

Town of Auburn, Massachusetts
Board of Selectmen Minutes
Remote Participation Meeting
February 8, 2021- 6:00 P.M.

Participating remotely: Doreen M. Goodrich, Tristan Laliberte, Daniel Carpenter, Lionel Berthiaume, Scott C. Wrenn
Also: Town Manager Julie A. Jacobson and Asst. Town Manager/CFO Ed Kazanovicz

The Chair, Doreen Goodrich, called the meeting order at 6:00 P.M

The Chair Doreen Goodrich stated that this Open Meeting of the Town of Auburn Board of Selectmen is being conducted remotely, consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, which suspends the requirement of the Open Meeting Law to have all meetings in a publicly accessible physical location. Further, all members of public bodies are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely as long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting.

Ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law. For the public to join the meeting remotely by telephone, call 1-408-650-3123 and enter Access Code 235-235-861. Or, the public can join via computer at <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/235235861>.

All supporting materials that have been provided to the members of this body are available on the Town's website. The public is encouraged to follow along using the posted agenda.

As a preliminary matter, the Chair confirmed that all members and employees participating in the agenda were present and could hear her:

- o Tristan Laliberte - Yes
- o Lionel Berthiaume - Yes
- o Daniel Carpenter - Yes
- o Scott Wrenn -Yes

Also,

- o Town Manager Julie Jacobson - Yes
- o CFO/Asst. Town Manager Ed Kazanovicz - Yes
- o Administrative Assistant Sharon Kwiatkowski - Yes

Mrs. Goodrich announced that there is a public hearing under agenda item 2a) that was continued from the last meeting. This hearing is for the Notice of Intent to sell land at 50 Washington Street. There is a call-in number for those who want to speak during this

public hearing. She noted that abutter notices were mailed for the Chapter 61 hearing on the Notice of Intent to sell land at 50 Washington Street.

Chair Doreen Goodrich announced that she would be recusing herself from the public hearing on the Notice of Intent to sell land at 50 Washington Street because she is an abutter and has been advised so by the State Ethics Commission. She stated that Vice Chairman Tristan Laliberte would chair the continued public hearing.

The Chair also noted that the meeting was being recorded by Auburn Cable Television and she stated that all votes to be taken in this meeting will be conducted by roll call vote.

Mrs. Goodrich then recused herself for the first agenda item and turned off her camera and microphone and turned the gavel over to Vice Chairman Laliberte.

Public Hearings/Presentations

Public Hearing on Notice of Intent to Sell Land at 50 Washington Street. Auburn, MA. - 6:00 P.M. continued hearing.

At 6:02 P.M. the Board of Selectmen voted to re-open the public hearing on the Notice of Intent to Sell Land at 50 Washington Street. Auburn, MA. (Motion made by Mr. Wrenn; motion seconded by Mr. Berthiaume) roll call vote: Mr. Berthiaume, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mr. Laliberte, Yes - passed 4 to 0.

The Town Manager gave an update during which she described two letters that were received from the Conservation Commission and the Economic Development Committee. Both groups voted to not recommend that the Town exercise its right of first refusal on the 50 Washington Street property (i.e. not to purchase the land).

Ms. Jacobson further noted that the Open Space Committee, Planning Board and Town Departments had made the same recommendation as well (not to purchase the land).

Mr. Laliberte asked if there were any abutters or others on the call now and wished to comment on the matter. None were indicated.

Mr. Clay Williams of Eastland Partners was participating remotely and advised that he had no additional comments to make than those he had stated at the first hearing.

Vice Chair Tristan Laliberte asked if the board members had further comments. None were indicated.

The Board then voted to close the hearing at 6:08 P.M. (Motion made by Mr. Berthiaume; motion seconded by Mr. Wrenn) roll call vote: Mr. Berthiaume, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mr. Laliberte, Yes - passed 4 to 0.

The Board of Selectmen voted to waive its right of first refusal (Motion made by Mr. Carpenter; motion seconded by Mr. Wrenn).

Mr. Laliberte asked if there were any comments on the motion. There being none, the Board voted on the motion by roll call; Mr. Berthiaume, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mr. Laliberte, Yes - passed 4 to 0.

Mrs. Goodrich connected back to the meeting and resumed the Chair.

Presentation by Tecton Architects on Updated Public Safety Facilities Feasibility Study Project

Town Manager Julie Jacobson introduced the item. Jeff McElravy and Matt Salad, Dennis Ross and Katrina of Tecton Architects were participating remotely, as well as the Fire Chief Stephen Coleman and Deputy Fire Chief Glenn Johnson.

Tecton Architects Jeff McElravy and Matt Salad gave a brief recap of where they are right now in the process since last year. They reviewed and discussed the project site test- fits for the preferred locations for the public safety facility: Lowes site, Shaw's site and Sears site.

Their presentation discussed the following topics relating to costs:

- Review project opinion of probable costs
- Public Safety opinion of probable costs
- Public Safety project cost comparisons
- Construction cost escalation/year

Also presented were precedent reviews for the Town of Charlton Public Safety Facility and for the Shrewsbury Police Station.

Board members held discussion and asked questions concerning the information.

Mr. Berthiaume asked CFO Ed Kazanovicz about the cost of the proposal and what would be the next steps if we were to go out for RFP.

Ed Kazanovicz began by stating that a project of this magnitude should be determined by the voters. He advised that the cost was projected to be about 46 million and payments could span over 25 - 30 years.

Mr. Kazanovicz gave an overall view of the cost to finance the project and restructuring debt so as not to have overlap with any debt (e.g. the high school debt). He said that the high school debt would be retired before assuming debt for the public safety facility.

Mr. Kazanovicz said that we also need to promote the project and educate the public. He reviewed the estimated effect on the tax rate.

Mr. Berthiaume noted that we have to go for an RFP to get better cost estimates for the voters to make a decision concerning this project.

Ms. Jacobson advised that the next step for the administration would be scheduling joint meetings with the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee so that both groups would get the information to be able to support the project. The Town Manager discussed the proposed timeline of the meetings and moving forward with the RFP. She said that she would like a vote by the Board to move forward with the process, with the RFP to be issued in April or May.

Mr. Berthiaume said that he supports the RFP but he wants to hear from other Board members and he said that voters should be told about any other needed major expenses that might be coming in the next 10 - 30 years. He clarified that he meant expenses like major building projects or land.

Mr. Carpenter asked the Town Manager to clarify if it would be an RFP versus RFQ process as stated in the other documents provided to the Board. Ms. Jacobson replied that Town Counsel has since researched the matter and has advised that the Town could do an RFP conditional on getting approval as opposed to an RFQ.

Mr. Carpenter discussed the considered sites and expressed some concern about potentially putting the facility on a site with other uses.

Mr. Carpenter also asked, based on the numbers that the CFO provided, about continuing the shift to a single tax rate and the impact of the project on that plan.

Mr. Kazanovicz replied that it is not a question of one or the other. Debt has been incurred in other years while the Board has been continuing the shift toward a single tax rate when the economy allowed.

Ms. Jacobson addressed Mr. Carpenter's first question related to the parcels. She said that we know that the former Lowes site is on the market. We don't know for sure what the Mall (Simon Property Group) is looking to do with the Sears property. Ms. Jacobson said that we can assume that they will be looking for some redevelopment options. The Mall actually consists of two parcels - the Sears and the automotive parcel are separate from the Mall parcel, so that's already been separated out.

Mr. McElravy added that most communities have public safety facilities in commercial/industrial areas and mixed use parcels near a major thoroughfare with access to highways while having appropriate acreage.

Ms. Jacobson advised that the RFP will be asking for a property within a defined area and size parameters, and the Town may hear from a property owner in that area with land for sale that we don't know about right now.

Mr. Carpenter said that his statement was more for moving around in the site area, not that the building would be in the middle of nowhere and he discussed his specific concerns.

Jeff McElravy addressed strategies as to the site. Mr. Carpenter talked about the longevity of the building and the importance of giving accurate information to the public and listening to the community.

Mr. McElravy addressed Mr. Carpenter's questions and talked about issues related to ensuring the longevity of the building.

Dennis Ross agreed that flexibility of the building space was very important, as well as using the right building materials for longevity.

Mr. Laliberte raised a question to Mr. Kazanovicz on the cost estimated 1.75M per year to what we're currently paying for the high school debt for a 30 year period and what he thought would be the interest rate on that estimate.

Ed Kazanovicz replied that they did a model showing interest rates on long term debt ranging from 3 - 3.5% and the interest rate was about a blended 3.25% for a 30 year purpose. He said that going out for a shorter term might yield a better rate.

Chief Stephen Coleman spoke to the point of building the facility looking at the potential for long-term growth and having additional size and space and using suitable materials for long-term use and growth. He expressed agreement with the importance to do great public outreach to get the most accurate information to the citizens, be truthful in what we're looking at and be honest in our responses and listen to their comments and get information to tweak this project and be successful to build the best facility for the employees and the community.

Police Lt. Todd Lemon was participating remotely and agreed with Mr. Berthiaume that citizens need to know about any other possible large building needs and that it's very important to have a vision for the future. He said it was very challenging to the committee to find large parcels of land in the town. It's key to be looking at the locations picked out in terms of the potential for future growth. Lt. Lemon said that the project needs to move forward and we need to build the structure with room to grow.

Mr. Berthiaume emphasized the need to see the numbers and to proceed forward with an RFP.

Mr. Berthiaume then made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to go out for an RFP and also schedule a joint meeting with the Finance Committee to get additional information. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion for discussion.

In discussion Mr. Carpenter stated that he thinks that the Town Administration should meeting with the Finance Committee but it's premature for the Board of Selectmen to meet with the Finance Committee until we get those numbers.

Based on Mr. Carpenter's comments, Mr. Berthiaume then amended his motion to authorize the Town Manager to go out for an RFP. Mr. Carpenter seconded the amended motion.

Under discussion, Scott Wrenn raised the point about the effect of the motion on the timeline.

The Town Manager said that we need to bring the Finance Committee in to the discussions now even though we won't have the all the financial numbers.

Mr. Carpenter agreed that the town management should meet with the Finance Committee but he thinks that the Board of Selectmen doesn't need to be part of discussion with them right now because we don't have hard numbers.

The Chair Doreen Goodrich stated that after taking this vote the Board has given a clear message for the manager to take to the Finance Committee that the Board of Selectmen voted in support of allowing the Town Manager to go for an RFP to get additional financial information and then before public outreach and information the Board may need to meet with the Finance Committee to be on same page.

The Board of Selectmen then voted by roll call on the amended motion: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Berthiaume, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes - passed 5 to 0.

The Board voted to move up agenda item 5a) New Street Address Program - Fire Chief (Motion made by Mr. Carpenter; motion seconded by Mr. Laliberte) roll call vote: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Berthiaume, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes - passed 5 to 0.

Fire Chief Stephen Coleman explained the new program to place reflectors at the end of driveways to better identify street addresses.

Mr. Berthiaume then left the meeting.

Communications

There were no items.

Board of Selectmen General Items

Seasonal Open Air License on Town Property-Girl Scout Cookie Drive Thru Pop-Up Events (Troop 64778) at Auburn Public Library - February 20th and 21st and March 5th and 6th from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

The Board of Selectmen reviewed the application documents and the written approval from the Library Director to use the library parking lot for the events.

Kristina Ashold leader of Troop 64778 and Service Unit Cookie Manager April Campbell were participating remotely on behalf of the application. Ms. Ashold explained the event

and the detailed COVID plan that has been put in place as recommended by the Board of Health. April Campbell provided additional details on the procedures to be implemented because of COVID. Ms. Campbell also explained the traffic flow plan that had been included with the application documents.

The Board of Selectmen voted to approve the license, provided that all applicable requirements of the state and town and any of its departments, boards and commissions have been fulfilled. Said license is subject to all the conditions stated upon it. Failure to comply with any and all the conditions shall invalidate the license and render it null and void (Motion made by Mr. Carpenter; motion seconded by Mr. Wrenn) roll call vote: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes - passed 4 to 0.

The Board voted to approve the request to waive the license fee (Motion made by Mr. Wrenn; motion seconded by Mr. Carpenter) roll call vote: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes - passed 4 to 0.

The Board then voted to move forward two agenda items - 4f), immediately followed by 5c) (Motion made by Mr. Carpenter; motion seconded by Mr. Laliberte) roll call vote: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes - passed 4 to 0.

Request Board Vote to Place the Auburn Housing Authority Seat Appointed until May 18, 2021 on the 2021 Annual Town Election Ballot

The Town Clerk Debra Gremo explained her request, due to the delay in the DHCD's promulgating regulations to establish procedures for tenant-elected members of local housing authority boards, to place the position that the Board of Selectmen appointed last year until May 18, 2021 on the 2021 Annual Town Election Ballot.

The Board of Selectmen voted to place the Auburn Housing Authority seat that was appointed until May 18, 2021 on the 2021 Annual Town Election Ballot, as requested by the Town Clerk (Motion made by Mr. Carpenter; motion seconded by Mr. Laliberte) roll call vote: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes - passed 4 to 0.

Update on Proposed Library/Goddard Park/Pedestrian Bridge Project

CFO Ed Kazanovicz provided updated financial information for the project that was presented at the last meeting. In addition, the Economic Development Committee submitted a letter concerning the committee's vote to support the proposed Library/Goddard Park/Pedestrian Bridge Project.

Gift Acceptances in Accordance with MGL Chapter 44, Section 53A

The Board of Selectmen voted to accept with gratitude gift acceptances to the Fire/Rescue Department for the Fire Department Gift Account from the following donors:

- Chester S. Stencil in the amount of \$25.00 in memory of Roberta Nicholson
- Maureen Kennedy in the amount of \$25.00 in memory of Roberta Nicholson

(Motion made by Mr. Wrenn; motion seconded by Mr. Laliberte) roll call vote: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes - passed 4 to 0.

Proclamations and Recognitions

The Board of Selectmen voted to issue a proclamation to Masterman's to commemorate 60 years in business, 40 of which in Auburn (Motion made by Mr. Wrenn; motion seconded by Mr. Carpenter) roll call vote: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes - passed 4 to 0.

Sub-Committee Update - Report on Declining Voter Turnout in Auburn, Massachusetts Municipal Elections and Potential Remedies

Mr. Laliberte presented the sub-committee's report on Declining Voter Turnout in Auburn, Massachusetts Municipal Elections and Potential Remedies. The sub-committee consisted of Tristan Laliberte and Daniel Carpenter.

Town Manager Items

Discussion and Vote on Town Manager Goals

The Town Manager relayed some of her thoughts about her 2021 goals. The Board of Selectmen voted to continue the item to the meeting on February 22, 2021 for the full board to be present (Motion made by Mr. Carpenter; motion seconded by Mr. Laliberte) roll call vote: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes - passed 4 to 0.

Grant Application - Request a Board Vote to Authorize the Acceptance and Expenditure of a \$280,000.00 Shared Winter Streets and Spaces Grant through the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) to Improve Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodations on Brotherton Way.

The Town Manager explained the grant application for \$280,000.00 to improve pedestrian and bicycle accommodations on Brotherton Way. There is no match for the grant.

The Board of Selectmen voted to authorize and approve the acceptance and expenditure of a \$280,000.00 Shared Winter Streets and Spaces Grant through the MassDOT as outlined by the Town Manager (Motion made by Mr. Carpenter; motion seconded by Mr. Laliberte) roll call vote: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes - passed 4 to 0.

Town Manager Jacobson noted the closing on the Julia Bancroft property to Pennrose Properties. The project will be getting underway and the Mary D. Stone project is proceeding.

Tabled Items

There were no items.

Board of Selectmen Member Items

There were no items.

The Chair asked if there were any corrections or omissions to the minutes of January 11, 2021. There being none, the Chair Doreen Goodrich accepted the minutes of January 11, 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 P.M. (Motion made by Mr. Carpenter; motion seconded by Mr. Laliberte) roll call vote: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes - passed 4 to 0.

Submitted: Sharon A. Kwiatkowski
Adm. Assistant to the Town Manager

The following documents were part of the Board of Selectmen's Meeting of February 8, 2021 and are retained in the Executive Office of the Town Manager:

- February 8, 2021 Agenda.
- Notice of Intent to Sell Land (Pursuant to Mass. General Laws Chapter 61) 50 Washington Street, Auburn, MA. and related Documents; Presentation by Town Manager Julie Jacobson entitled "Notice of Intent to Sell Land at 50 Washington Street, Board of Selectmen Public Hearing January 25, 2021"; Presentation entitled "Washington Street Economic Development" by Eastland Partners.
- Application Documents -Seasonal Open Air License on Town Property-Girl Scout Cookie Drive Thru Pop-Up Events (Troop 64778) at the Auburn Public Library - February 20th and 21st and March 5th and 6th; Approval by Library Director to Use the Parking Lot on those dates
- Gift Acceptance Forms - Fire/Rescue Department totaling \$50.00 for the Fire Department Gift Account
- Sub-committee Report - Declining Voter Turnout in Auburn Massachusetts Municipal Elections and Potential Remedies
- Request by Town Clerk to Place the Auburn Housing Authority Seat Appointed until May 18, 2021 on the 2021 Annual Town Election Ballot
- Presentation on Proposed Library/Goddard Park/Pedestrian Bridge Project and Preliminary Proposed Project Summary - by the Town Manager
- Request by DPW Director for Board Vote to Authorize the Acceptance and Expenditure of a \$280,000.00 Shared Winter Streets and Spaces Grant through the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) to Improve Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodations on Brotherton Way
- Minutes of January 11, 2021