

STOCKBRIDGE SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, April 9, 2020
6:30 p.m.
TOWN OFFICES, 50 MAIN STREET

Present:

Terry Flynn, Chuck Cardillo, Roxanne McCaffrey and Mark Webber

Call to Order:

Terry called the meeting to order.

Agenda:

First on the agenda was a special permit request for Albert Rodriguez and Layne Candice Reznick for property at 21 Lakeview Drive. Terry stated that this is a restoration of an existing home and has been approved by the building inspector. To date there was no correspondence or calls from notified abutters. Terry made a motion that the Board approve the special permit for Albert Rodriguez and Layne Candice Reznick for property at 21 Lakeview Drive. Roxanne seconded; all were in favor.

Mark requested that with the COVID-19 restrictions that people hold off on applying for special permits at this time; not only the Select board but all Town boards.

Next was the adoption of COVID-19 Elements Ch 53 of Acts of 2020. Mark deferred to Town Treasurer/Collector Karen Williams. Karen said that there are three options. The first is to postpone the due date for 2nd half real estate and personal taxes for 1 month from May 1 to June 1. The second which applies to the Assessors is to extend the due date for applications for property tax exemptions from April 1 to June 1. Mark said that he spoke to the Principal Assessor and asked him to poll his Board of Assessors and they all agreed and recommended option two. Karen said that the third option was a little more involved as it is to waive penalties and interest on excise, real estate and personal property taxes due March 10 or after, if paid by June 30. This would include excise taxes. Karen stated that this would be inequitable if you have already paid and a bit more difficult. Karen agreed with voting in numbers one and two. Karen also stated that she was willing to work with people on payment plans. The adoptions will need to be sent out by a robo-call and posting on the Town website. Terry mad a motion that the Board postpone the due date for 2nd half real estate and personal taxes for 1 month from May 1 to June 1; and to postpone the due date for applications for property tax exemptions from April 1 to June 1. Roxanne seconded; all were in favor.

The next item was to appoint an assistant wire inspector. Terry made a motion with the recommendation of Nick, to appoint as assistant wire inspector Warren Harrison of Becket. Chuck seconded; all were in approval.

Concerning the FY 2021 Annual Town Meeting and budget discussion, Mark said that the Finance Committee will be meeting in a week with a number of points on potential COVID-19 considerations and Mark will attend. Terry felt that these items will be addressed by the Select Board and said that this is early and it is the Boards roll to develop the proposals for the Warrant followed by the Finance Committee weighing in.

Next, Mark spoke on the Town Administrator discussion. Mark noted that in light of the current State of Emergency and day to day uncertainty, he suggested that the Board consider extending his time here for up to another six months, beginning May 1. In anticipation of this type of circumstance, the Governor signed legislation last Friday lifting the earnings restrictions on municipal retirees. With everything in flux, it would be difficult to do a hire and transition by the end of this month. Mark spoke with Search Committee Chair Bronly Boyd and he agreed. He added that they wouldn't start over. The announced finalists would remain in place until public interviews could be held. Mark did not feel right leaving the community right now. All were in agreement.

Terry made a motion that the Board postpone the interviews for the two candidates for the permanent Town Administrator and that Mark Webber continue as the current Interim Town Administrator for the next six months from May 1st. Chuck seconded; all were in favor.

In other business: The Town Clerk wanted to reach out to residents on the 2020 census as follows: Recently, you should have received a letter from the U.S. Census Bureau, inviting you to go online to respond to the 2020 federal Census. The U.S. Census counts every person in the country every 10 years. The information gathered through the census is used to decide how much our communities get in state and federal money for things like public health, transportation, and education. The census is quick, easy, and important, and all of your answers are confidential. Please visit www.my2020census.gov and be counted today. The Census Bureau has had to suspend field operations through next week, if not the end of the month or beyond, but that doesn't mean residents cannot respond online (<https://my2020census.gov/>) or by phone. (844-330-2020). This information is up on the Town website.

Mark said that he received a call from Ameresco, the people who did the Town's solar field, requesting to put on the Town website an online kiosk that gives online power generations from the solar service. It is a free service and Ameresco maintains the kiosk. The Board agreed to having it on the website.

Mark announced that in response to the closings of other hiking areas, there has been an overwhelming amount of people on the hiking the trails off of Park Street. Therefore, the entrance to Ice Glen and the Laurel Hill trails at end of Park Street have been closed, with the consent of Laurel Hill Association. Mark said that the Board might consider closing other Town parks/playgrounds as well. The Board discussed the playground equipment and tennis courts as they are not being routinely disinfected. Terry suggested reaching out to the Parks and Rec. Commission first. Terry made a motion to close the Town parks and playgrounds pending Marks consultation with the Parks Commissioners. Roxanne seconded; all were in favor.

Chuck questioned where things stood with the Highway garage and Mark said that they are steadily working and moving forward. Chuck asked for a complete inventory list when everything is moved into the garage.

Roxanne reminded resident to keep up withy social distancing and stay safe.

Adjournment:

With no further business, Terry adjourned the meeting.