

Board: Select Board / Water Commissioner's Meeting
Date: Monday, February 22, 2021
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
Finance Committee: Daniel Hammock, Benjamin Fellows, Charles Zilinski, Debra Smith
Capital Planning Committee: Benjamin Fellows, Debra Smith, Linda Downs-Bembury, Jacob Smith
Also, Present: Bryan Smith, Adam Paicos, David Rice, Robert Holst, Sarah Vega-Liros, Scott Bastarache, Marcia Bernard, Brandon Bryant, Gregory Moretti, Peter Sanders, Lisa Slonus, Lisa Holst, William Storti, Chelsey Grogan, James Loynd, Mariah Kurtz, Henry Balzarini, Glenn McCrory, Amanda Flower
Press: Katherine Nolan, Montague Reporter; Max Marcus, Greenfield Recorder

At 6:04 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 the Town is working with regional partners to support the vaccination site at the Jon Zon Community Center in Greenfield. **Chairman Smith** explained that Erving has had no new COVID-19 positive cases in the last two (2) week period and that the Franklin County numbers have continued to decrease since the significant increase experienced in January 2021. Bryan Smith, Town Administrator, explained that individuals that are age 65 and older are now eligible for vaccination and that the Town's Senior Center staff are assisting Erving residents with the registration process. Bryan explained that Chief Wonka continues to provide support to the Greenfield vaccination site.

Library Construction Project Update & Review of Change Order Requests

Bryan explained that representatives from the Town will be meeting with the Owner's Project Manager, Architect, and the General Contractor to conduct a final site walk of the Library facility on Friday, February 26, 2021.

River, Warner & Strachan Street Project Update & Change Orders

Bryan explained that the representatives from the Town will be meeting with engineers from Weston & Sampson at the site to review the findings from the recent survey that was completed. An update regarding the project for the Board should be ready for next week.

Discussion Regarding Chief of Police Position Search & Interviews

Scott Bastarache, Chief of Police Screening Committee Chairman, joined the Select Board to review the Screening Committee's process memorandum. Scott explained that the applicant pool included several highly qualified applicants and that the Screening Committee invited four (4) applicants to interview. Scott explained that the Screening Committee has provided two (2) finalists for the Board's consideration. **Selectman Bembury** discussed wanting to move forward to the final round of interviews with the recommended final candidates. **Chairman Smith** clarified that finalists presented by the Screening Committee are Robert Holst and David Rice. **Selectman Bembury** spoke in support of the Board using the interview questions as presented. **Chairman Smith** discussed wanting to add a question about how the

candidates view incorporating the use of body camera equipment into the operation of the Police Department and furthering the Department's mission. **Selectman Bembury** expressed support for the additional question and discussed how Erving was the first Franklin County Police Department to institute a body camera use program. The Board discussed the Police Department's progressive stance on technology use.

Regarding the format for the interviews, **Chairman Smith** discussed the challenges with conducting the interviews in-person and allowing for public participation with the current restrictions related to the State of Emergency. **Chairman Smith** expressed support for utilizing an online meeting platform to maintain public participation while acknowledging that the online platform is not the most desirable method for conducting an interview. **Selectman Bembury** discussed the importance of protecting the public and allowing the public to participate in the process. Scott asked if there was a way to allow the Select Board to meet in person with the candidates while allowing online participation for the public. The Select Board agreed that logistically it would be too challenging to manage both an in-person interview and to facilitate the online participation. The Select Board agreed to conduct final interviews on Wednesday March 03, 2021 with the meeting beginning at 6:00 PM and the first interview beginning at 6:15 PM. The Board agreed to allow for up to one (1) hour for each interview. The Board agreed to provide the predetermined questions to the candidates in advance of the interview. Scott expressed his support for providing the candidates with time to review the predetermined interview questions and to prepare in-depth answers.

FY2022 Budget Request Review, STM Warrant Review & Church Street Bridge- Joint Meeting with the Finance Committee & Capital Committee

At 6:33 PM **Chairman Smith** called the joint meeting of the Select Board, the Finance Committee, and the Capital Planning Committee to order.

Discussion Regarding Church Street Bridge & Traffic Plan

Chairman Smith gave an overview of the need to reduce the use of the Church Street bridge and to develop a traffic plan to submit to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). Chairman Smith explained that MassDOT is sending the Town an official notice and the Town will have two (2) weeks to enact a plan once received. William Storti and Lisa Slonus, Engineers with Weston & Sampson, joined the meeting to discuss traffic options. William explained that the Town has three (3) options to choose from, including the complete closure of the bridge, bilateral direction traffic over the bridge with a single lane of traffic that would require a traffic light system, or one-way traffic with a single road direction. William explained that the recommendation is for the Town to consider a complete closure of the bridge or 1-way traffic with a single lane. Lisa explained the opposition to traffic lights creating an intersection at Church and North streets with traffic lights and suggested the complete closure of the bridge. **Chairman Smith** acknowledged the recommendation and explained the safety concerns about creating a situation where two-way traffic on North Street is forced to turn on and off of Route 2. Lisa discussed the narrow layout of North Street and the proximity to other structures. Bryan also spoke to safety concerns with traffic entering and exiting Route 2 and suggested that the Town make the bridge one-way with a single lane and a preference for southbound directional traffic on Church Street with northbound directional traffic on North Street until the bridge. Bryan discussed challenges with truck traffic on these streets even after a truck exclusion was approved and posted. Lisa discussed the option for southbound traffic on Church Street and northbound traffic on North Street and explained the development of a detour signage plan to help minimize the impact with non-local traffic. **Chairman Smith** discussed the need to consider potential impacts on High Street and Mountain Road.

Linda Downs-Bembury discussed her experience living on Church Street and observing the changing traffic with use of GPS devices. Linda discussed opposition to alternate traffic lights and explained her preference for southbound traffic on Church Street and northbound traffic on North Street or to close the bridge. Debra Smith asked what could be done to address traffic impacts on Route 2 and spoke to the safety concerns. Debra explained the current impacts of left hand turning from Route 2 on to North Street and Church Street. **Chairman Smith** discussed agreement with the concerns. Bryan added the occasional impacts of closures on Route 2 due to accidents and the requirement to use North Street as a detour route to connect motorists to Route 63 and Route 10 in Northfield. **Selectman Bembury** discussed his experience with seasonal high volume traffic impacts on Church Street and discussed support for closing the bridge until a decision about replacement can be made. **Selectman Bembury** discussed the existing challenges with too much signage and the continued challenges of enforcing the truck exclusion.

Chairman Smith asked if it was an option to restrict traffic on Church and North streets to local traffic only. **Chairman Smith** also asked for the team to consider if the Church Street bridge needs to be replaced or if it could be removed and a different permanent traffic flow could be identified. Sarah Vega-Liros, resident, expressed support for one-way traffic on Church Street or for closing the bridge. The Select Board, Finance Committee, and Capital Planning Committee discussed the engineering proposal from Weston & Sampson and agreed that there were no concerns with the proposal and that a funding request should be included on the Special Town Meeting warrant. **Chairman Smith** asked for rough estimate of a cost to replace a bridge like the Church Street bridge. Lisa explained that there a several factors that would impact cost, but a preliminary budget estimate might be approximately \$1 Million.

Bryan asked the Select Board for guidance on next steps, asking if the Board prefers a one-way traffic plan or a plan with the closure of the bridge. The Board members agreed that they would like to wait until the official notice from MassDOT is received before agreeing to a preferred option. Lisa explained that next steps would include developing a temporary signage plan. Lisa acknowledged the feedback shared during the meeting with the concerns about sight lines for southbound traffic turning onto Route 2. **Selectman Bembury** again spoke to his support for closing the bridge and discussed wanting to minimize the impacts to the community. Bryan summarized his understanding of the next steps for working on a signage plan.

Review of Special Town Meeting Warrant Draft

The Select Board, Finance Committee, and Capital Planning Committee reviewed the draft Special Town Meeting warrant that is anticipated to occur in March 2021.

Article 1: Additional FY2021 Appropriation for the Police Department

The boards reviewed Article 1 which would appropriate \$122,000 from Free Cash to fund operating expenses in the FY2021 Police Department budget. Bryan explained the various unanticipated staffing changes that are necessitating the request. **Selectman Bembury** asked if the appropriation was only for salary expenses. Bryan explained that the requested appropriation would be used towards salary, overtime, and training costs. The Select Board and the Finance Committee agreed that they have no concerns with the Article as presented.

Article 2: Decorative Streetlight Repair Project

The boards reviewed Article 2 which would appropriate \$80,000 from Free Cash to fund the repair of decorative streetlights on East Main Street, West Main Street, and Lillian's Way. Bryan explained that the Town previously conducted a procurement to fix the lights and install new wiring that was failed when the only bid received was \$80,000 in cost. Debra asked Bryan had confident the Town is in the \$80,000 cost for the work. Bryan expressed concern, noting that the Town has received three (3) different cost

estimates that range from \$10,000 to \$80,000, and explaining that the higher cost estimated was anticipating significant labor. Bryan explained that he would like to revisit the scope of work and potentially use the State procurement contract to expedite the quote process to see what can be done to bring down the costs. **Selectman Bembury** discussed his support for replacing the decorative lights and asked if the project could wait until the Town reconsiders what the desired streetlight design should be, noting that the current lighting layout is overwhelming when lit. **Selectman Bembury** also expressed concern about the cost estimate. Bryan acknowledged the concerns and raised a concern about not proceeding and the timeline for securing an appropriation and conducting the work. **Selectman Bembury** explained that he would like the Select Board to discuss how to proceed with decorative lighting. **Chairman Smith** asked what it might cost to remove. Glenn McCrory, Highway Superintendent, explained that it depends on how the conduits are run and how the fixtures are wired to one another. Linda suggested that the Town contract with a lighting engineer to work on the project. Benjamin Fellows, Finance Committee Chairman, expressed support and suggested changing Article to fund engineering. **Chairman Smith** and **Selectman Bembury** expressed support for the change. Bryan will revise the Article.

Article 3: Church Street Bridge Replacement Engineering Project

The boards reviewed Article 3 which would appropriate \$195,000 from Free Cash to fund the Church Street Bridge engineering project. Bryan explained that this Article reflects the engineering needs for the project that the boards just met about and noted that the Capital Planning Committee previously met about the project and recommended that a funding article for the engineering work be presented for consideration. Debra noted that the word “thousand” is missing from the Article language. Bryan will amend the Article. The Select Board, Finance Committee, and Capital Planning Committee agreed that they have no concerns with the Article as amended.

Article 4: Purchase of Solar Powered Message Board

The boards reviewed Article 4 which would appropriate \$20,000 from Free Cash to fund the purchase of a solar powered messaging board that would be used by public works and public safety. Bryan explained that the proposed message board would be similar to a unit the Town already owns and would be used in part to help communicate traffic pattern changes with the Church Street bridge project. **Chairman Smith** asked if it would be possible for the Town to explore grant funding options. Bryan answered “yes” but expressed concern about the potential timeline delays in seeking and receiving grant funds in consideration to when the Town needs to begin communicating traffic pattern changes. **Selectman Bembury** expressed support for the Article. The Select Board, Finance Committee, and Capital Planning Committee agreed that they have no concerns with the Article as presented.

Article 5: Wastewater Emergency Generator Replacement Project for POTW#1

The boards reviewed Article 5 which would appropriate \$80,000 from Retained Earnings in the Wastewater Enterprise Fund to pay for the purchase and installation of a new emergency generator for POTW#1. Bryan explained that the treatment plant’s emergency generator is believed to be original to the construction of the plant and it failed in the fall of 2020 and cannot be repaired. The Select Board, Finance Committee, and Capital Planning Committee agreed that they have no concerns with the Article as presented.

Article 6: Rescind Borrowing Authorization for Erving Center Wastewater Treatment Plant

The boards reviewed Article 6 which would rescind the borrowing authority in the amount of \$17,940,000 for improvements at POTW#2 that was approved at the October 03, 2020 Special Town Meeting. **Chairman Smith** asked Bryan to amend the article information to stated that the borrowing option was

no longer viable for Erving Industries. The Select Board, Finance Committee, and Capital Planning Committee agreed that they have no concerns with the Article as amended.

Article 7: To Acquire Parcel 17 Moore Street

The boards reviewed Article 7 which would authorize the Select Board to use eminent domain to take the former library parcel at 17 Moore Street. **Chairman Smith** explained that the Town is working on the plan to sell the graded school building on the neighboring parcel and became aware of an issue with title for the 17 Moore Street property. Bryan explained that the taking would clarify the title concern. The Select Board, Finance Committee, and Capital Planning Committee agreed that they have no concerns with the Article as presented.

The boards discussed the possible date and format for a Special Town Meeting. **Chairman Smith** suggested holding the meeting on a Saturday. Bryan will follow up with the Town Moderator and Town Clerk for potential dates at the end of March or the beginning of April.

Review of FY2022 Budget Requests & Revenue Review

The Select Board, the Finance Committee, and the Capital Planning Committee reviewed the FY2022 draft budget overview with anticipated revenue and tentative expenses. **Chairman Smith** noted that the current draft budget and the proposed Special Town Meeting articles would present a deficit of approximately \$400,000. **Chairman Smith** asked if there are any areas that members would like to look at for reductions. Debra suggested that that boards revisit the FY2022 capital plan. **Chairman Smith** agreed and discussed reviewing the master project list as well. **Chairman Smith** asked if the Capital Stabilization funding article should be reduced from \$250,000 for FY2022. Bryan discussed moving the project to upgrade the Assessors' software out one (1) more year, which would be a reduction of \$20,000. The boards expressed agreement. Debra suggested removing the appropriation for the design and construction of the Riverfront Park boat launch for a reduction of \$15,000. Linda discussed support. The boards expressed agreement. **Chairman Smith** suggested removing the appropriation for the public works office and dry storage building for a reduction of \$150,000 and waiting until the conceptual design is done to discuss funding construction. The boards expressed agreement.

The Select Board and the Finance Committee reviewed the draft FY2022 operating budget to consider budget reductions. Bryan explained that he had met with department heads and has some suggested operating budget reductions for the boards to consider. Bryan suggested a reduction of \$10,000 for legal counsel. **Chairman Smith** spoke against the suggested reduction, noting the need to negotiate a labor union agreement in FY2022. **Selectman Bembury** expressed agreement with the Chairman. Bryan suggested a reduction in ground maintenance services by \$10,000. Bryan noted that the budget would still reflect an increase and that the scope of work for contracted services would need to be refined. **Selectman Bembury** and **Chairman Smith** expressed support for the reduction to ground maintenance. Bryan suggested reducing the health insurance line-item request by \$60,000 for a new total of \$1,290,000. Bryan explained that the Town had anticipated premium increases for health insurance and that the Town now knows that the Health Insurance Trust voted not to increase premiums. Bryan added that the health insurance line-item request still includes a \$40,000 increase that will help cover staffing changes and life events. **Selectman Bembury** and **Chairman Smith** expressed support for the health insurance line-item reduction. Bryan suggested that in the Wastewater budget that \$5,000 could be reduced in electricity and \$5,000 could be reduced in chemicals. Debra asked for an explanation of the departmental expenses to date. Peter Sanders, Water & Wastewater Superintendent, joined the meeting to explain the expenses to date. Peter expressed support for the suggested reduction.

Regarding the Police Department budget request, **Chairman Smith** reminded the Select Board and the Finance Committee members that since December the boards have been considering whether or not to increase the FY2022 departmental budget request to be level funded with FY2021. Robert Holst, Sergeant and Acting Chief of Police, joined the meeting and articulated that the budget request presented as a reduction because of the retirements of long-term employees and the anticipated hiring of new staff at lower rates of pay. Sergeant Holst spoke in favor of level funding the budget request. **Selectman Bembury** expressed his support for level funding the Police Department budget request.

Chairman Smith asked to table discussion the topic of wage and stipend adjustments for the positions of Emergency Management Director, Assistant Emergency Management Director, Information Technology Coordinator, and Information Technology Technician. The Select Board and Finance Committee agreed.

Chairman Smith summarized the draft budget amendments that were discussed and suggested that the appropriation into the Capital Stabilization Fund is reduced to \$150,000 which is a reduction of \$100,000. Benjamin expressed support. The boards expressed agreement.

The Finance Committee and the Select Board will next meet on March 01, 2022 at 7:00 PM to review the revised FY2022 budget draft, the revised Special Town Meeting warrant, to consider the outstanding wage related items, and to consider an engineering proposal regarding streetlights.

At 9:29 PM **Chairman Smith** made a motion to adjourn the joint meeting of the Select Board, Finance Committee and Capital Planning Committee and to continue with the Select Board meeting. Debra Smith seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Discussion Regarding POTW#2 Sludge Dryer Project

No update at this time.

COVID-19 Micro-enterprise Loan Forgiveness Application- Artscape Landscaping

Bryan explained that a loan forgiveness application was received from Arthur A. Kaczinski II, owner of Artscape Landscape & Design under the Town's COVID-19 micro-enterprise relief program. Bryan explained that the applicant has demonstrated that the funds were used in accordance with the program terms and therefore recommends loan forgiveness in the amount of \$4,795.00. The Board discussed having no concerns with the recommendation. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to motion to approve the loan forgiveness application submitted by Arthur A. Kaczinski II, owner of Artscape Landscape & Design at 3 Rose Lane, 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.

Review of Meeting Minutes for April 27, 2020

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Review of Meeting Minutes for December 14, 2020

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Review of Meeting Minutes for January 04, 2021

The Board reviewed meeting minutes for Monday, January 04, 2021. **Selectman Bembury** made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of January 04, 2021 as written. **Chairman Smith** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Review of Meeting Minutes for January 11, 2021

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Review of Meeting Minutes for January 25, 2021

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Review of Meeting Minutes for February 08, 2021

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Review of Engineering Proposal for Wastewater Smoke & Dye Testing Project

Peter Sanders, Water & Wastewater Superintendent, joined the meeting to discuss the proposed smoke and dye testing project for the wastewater system. **Chairman Smith** provided an overview of the project and explained that the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection is requiring the Town to conduct the work to identify potential sources of unauthorized system flow. The Select Board discussed the proposed professional engineering services from Tighe & Bond to conduct the testing work. **Chairman Smith** asked Peter to confirm that a communications plan will be developed and implemented for property owners connected to the wastewater system. Peter confirmed the communications work will be completed prior to the testing work. The Select Board discussed having no concerns with proceeding. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to approve the engineering professional services proposal for the smoke and dye testing for the wastewater system, to be conducted by Tighe & Bond in an amount not to exceed \$65,200.00. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Review of Engineering Proposal for Complete Streets Project

The Board passed over this agenda item.

Review of FY2022 Heating Oil, Gasoline, and Diesel Procurements

Chairman Smith made a motion to extend the fuel procurement service contracts for the stated vendor and term, in fiscal year 2022, as follows:

Vendor	Service	Term
Roberts Energy, LLC	Diesel Fuel	July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022
Dennis K. Burke	Unleaded Gasoline	July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022
Roberts Energy, LLC	No. 2 Heating Oil- Trailer Transport	July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022
Sprague	No. 2 Heating Oil- Metered Pump Truck	July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022

And to authorize Bryan Smith, Town Administrator, to execute the buy order forms. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

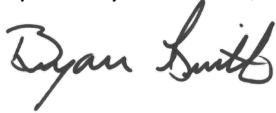
Review of Tentative Subdivision Proposal for 17 Moore Street & 18 Pleasant Street

The Board reviewed a draft plan for land division for the former library parcel at 17 Moore Street and the former graded school parcel at 18 Pleasant Street. Bryan explained that the parcel for 17 Moore Street requires additional land to remain a buildable lot and that it is proposed that the needed land could be taken from the 18 Pleasant Street parcel. Bryan also explained that a title issue has been identified for the 17 Moore Street property from when it was once owned by the Orange- Erving School District #3 in the 1800's. The recommendation is to ask the voters to approve an eminent domain taking authorization for the Select Board to allow a taking of the property to rectify the title issue. The Board discussed the proposals and express support for proceeding as recommended.

Adjournment

At 9:47 PM **Chairman Smith** made a motion to adjourn. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:**
Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bryan Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bryan Smith
Town Administrator