

TOWN OF STERLING  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
November 13, 2019

MEETING:	<p>Chairman Kilcoyne called the Board of Selectmen meeting to order at 6:31pm. Roll Call: Selectman Cranson – Present. Chairman Kilcoyne – Present. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – Present.</p> <p>Also present were Accountant/Operations Manager, Fred Aponte and Executive Assistant, Kama Jayne.</p> <p>Chairman Kilcoyne asked for a moment of silence to honor Jason Menard who died a hero, in the line of duty, as a Worcester fighter early this morning</p>
Minutes	<p>Selectman Cranson moved to approve the minutes as written. Selectwoman Sonnenberg 2<sup>nd</sup>.</p> <p>Selectman Cranson – Aye. Chairman Kilcoyne – Aye. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – Aye. Motion carried.</p>
Tax classification Hearing	<p>Prior to the mailing of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter tax bills, the Board of Selectmen must hold a hearing to determine the percentage of the Town's property tax levy to be borne by each major property class, per Chapter 40, Section 56 of the Massachusetts General Laws.</p> <p>At 6:35 Selectwoman Sonnenberg moved to open the Public Hearing regarding Tax Classification. Selectman Cranson 2<sup>nd</sup>. Selectman Cranson – Aye. Chairman Kilcoyne – Aye. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – Aye.</p> <p>Donlin Murray and David Manzello appeared before the Board of Selectmen. The Board was advised that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Assessors have recommended that the tax rate be reduced by 46 cents to \$16.81.</li></ul> <p>Valuations continue to rise, so despite the reduction in the rate, tax bills will increase for most homeowners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The tax increase represents an annual increase of \$192 per average home.</li><li>• There is a healthy excess levy capacity of \$1,056,045 that could be used before a proposition 2 1/2 would be required to fund a significant budget increase. (not planned)</li><li>• The Assessors recommended that the Town continue to support the single rate, as has been the practice, in order to continue to encourage business.</li></ul> <p>A couple of residents requested that the Tax Classification Hearing be better publicized and that a community information hearing be held to educate the tax payers, regarding the implications of this annual decision. The Board of Assessors will consider that proposal.</p> <p>After discussion, Selectman Cranson moved that the Sterling Board of Selectmen vote in accordance with MGL Chapter 40 Section 56, as amended, the percentage of local tax levy will be borne by each class of real and personal property relative to setting the Fiscal Year 2019 tax rates and set the Residential factor at 1.0000, with a corresponding CIP shift of 1.0000, pending approval of the Town's annual tax recap by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. Selectwoman Sonnenberg 2<sup>nd</sup>. Chairman Kilcoyne – Aye. Selectman Cranson – Aye. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – Aye. Motion carried. The Board members signed the LA5 letter that states the excess levy capacity and the approval of the single tax rate. It will be submitted to the Department of Revenue.</p> <p>At 7:02, Selectwoman Sonnenberg moved to close the Public hearing. Selectwoman Cranson 2<sup>nd</sup>. Chairman Kilcoyne – Aye. Selectman Cranson – Aye. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – Aye. Motion carried.</p>
Collection Bin Regulations, discussion with Board of Health	<p>Alan Hoffman and Gary Menin of the Board of Health attended the meeting. After discussion, the consensus of the members of both boards was that the Board of Health will create the Collection Bin regulations and the onus of enforcement will lie with the Board of Health.</p>
Appointment to Conservation Commission	<p>After discussion, Selectman Cranson moved to appoint Connor Emsley to the Conservation Commission. Selectman Sonnenberg 2<sup>nd</sup>. Chairman Kilcoyne – Aye. Selectman Cranson – Aye. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – Aye. Motion carried. His term will expire on June 30, 2021.</p>

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Approve Road Closure	After discussion, Selectman Cranson moved to close the portion of Meetinghouse Hill Road that is located in front of the church, from 3:30 – 5:30 on December 8 <sup>th</sup> to accommodate the annual tree lighting ceremony on the common. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – 2 <sup>nd</sup> . Chairman Kilcoyne – Aye. Selectman Cranson – Aye. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – Aye. Motion carried.
Set permanent schedule for ATM/STM warrant openings	After discussion, Selectman Cranson moved that from this day forward, the warrant for the Annual/Special Town meetings will open on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday of January each year. Selectwoman Sonnenberg 2 <sup>nd</sup> . Chairman Kilcoyne – Aye. Selectman Cranson – Aye. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – Aye. Motion carried. This coming year, it will open on January 20 <sup>th</sup> .
Set permanent schedule for Annual/Special Town meetings	After discussion, Selectman Cranson moved that from this day forward, the Annual Town Meetings (with Special Town Meeting, if needed) will be held at 6:30pm on the 1 <sup>st</sup> Monday in May, each year. Selectwoman Sonnenberg 2 <sup>nd</sup> . Chairman Kilcoyne – Aye. Selectman Cranson – Aye. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – Aye. Motion carried. This coming year, the ATM will be held on May 4 <sup>th</sup> .
Set permanent schedule for future town elections	After discussion, Selectman Cranson moved that from this day forward, the Annual Town election will be held on the 2nd Monday in May, each year. Selectwoman Sonnenberg 2 <sup>nd</sup> . Chairman Kilcoyne – Aye. Selectman Cranson – Aye. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – Aye. Motion carried. This coming year, the ATM will be held on May 11 <sup>th</sup> .
Proposed Budget dispersal	After discussion, Selectman Cranson moved that the proposed Budget and Capital request guidance notification be forwarded to all Departments, Boards and Committees. Selectwoman Sonnenberg 2 <sup>nd</sup> . Chairman Kilcoyne – Aye. Selectman Cranson – Aye. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – Aye. Motion carried.
Appoint MVP Core Team	<p>After discussion, Selectman Cranson moved to appoint the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Core Team, as submitted by Domenica Tatasciore. The members are as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Town Administrator, Ross Perry</li><li>• Town Planner, Domenica Tatasciore</li><li>• DPW Superintendent, Paul Lyons</li><li>• Emergency Management Director, Chief David Hurlbut</li><li>• Citizen Advocate, Susan Aldrich</li></ul> <p>The motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> – Selectwoman Sonnenberg. Chairman Kilcoyne – Aye. Selectman Cranson – Aye. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – Aye. Motion carried.</p> <p>Selectman Cranson moved to authorize Chairman Kilcoyne to sign the grant application letter on behalf of the board. The letter will be forwarded to the Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – 2nd. Chairman Kilcoyne – Aye. Selectman Cranson – Aye. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – Aye. Motion carried.</p>
Holiday closings	Selectman Cranson moved that the Municipal Building be closed on December 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2019 and that the non-union employees be paid for the day this year. Selectwoman Sonnenberg 2 <sup>nd</sup> . Selectman Cranson – Aye. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – Aye. Chairman Kilcoyne – Aye. Motion carried. The day after Thanksgiving will be considered a regular work day. If employees must clear it through their supervisors and use personal or vacation time.
Public Session	<p>Rosanne Mapp thanked and praised the Police Department for providing self-defense classes, in which she participated. She recommends that all women take advantage of the program.</p> <p>Blaine Bershad reported that the proposed Vegetation Management plan has been sent to the State for consideration.</p>

Lex Thomas asked for support of the Small Business Incubator proposal that she hopes to present at the next Sterling Business Association forum in December. She explained that;

- The business incubator is an opportunity for small businesses to transition out of the home setting
- This is an innovation that will make Sterling "small business friendly"
- It encourages companies to locate and then expand
- This will be a wonderful opportunity to market Sterling through media channels
- The proposed space for this endeavor is the main floor of the 1835 Town Hall
- The incubator businesses will pay the town to use the space
- More businesses in the center of Town kindles vitality

After further discussion, the consensus of the Board was that they support this new endeavor.

TA Report

Town Administrator Report 11-13-19 (By Fred Aponte, Operations Manager)

Budget:

- Draft FY 21 budget advisory letter for the Board to review
- Joint Town and School Admin budget meeting was last week on 11/7 in Holden. Sterling presented the following FY 21 budget guidance to the School and the other towns seemed to echo this guidance.
  - Annual WRSD budget increase 2- 3 ½%
    - 2 % is the goal
    - Should be in line with municipal budget guidance and match revenue changes
  - Line item budget for transparency.
    - Similar to municipal budgets
  - 5 year capital plan
    - Similar to municipal departments
  - 10 year plan for major building projects
  - Reasonable and meaningful' OPEB contributions included in budget
  - Details, history and balances on revolving accounts

Facilities:

- Within 7 days from a comment from a resident concerned about the dark areas in the back parking lot, SMLD reviewed the situation and installed two LED flood lights. Many thanks to SMLD and Darren Borge for the quick response.
- Friday to Sunday, 11/15-17 the old asbestos covered steam pipes from the now defunct boiler will be professionally removed. The work will done when the building is empty and will include covering all surfaces and equipment, and the appropriate clean up afterwards.

IT:

- The electronic permitting will be discussed with staff next week as we continue to move forward in this endeavor.
- Operations Manager, Fred Aponte, applied for a cyber-security grant that will provide free training for employees.

Contracts:

- Both the Dispatcher and Firefighters' union contracts expire this June. The first meeting with the Dispatch Union could be the week of 12/2 or 12/9. The negotiating team will include the respective Chief, Town Administrator, Operations Manager, and a Select person. If anyone from the Select Board wants to be part of the Town's negotiation team, the Board should appoint this person. (Chairman Kilcoyne offered to assist in these negotiations.)

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PSAs

- As mentioned at an earlier Board meeting, the Police Chief’s contract also expires on June 30, 2020. Both the Chief and the Board (and Town Administrator) indicated their intentions to renew this contract. I will work with the Chief to update his contract for the Board to review at a future meeting.
- There is an ALL BOARDS meeting on November 18<sup>th</sup>.
- December 5<sup>th</sup> will be the Sterling Business forum at the Sterling National Country Club.
- The Board commended Bob Temple for the Veteran’s day celebration.
- The Friends of The Sterling Senior Center will hold their Cookie sale on December 14<sup>th</sup>.
- It is YAHOO season. Those wishing assistance from the youth group should contact the Senior Center.
- Lake Shore Drive water project is complete. Fire hydrants have been installed and public water is available to those who wish to connect.
- Clark University will be offering a free graduate certificate to Municipal Employees regarding Cannabis legislation and regulations.
- The Board encouraged volunteers to step forward to fill vacancies on Boards and Committees.

Adjourn

At 8:17 Selectwoman Sonnenberg moved to adjourn. Selectman Cranson 2<sup>nd</sup>. Selectman Cranson - Aye. Chairman Kilcoyne – Aye. Selectwoman Sonnenberg – Aye. Motion carried.

Materials: minutes, Volunteer App., road closing request, budget letter proposal, tax hearing info., letter to Environmental and Energy