

IPSWICH SELECT BOARD
Meeting of Monday, March 21, 2022

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, March 21, 2022, at 7:00 PM in Meeting Room A.

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

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

With a quorum present, Dr. Jones called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

Citizen Queries

Stephen Comley (Rowley) appeared before the Board to ask them to write a letter opposing the use of nuclear power in the area. Dr. Jones recognized that Mr. Comely had made this request before and asked for a 1:1 meeting with him to discuss his concerns.

Board and Committee Appointments/Business

- I. Resignation from Library Board of Trustees - Marion Frost
- II. New Appointment Request - Donna Hughes and Donna Carpenter - Shade Tree Beautification Committee
- III. New Appointment Request - Thomas Smith - Library Board of Trustees

➤ *Vote: Ms. Player moved to approve the appointments. Mr. Whitmore seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

PUBLIC HEARING: Outdoor Entertainment Police Review, Establishment of Fees

“Residents of the Town of Ipswich, please note that the Select Board will conduct Public Hearings on Monday, March 7, 2022, at 8:45 PM and Monday, March 21, 2022, at 7:15 PM in Meeting Room A of Town Hall, 25 Green Street, relative to the review of an Outdoor Entertainment Policy and the establishment of fees.” - Dr. Tammy Jones, Select Board Chair

➤ *Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to open the Public Hearing. Mr. Whitmore seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

In response to feedback received at the March 7 Public Hearing, Mr. Marino recommended setting up a working group of residential abutters, restaurant owners, and venues to come to a consensus on an Outdoor Entertainment Policy.

Elaine Teriault (52 Farley Avenue) asked what the working group process would look like. Mr. Marino responded that members of the group would work with himself, the Police Chief, and Fire Chief over the next 2-3 months to form recommendations for the Board. An open meeting would be held to discuss their findings.

Jackie Kronenberg (6 Essex Road) argued that outdoor entertainment should not be allowed at all if it disturbs residents. She stated that she would like to be a part of the working group as an abutter. Mr. Whitmore questioned whether Ms. Kronenberg could be an effective member of the group given her opposition to any outdoor music at all. Ms. Kronenberg responded that outdoor music should only be allowed if it didn't disrupt abutters, but she would prefer bands perform indoors only.

Bob Tragert (15 Masconomet Road) stated that he is an abutter of the Hellenic Center as well as an environmental health and safety engineer and would like to be a part of the working group.

Rick Delisle (Owner, Vinewood Catering) agreed that live bands at the Hellenic Center last summer were excessively loud but expressed concerns about ending events at 9 or 10 PM. He stated that clients had reached out to him to say that they would not have booked their weddings in Ipswich had they known that a noise ordinance was being considered. Mr. Whitmore clarified that a noise ordinance would only apply to outdoor music.

Mary Kate Surette (250 High Street) stated that she will be getting married in her backyard this summer and expressed concerns about having to end her wedding at 9 PM.

Bud Siciliano (Owner, Heart & Soul Cafe) asked if businesses would be allowed to host live music in June. Mr. Marino stated that while the policy is being developed, businesses would simply seek a temporary permit for outdoor entertainment.

Marlene Markos Doyle (Damon Avenue) stated that an outdoor entertainment policy is not necessary at all.

Jake Rogers (Co-Owner, True North Ale) asked to be a member of the working group.

Mr. Marino suggested a working group made up of five (5) businesses, five (5) resident abutters, and four (4) Town officials.

- *Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to close the Public Hearing. Mr. Whitmore seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*
- *Vote: Mr. Whitmore moved to establish the Outdoor Entertainment Policy as a no-fee policy. Ms. Alexson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*
- *Mr. Whitmore moved to establish a working group to establish parameters on outdoor music and present their findings no later than the first meeting of June. Ms. Mackin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

School Committee Budget Update

Kate Elliot and Hugh O'Flynn (School Committee) appeared before the Board to provide further details and answer questions about the proposed FY23 school budget.

Primary budget drivers this year include staff compensation, made up of six (6) separate bargaining units with an average annual increase of 4.7%; a 4% increase in health insurance costs; a 2.1% increase in special education costs, including out-of-district placements; and a 5.9% increase in costs relating to retirement, workers compensation, unemployment, and general property/liability insurance.

Enrollment at the high school has remained stable over the last four (4) years. Middle school enrollment declined slightly. The Doyon School saw a decrease during the 2020-2021 school year due to homeschooling in the wake of COVID but has begun increasing in the 2021-2022 school year. The Winthrop School saw a 15% increase in enrollment for the 2021-2022 school year.

There is an increased emphasis on the social/emotional health of students and addressing learning loss in the wake of the pandemic. Standardized testing showed that the high school was minimally impacted by learning loss, the middle school moderately impacted, and the elementary schools profoundly impacted. A career pathways program is in development for the high school, and a world language curriculum is being prepared for elementary schools.

Ms. Alexson asked how a 4.5% increase to salaries would be sustainable over time, and why the Town regularly only offers 2% increases in comparison. Mr. O'Flynn responded that the Commonwealth has a grid/step system that the schools are required to follow that base teacher salaries on experience and educational background. In addition, the teachers' unions negotiate an annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) at a rate of 2-2.5%, bringing the annual

increase to 4.5%. These increases are most easily funded through overrides, resulting in an impact on the average taxpayer of about \$270 per year.

The following budget cuts were made as a result of the failed \$1.1 million override in FY15: fourth grade strings; summer literacy program; robotics program; drama program; special education staffing; foreign language programs; coaching stipends, leading to increase user fees that have remained in place; and librarians at the elementary schools. An override in FY23 would support the continuity of programs; attract and retain quality educators to the district; and delay in larger budget requests next year.

Common Victualler, Weekday Entertainment, Sunday Entertainment License Applications for Mansion on Turner Hill and the Clubhouse Grill

Rescheduled for a future meeting.

Consideration of Trail Easement Acceptance for Trail at 173 Linebrook Road

Brad Lathem appeared, representing Village Linebrook LLC, a development located on Linebrook Road. A special permit was issued imposing a condition of construction that a recreational access trail be formed through the property. An additional 44 acres of land have also been granted to the Town for public recreational use.

- *Vote: Mr. Whitmore moved to accept the easement. Ms. Alexson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

Discuss/Vote Sending Letter About Proposed MBTA Multi-Family Zoning District

A letter drafted by Mr. Marino for the Board's consideration addresses challenges that will arise of the MBTA's zoning including a lack of public transportation and increased traffic issues.

Dr. Jones stated that the requirements posed are unreasonable for a town like Ipswich without building fifteen-story buildings.

- *Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to sign and send the letter. Mr. Whitmore seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

Discuss/Vote Select Board Recommendations on 2022 ATM Warrant

ARTICLE 11: Home Rule Petition - Amend Charter - SECTION 1. Section 6. Town Manager

Submitted by: Select Board

Mr. Whitmore reported that during the last Town Manager recruitment process, only two (2) Ipswich residents applied for the role, and neither were qualified. Ipswich received thirty (30) candidates total. He stated that the home rule petition change is to engage a broader candidate pool.

Tori Bottomley (60 Central Street) stated that all prior Town Managers have lived in Ipswich, and that there should be penalties for a Town Manager in violation of the residency requirement.

Mr. Whitmore noted that both the Government Study Committee and a recruiter retained for the last Town Manager search both recommended removing the residency requirement.

Ms. Alexson suggested that the Town might also have to consider relation reimbursements if they continue to enforce a residency requirement.

Ms. Player stated that the Select Board's charge is to ensure that the role goes to the most qualified candidate, and that she would expect any Town Manager to be efficient and engaged regardless of where they live.

Votes for Select Board recommendations will be taken at the next meeting.

Town Manager Report

Bean Counting will take place on Saturday, March 26 at 9 AM.

Construction for improvements to Market Street will begin on April 4.

Town Meeting will utilize a new vendor, Meridia, for electronic voting. Town Meeting will be held in the lower gymnasium of the middle/high school.

A request for bids has been put out for a designer of the Public Safety Building. Bids are due by April 8.

Select Board Member Subcommittee Update

The Public Safety Property Reuse Working Group has appointed Gordon Harris as their Chair, and Keith Anderson as their Vice Chair. Discussions have begun on what the process of making recommendations will look like. A site visit of the current police and fire departments were held. The group hopes to make a presentation of initial options by the 2022 Fall Town Meeting.

The Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board met on March 10.

The Electric Subcommittee met on March 16 to discuss the annual budget and rate structure.

The Climate Resiliency Committee discussed the issue of cars idling. They also discussed the possibility of installing solar panels on the roof of the middle/high school.

New Business

Ms. Player suggested designating one Saturday per month where a Select Board member could be available downtown for a casual drop-in to answer questions.

Old Business

Ms. Alexson would like to revisit youth-oriented programming through the Recreation program outlined in the Town Charter. Mr. Marino reported that at Bean Counting, the Tri-Board would discuss funding scholarships for YMCA summer programming and would be looking at creating Town-sponsored programs for the summer of 2023.

Ms. Mackin stated that she would like the Select Board to send a message to the Water Department that they should not exceed withdrawal limits that cause ecological degradation.

Miscellaneous and Correspondence

None.

➤ *Vote: Ms. Mackin moved to adjourn. Ms. Alexson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

The Select Board adjourned at 10:34 PM.

*Respectfully submitted by Eileen G. Page
04.21.2022*