carie Berg. The Board expressed agreement with the recommendation. **Selectman Bembury** made a motion to appoint Carie Berg as a member of the Conservation Commission for a three (3) year term expiring June 30, 2023. **Chairman Smith** Seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Review of Meeting Minutes for October 19, 2020

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes of Monday, October 19, 2020. **Selectman Bembury** made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of October 19, 2020 as written. **Chairman Smith** seconded. **Chairman Smith** made motion to amend page 3 by adding "...with the understanding that the 7th seat is reserved for a Chief of Police from a surrounding community, yet to be determined." **Selectman Bembury** seconded the amendment. **Vote:** Unanimously approved as amended.

Review of Meeting Minutes for November 02, 2020

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes of Monday, November 02, 2020. **Selectman Bembury** made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of November 02, 2020 as written. **Chairman Smith** seconded. **Selectman Bembury** made a motion to amend Page 3 by adding the word "continuing." **Chairman Smith** seconded the amendment. **Vote:** Unanimously approved as amended.

Review of Meeting Minutes for April 27, 2020

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Review of Meeting Minutes for April 29, 2020

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Review of Meeting Minutes for June 01, 2020

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Review of Meeting Minutes for June 08, 2020

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Review of Meeting Minutes for September 14, 2020

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Review of Site Readiness Grant Application for IP Mill

Mariah joined the Board to review the draft Site Readiness grant application for the IP Mill site. Mariah explained that the focus of the grant application was changed to remove the creation of an access road, though it is noted that it is a possible future part of the project. The Board reviewed the revised opinion of probable cost, and there for the grant request of \$933,500. **Chairman Smith** asked to ensure that the

application narrative is focus on safety of the site and preparing for future reuse. **Mariah** explained that it was. **Selectman Bembury** explained that he had no concerns with the grant application as presented and was ready to support its submission. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to submit the Site Readiness grant application for the IP Mill site to MassDevelopment. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Discussion of Establishing Feasibility & Building Committee

The Board reviewed a memorandum from Bryan to discuss the need to identify a feasibility committee to review designer proposals for the public works offices and dry storage construction project. The memorandum encouraged the Board to consider the future establishment of a permanent building committee that would oversee all of the Town's construction projects. **Chairman Smith** discussed the suggestion for the permanent committee with the goal of creating consistency for how projects are handled. **Selectman Bembury** discussed support for establishing a permanent building and construction committee for the Town. **Selectman Bembury** discussed support for borrowing some language from the municipal examples included within the memorandum. **Selectman Bembury** expressed concern about the amount of work that may be overseen by the proposed committee and the need to consider a stipend for members in the future. **Chairman Smith** expressed support for a permanent building committee suggestion as well.

Chairman Smith asked for an explanation of the timeline the Board needs to work within. Bryan explained that the Board needs to assemble a feasibility committee in the coming weeks to review the designer proposals that will be received in early December 2020 and that the Board could work on a proposed permanent building committee article to present to the voters at the Annual Town Meeting in May 2021. **Chairman Smith** discussed support for drafting the structure for the proposed permanent building committee and to use the draft framework for the establishment of the public works building feasibility committee. **Selectman Bembury** expressed support for this approach and discussed support for presenting the proposed permanent building committee article at the Annual Town Meeting. **Chairman Smith** discussed support for the proposed permanent building committee to maintain a long-term plan for the capital needs of the municipal buildings, including their sale and surplus. The Board will review draft materials at the next meeting.

Discussion of Water Line Upgrade Request Near Water Tower

Bryan explained that there are two (2) homes planned for construction on land that is adjacent to the Town's water tower. Bryan explained that there is currently a 1" diameter water line from the water tank that provides water service to two (2) existing homes. Bryan explained that Peter Sanders, Wastewater & Water Superintendent, has had preliminary conversations with the new homeowners to explore options to connect to the Town water system. Bryan explained that it is his understanding that the water volume in the existing line would not be sufficient to add additional customers and would require an upgrade to at least a 4" water main. Bryan explained that the Town is working to obtain a cost estimate and is conducting further research to determine if the 1" line is an actual water main owned by the Town or is a residential connection that is the responsibility of the homeowners. Bryan explained that the Water Superintendent will be able to provide greater detail about the requested project. **Chairman Smith** discussed the need to understand the estimated cost for the upgrade and clarity regarding which party would be responsible for the upgrade. **Selectman Bembury** expressed agreement. The Board asked for a clear explanation of the proposed upgrade and the need for the work. The Board will revisit the topic at the next meeting.

Letter of Resignation from the Board of Library Trustees

Chairman Smith discussed the receipt of a letter of resignation from Peter (Rupert) Roy-Clark as a member of the Board of Library Trustees. **Chairman Smith** discussed Rupert's work as a Library Building Committee member for the new Public Library and the contribution of his engineering expertise. **Chairman Smith** expressed appreciation to Rupert for his years of service to the Town. **Selectman Bembury** expressed agreement.

Chairman Smith discussed the process for identifying a registered voter to appoint as a member of the Board of Library Trustees until the next Annual Town Election. Bryan suggested advertising the vacancy and asking for letters of interest to be submitted by December 10, 2020. The Board expressed agreement.

Adjournment

At 8:04 PM **Chairman Smith** made a motion to adjourn. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bryan Smith".

Bryan Smith
Town Administrator