

TOWN OF STERLING
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
February 27, 2019

MEETING:	<p>Chairman Lane called the Board of Selectmen meeting to order at 9:09am. Roll Call: Selectman Cranson – Present. Chairman Lane – Present. Selectman Kilcoyne – Present.</p> <p>Also present were Town Administrator, Ross Perry and Executive Assistant, Kama Jayne.</p>
OML Complaint	<p>The Board discussed their response to an Open Meeting Law complaint that was filed by Michael Rivers on February 8, 2019 and received on February 9, 2019. The Complaint alleges that the Chair failed to properly post the notice for the Board's January 9, 2019 meeting to include a topic of establishing the Earth Removal Bylaw Committee ("Committee") and appointing members to the Committee in a way that would provide the public with a reasonable understanding of the action(s) to be taken. This OML also alleged that the Board had deliberated outside of a public meeting regarding the establishment of this committee. During discussion, the Board substantively denied that it committed any intentional violation of the Open Meeting Law, as alleged, and asserts that its meeting notice was sufficiently specific in compliance with the Open Meeting Law and that there is no support for the allegation that the Board improperly deliberated.</p> <p>After further discussion, Selectman Kilcoyne moved that the Board hereby acknowledges receipt of the Open Meeting Law Complaint from Michael Rivers dated February 8, 2019 and received February 9, 2019. Following its review, discussion and deliberation of the Complaint, the Board voted to issue a response as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Complaint was not timely filed where it was not received until Saturday, February 9, 2019, which was not within 30 days of the January 9, 2019 meeting.2. Without waiving its claim about lack of timeliness, it is the Board's position that the topic of "Appointment of Earth Removal Bylaw Committee" on its January 9, 2019 meeting notice was sufficiently specific to comply with the Open Meeting Law;3. The Complaint does not set forth any facts for the allegations that the Board deliberated outside of a public meeting and it is the Board's position that no improper deliberation took place outside of a public meeting;4. Consistent with its review of the Complaint and its discussion, the Board authorizes Town Counsel to respond to the Complaint as deliberated, on its behalf, and designates the Town Administrator to work with Town Counsel to issue its final response. <p>Selectman Cranson 2nd. Selectman Cranson – Aye. Selectman Kilcoyne – Aye. Chairman Lane – Aye. Motion carried. The Board considered the draft letter that has been prepared by Town Counsel to address Mr. River's Complaint. The consensus of the Board is that the draft letter is acceptable as written.</p>
Zoning Change request	<p>After a presentation by the Town Planner. The Board discussed the advantages of re-zoning 212 – 246 Worcester Road (including 32 Princeton Road) from Neighborhood Residential to Town Center zoning. This change would ultimately facilitate the revitalization of the buildings in this area of Town and give the owners more options. Selectman Cranson moved to request that the Planning Board hold a Public Hearing regarding the re-zoning of the Properties on Route 12 South. Selectman Kilcoyne 2nd. Selectman Cranson – Aye. Selectman Kilcoyne – Aye. Chairman Lane – Aye. Motion carried. Letters will be sent to the land owners to encourage their feedback.</p>
MPO Representative	<p>The current representatives of the Montachusett Metropolitan Planning will serve until the end of August 2019. Although the Board is satisfied with the service of the current representatives, if anyone</p>

	<p>wishes to volunteer to serve as a sub region representative or alternate, they are encouraged to contact the Town Administrator.</p>
Scholarship Funding	<p>After discussion, Selectman Cranson moved to use \$1,000.00 from the Maria Houghton fund and \$500.00 from the Conant High School fund to offer (3) \$500.00 scholarships to Sterling High School seniors who wish to further their education. Selectman Kilcoyne 2nd. Selectman Cranson – Aye. Selectman Kilcoyne – Aye. Chairman Lane – Aye. Motion carried. The scholarship applications are due by May 1, 2019. The application will be sent to the High Schools and posted on the website.</p>
Financial Audit	<p>The 2018 Audit findings are as follows; 2018 Audit Findings – recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That the Town Treasurer evaluate the Town's depository balances and accounts and evaluate the possible benefits of reallocating portions of the Town's excess funds to stable financial institutions that offer very liquid short-term investments. (The Town Administrator reports that this is an on-going process and the Town continues to look for institutions that offer the best interest rates.)2. That the Town work with its newly appointed IT service provider to perform a risk assessment on the Town's IT security. (The Town Administrator reports that IT is currently endeavoring to provide this service)3. That the Town evaluate all inactive, special revenue accounts to determine if the funds' purposes are no longer necessary and/or if general fund monies were used in prior periods versus the monies from these funds. It is likely that a portion of these funds should be returned to the Town's general fund. (The Town Administrator assured the Board that each year special revenue accounts that have not been used for the purpose intended are added back into the general fund.)4. That the Town's Operations Manager perform periodic "spot audits" on departments' cash handling procedures and establish a rolling five or ten-year revenue by type/department. . analysis.5. That the Town perform an analysis of its employee withholdings and record true up entries to arrive at the correct withholding balance for the individual employee withholding liability account. (The Town Administrator reports that this has been an issue for a number of years and the Treasurer's office continues to work on reconciliations). <p>Selectman Kilcoyne is pleased at the excellent bond rating that the Town has achieved. The Town received no deficiencies and he gave kudos to the staff.</p>
MIIA Health Benefits Agreement	<p>The Town's current insurance provider proposed a 9% increase this year. So the Town went out for bids. The Insurance Advisory Board unanimously voted to accept the MIIA proposal, which will effect a 5% DECREASE in the current Town health insurance costs. They were also pleased that it will provide comparable services (Same doctors, deductibles and co-pays). The Town Administrator advises that the Town "level fund" the Health Insurance this year and place the excess money into a separate account in order to use those funds next year to offset expected increases. After discussion, Selectman Kilcoyne moved to accept and sign the MIIA Business Associate Contract and the MIIA Health Benefits Trust Agreement. Selectman Cranson 2nd. Selectman Kilcoyne – Aye. Selectman Cranson – Aye. Chairman Lane – Aye. Motion carried.</p>
Warrant	<p>Merit and Longevity Program - As one of his goals, the Town Administrator had been tasked with developing a mechanism to recognize employee merit and longevity. To that end, he proposes the following step raises;</p>

	<p>Non-union regular personnel (after receiving a favorable annual performance evaluation)</p> <table><tr><td>Step 1</td><td>0-<2</td><td>years</td><td>0% increase</td></tr><tr><td>Step 2</td><td>2-<5</td><td>years</td><td>2% increase</td></tr><tr><td>Step 3</td><td>5-<10</td><td>years</td><td>3% increase</td></tr><tr><td>Step 4</td><td>10-<15</td><td>years</td><td>3% increase</td></tr><tr><td>Step 5</td><td><15</td><td>years</td><td>3% increase</td></tr></table> <p>After discussion, Selectman Kilcoyne moved to support the proposed employee merit and longevity plan. Selectman Cranson 2nd. Selectman Cranson – Aye. Selectman Kilcoyne – Aye. Chairman Lane – Aye. Motion carried.</p> <p>The Board discussed the current, proposed FY20 omnibus budget of \$24,810,771.59. This budget represents an overall increase of 2.77%. The budget will be discussed with Department Heads and Boards/Committees on March 2nd. The school will forward their approved budget in March.</p> <p>The Board discussed the 1835 Town Hall Capital request for funding to connect the 1835 Town Hall to the Fire Station septic system. After discussion, the consensus of the Board was that it would rather request funding to add the sprinkler system to the 1835 building this year, instead of funding for the septic system connection. . It was pointed out that it makes sense to install the sprinkler system while the building is still under construction, rather than have to reclose the building at a later date. Also, the Board wishes to protect the occupants of the building, as well as the Town’s investment.</p> <p>The Board requests that the Fire Department give their professional opinion as to whether the building should be equipped with a sprinkler system, sooner rather than later. The Board will discuss this option with the Finance Board. The Chairman made it abundantly clear that the Board wishes to move forward on the procurement for the “rights of way” that are necessary to tie into the Fire Station septic system, so that the project can move forward in the near future.</p>	Step 1	0-<2	years	0% increase	Step 2	2-<5	years	2% increase	Step 3	5-<10	years	3% increase	Step 4	10-<15	years	3% increase	Step 5	<15	years	3% increase
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PSAs	<p>The Council on Aging is looking for an additional driver.</p> <p>April 4 – 4:00 – 7:00 Master Plan Open House at Senior center to garner input from the General Public</p>																				
One day Alcohol	<p>No one-day alcohol licenses were requested.</p>																				
Public Session	<p>No one spoke at Public Session.</p>																				
Adjourn	<p>At 10:43 am, Selectman Cranson moved to adjourn the public session. Selectman Kilcoyne 2nd. Selectman Cranson - Aye. Selectman Kilcoyne – Aye. Chairman Lane– Aye. Motion carried.</p>																				
	<p>Materials: OML letter, zoning request, MPO rep papers, Scholarship Financing, Audit findings, MIIA health contract/agreement, merit/longevity proposal,</p>																				