

TOWN OF STERLING
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
March 31, 2021

MEETING:	Chair Cranson called the Select Board meeting to order at 6:30pm. Roll Call: Chair Cranson – Present. Select member Sonnenberg – Present. Select member Kilcoyne – arrived at 6:35. Also present were Town Administrator, Kellie Hebert and Senior Executive Assistant, Kama Jayne.
Minutes	Select member Kilcoyne moved to approve the minutes of March 17, 2021. Select member Sonnenberg 2 nd . Chair Cranson – Aye. Select member Sonnenberg – Aye. Select Member Kilcoyne – Aye. Motion Carried. Select member Kilcoyne moved to approve the work session minutes of March 24, 2021. Select member Sonnenberg 2 nd . Chair Cranson – Aye. Select member Sonnenberg – Aye. Select Member Kilcoyne – Aye. Motion Carried.
Public Hearing 61A Releases	At 6:35, Select member Sonnenberg moved to open the Public Hearing regarding the release of Lot, 6 on Justice Hill Road, from Chapter 61A. Chair Cranson 2 nd . Chair Cranson – Aye. Select member Sonnenberg – Aye. Motion carried. The Planning Board and Conservation Commission have voted to approve these releases and to not pursue the purchase of the property. The Assessors voted to investigate the possibility of using the existing well, on Roper Road as a water source or as a means of fire suppression in that area. However, the water/DPW Superintendent, Paul Lyons reports that the well are not a viable water source. After further discussion, Select Board member Sonnenberg moved to approve the release of Lot 18 on Justice Hill Road, Lot 19 on Upper North Row Road, Lot 14 on Roper Road, and Lot 16 on Justice Hill Road (Deed Ref. Book 6059, Page 338 – Assessor's map 18, Parcel 17 at 2.31+ acres, 3.35+ acres, 2.96+ and 3.1+ acres respectively. Chair Cranson - 2 nd . Select member Sonnenberg – Aye. Chair Cranson – Aye. Motion carried. At 6:36 the Board adjourned from the public hearing to convene in the public session.
Interview Finalist for Recreation Director	The Board interviewed Sandra Habe for the Directorship of the Recreation Department. She lives in Lunenburg and is the Director of Operations at the Mill Works Complex for Sports, Health, Education, & Arts in Westford, MA. Sandra is looking forward to making a positive impact in the community. Select member Kilcoyne moved to appoint Sandra Habe as the Recreation Director. Select member Sonnenberg 2 nd . Chair Cranson – Aye. Select member Sonnenberg – Aye. Select Member Kilcoyne – Aye. Motion carried. The Board thanked the Recreation Commission for their diligence in bringing forth this well qualified candidate and welcomed Sandra to the Town of Sterling.
Open Space Appointment	After discussion Select member Kilcoyne moved to appoint Paul Lekberg to the Open Space Implementation Committee. Select member Sonnenberg 2 nd . Chair Cranson – Aye. Select member Sonnenberg – Aye. Select Member Kilcoyne – Aye. Motion carried. His term will expire on June 30, 2022.
Historical Com. Appointment	After discussion Select member Kilcoyne moved to appoint Thomas Fales to the Historical Commission. Select member Sonnenberg 2 nd . Chair Cranson – Aye. Select member Sonnenberg – Aye. Select Member Kilcoyne – Aye. Motion carried. His term will expire on June 30, 2022
Historical Com. Update	Chair of the Historical Commission, Cathy Harragian joined the meeting to update the Board on the current and planned activities of the Historical Commission.

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

March 31, 2021

- The HC is submitting warrant articles for funding to repair of the West Sterling Schoolhouse and cemeteries.
- They are proposing an art show at the West Sterling Schoolhouse in June as a fundraiser. Submissions are welcome. This event may be virtual, due to the pandemic restrictions.
- They are interested in pursuing the Veterans Grant for assistance with restoring and maintenance of the Veteran's memorial on the Common.
- With the assistance of the DPW, restoration will continue at Chocksett and other cemeteries
- Plans are taking shape for collecting information regarding the inventory of Historic Districts, including the Wekepeke area and cemeteries. They hope to be able to digitize this information so that it can be shared on-line.
- The HC is requesting funding from the Capital Committee to make repairs at Oak Hill and improve drainage at Chocksett Cemetery

Seasonal Alcohol License

After Discussion, Select member Kilcoyne moved to approve the seasonal alcohol License for the Sterling National Country Club. Select member Sonnenberg – 2nd. Chair Cranson – Aye. Select member Sonnenberg – Aye. Select member Kilcoyne – Aye. Motion Carried. The License is valid from April 1, 2021 – November 30, 2021.

Cultural Council event

Rosanne Mapp, chair of the Cultural Council requested the use of the Town Common and Memorial Park on August 21, 2021 for the purpose of an art festival. After discussion, Select member Kilcoyne moved that the Cultural Council be granted permission to use the Town Common and the Memorial Park for an art festival and to support this effort. Select member Sonnenberg – 2nd. Chair Cranson – Aye. Select member Sonnenberg – Aye. Select member Kilcoyne – Aye. Motion Carried.

CLOSE Warrant

After discussion, Select member Kilcoyne moved to close the warrant on Wednesday, April 14 at noon. Select member Sonnenberg – 2nd. Chair Cranson – Aye. Select member Sonnenberg – Aye. Select member Kilcoyne – Aye. Motion Carried.

Refer petition to planning Bd

After discussion, Select member Kilcoyne moved to request that the Planning Board hold a public hearing regarding the petition by the property owner on Princeton Road to amend the split zoning on parcels 93-48.2, 93-48.3 & 93-48.4 to include the parcels, in their entirety, within the Neighborhood Residential zoning district. Select member Sonnenberg 2nd. Chair Cranson – Aye. Select member Sonnenberg – Aye. Select Member Kilcoyne – Aye. Motion carried.

ATM Articles

The Board agrees that some warrant articles need to be revisited. It is their mission to appropriately finesse the language used in the articles so that the reasoning and overall impact of each is clear to the voting public. They also hope to engage the public and answer questions well in advance of the meeting. The Board proposed that all means available should be used in this endeavor, including Cable TV interviews/discussions, public meetings, and news articles. Funding requests for the DPW storage building and the school playground should also be revisited to ascertain whether the amount requested on these articles is adequate. (The cost of building materials has significantly increased within the past year.)

Management letter

Select member Kilcoyne reviewed the management letter that was sent to the town by Roselli Clark, the Town Auditors. Overall, the Town is very well run. The management letter recommended continued IT security and cameras within the building to address physical security. The Town Operations manager is currently working with the light department and Representative Ferguson to access funding for this. It was also recommended that a reserve fund be established for retiring employee benefits so that those benefits do not negatively impact the salary/wage budget for that department.

TA Report

INSURANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE:
The Insurance Advisory Committee has been meeting for the past few weeks to discuss potential health insurance plan design changes. The group discussed options for cost saving changes to the Town’s current medical insurance plan. Further information will be available at the next meeting.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT:
On Wednesday, the vendor from Permit Link came to do a training with the staff and inspectors about the Permit Link Software. This training helped bring the staff and interim Building Inspector up to speed on this software.

PERSONNEL UPDATES:
DPW Superintendent: Screening Committee Formed. The committee voted to recommend the services of Paradigm Associates to assist the Town with a position/departments assessment and a professional recruitment and hiring process. Consultant John Petrin is the principal advisor for the project and is assisting with a review of the DPW positions and the salary adjustments that have been requested by the DPW Board.
DPW Water Foreman: Two (2) applications were received by DPW Superintendent Paul Lyons for the position of DPW Water Foreman. Interviews will be held on Tuesday, March 30th.
DPW Executive Assistant: Eleven (11) applications were received by DPW Superintendent Paul Lyons for the position of Executive Assistant in the Water Division of the Department of Public Works. Any qualified candidates will be recommended to the DPW Board.
Department of Public Works Employees: I attended a Department Meeting at Public Works to explain the various steps and actions being taken to help address the recent concerns about mid-year wage adjustments. I explained the potential Warrant Article for a professional Town-Wide Classification and Compensation Analysis for non-union employees. I also notified the employees about the potential health insurance plan design changes being considered by the IA Group.

PSAs

- Filming for the episode of Dexter, at the B-Man Tavern, will take place on April 5th. The Town accepts payment of \$1,000.00 to park equipment at the Muddy Pond Road parking area.
- Meeting House Hill Road will be closed to traffic on Easter Sunday between 8:00am and noon to accommodate the outdoor church service.
- The Town-wide Clean Up effort will take place on April 24. Supplies will be available on the Common that morning.
- The I190 Exit numbers have been changed. Sterling is now Exit 14 instead of Exit 6.
- There is still time to take out papers to run for elected offices.
- The First Church program, Food is Love continues. Donations are welcome.

Adjourn

At 8:09 Select member Sonnenberg moved to end the meeting. Select member Kilcoyne 2nd. Chair Cranson – Aye. Select member Sonnenberg – Aye. Select Member Kilcoyne – Aye. Motion carried.

Materials: agenda, minutes, 61A release documents, volunteer applications , citizens petition, cultural council request, management letter