

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES
Zoom # 847 4284 3922
May 24, 2021, Monday

Present: Arthur Mathews, President
Michael Molisse, Vice President
Pascale Burga, Councilor
Kenneth DiFazio, Councilor
Brian Dwyer, Councilor
Fred Happel, Councilor
Ed Harrington, Councilor
Rebecca Haugh, Councilor
Christopher Heffernan, Councilor
Maureen Kiely, Councilor

Absent: Jane Hackett, Councilor

Also Present: Robert Hedlund, Mayor
Ted Langill, Chief of Staff
Kathleen Deree, Town Clerk
Joseph Callanan, Town Solicitor
Richard Swanson, Town Auditor

Recording Secretary: Mary Barker

President Mathews called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. After the Pledge of Allegiance, Town Clerk Kathleen Deree called the roll, with two members absent. Councilors DiFazio and Hackett were not present.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council President thanked the School Committee members and administrators for being present. He announced that the Weymouth Scholarship Committee awarded scholarships totalling \$102,000 to 52 residents. He congratulated the recipients and reported that the list of awards can be found on the town website.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES

Budget/Management Committee-Chairman Michael Molisse

21087-Reserve Fund Transfer-Lane Beach Bathhouse

Vice President Molisse reported that this measure was referred on May 3, 2021. The committee met on May 17, 2021 and voted to forward to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action.

On behalf of the Budget/Management Committee, Vice President Molisse made a motion to approve measure 21 087, as amended; that the Town of Weymouth transfer the sum of \$51,000 from the FY2021 Reserve Fund to an 02 capital account for expenses associated with repairs and improvements to the Lane Beach Bathhouse. The motion was seconded by Councilor Harrington.

A roll call vote was taken: Councilor Burga-Yes, Councilor Dwyer-Yes, Councilor Happel-Yes, Councilor Harrington-Yes, Councilor Haugh-Yes, Councilor Kiely-Yes, Vice President Molisse-Yes, President Mathews-Yes. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED, 9-0

OVERVIEW OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021

President Mathews read the following statement:

Good evening and thank you for attending our Annual Town Meeting. Once again, due to the current pandemic, we are meeting via Zoom. As we transition from the Governor's State of Emergency to the new normal, I thank you all for your cooperation as we conducted the council's business with accessibility and transparency forefront.

Congratulations to all of the scholarship recipients.

Pursuant to Section 6-6 of the Town Charter, the Town Council President shall deliver an update on the legislative activities of the Council, for fiscal 2021, which commenced on July 1, 2020.

The Town Council has held a total of 64 meetings so far for fiscal year 2021. This includes regularly scheduled Town Council Meetings, Special Town Council Meetings, and numerous meetings of the 12 committees under the jurisdiction of the Town Council.

<i>Committee meetings:</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>Town Council:</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Special Town Council:</i>	<i>5</i>

As the legislative branch of government, the Town Council is responsible for approving measures, new appointments and reappointments, town ordinances, zoning changes and the operating budget for the town, as submitted by Mayor Hedlund. Over the course of this fiscal year, the council has approved 14 appointments, and 36 reappointments, including extending the Town Auditor's contract for another year.

The Council, in deliberating the budget, and pursuant to the town charter, cannot increase, but can only reduce the budget.

Serving as President of the Town Council is an extreme honor. I appreciate my colleagues' trust in me to lead this esteemed body.

I would like to take a moment to highlight actions the Town Council took in fiscal 2021.

Weymouth's Charter requires that a periodic review of the charter is performed at ten-year intervals, and the Code of Ordinances at five-year intervals. Both review committees have completed their work and submitted their reports to the Town Council.

The following projects were earmarked by the Council:

The Town Council approved, with Community Preservation funds, the following:

- *\$10,000 for architectural services, and \$433,000 for the preservation of the First Church exterior*
- *\$18,750 for consulting services for the management strategy of Whitman's Pond*
- *22,680 to digitize historic library documents*
- *\$150,000 to replace windows in the Pope Towers*

The Council approved several utility petitions by National Grid and Verizon that range from pole relocation, to gas main installations.

We approved measures that authorized the acceptance of more than \$900,000 in HUD-CARES Act funding to assist homeowners, renters, and small businesses facing financial difficulty as a result of COVID-19. Funds were also allocated so the town was able to offer its employees COVID-19 testing and some limited vaccination services for seniors.

Free Cash measures that were approved to pay for:

- *\$210,000 for a Fire Department Dispatch/Records Systems*
- *\$122,000 to help pay legal fees incurred in the fight against the North Weymouth compressor station*

And approved the transfer of stabilization and reserve funds for the following:

- *\$1.8 million to purchase a new engine and ladder truck*
- *\$940,000 for demolition and site remediation of the Wharf Incinerator*
- *\$85,000 for legal fees incurred by outside counsel assisting the town's fight against the North Weymouth compressor station*
- *\$238,000 for COVID-19 testing*
- *\$36,000 HVAC repairs to Station 5 and for the apparatus to retrofit the new engine and ladder truck*
- *\$263,000 Firefighters settlement to cover the salary and overtime impacts of the collective bargaining agreement*
- *\$4,000 – to pay for an additional school federal program audit required by our independent auditors*
- *\$562,000 for the 53rd payroll week (that occurs once every 5 years)*

And approved expending from the Water and Sewer Enterprise funds to cover:

- *\$350,000 Libbey Park well replacement*

In other business, the Town Council voted to authorize the School Department to enter into a 5-year Bus Transportation contract, and for the Police Department to enter into a 5-year contract for Body Camera and Vehicle Video Communications systems.

The Town Council authorized the acceptance of the CDBG/HOME funds and a \$10,000 donation from Eastern Bank. We authorized bonding \$4 million for road and sidewalk repairs, and amended the bonding for the Talbot boiler and Adams Middle School renovation projects.

The following issues were deliberated:

- *Review of zoning amendment to create a commercial corridor overlay district*
- *Requested a regional Compressor Station Safety Analysis & Evacuation Plan*

The following Ordinance measures were approved:

- *Traffic Regulation speed limit for a portion of East Street*
- *Approved several proposed miscellaneous zoning ordinance amendments with respect to Garages, the Commercial Corridor Overlay District, and Dimensional requirements for Public Open Space*
- *A citizen petition to change Zoning Ordinance 120-64.7.1-Billboard Overlay District*
- *A change to section 120-64.7.1-Billboard Overlay District*
- *Imposition of a one-year moratorium on issuance of new permits for billboards in the commercial corridor overlay district*

Our Town Auditor, Mr. Swanson, provides analysis to the Councilors on the Mayor's proposed financial measures, including the annual operating and Capital Budget submissions. He reviews each line item in the proposed budget, and prepares questions based on his analyses, which are then reviewed in budget deliberation with each department. He also conducts detailed audits of the departments and operations to evaluate internal controls in place regarding all cash related activities for the Town Council.

I would like extend my sincere appreciation to my fellow Councilors, the employees of the Town Council and Town Clerk's Offices, Mayor Hedlund, his Administration, and the School Department and School Committee for their ongoing efforts.

Additionally, I would like to extend my appreciation to the residents of the Town of Weymouth, who by their valuable input through various communications at meetings and during public hearings have brought to light important issues. The Council appreciates your participation in local government.

Councilor DiFazio arrived during his statement (7:42 PM).

PUBLIC HEARINGS

21 062-General Government Annual Appropriation

21 063-Revolving Accounts Annual Authorization

21 064-Gift Accounts Annual Authorization

21 065- Sewer Enterprise Fund Annual Appropriation

21 066- Sewer Department – Pump Station Improvements, Borrowing Request

21 067- Sewer Retained Earnings – Pump Station Improvements

21 068-Sewer Retained Earnings – Capital Equipment

21 069-Water Enterprise Fund Fiscal Year 22 Appropriation

21 070-Water Retained Earnings – Capital Equipment

21 071- Water Retained Earnings – Water Treatment Plant Upgrades & Improvements

21 072- Community Preservation Fund Annual Appropriation

21 073- Free Cash for FY21 Snow Removal Deficit

21 074-Free Cash Transfer to OPEB Trust Fund

21 075-Free Cash Transfer for School IT Leases

21 076-Free Cash for New Police Cruisers

21 077-Establishment Facilities & Fields Enterprise Fund

21 078- Transfer to Facilities and Fields Enterprise Fund

Capital Improvement Plan for Fiscal Years 2021-2025

A motion was made by Vice President Molisse to open the public hearing on measures 20 062 through 21 078, and the Capital Improvement Plan, inclusive, and was seconded by Councilor Harrington.

A roll call vote was taken:

Councilor Burga-Yes, Councilor DiFazio-Yes, Councilor Dwyer-Yes, Councilor Happel-Yes, Councilor Harrington-Yes, Councilor Haugh-Yes, Councilor Heffernan-Yes, Councilor Kiely-Yes, Vice President Molisse-Yes, President Mathews-Yes. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED. 10-0

State of the Town-Mayor Robert Hedlund

Mayor Hedlund noted that this was a year of perseverance in difficult times. The declaration of a state of emergency by Governor Baker impacted 1/3 year. Revenue estimates for each of the three years before the pandemic averaged \$4.2 million above estimates and they worked proactively.

He thanked the staff, team effort, and looks forward to return to normalcy.

Presentation of the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget- Mayor Robert Hedlund/Chief of Staff Ted Langill

Ted Langill gave a PowerPoint presentation on the FY22 budget, presenting the budget with the Mayor:

Managing Through a Pandemic – Managing the Impacts of COVID-19

- Prioritize Revenue Collection
- Incentivize and simplify the paying of certain bills
- Expense Management

Continued Progress During COVID-19

- Continue “Pave the Way” Investment
- New Chapman Middle School
- Park and Trail Improvements
- Parks and Recreation Improvements
- Other Progress for Weymouth

FY22 Budget- Signs of Recovery

- Progress returns
- Schools
- Expense factors
- Water/sewer budget
- CPC budget
- Facilities & Fields Enterprise Fund
- Safety Nets

Facilities and Fields Enterprise will be established to maintain and eventually replace the fields and protect the investment on the fields by putting the revenue back to the needs. Another benefit of the FY22- safety nets is the revenue from covid and FEMA and American Rescue Plan- \$17.8 million in 4 categories of expenses:

- Response to public health emergency or its negative econ consequences
- Provision of premium pay to eligible workers
- Revenue replacement
- Investments in water, sewer and broadband infrastructure

Norfolk County also gets \$11 million, but it is still unclear how it will be spent, and whether any will come back to cities in towns in the county.

The schools will also be receiving funding-\$ 6.5 million. They will have to be cautious about

supplementing the operating budget with one-time sources of funding (unlike neighboring towns).

President Mathews asked if there were any questions or comments from the public, to which there was no response.

A motion was made by Vice President Molisse to close the public hearing on measures 20 062 through 21 078, inclusive, and the Capital Improvement Plan, was seconded by Councilor Harrington.

A roll call vote was taken:

Councilor Burga-Yes, Councilor DiFazio-Yes, Councilor Dwyer-Yes, Councilor Happel-Yes, Councilor Harrington-Yes, Councilor Haugh-Yes, Councilor Heffernan-Yes, Councilor Kiely-Yes, Vice President Molisse-Yes, President Mathews-Yes. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

ADJOURNMENT

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Town Council will be Monday, June 7, 2021. At 8:30 PM; there being no further business, Vice President Molisse made a motion to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Councilor Harrington.

A roll call vote was taken: Councilor Burga-Yes, Councilor DiFazio-Yes, Councilor Dwyer-Yes, Councilor Happel-Yes, Councilor Harrington-Yes, Councilor Haugh-Yes, Councilor Heffernan-Yes, Councilor Kiely-Yes, Vice President Molisse-Yes, President Mathews-Yes. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Attachments: Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget

Respectfully Submitted by Mary Barker as Recording Secretary

Approved by Arthur Mathews as President of the Town Council

Voted unanimously on 28 June 2021