

Board: Board of Selectmen/ Water Commissioner's Meeting
Date: Monday, December 21, 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, Peter Sanders
Also, Present: Bryan Smith, Robert Holst, Amanda Flower, Philip Wonkka, Jonathan Flis, 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.

Discussion Regarding Town Response to COVID-19

Chairman Smith explained that case counts of individuals with positive COVID-19 diagnosis continue to increase and that the nursing staff continues to monitor active cases. Bryan Smith, Town Administrator, explained that the Town is working to understand the plan and capacity for vaccine distribution. Bryan noted that first responders have been prioritized for vaccination in group 1C. **Chairman Smith** explained that the State is working to increase the availability of testing in the region.

Library Construction Project Update & Review of Change Order Requests

Bryan explained that Library's solar array is officially operational and has been producing power since Wednesday, December 16, 2020. **Chairman Smith** explained that reports on power generation should be provided for the review of the Board and the Library Board of Trustees. Bryan and **Chairman Smith** discussed the option to setup a kiosk within the Library to provide the public with information on the amount of energy produced by the array. Bryan added that the electric vehicle charger is also operational as of last week, and that public promotion will begin this week.

River, Warner & Strachan Street Project Update & Change Orders

Bryan explained that he has been working to coordinate a meeting with Town Counsel to review the contract documents, the deviations, and the proposal. The Board will revisit this topic at their next meeting.

Discussion Regarding Chief of Police Position Search

Bryan explained that work has begun with the UMass Boston Collins Center on drafting the community profile and to interview key stakeholder and Screening Committee members. Bryan explained that he plans to have a draft community profile and advertisement ready for the Board's review on January 04, 2021.

Discussion Regarding POTW#2 Sludge Dryer Project

Bryan provided the Board members with an update on the communications that have occurred with the public construction unit in the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office and with the Massachusetts Department of Labor (DOL). Bryan explained that the Attorney General's Office has issued an opinion that the proposed project at POTW#2 would not be considered public construction as long as no public funds, including financing from the State Revolving Loan Fund, are used for the project. Even if privately funded, the Department of Labor has issued a decision that the project would still require the implementation of

prevailing wage and the Town would be responsible for ensuring compliance. **Chairman Smith** explained that the Office is still trying to setup a meeting with a representative from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to understand what options exist with the State Revolving Loan Fund with the potential changes to the project. Bryan explained that he has a call scheduled with the representative of DEP later in the week. The Board will revisit this topic at the next meeting.

Review of Town-wide Project List

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Review of Town Branding

The Board passed over this agenda item.

2021 Liquor Licenses Renewals

The Board reviewed the amended 2021 alcoholic beverage license report for calendar year 2020. Bryan explained that after further review there was an error in the count for retail establishments and that it has been corrected for the amended report. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to approve the amended 2021 Annual Report for 2020. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Review of Meeting Minutes for April 27, 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 November 30, 2020

The Board reviewed meeting minutes for Monday, November 30, 2020. **Selectman Bembury** made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of November 30, 2020 as written. **Selectman Sanders** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Review of Meeting Minutes for December 07, 2020

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Review of Meeting Minutes for December 14, 2020

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Extension of 2020 Business Licenses

Bryan explained that the Office has been working to prepare for the 2021 Business License renewal process and that after further review of applicable statutes, it was determined that several of the general business licenses can be registered through the Town Clerk's office for a 4-year period as opposed to annually through the Board of Selectmen's Office. Bryan explained that Elizabeth Sicard, Administrative Assistant, has worked with the Town Clerk for this transition and to prepare the software with the necessary modifications. Bryan explained that renewal notices for 2021 have been issued and will be ready to be presented to the Board for issuance in January 2021. Bryan requested that the Board issue an extension of the following 2020 business licenses, to expire on February 02, 2021:

Dan's Veggies & Poplar Mtn. Maple	151 Northfield Road	General / Farm
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Baby Boomer Property & Management Systems	16 Wheelock Street	General / Consulting
Country Furnishings	16 Wheelock Street	General / Woodworking
Hammock International	16 Wheelock Street	General / Consulting
New England Maple Products	219 North Street	General / Farm
Dubay Pallet	123 North Street	General / Manufacture
Ikazuchi Martial Arts	50 West Main St	General / Instruction
Rose Ledge Companies	21 Poplar Mtn. Road	Class III / Buy, Sell Vehicle Parts
Rose Ledge Companies	21 Poplar Mtn. Road	Class II / Auto Repair / Retail
Fairlane Mobile Homes	224 Old State Road	General
Stoneville Auto	64 East Main Street	Class III / Buy, Sell Vehicle Parts
Stoneville Auto	64 East Main Street	Class II / Used Vehicle Retail
Whitney Wood Products	64 East Main Street	General / Woodworking
Tools of Liberty	223 North Street	General / Instruction
Music Tribute Productions, Inc.	58 State Road	General / Entertainment
B. E. Frank and Co.	43 Ridge Road	General / Contractor
Dry Brook Garden	105 Old State Rd	General / Farm
Quality Engineering Consulting	81 Old State Road	General / Consulting
Quixote Consulting	117 Old State Road	General / Consulting
Toast of the Town Music Productions	117 Old State Road	General / Entertainment
Sara E. Campbell PE	8 Maple Avenue	General / Consulting
Artscape	93 Northfield Road	General / Landscape
Downeast Clambakes	56 Northfield Road	General / Food
Weatherheads	63 French King Hwy	General / Convenience

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French King Bowling Center	55 French King Highway	General / Establishment Entertainment
French King Bowling Center	55 French King Highway	General / Food
Zilinski Maple Syrup	20 East Prospect Street	General / Farm
The Cleaning Detail	1 River Street	General/Cleaning
Freight House	11 East Main Street	General / Food
Freight House	11 East Main Street	General
Freight House Farm	32 Mountain Road	General / Farm
French King Restaurant	127 French King Highway	General / Restaurant
French King Motor Inn	129 French King Highway	General / Motel
Waldron Building & Remodeling	46 High Street	General / Contractor
Margaret's Guitar Studio	10 North Street	General / Instruction
Justin Fellows Construction, Inc.	220 North Street	General / Contractor
Associated Light Horse; Varga Girl Productions	1 River Street Ste 103	Business Registration
Greenfield Automotive	38 French King Hwy	General / Auto Repair
Erving Equipment	38 French King Hwy	Class II / Used Vehicle Retail
Franklin Grocery	1 West High Street	General / Food / Convenience
Weatherhead Apts.	65 French King Highway	General / Storage Units / Apartments

Selectman Bembury made a motion to extend the 2020 issued business license to expire on February 02, 2021. **Selectman Sanders** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

FY2020 Emergency Management Preparedness Grant

Philip Wonkka, Fire Chief & Emergency Management Director, joined the Board to discuss the FFY2020 Emergency Management Preparedness Grant (EMPG) application. Chief Wonkka explained that for this year's EMP grant, he proposes to use the funds to purchase bullet proof body gear for Fire Department personnel. Chief Wonkka discussed the concern about staff responding to more dangerous calls that may involve weapons. Chief Wonkka discussed concerns with active shooter threats nationally and within the State. Chief Wonkka discussed the need to develop policies for use of the proposed equipment. **Selectman Bembury** asked for an explanation of other local Fire Departments that have implemented this type of gear. Chief Wonkka explained that neighboring Fire Departments have begun to acquire the

equipment. Chief Wonkka discussed the factors that will be considered for equipment selection to reduce maintenance costs. **Selectman Bembury** asked that a policy and procedure is drafted and presented to the Board for review and approval. Chief Wonkka explained that he will be working on a draft policy and that use of the gear will be dictated by the 911 call that is then dispatched. **Selectman Bembury** asked how many sets of gear the grant funding will provide. Chief Wonkka explained that the grant will allow the purchase of two (2) sets of gear and that the gear does not need to be fitted to the individual. **Selectman Sanders** asked to clarify if the proposed purchase would include ballistic helmets. Chief Wonkka answered "yes." **Chairman Smith** asked where the gear would be stored, noting that the Department has two (2) fire stations, and it is possible that responses could launch from either station. Chief Wonkka explained that a response requiring the equipment would be conducted in conjunction with law enforcement. **Selectman Sanders** asked if the EMTs would only enter once law enforcement has responded. Chief Wonkka explained response protocols and noted that an initial response may include EMT's. **Selectman Bembury** discussed support for the grant and the request while noting concern. **Selectman Bembury** discussed a past experience with an EMS response that turned into a domestic violence response. **Selectman Bembury** explained that because the call was not clear the EMS response was delayed until law enforcement could arrive. **Selectman Bembury** expressed the importance of a proper policy and procedure that outlines the use and maintenance of the equipment. **Selectman Bembury** discussed wanting to ensure the protection of Fire Department staff. **Selectman Bembury** asked Chief Wonkka to send the Board imagery of the proposed equipment for the Board to review. Chief Wonkka will send images to Board members. **Chairman Smith** discussed the need to develop a plan to ensure that there is equipment at both fire stations so that the policy that is implemented will be followed. Chief Wonkka discussed implementing the program in phases and would begin with the grant funds that are available and can be further developed in the next fiscal year. The Board will review a draft policy at a future meeting.

Selectman Bembury motioned to approve the Emergency Management Preparedness Grant for FFY2020 in the amount of \$2,700 and for Chief Wonkka to serve as the signatory for the grant. **Selectman Sanders** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Discussion Regarding Town Response to COVID-19 (revisited)

Chief Wonkka explained that it is his understanding that several Franklin County agencies are trying to coordinate the distribution of vaccine for first responders. Chief Wonkka explained that once the plans are finalized, they will be communicated to the Board. Chief Wonkka discussed the need for the Board members to set policy on vaccination requirements for staff members. **Chairman Smith** expressed agreement and discussed the need for the Board to understand the implementation plan and legalities of the situation and to develop a policy. Chief Wonkka explained that he expects a large vaccination event to be organized in Western Massachusetts in coordination with the State with the potential for a Franklin County level vaccination program. The Board will revisit this topic at a future Board meeting.

COVID-19 Forgivable Loan Application- Freight House Antiques

The Board members reviewed a memorandum from Bryan that explained that an application for loan forgiveness from Jeffrey & Rita Dubay, owners of Freight House Antiques, under the COVID-19 Micro-Enterprise Relief Program had been received. Bryan explained that the applicants have demonstrated that the loaned funds were used in accordance with program requirements. Bryan explained that he recommends that the Board of Selectmen grant relief allowed by the program and forgive the loan of \$4,795.00 in full. **Selectman Bembury** asked if the Board can issue additional loans under the COVID-19 Micro-enterprise Relief Program. Bryan explained that the Board sets the application period and has that discretion. Bryan added that the Board cannot change the income eligibility requirements. **Chairman**

Smith asked for an explanation of available funds to make additional loans. Bryan explained that there was approximately \$5,000 remaining to issue loans if the Board wanted to. **Selectman Bembury** expressed support for continuing to make the program available to eligible Erving businesses until funds are exhausted. **Chairman Smith** expressed support for accepting another application. Bryan will work with Mariah Kurtz, Assistant Town Planner, to advertise the opportunity.

Selectman Sanders made a motion to approve the loan forgiveness application submitted by Jeffrey Dubay & Rita Dubay of Freight House Antiques, Inc. and Odin Enterprises, Inc. at 11 East Main Street, Erving, MA through the Town of Erving's COVID-19 Micro-enterprise Relief Program, in the amount of \$4,795.00, and to issue all necessary loan discharge instruments. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Adjournment

At 7:17 PM **Chairman Smith** made a motion to adjourn. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Bryan Smith
Town Administrator