

**IPSWICH SELECT BOARD**  
**Meeting of Monday, January 6, 2020**  
**Ipswich Town Hall | 25 Green Street**

Pursuant to Open Meeting Law M.G.L. Chapter 30A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Select Board was held on Monday, January 6, 2020 at 6:30pm in Meeting Room A.

Board Members present: William Whitmore, Chair; Linda Alexson, Vice Chair; Dr. Tammy Jones; Kerry Mackin; Nishan Mootafian

Also present: Anthony Marino, Town Manager; Eileen Page, Recording Secretary

**Executive Session**

Possible Purchase of Land off Pineswamp Road for Open Space Purposes; subject to determination of the chair that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Board.

- a. Approval of Minutes – December 16, 2019

*Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to go into Executive Session and then return to open session, and Mr. Mootafian seconded. The motion carried unanimously via roll call.*

The Select Board returned from Executive Session at 6:57pm.

With a quorum present, Mr. Whitmore called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

**Welcome/Announcements**

The Public Safety Facilities Committee will meet on Tuesday, January 7 at 7:00pm in Room B2.

Following the retirement of Greg Parachojuk, Jay Wassouf has been hired as the new IT Director. Mr. Wassouf has worked for the Andover Public Schools for 22 years, and has spent the last three years working for Masconomet Regional Middle/High School.

**Citizen Queries**

Phil Goguen (4 Kingfisher Road) asked if citizens would be allowed to ask questions during the capital spending discussion. Mr. Whitmore responded that questions would be allowed, but reminded Mr. Goguen that tonight's discussion would be a preliminary review.

**Board and Committees**

- a. Peter Soffron – New Appointment – Shellfish Advisory Board
- b. Kathie Eliopoulos – Resignation – Board of Registrars
- c. Antigone Simmons – New Appointment – Board of Registrars
- d. Kristen Seashore – New Appointment – Board of Registrars

Kristen Seashore appeared before the Board seeking appointment to the Board of Registrars. She stated that she received a message asking for interested citizens to apply, and spoke with Amy Akell (Town Clerk). Ms. Seashore has lived in Ipswich for seven years, and has worked as a social worker for 45 years.

Antigone Simmons appeared before the Board seeking appointment to the Board of Registrars. She currently works as an attorney, is a former Secretary of State attorney, and has also worked as a voter protection attorney in Maine, Connecticut and Ohio.

*Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to appoint Peter Soffron to the Shellfish Advisory Board, Antigone Simmons and Kristen Seashore to the Board of Registrars, and pointed out that the Shellfish Subcommittee will now be fully seated. Dr. Jones seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

Mr. Whitmore stated that there are current vacancies on the Agricultural Committee, the Bialek Park Committee, the Climate Resiliency Committee, the Cemetery and Parks Commission, the Ipswich Cultural Council, the Conservation Commission, the Design and Review Board, the Government Study Committee, the Historical Commission, the Ipswich Housing Partnership, the Recreation Committee, the Shade Tree Beautification Committee, the Wastewater Subcommittee, and the Waterways Advisory Committee.

### **DEPARTMENT UPDATE: CEMETERY & PARKS**

Jeff Putur (Superintendent of Cemetery and Parks) appeared before the Board to provide a department update.

#### **OVERVIEW**

The department is responsible for planning funerals, maintenance of 127 acres of land, and community space improvements.

#### **STAFF**

The department employs six permanent employees, including Mr. Putur, one part-time benefited clerk, four full-time laborers, and one laborer shared seasonally with the Department of Public Works. In the summertime, the department takes on three or four temporary part-time employees.

#### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The Pony Express fields have hosted two successful seasons thus far, and several in-town groups have reached out about utilizing the space. Headstones at Old North Burial Ground are currently undergoing refurbishments by a local company. The department's GIS mapping project is about 60% completed, and Mr. Putur anticipates it reaching completion in the next three or four years.

#### **UPCOMING PROJECTS**

GIS mapping will continue, spearheaded by Mr. Putur and the department clerk. A new shade structure is scheduled to be built at Bialek Park in the springtime, and ADA-compliant walkways will be installed leading from streets into the playground.

Ms. Alexson asked if there are any grant opportunities available to the department. Mr. Putur responded that 50% funding is often available for larger projects, but right now the department is prioritizing the restoration of headstones. Ms. Alexson asked if the bond issued for Pony Express imposes restrictions on leasing the land. Mr. Putur responded that the bond stipulates that the Town may not bring in more than the total cost of maintenance per year, which is around \$35,000. In FY19, leasing brought in around \$3,000. Ms. Alexson asked about fencing the irrigation pond on the property, expressing concern for the pond's steep edges and 25' depth. Mr. Putur responded that quotes for an 8' tall steel fence came in at \$23-24,000. He believes this cost would have to be figured into the capital budget, and that in the meantime signs warning against entering the pond, in addition to the tall grass surrounding it, will be sufficient.

Ms. Mackin asked if improvement work could be done along the trail from Sally's Pond to the south cemetery. Mr. Putur stated that historically the department has not maintained the trail, and was unsure if it was even Town-owned property. Ms. Mackin responded that it is owned by the Ipswich Museum.

Mr. Mootafian asked about the rental costs for leasing the Pony Express fields. Mr. Putur responded that for groups made up entirely of Ipswich residents, there is no cost. For groups made up of 50% Ipswich residents, the cost is \$15 per hour, per field. For groups made up of under 50% Ipswich residents, the cost is \$20 per hour, per field.

Dr. Jones commended the department on their work around town.

Phil Goguen (4 Kingfisher Road) asked if Mr. Putur planned for a budget increase in FY21. Mr. Putur responded that he foresees a 2% increase that will be a wash against cutting funding for a half-court basketball court.

#### **Department Update: Treasurer/Collector**

Delayed due to illness.

**Vote to Approve the Issuance and Details of Bonds and Notes to the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust and Sign Related Note Closing Papers**

Colleen Fermon (Director of Public Health) appeared before the Board to discuss the septic system replacement program. She reported that funding comes from a State revolving account, with a 0% interest rate for the Town, and communities only repay what is used. When a Title V inspection shows that a septic system is failing, homeowners are eligible to obtain loans from the Town for up to 18 years, at a 2% interest rate. Property owners choose the length and amount of their loan, and loans are paid back through a tax betterment lien.

Sarah Johnson (Finance Director) reported that to date, \$663,000 have been issued in loans. There have been sixteen loans issued total; eleven remain outstanding, and five have been paid back ahead of schedule.

Phil Goguen (4 Kingfisher Road) asked what the average amount of the loans granted were. Ms. Fermon responded that the loans vary, but average around \$40,000. Mr. Goguen asked how many of the failing septic tanks were located on the Neck, and Ms. Fermon responded that the affected tanks are predominantly located on the Neck.

*Vote: Dr. Jones moved to approve the issuance and details of the bond to the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust, and Ms. Mackin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

**Open Warrant for 2020 Annual Town Meeting**

The purpose of this vote will be to open the 2020 Annual Town Meeting warrant. While the warrant is open, residents may submit citizens' petitions. Questions about petitions can be directed to Mr. Marino, Amy Akell (Town Clerk), or Mr. Whitmore. Annual Town Meeting will be held on May 12, 2020.

*Vote: Ms. Mackin moved to open the warrant for the 2020 Annual Town Meeting, and Ms. Alexson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

**Review/Vote Letter of Support for NOAA Grant Application for Dam Removal Mitigation Design Plans**

The proposed letter would serve as a preliminary grant proposal for a mitigation design. If NOAA awards the grant, the Town would receive \$200,000 and be responsible for a 50% match, and the Department of Environmental Protection would award a \$100,000, with the Town responsible for a 25% match. There would then be additional costs for the plans and removal of the dam.

Ms. Mackin stated that a feasibility study has found that sediments upstream are clear, and releasing them would be beneficial to the marshland downstream. Ms. Alexson expressed concern that fresh and saltwater mixing could be damaging to the clam beds if the dam is removed, especially the effects of freshwater on the clams. Ms. Mackin disagreed. She reiterated that the dam is ecologically damaging.

Ms. Alexson asked for confirmation that the application for the grant does not serve as a statement of support of the dam's removal. She also stated that she does not support the removal of the dam at this present time, for financial reasons. She understands that the dam has been identified as ecologically damaging, but believes that Ipswich taxpayers have higher priorities right now. She stated that she will support signing the pre-grant application and getting more information, but will not support spending money for dam removal in 2020.

Mr. Whitmore would like to schedule further discussion of the dam at both February Select Board meetings.

Mr. Mootafian abstained from a vote as the relative of an EBSCO employee.

*Vote: Ms. Mackin moved to submit the letter, and Dr. Jones seconded. The motion carried 4-0-1, with Mr. Mootafian abstaining.*

**Review/Vote Letter of Support for the Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant Application Through the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs**

The Town is interested in purchasing a parcel of large parcel of land that would provide significant drinking water protection. The first step in the process is to apply for a grant that would aid in the purchase.

*Vote: Dr. Jones moved to sign the letter of support, and Ms. Mackin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

### **Capital Plan Budget Overview**

The Select Board was provided with a draft version of the FY21 capital budget. Anticipated Green Communities Funding is included in the FY21 figures.

Regarding Town-wide facilities, notable items include \$20,000 for general roof repairs, specifically at Town Hall; \$19,500 for repairs to the ADA-compliant chair lift from the Town Hall gymnasium to stage area; HVAC upgrades; iron fence repairs at the Library; radio box communication upgrades for panic button installation at Town Hall; installation of a storm switch for the emergency generator at the Linebrook Road Fire Station; \$5,000 for the installation of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors at the Hall-Haskell House; and \$24,500 for fire alarm upgrades at the DPW garage.

Regarding School facilities, notable items include an ongoing lease payment for the special education wheelchair van; \$20,000 for the wind turbine; \$150,000 for computers; \$24,000 for flooring and carpeting; \$15,000 for painting; \$10,000 for restoration at The Payne Building; \$12,000 for exhaust fan replacement at Doyon; \$15,000 for walkway replacement at Doyon; \$10,000 for classroom upgrades at Doyon; \$15,000 for air compressor replacement at Winthrop; \$6,400 for a washer and dryer at Winthrop; \$46,000 for a new HVAC at the high school; \$20,000 for painting at the high school; \$80,000 for locker room upgrades at the high school; and \$30,000 for wiring upgrades in the Dolan Performing Arts Center.

Other notable items include \$136,900 for a backhoe in the DPW; \$14,000 for a zero-turn mower and \$5,000 for an aerator in Cemetery and Parks; \$50,000 set aside for a new ladder truck in the next 3-5 years; \$10,000 for computer replacement; and \$18,000 for an IT network upgrade.

Mr. Whitmore asked when the Town will hear whether or not they have received the Green Communities grant. Mr. Marino hopes to know by March, and stated that the figures reflected in the budget will be adjusted based on the grant amount received. Mr. Whitmore stated that the budget will be discussed more in-depth at the January 21 Triboard meeting, and the Select Board's January 27 and 28 meetings will include budget business only.

Phil Goguen (4 Kingfisher Road) asked if citizens would be allowed to ask questions during the budget discussion. Mr. Whitmore responded that questions would be allowed so long as they were appropriate and productive. Mr. Goguen stated that he would like department to look for line items that could be swapped for new items, in place of increases.

### **Consent Agenda**

- I. One Day Liquor License Application
  - a. Wine & Malt - Trustees of Reservations for Fundraisers at Castle Hill on 2/7, 2/8 and 2/9
- II. Over 70 Recreational Shellfish Permit
  - a. Robert Kiesling, 21 Eagle Hill Road

*Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to approve the Consent Agenda, and Mr. Mootafian seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

### **Approval of Minutes**

- a. December 16, 2019

*Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to approve the minutes as amended, and Mr. Mootafian seconded. The motion carried 4-0 with Dr. Jones abstaining, as she was not present for the entire December 16 meeting.*

### **Town Manager Report**

Mass DOT

There was an increase in Chapter 90 funding for the town. Ipswich will now receive \$44,034 for road improvements.

RETIREMENTS

Greg Parachojuk has retired after 19 years as the IT Director. A ceremony was held for him on January 3 and was attended by Representative Brad Hill.

OPEN POSITIONS

Terry Anderson has retired as the Housing Coordinator in the Planning Office. The part-time position is accepting applicants on the Town website.

COUNCIL ON AGING

There are two openings for the Council on Aging, and seven applicants. Three applicants will serve as Friends of the Council on Aging. Two applicants will be appointed to the Council on Aging Board as members, and two will be appointed as alternates. All four applicants will appear before the Board for appointment.

FIRE LIEUTENANT

We went through the assessment center for the lieutenant vacancy, and Kendall Buhl, Keith Carlson, and Patrick Dingle were identified as candidates for promotion. Patrick Dingle has been promoted to Lieutenant, and will be moving to a day shift to serve as the Fire Prevention Officer.

NEW ENGLAND BIOLABS

New England Biolabs has submitted plans for their expansion to the Planning Board. They will attend the January 21 Triboard meeting to discuss their plans.

ROTARY

Mr. Marino shared that he was recently appointed to Rotary's Board of Directors.

**New Business**

None.

**Old Business**

Ms. Alexson asked about the status of the net zero water study; Mr. Marino will follow up for a report with Vicki Halmen (Water and Wastewater Director). Ms. Alexson asked about the Land Disposition Committee attending a Select Board meeting. Mr. Marino responded that they will be attending one of the February meetings.

Mr. Marino reported that he has heard back from the insurance company and, because there is no additional liability in doing so, a mirror will be installed on the pole at the end of Argilla Road to assist drivers in identifying oncoming traffic.

It has been determined that the barn at 161 Topsfield Road can be taken down by staff in-house.

**Miscellaneous and Correspondence**

None.

*Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to adjourn, and Dr. Jones seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

The Select Board adjourned at 8:49pm.

*Respectfully submitted by Eileen G. Page*

*01.07.2020*