



OFFICE OF THE SELECTBOARD
272 Main Street Townsend Massachusetts 01469



Chaz Sexton-Diranian, *Chairman*

Joseph Z. Shank, *Vice Chairman*

Theresa A. Morse, *Clerk*

R. Eric Slagle, *Town Administrator*

Sabrina Moore, *Administrative Assistant*

RECEIVED
FEB 13 2024

TOWN OF TOWNSEND
TOWN CLERK

Topic: Selectboard

Time: January 23, 2024 18:00 Eastern Time {US and Canada}

I. PRELIMINARIES:

1.1 Call the meeting to order and roll call.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

1.3 Announce the meeting is being recorded and uploaded to YouTube.

1.4 Chairman's Additions or Deletions.

1.5 Review/Approve the meeting minutes for 01/09/2024.

II. APPOINTMENTS AND HEARINGS:

2.1 (6:05) Joint Meeting with Finance Committee and Nashoba Tech to discuss the school budget.

2.2 (6:30) Energy Committee Presentation of Master Plan.

Board of Selectmen meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. with Chaz Sexton-Diranian in person, Joseph Z. Shank in person, Theresa A. Morse in person.

Pledge of Allegiance recited.

Chaz Sexton-Diranian announced that the meeting is being recorded, live on channel 9, and will be on the Town's YouTube channel afterwards. An early executive session was announced.

Additions: None

Deletions: None

Moved to February 06, 2024 meeting.

No vote on anything by Finance Committee due to posting issue. The Finance Committee was present. Denise Pigeon Superintendent from Nashoba Tech, Michelle Shepard, Michelle Beauvais, Karen Chapman, and Sheldon Chapman were present as well. Denise Pigeon came to the table with handouts. The presentation was shared on the screen. An open seat for an alternate was announced. An increase in various costs was presented. Enrollment has increased including high enrollment of Townsend students as of October 1, 2023. The governor's budget will be released on 01/24/24. Estimates and projections were given, and an overview of the school process timeline was given. The Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee were invited to the school breakfast when the numbers are finalized. The Town Administrator asked for a finalized document for posting on the Town website. A question was clarified about fire suppression as part of the renovation of the school building.

Mike Brown and Ron Montgomery from the Energy Committee were present. The Energy Committee had difficulty getting Volunteers for the Subcommittee. The Energy Committee asked to share their goals with the various other Townsend Master Plan departments with a referral process for others to comment on and act as an appendix to the Townsend Master Plan with the idea to apply the Energy Committee goals to their sections to ensure that each section of the Master Plan has a focus on energy. This was a change from the original Energy Committee plan. The Board of Selectmen agreed that this would need to go to the Planning Board as a next step. The idea was to have the

III. APPOINTMENTS OF
OFFICIALS/PERSONNEL:

3.1 Appoint Richard Bernier as heavy
equipment operator to the Highway
Department effective
01/22/2024 with start date 01/22/2024.

IV. MEETING BUSINESS:

4.1 Approve/Adopt Remote Participation
Policy – 2nd Reading.
-Implement after Meeting Room 2 is fully
operational.

4.2 Discuss creation of Memorial Hall Policy.

4.3 Surplus Request Facilities – RE: Chairs.

4.4 Discuss cell phone use during meetings –
Meeting Decorum Policy.

4.5 Discuss/Vote on opt-out of vote by mail
for Local Elections.

Master Plan reviewed by section every year. Laurie Shifrin
Chairman of the Planning Board agreed remotely.

Motion was made by Theresa A. Morse and seconded by Joseph
Z. Shank to approve the plan of the Energy Committee with the
goals as presented and refer to the Planning Board for next steps.
Motion was passed with Chaz Sexton-Diranian yes, Joseph Z.
Shank yes, Theresa A. Morse yes.

Motion was made by Theresa A. Morse and seconded by Joseph
Z. Shank to appoint Richard Bernier as heavy equipment
operator to the Highway Department effective 01/22/2024 with
start date 01/22/2024. Motion was passed with Chaz Sexton-
Diranian yes, Joseph Z. Shank yes, Theresa A. Morse yes.

Moved to February 6, 2024 meeting.

Motion was made by Theresa A. Morse and seconded by Joseph
Z. Shank to establish a Memorial Hall/Great Hall fee schedule
that would be Town Boards and Departments at no charge,
Townsend non-profits and community groups at \$100 for the
first 3 hours and \$25 for any hour over that, private events at
\$150 for the first 3 hours and \$50 for any hour over that and all
non-departmental users would be required to submit a \$50
security deposit that would be returnable if the Memorial
Hall/Great Hall was left in good condition with an application
and on first come first serve basis. as outlined above. Motion was
passed with Chaz Sexton-Diranian yes, Joseph Z. Shank yes,
Theresa A. Morse yes.

Motion was made by Theresa A. Morse and seconded by Joseph
Z. Shank to surplus any chairs over 228 in the Great Hall
stage/area. Motion was passed with Chaz Sexton-Diranian yes,
Joseph Z. Shank yes, Theresa A. Morse yes.

The Board agreed the computer and phone should be silenced.
The Board agreed to add an amendment to the Board of
Selectmen Decorum Policy at the 02/06/24 meeting as a 1st
reading.

Taken out of order. Town Clerk Kathy Spofford was present.
The Town Administrator briefly explained the financial reasons
for an opt out since the cost of voting by mail would be
prohibitive for the Town. Motion was made by Chaz Sexton-
Diranian and seconded by Theresa A. Morse to exercise the opt-
out of vote by mail for Local Elections. Motion was passed with
Chaz Sexton-Diranian yes, Joseph Z. Shank yes, Theresa A.

V. WORK SESSION:

5.0 ARPA Projects

-ARPA Project Request Form for ARPA bonus payments.

Morse no. Town Hall posting, and website posting will follow to inform the Public.

Project request forms for bonus payments moved to February 6, 2024.

Forms were handed out to the Board and also available for review on the SharePoint.

- Motion was made by Theresa A. Morse and seconded by Joseph Z. Shank to reallocate \$9,886 from ARPA 05 (ARPA Reporting) to cover overage in ARPA 10 (Water Treatment Plant Engineering). Motion was passed with Chaz Sexton-Diranian yes, Joseph Z. Shank yes, Theresa A. Morse yes.
- Motion was made by Theresa A. Morse and seconded by Joseph Z. Shank to reallocate \$29 from ARPA 05 (ARPA Reporting) to cover overage in ARPA 22 (Gazebo Improvement). Motion was passed with Chaz Sexton-Diranian yes, Joseph Z. Shank yes, Theresa A. Morse yes.
- Motion was made by Theresa A. Morse and seconded by Joseph Z. Shank to reallocate \$3,284 from ARPA 05 (ARPA Reporting) to cover overage in ARPA 18 (Public Safety Expenses). Motion was passed with Chaz Sexton-Diranian yes, Joseph Z. Shank yes, Theresa A. Morse yes.
- Motion was made by Theresa A. Morse and seconded by Joseph Z. Shank to reallocate \$49,856 from ARPA 05 (ARPA Reporting) to ARPA 9 (Broadband & WIFI). Motion was passed with Chaz Sexton-Diranian yes, Joseph Z. Shank yes, Theresa A. Morse yes. The project costs ended up more than expected.

-Update on building assessment.

Update on Building assessment. The contract is being reviewed and signed shortly for crews to be out in the building after the frost is gone.

5.1 Town Administrator Updates and Reports

The Town vehicle has been on auction. Not many bids came in so far. The reserve of \$11,000 can be lowered. The Board agreed to drop the reserve if the vehicle doesn't sell.

Intermunicipal agreement PREC (Intermunicipal agreement for the shared provision of public safety communications, dispatch and operational services) to add Dunstable and Groton to the PREC. Signatures are needed. The Board signed up at the meeting.

Tentative Public Hearing of the Planning Board on April 8, 2024 for the updated overlay district bylaw. The Planning Board was looking for comments. They have worked on the draft to update the bylaw. The Board agreed to turnaround the feedback by the end of February.

Request from TAYSA to extend the length of the 3-year lease on the soccer fields for Town Meeting. Town Counsel will review what is needed. The lease was based on maintenance and remainder of the site in its natural habitat.

Meeting with MART about Shuttle service for Fitchburg Intermodal center was held. To increase ridership the idea was to engage with visitors of the Senior Center and possible surveys to Townsend Woods with different shuttle times. The Board okayed the potential shift and directed the Town Administrator to reach out to the Council on Aging. The question came up whether use of the shuttle to go shopping within Townsend would be possible, but this would increase costs as another stop would be added.

Eric Slagle gave an update on happenings at the MMA conference. The Governor was there and announced a filing of the Municipal Empowerment Act bill. When this bill gets passed the Town Administrator will

5.2 Reports from Board liaisons

5.2.1 General Government

5.2.2 Elected Boards

5.2.3 Public Safety

General Government - Theresa A. Morse gave update given on Capital Planning Committee and Energy Committee. Eric Slagle was directed to talk to Rise Engineering.

Elected Boards - Chaz Sexton-Diranian gave brief update on Water Department, Affordable Housing Trust and Housing Authority.

Public Safety - Joseph Z. Shank gave update on Fire Department, Police Department, Building Department and Animal Control officer.

5.3 Announcements/Communications

- Passing of Townsend Representative of the NMRSD School Committee.

- Resale Notice for 13 Coppersmith Way.

- Announcement of passing of the NMRSD School Committee Townsend Representative Susan Robbins.
- Resale of 13 Coppersmith Way.

5.4 Next meeting

Next meetings will be Wednesday 01/24/2024, at 12 p.m, Saturday 01/27/2024, at 9 a.m., Tuesday, February 6, 6 pm.

5.5 Review and sign payroll and bills payable warrants out of session.

Motion was made by Theresa Morse and seconded by Joseph Z. Shank to review and sign payroll and bills payable warrants out of session. Chaz Sexton-Diranian yes, Joseph Z. Shank yes, Theresa A. Morse yes.

VI: EXECUTIVE SESSION:

6.1 2) Executive Session pursuant to GL c. 30A, s. 21(a)(3)

Motion was made by Theresa A. Morse and seconded by Joseph Z. Shank to enter Executive Session at 6:59 p.m. and to come back from Executive Session:

6.1 2) Executive Session pursuant to GL c. 30A, s. 21(a)(3), to discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. Motion was passed with Chaz Sexton-Diranian yes, Joseph Z. Shank yes, Theresa A. Morse yes,

6.1 1) Executive Session pursuant to GL c. 30A, s. 21(a)(3)

6.1 1) Motion was made by Theresa A. Morse and seconded by Joseph Z. Shank to enter Executive Session at 8:40 p.m and to adjourn from executive session pursuant to GL c. 30A, s. 21(a)(3), to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares. Motion was passed with Chaz Sexton-Diranian yes, Joseph Z. Shank yes, Theresa A. Morse yes.

Recording of meeting found
at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lHtMJfujtE0&list=PLQpCwUSpXeCa-inxdzK0jQMgEx3wCFBbE&index=2&t=5334s>

Minutes submitted by Sabrina Moore on 02/06/2024.

