

HALIFAX BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 27 – 6:30 P.M.
GREAT HALL

Meeting came to order at 6:30 p.m. with Selectmen, Gordon C. Andrews, Troy E. Garron and Ashley A. DiSesa present.

The following business was discussed:

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board as well as those attending tonight's meeting stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA

Moved by DiSesa and seconded by Garron, the Board unanimously approved the agenda for Tuesday, July 22, 2021.

MINUTES

Moved by Garron and seconded by DiSesa, the Board unanimously voted to approve the following Selectmen Minutes:

Regular Session – May 20, 2021
Regular Session – May 27, 2021
Regular Session – June 1, 2021
Regular Session – June 4, 2021
Regular Session – July 20, 2021

AFFIRMED WARRANTS & COMMITMENTS

Moved by DiSesa and seconded by Garron, the Board voted as follows to affirm payment of the following warrants and commitments:

Gordon C. Andrews - Abstained
Troy E. Garron - Yes
Ashley A. DiSesa - Yes

Vendor Warrant	#137	\$ 11,585.99
Payroll Warrant	#6	\$ 230,685.54
Vendor Warrant	#7	\$ 237,834.16
Withholding Warrant	#8	\$ 78,577.46
Ambulance Commitment	for	\$ 72,248.89
7/5/21-7/11/21		
Ambulance Commitment	for	\$ 30,529.86
7/12/21-7/18/21		

APPROVED WARRANT

Moved by DiSesa and seconded by Garron, the Board voted as follows to approve payment of the following warrant:

Gordon C. Andrews - Abstained
Troy E. Garron - Yes
Ashley A. DiSesa - Yes

Vendor Warrant	#9	\$ 238,689.03
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APPROVED BILLS

Moved by DiSesa and seconded by Garron, the Board unanimously approved payment of the following Selectmen bills:

W.B Mason (ink & paper).....	\$ 173.47
National Grid (Town Hall electricity).....	\$ 1,284.79

GENERAL MAIL / DISCUSSIONS**Road Opening – 43 Holmes Street**

Moved by Garron and seconded by DiSesa, the Board unanimously approved Permit #2021-27 issued to Eversource Gas of Massachusetts for a 3' x 5' x 3' road cut to abandon inactive gas service line at the main at the above location.

Zoning By-Law Review Project Contract

The Board was asked if they wanted to make any amendments to the contract and if so Seelig needs them so that he can send to Attorney Bobrowksi before the Board signs the contract. He dd talk with the Finance Committee and they are welcoming other boards, committees and town officials to participate in this project.

Andrews is concerned as the Finance Committee said they did not have the expertise to move forward with the zoning by-law changes and they are not getting any participation. He thinks they should consider revamping the zoning by-law subcommittee and assign them to work on this with Attorney Bobrowksi. The contract states that upon the completion of five meetings of the first draft of the by-law the attorney is going to request a payment of \$22,500. At this time, they have been two meetings and Attorney Bobrowksi has been giving an update on what he sees we could do differently. The committee is not telling him what they want to see move forward for the town, which he thinks is a mistake. DiSesa agreed with putting the subcommittee back together. Garron asked who would be on the committee and she said definitely someone from zoning & planning and resident(s). She asked who was on before and Seelig said member of: ZBA, Planning Board, selectmen, Building Inspector and one or two members at large. Seelig stated a number of people opposed this project at town meeting back in September so he is not sure if it would be normal to have people who opposed the project and voted against be on the committee that wants to get the work done. Andrews thought was if you are going to have people on the committee you should have people who have an interest making sure what is in the by-laws is in there. Seelig said the problem is if you put in people on the committee who did not want the project in the first place what is preventing them from sabotaging the project. DiSesa said there will be other members on the committee who will be the checks & balances. Andrews said the Finance Committee does not have the expertise to move forward with this project so moving forward it needs to be changed. Garron stated that if you put a *At Large* on the committee you will need to have someone with expertise on by-laws. DiSesa said there will be the attorney and people from different boards to help the residents and stated that we need more people having a voice and be part of changes happening here and this is how we do that. Andrews said this is not going to fly with the Finance Committee doing this because they have said that they do not have the expertise to do this. DiSesa agreed and stated by forming a subcommittee we know people are taking this seriously and they are accountable for making the changes. Seelig said if people show up that would be great, but the last zoning by-law committee we had he was here some evenings waiting for people to show up and then there would be people in the parking lot who never came in the building. Andrews said the town's people voted this and he did not see putting the Finance Committee in charge of this of this where they did not have the expertise.

Garron said isn't that why we have an attorney and Andrews said he is not supposed to be dictating what the town's by-laws are. He may have his views, but it might not match what the residents of the towns are. DiSesa said the Finance Committee hired him and they openly said they don't have the expertise - this is why we need to have more people involved.

Moved by Andrews and seconded by DiSesa, the Board voted as follows to put on their agenda for August 10th the Zoning By-Law Committee:

Gordon C. Andrews	-	Yes
Troy E. Garron	-	Abstained
Ashley A. DiSesa	-	Yes

Materials Recovery Facility Legislation

The Board was asked if they wanted to contact the Town's legislative delegation about the proposed legislation to require more transparency by Material Resource Processors.

Moved by Garron and seconded by DiSesa, the Board unanimously vote to contact the Town's legislative delegation to support the bill.

Live Entertainment Permit – David & Linda Tonioli

Moved by Garron and seconded by DiSesa, the Board unanimously approved Permit #2021-26 to David & Linda Tonioli for live entertainment at 67 Franklin Street on Saturday, August 14th, from 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Ambulance Abatements

Moved by Garron and seconded by DiSesa, the Board unanimously voted to approve ambulance abatements for June 2021 in the amount of \$110,121.18.

Use of Town Green – Congregational Church

Moved by Garron and seconded by DiSesa, the Board unanimously granted a request from the Congregational Church for the use of the Town Green on Sunday, August 22nd for the Blessing of the Pets and Saturday September 11th for their flea market.

One Day Liquor License – Fieldstone Farms – Cancelled

Moved by Garron and seconded by DiSesa, the Board unanimously voted to rescind the vote taken on July 13, 2021 for 6 one-day liquors licenses issued to Paul Nixon of Independent Fermentation Brewing, LLC.

CoA Women's Coffee Group

CoA Director Regan was approached by a member asking if they could have women's group. Regan stated that the members bring forth tons on energy and they are happy to have Officer Cushman as their Elder Affairs Liaison.

Printing of the Town Report

Reports all have been submitted. The plan is to print ten copies and then bring to them to get bound. The report will be available on-line so anyone can print it out. There is approximately \$100 available for the cost to do this. McSherry will check with We Print Today for pricing.

Town's Facebook Page

Andrews said that this has previously come up before and asked the Board what their thoughts were on creating a page and policy. Garron said if this is a way to let people know what is going on and provide it for people to voice their opinions then he was ok with it.

Seelig said if they are going to do that, then you will have to deal with monitoring the comments unless you are going to allow a free for all because you are going to get into 1st amendment problems. If you do not allow any comments and are just posting information about various departments then they you will not have that problem.

Andrews thinks posting on Facebook to share information is good, but it will create issues if more than one person comment back because if two members of a three-person board comments then it is a violation of the open meeting law. Seelig is not so much worried about that as he is about allowing comments from the general public and then someone is going to have to make a judgement call if it is an acceptable comment or not.

DiSesa thinks the point of the Facebook page is putting information out there on meetings, hearing and things going on in the town so that more people can get involved in the town. She does not think comments need to be turned on but thinks they should let messages be received and whoever is running the page can forward them to the specific board if there needs to be a response. We do not want it to seem like we are not being responsive. She also thinks it is important the page provide the proper emails and who is on what boards and a contact person if there is something they want to talk about.

Andrews asked if they post something to the website they are going to post to Facebook also and DiSesa said that Seelig already posts to both pages. She thinks it would be important to have a specific town page to post things in a more positive way and to get messages out there. She further said they have to decide what is going to be posted such as when meetings are, agendas, let people see what is being talked about so they can decide if they want to come to a meeting and have input or send an email in and have a voice. The Facebook page will be a way of getting information to the residents about what is going on in all of the town buildings and what is going on in the town.

Andrews thinks a policy should be in place before moving forward. Maybe take with Brooks & DeRensis and see if they have a social media policy that they can recommend and vote on it at the next meeting. Garron and DiSesa agreed with Andrews' suggestion.

LED Streetlight Discussion

Seelig is waiting to hear back from Highway Surveyor Hayward.

MBTA Advisory Board Representative

Moved by Garron and seconded by DiSesa, the Board voted that Chairman, Gordon C. Andrews be the Town's representative for the MBTA Advisory Board.

Letter of Commendation – Officer Hingst

The office received a letter of commendation from Chief Chaves praising Officer Hingst on a call he responded to. The office will also send a letter to Officer Hingst.

FEMA Map Changes

The office received a letter confirming the changes made in the Town's flood maps in connection with specific properties. The Building Inspector's office also received a copy.

Curtin Brothers Oil Petition

Andrews recused himself from this discussion.

Karen Fava sent a series of photos of a petition opposing the proposed flammable storage license for Curtin Oil. The photos do not provide enough detail of the text of the petition and the signatures. Ms. Fava has been informed of it. Even though the property borders the Historic District, it is not located within the district. No action is needed from the Board.

Traffic Sign Safety Account

The Board was asked if they wanted to set up a new line item as part of the September 8th STM or would wait for the ATM in May 2022? DiSesa said that she has talked with Highway Surveyor Hayward, and they think they are going to get it on the September 8th STM. They are working on the details. Seelig will talk with Hayward.

SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT**Water System Discussion w/ Water Commissioners & Board of Health**

The Water Commissioners and the Board of Health were asked to come in to talk about issues with the Town's water supply. Resident, Kim Sims, previously attended one of the Board's meetings and presented them with pictures and talked about some of the issues that she is having at her residence, the amount of water that she's trying to flush through the system. The Commission was asked to give the Board an update on what is going on with the water system in Town and why some of our residents are having brown water complaints.

Bill Lindsay – water Superintendent

He said I know that specific development that she lives in is because of the way the water mains were put in – it's an 8-inch water main going with 2-inch drains coming off and the building maintenance company was supposed to put in the leaders because we can't go in and flush. and he thinks they flushed once or twice a unit and that contributes to some of the problem. Andrews asked if the water is safe, and Lindsey said yes – it gets tested every month.

Kimberly Sims – Lydon Lane

She asked if it is happening in the condos and it's our system then why is it happening in other places like South Street, Twin Lakes and Monponsett Street. It is not just Lydon Lane. She is on the Board in the Condos and stated that they have been flushing more regularly.

Dick Clark – Water Commissioner

He asked how often are they are flushing and Sims said quarterly and asked how often you would like us to be doing the flushing.

Sims understands the condos have a faulty system but thinks the Town must have said that was okay back in the day when the condos were built, which means the Town thought that they could give us clean water.

Clark said they are not blaming it on the condos and stated that he does not think they have been doing their job in the past on the flushing, but we now have a new superintendent who has been doing a good job in the last three weeks he has been here. We know this is a problem and we are trying to correct it. We have a contract with the engineers to do work both on the treatment plant and the filtration plant. That got delayed a little bit because of the COVID and from other reasons. The water is safe, and they are dealing with the problems as fast as they can. Clark said they don't want dirty water; they want clean water and part of the problem is that you were not doing it right and part of it was we were not doing it right. Sims thanked them for taking some ownership and said the last Superintendent constantly blamed the condos in general.

Clark said they are doing everything they can with the tank, the treatment plant and the filtration plant to take care of these problems.

Andrews thinks the residents should know what is the current well set up is right now and asked if they are being filtered right now.

Clark said no only two are.

Andrews then asked if we were getting a lot of magnesium and iron into the system because we're not filtering two out of the four.

Clark said the two that aren't being filtered don't require a filter but further down the road they might require it, but right now the manganese and iron is below the limit of the State requirements and the other two wells that are not being filtered there is a company coming in Monday morning to upgrade the both of them.

DiSesa asked if they could filter the other two and Clark said there is no need to do it now because the iron and manganese are below what the State says we can put out.

Andrews said that somebody had posted a copy of their water they sent out to get tested and it was high in iron and magnesium. The reason why the Board asked everyone to come in is because it's a constant thing, and the residents didn't feel like they were getting answers. Andrews said that we have ARPA money available that can be spent on the water system so if there are upgrades that you guys have been holding off on because we didn't have the funds associated with it, we have it now. Clark said they were not holding off on anything and that they hired an engineering company a while ago, we went to Town Meeting and got the money approved to do it, we signed a contract with them, it got delayed and now they are telling us they will be here Monday morning.

DiSesa was concerned that sometimes the town let things fail and then we pick up the pieces quickly and spend a whole bunch of money when maybe we could have maintained it along the way and not been hit with it at Town Meeting or pay big fees. She asked if there was anything they can do in the meantime with the two wells of more of a maintenance to make sure we don't get to that point. and maybe it would also even out by helping with some of these levels, or are we just going to cross our fingers, hope for the best, and when it fails tell all these people sorry about your brown water and now we need all your money to fix the two wells. Again, Clark said the company is coming in Monday morning to start working on the two wells that need work done on them. There are no problems with the other two wells.

DiSesa said that they are not a problem yet and Sims asked can we do something preventative.

Lindsey said the company that has given us a quote to clean the tank also is recommending installing a mixer which will keep the water circulating so that the minerals don't gather and get spread throughout the system. DiSesa asked if this was something they funded for or are they going to hold off on and he said that is getting done when they clean the tank.

DiSesa thinks those are important things for the residents to know and now that we know we have problems we are working on them – they want to know how you are working on them and where their tax money is being spent when they are still looking at brown water. Just a little more detail I think makes everyone feel a little better and not like things are being hidden or not transparent.

A resident asked if the unfiltered tanks service the condos and Clark said all four wells service the entire town.

Amy Troup

She asked when was the when was the last time Richmond Park well was actually filtered and that all magnesium and iron was removed because she heard that we used to do it and stopped because we couldn't dump it because the DEP doesn't allow us to dump it back there anymore, so when was the last time ...

Clark said they filter every day, 365 days a year and that has nothing to do with the water going out into the system and that they collect iron and magnesium and put in pits.

Troup said they were actually emptied them so they filtered better and Clark said they still empty them. She then asked when was the last time ... and Clark said that has nothing to do with the filtration.

Troup wanted to see it in writing and see records because she was told it has not been done in years. Clark said she was talking about two different things. We are talking about the filtered water that is going into the system and you are talking when we backwash the filters the dirt that we collect from the filters where it is stored. He did not see what that has to do with anything to do with the problems we're having. Troup was asking because she heard that it was something that was affecting our water.

Clark explained that it is like backing washing a pool - you backwash the dirty water, that dirty water comes out of the filter. That is exactly what we do down there.

Troup said she would like a date and Clark said he does not have it right now.

Kim Cavicchi - 668 Plymouth Street

She said as being an Associate Member of Conservation, she was curious with the Water Act under Chapter 146 if Conservation in the future should be involved in any more joint meetings. As a resident she has called the Water Department but for the past six months we've had no better water quality than hydrated p-yellow which at least they can shower and it is not such a threat to her heating system, washing machine, dishwasher and other things, but she still has to use bottled water for cooking, the animals and drinking because she does not feel the water is 100% not to it gets a little costly to residents during a pandemic.

Sims said it seems asked like this is happening in the older areas of Halifax so would having older pipes have anything to do with this? Lindsay did not think so because the water's all the same.

Clarks said part of the problem is flushing has not been done correctly. DiSesa asked how long is going to take for them to see a significant change in their water and Clark said every time Lindsey flushes. At time we do not want to flush because we do not have enough water to do it and we would just be draining the tank. First thing is we get the tank cleaned and then he can schedule flushing after that is done he thinks 90% of these problems are going to go away.

Woman in the audience

She stated so what they are recommending is proper flushing and a maintenance schedule is for a closed system like in the condos and asked if quarterly was sufficient? Clark said quarterly is sufficient if the problem is getting better and the last time he met with them he told if it's not then he is going to do it more frequently until the problem gets better.

She (woman in the audience) then said it was done at the beginning of June and Sims showed a bottle of water from her home from yesterday and a bottle of water from her parent's (they live in the condos too) a week ago.

She (woman in the audience) said they have not even met the next quarterly time for flushing and there are still issues.

Andrews asked if there was a way to flush any of those lines that are dead-headed and Lindsey said the two inch hydrant are bigger than the lines they have in there now but there are no big hydrants.

Sims said if they are flushing quarterly on their end and the town is not doing it on their end how do we justify that it is on the condo's end and Lindsey said if the water outside the neighborhood is clean, when you flush it clean water will be pulled in. He further explained that when and her neighbors are not home all day the water is sitting so when everyone comes home and you turn your water on the magnesium that had been sitting comes through the 2-inch pipe and since it is a 2-inch main there is not a lot of room in there.

Ashley questioned that there are residents from all over the town saying they have the same issue, so it's not just their neighborhood and Lindsey said that is why he is going to the clean the tank should it be coming from there.

DiSesa asked when was the last time the tank was cleaned and he said 2015 or 2018. Lindsey just got a quote yesterday for the cleaning of the tank whom he will call back to set up a time to do it. DiSesa then asked how often should it be cleaned and he thinks every five years.

Andrews thinks one of the other one of the issues the residents brought up is they're being told to basically just run their water, and basically they are being asked to pay for water that they know they can't use because they're trying to flush the system.

Sims said that was the prior superintendent solution to the problem and filling a tub or pool that uses 307 gallons, until it's clean is wasteful. Yes, the water gets a little better but nothing significant.

Andrews asked if there was a way to work out a program where everybody in a certain building basically works with you guys and flushes out their internal system or the out-ternal spigot that everybody in a building on a certain day, and you just walk around or a certain hour that you guys work with them on to not only just do the bleeders but the water that is going inside their buildings too. Because we are telling everybody they have to flush the water and pay for it.

Clark said if they are bleeding they are not paying for it.

Andrews said they are flushing through their house so they are paying for water to come in that they cannot use and are telling them they have to flush the water in order to use it. Clark said they are not telling them that the old superintendent did we are not saying that at all.

Clark stated that they may have to replace their hot water tank as sediment settles to the bottom. Sims stated it is coming out of a hose, it's not involving a hot water tank.

Andrews said the pictures she showed are definitely not coming from the hot water and we should probably tell the residents if you've got a hot water heater, you should flush it once or twice a year to make sure all the sediment is removed. But he thinks the issue is not from hot water tanks, it is from the cold water that is coming through and the residents want to know if there is a solution that we can work on.

DiSesa asked Lindsey if he was willing to go out and look at the condos and see what's going on over there and he said yes.

Clark said last spring him and the old superintendent meet with the condo association –they'd hired a contractor to do the flushing for them. At that time, we told the contractor that when they flush to contact the water department and they would work with them to help get this problem straightened out because they don't want people with dirty water. He does not know if that ever happened.

DiSesa said that it is great that you're willing to do that and appreciates it. She hopes they will give the Commissioners some time to work with the new Superintendent to makes things better for the town.

Tom Thibeault – 368 South Street

He is happy that there is a plan in place as he has had continuous problems and felt that the old superintendent made it sound that it was in house and he would flush and would see an improvement but the next day it would be brown again. This is great to hear that the tanks are and the filters on the pumps are going to be cleaned. He also stated that he discovered at a water department meeting that a policy that was in place was not being followed on the flushing, so this is good news to hear because we would be in the dark if we didn't come.

DiSesa said that they need to give the new Water Superintendent a chance.

GENERAL MAIL / DISCUSSIONS

Reappointment – Tania Massa – Holidays in Halifax

Moved by Garron and second by DiSesa, the Board voted to reappoint Tania Massa to the Holidays in Halifax Committee.

Appointment – Zoning Board of Appeals

Andrews recused himself from this discussion.

Garron nominated Mr. Borsari to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

DiSesa nominated Ms. Kenyon.

Moved by DiSesa and second by Garron, the Board unanimously voted to appoint Tina Kenyon to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Surplus Vehicle

Moved by DiSesa and second by Garron, the Board unanimously declared the following vehicle surplus:

2014 Ford Explorer (black) – VIN #1FM5K8AR7EGA18257

SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT

Department Head Meeting

Bob Valery – Board of Health

We cannot predict the unpredictable, we were able to handle it fortunately with some help from DPH, but it looks secure right now but that all dependent upon what happens this fall. As for COVID itself the town is on an increase 2.41%, we have been under 1% for about a three- or four-week trend, where those numbers will take us is to be determined and as far as the state guidance, CDC guidance, we are going to have to always follow the same procedures that we did the last time that this happened.

Andrews asked if the BOH had enough masks for every department and he said the BOH does not, but the Fire Department does.

Valery said also emerging is cyanobacteria cases – we have none currently. What we have seen is normal algae consistent with the eclipses, and testing will continue. Talking about ponds we need to aware of water safety and sunburns. Ticks are incredible this year n there have been more tick bite cases than COVID cases in the last month. Another thing is we have had almost a month-worth of rain, so needless to say mosquitoes will be abundant.

Chief Chaves - Police Department

Budgetary wise he is hurting but staffing is at one hundred percent - Officer Boncariewski was sworn in as a Police officer in August giving his parents a chance to be part of his achievement. With the police reform everything is in a standstill, uncertainty, we don't know what's going to happen with this whole bridge academy and certification of police officers, but the State has demanded it that every single police officer that works in the Commonwealth has the same level of training (800 hours) that the recruits receive at the academy. Our Special Police Officers are lacking the hours. There is going to be an option what they call a bridge academy which is going to be 100 days to go back to school for 120 hours, 80 hours of online training and then the other is going to be a hands-on training. He thinks the Specials he currently has on staff right now, probably just one might take that bridge academy. What makes it more difficult is that the State is contemplating mandating the people that want to go to bridge academy should submit to a physical assessment test, which is what the recruits have to do, and then also meet physical standards set by Cooper's for standards depending on age.

So, it is going to cause even more of a barrier for these guys to go back. We are going to have to discuss who is going to pay for bridge academy – the town or them. So, if that happens, we will have to have some serious talks about increasing our staffing because there is no way we are going to be able to maintain the round-clock service for the town with eleven full-time officers. As far as Town Meeting, I have an article on the warrant to remove Halifax from Civil Service, it is supported by both unions, so he does not see a major issue. He thinks for the size of his department it makes all the sense in the world – Civil Service is going to be a basically a place where somebody takes a test and they going to create a list. They will have no power to overturn anything, any discipline because that's going to fall within this commissioner now and the officer has no option to appeal it. We are handcuffed being a part of Civil Service because it is hard to recruit officers – they take a test and get on the list. The last Civil Service test we had seven applicants on our list, so if we are out of Civil Service we can do our own testing, we can do an assessment center which he thinks is more valuable than just a written test, and then they can actually legitimately recruit some officers into town. He thinks this is a good step forward. Some of the programs they are going forward with this year is an autism awareness program where any town resident who has an autistic child can reach out and we will provide them with decal for their home and cars to make the Officer aware of the possibly of an autistic kid in the home and have the mindset that they may be in a situation where there is somebody who may be violent or behavior and are not surprised. They partnered with the litter program - the Beautification Committee was good enough to reach out to some businesses in town and they got some gift certificates that the Officers have on their cruisers and if they get calls or they see somebody litter-busting they will give them a citation for an ice cream cone or a certificate for coffee, stuff like that. They have another program with an Sinturn that's helping to obtain care packages to set up for children from zero to twelve at the station in case an Officer comes in contact with a child and to kind of give that child some comfort, we'll have some packages at the station – either a toy or some food, candy, whatever – to have on hand for these children. We are continuing to work towards certification - rules and regulations have been issued out to all the Officers and they all have signed off on it. His goal is to hopefully by the end of this year, beginning of next year, call the State for an assessment of the policies, the facility and equipment, to see if he can get certification by the State and get a discount on our insurance. This will show transparency to the residents that we are a department that prides itself on professionalism by making sure all the Officers are meeting the national standards.

Valery remembers last year during COVID there was a problem with child services actually not responding when children needed because of COVID so he is going to do some follow-ups and see if there are in place.

Kayne Beaudry – HES Principal

The building is being deep cleaned. The classrooms have been stripped and waxed and cleaned out and we are working on getting the hallways cleaned up and stripped of the wax. The kitchen floor is currently being done right now with stripping it and then the install of the new floor. The parking lot has been resealed & striped. After the kitchen floor goes in the kindergarten hallway and then the second floor out back will be done. The other two big jobs down the line we are going to be the AC units in the tech lab and in the art room. The gym floor is set and ready to be re-finished this week or next week and the other big job that we're looking at is the kindergarten playground – it needs some love and some TLC – a lot of weeds and things growing over there. He has talked to Scott and see if they would help out with some of the issues over there.

John Shiavone – Assessor's Office

As far as budgetary issues, the assessor's office will be able to level fund, we're not anticipating any additional requirements for equipment so there shouldn't be any problem level funding for the general budget. They have five ATV cases that are open right now.

They are having a meeting this Thursday and he will be making a motion to request that the legal department join them in the future to discuss a cost analysis of the litigation versus what the recovery would be. Documentation for the residential and commercial, industrial and personal property have been sent to the DOR for approval. Once that is done, they will have a public hearing on the new tax rate and then they will have the classification hearing soon after that.

Steve Hayward – Highway Department

For personnel is he is going to be losing one recycling person two days a week who works at Highway on Thursday and Fridays. This person does not want to work for Highway anymore and will be working at the recycling center for three days. This will be saving us money on Saturday because now we are not going to have to pay overtime, as that person will be working straight time, but it will put him down one person for the two days. The mechanic's last day is this Friday. We still do not have a job description because we are trying to go about getting a mechanic the town can afford. With all the computers in the vehicles now we need to get a person who has that skill but the town is not going to be able to afford to buy all the equipment we need to do the work. We have a couple of people who are mechanically inclined so until a mechanic is hired, they can do some oil changes and stuff like that. On the stuff we cannot do we have to send it out.

Andrews asked about other town vehicles and Hayward said they can do the oil changes, but they cannot work on fire department vehicles unless someone is certified, which is another cost to get a certified mechanic to work on those vehicles.

Garron asked if the position has been advertised and Hayward said no because the whole job description needs to be changed. Other towns start mechanics off at \$35 an hour but Halifax starts them off at \$25 an hour so he is trying to do a job description that will fit the pay.

DiSesa asked what are other towns doing who have decided not to take on a mechanic and he said they are doing what they can in-house and then sending the rest out. She then asked what that would do to our budget if we didn't hire a mechanic and we went that route and Hayward said we have to find somebody that is willing to take the pay that we are offering so we will get a mechanic at some point and hopes to have it done and filled within the next month but we will not be able to afford someone who can work on the computers so he is trying to get a person to come in and be able to work on just the basic stuff and fabrications because we definitely need a fabricator because during a storm if something breaks we need to fix it to get it back on the road and then fix it the right way after the storms over.

DiSesa asked if he wanted that one person to be able to do both of those things and he said yes most mechanics can do some fabrication. He said he is either going to get a kid out of school or somebody who is retired.

DiSesa asked if he could do lesser hours and give them more money to get a better mechanic or another alternative and he said there are mobile units you can call but it on their time so if you have something break right now you are going to have to wait a day or two to come out.

Hayward further said as for his budget he does have money for the Pine Street bridge and preventive maintenance spots on River, Wood and Hayward Street.

DiSesa stated that there was talk earlier before he got here about going to town meeting this September with a line item for the traffic safety. Seelig said he will talk with Steve to figure out what issues and projects it is going to cover and how much money might be needed.

Hayward on cemetery seven lots have been sold in the cremation garden and two services have been done and the new lot is open now and have had one burial so far.

Jean Gallant – Holmes Public Library

Library is doing well and are busy. She has made some adjustments to our summer reading program and most of the programs are outside. People are happy to be back into the library. She is down in one position – a 35-hour a week position. She is in the middle of writing a five-year strategic plan. A tech person has been hired and she is going to wait until September to find somebody to fill the 35-hour a week position. The library received a grant from the Mass. Board of Library Commissions and the funds will be used to design three new spaces in the library – the toy room which will be really designed for social, emotional development. The toys had to be thrown away so all new toys will be purchased. In the children's room there is a table there for coloring and a lot of tutorials. A quiet space will be made where caregivers and/or parents can come and just sit with their children and read. A school readiness/exploration station is going to be created that will have materials, maps, drawings and tracings.

Pam Adduci – Treasurer-Collector

She stated that once the tax rate is set her office will send out the recycling bills. Nothing to report other than that money comes in into her office and then goes out.

Sandy Nolan – Town Accountant

Budget statuses for the end of the year have been distributed. She is also on the Capital Planning Committee, and they are trying to get together a plan where we get as much information as possible on all the Articles that people want at Town Meeting, and then will present them to the Finance.

For the Special Town Meeting coming up – they work under the levy limit for the Town Meeting on the spending. Hopefully they won't have to put too much on top of the Special Town Meeting and be able to remain under the levy limit because we can't set the tax rate until after the Special Town Meeting.

DiSesa asked if the projector and everything else will be set up for Town Meeting because at the Capital Planning Meeting they talked about the issues we are having at Town Meeting is a lack of communication or not presenting the warrants correctly, not giving the townspeople the information that they are looking for and then we don't have answers to questions. She thinks it is important that everyone works together to be able to work for the residents and that we know what we are talking about at Town Meeting, and we all are on the same page. She appreciated everyone being here this evening and that this should be done more often so everyone knows what is going on in each department.

Darlene Regan – CoA Director

The reopening of the building turned out pretty well and now they are looking forward to more activities which is a great thing. We did rebrand a bit and not just reach out to the senior community but also their caregivers, and to let them know that we are out there and that there are a number of resources available. With the limited space at the CoA difficult maintain social distancing and to retain people to keep them with the mask on, so that is one of the major issues she is confronted with while trying to keep the seniors safe. We are coming up with different strategies to approach new programs but are limited as to how we are going to do it with regard to the mask theory. Some members have asked why things are going so slow, but we have to as we just opened. She has only been in the position just four weeks and has been confronted with a lot of different aspects of the CoA since coming on board. She is learning as she goes along and is thankful for Sue Lawless' help. They are working on a web page which hopefully will be state-of-the-art hopefully and maybe some podcasting – option so people press the button and listen if they do not want to read the information.

Cesar Calouro – IT

He stated last week he started his forty hours a week for his position. We were able to get our new email security and hybrid system preliminary set up. The implementation for the new backup solution for our servers as well as dedicated workstations across the town has been done. Right now the only servers that are actively being backed up with full disaster recovery are the ones located in the Town Hall. The (inaudible) system is currently not being backed up to disaster recovery standards. With this new solution we'll be able to back everything up 100% because we will be utilizing other cloud service providers to still provide that disaster recovery ability to the town so we will have physical on-premise backups, five backups and pretty much hybrid – three different scenarios. Working on the paving project and the only building done has been the Town Hall. The company that was hired did not work out the greatest and he is in the process of cancelling the contract with them and believe that decision is pretty much a denial because he has not heard from them. COVID did not help with getting it back up and running, and obviously we did not want to bring people inside the building to do work with staff around so that was on hold. Scott and him are working together to rebuild the scope of work and how we could possibly try to reduce the cost in our procurement requirements by utilizing staff within the maintenance department to do some maybe heavy lifting that the vendor wouldn't have to do. So that's still in the works right now where we've actually pretty much almost finished the library in terms of planning, and he just has to figure that out and send it over to him for his final sign off and then move on to another department. Right now we are looking at doing each project separately as opposed to what we did back in 2018 and how we proposed it which was a full on project here at the building to see what you know each one's going to get but we are trying to treat each one separately now because every building has its differences and structural deficiencies. The phone system has been fully implemented and running on our cloud provider 8x8 that has been fully implemented to all departments. We still have Verizon some of our land, elevator lines, and back lines. We are hoping to implement our eFax system within the next few months, we're just waiting for our new copy machines to come in for the Police Department and once both copiers are there we will be able to start with the eFax transition and getting them off Verizon and move them over to a more cost-effective digital solution, but still fax concept.

Andrews said the biggest issue that we had from COVID at least in the Town Hall has been the ability to zoom or google meets on multiple computers or devices and the phone system working at the same time. He knows a 5G device has been installed but asked if he can reach out to Comcast and talk about having two cable modems.

Nolan asked if anything could be done so the phone system does not break up as much as it does.

Andrews explained that the problem with Comcast is they don't have a gigabit upload for us, so we can download fine, but in order to have two-way communication you have to have the upload and that's really been the issue with this many users in the building.

Calouro is aware of the zoom issues but unfortunately, there is nothing that he can do without doing the appropriate research and understands the carpal audio is an issue and is not effective.

Nolan stated that Calouro mentioned his 40-hour week started this week and that the Accountant's and the Treasurer's office did not get notification of this yet so they need the selectmen to notify us

Andrews stated that two weeks ago they voted to ...

Nolan said she needs a change of status. She then asked when is the Computer Advisory Committee going to start, and Calouro said he is hoping that sometime in August the committee will be able sit down and talk about projects and issues. He is aware of the town issues, but the situation really is Comcast – we have their highest plan, and the upload speed is also capped out. He is looking at other options, but it will be costly but long term.

Calouro said a lot of the issues have to do with many people working from home and the Comcast lines coming in are shared business lines.

Seelig stated we should look at CapeNet again even though it is going to be more expensive, but if the difference is we spend money or have lousy service maybe go with them. Calouro has looked at several different fiber options and the costs.

Andrews stated at for the next meeting Calouro present some solutions with some costs so we can fix the issue.

As for the library Cesar said the Board of Trustees had voted to hand over all IT responsibilities to the IT department versus having their technology librarian be responsible. This is an additional facility added to his scope. An Article will be submitted for the next Annual Town Meeting to get the library the appropriate equipment s that they can be tied to the Town network. We signed off on that contract to continue IT services through the SAILS Network and going to start the email migration for the library so they are moving over to the Town's email system as opposed to being on the SAILS one and that will be starting sometime next week.

Gallant explained that SAILS does not back up their email which was one of the problems so now everything will be backed up, the website as well as everything that goes on everybody's personal computer.

Andrews suggested having a IT meeting for everybody to go through what the issues are that everyone's facing and where we are on Cesar's list of items to move forward.

Seelig began by saying a couple of questions have come up during the last couple of weeks that he thought was relevant for the meeting. He thinks the staff would like to get a better idea of what the Board's considering in terms of the use of the ARPA money – a general idea of what steps the Board is going to take towards making those types of decisions because we have the various uses for the money which are allowed under ARPA, such as we have the infrastructure for water, for sewer, for broadband, COVID-related, replacement of services or money that can be spent basically on anything because of revenue loss, the ability to provide award money to employees here and also for employees outside of the funded town government in that with more emphasis on lower-paid employees than higher-paid but you know there are ways of dealing with all those situations.

Andrews said adding hours to the IT specialist was important because of all the issues we had and thinks the money was available and should do that as soon as possible so that is why we voted or at least that is why he voted the way I did a few weeks ago. Infrastructure he was hoping that if the Water Department comes up with some sort of solution working with the engineering company to upgrade things.

Garron felt the same and asked when is the money going to be made available.

Seelig believes 425K came in the first check, and we will be getting another \$425K a year from now. The county money is going to be a little more complicated as the County Commissioners and the County Treasurer are going to take responsibility for the money coming through the County, it won't be a reimbursement system, but what they're going to is ask the town 'to make a request for money' but we are going to make a decision whether in fact it is an eligible activity or not. He will have to check with the County Treasurer as to whether they've gotten the money for the municipalities here in Plymouth County except for Plymouth and Brockton because they are larger than 50,000 but they may be working with Norfolk and Bristol Counties about pooling money.

Seelig believes the money does not have to be spent until either June 30th of 2024 or December 31st of 2024, so there's no immediacy to spend it and this may be to our advantage especially if we are doing infrastructure projects because if we need to get something done versus can we wait a little while longer and hope that the prices for materials go down.

The loss of revenue money can be used almost for anything – any government services and program – but when they said the infrastructure was limited to water and sewer including storm sewer and broadband, and broadband the way it reads is we could not do a qualified activity because Comcast does bring in to the town sufficient speeds even though we don't like the service, they are at a high enough rate that we could not do a broadband project here in Halifax.

Seelig said the second area is the Board has been dealing with a number of complaints, and whether the Board is thinking about formalizing the process of dealing with complaints in the sense of whether you know certain complaints depending on probably the type of complaint and the persons involved in the complaint, for instance elected officials versus department heads versus members of departments versus board or committee members versus even we might get complaints from town employees about people who aren't town employees in terms of abusive treatment, and how the Board would formalize that so that you know some matters might become, go to the Board, some matters might automatically go to Town Counsel or to an investigative firm, and what's the intent of the Board to formalize that process

Andrews thinks reaching out to Brooks and DeRensis to reach and talk with them about talk about what policies they can recommend and present to the Board to adopt them so we can deal with some of these issues.

Seelig said the third area was just in terms of morale. Obviously, it's been a rough year, more than a year, for a lot of people, especially the last two months have been fairly traumatic, and he think at least in this building, morale has gone down, and he has been asked what steps does the Board intend to take to try and build morale back up again.

Andrews thinks by having these open meetings with department heads, getting people together, understanding what everyone's going through with their issues will help.

DiSesa thinks it is important that everyone works together. She understands the morale is down, and people don't like change, but change can be good sometimes and thinks if everybody has an open mind about things and works together that will help the morale to help each other be successful for this town.

DeRensis said right now they are trying to get a handle on what all these complaints are, what are they involve.

Andrews suggested that someone from the firm talk with Seelig and then present some policies and Seelig said Paul has designated someone from his firm to talk with him about it.

Amy Troup – Planning Board

Troup said they are getting fuller attention to all the by-laws and moving forward with different expertise and everybody's looking at it and there is conversation and that's different so that's fantastic, we're having a good conversation and hearing each other and listening to the residents better at the meeting and making sure that their needs are met as well so I feel like it is a good direction.

Sue Lawless – Town Clerk

Lawless said that her office has been busy with dog licenses, all are past due now so if they are paid by September 14th they will be charged \$50 and there are a lot who have not licensed their dogs. A Mass inactivation has been sent out to people who did not complete their census, their voter registration becomes inactive. We sent them out a postage-paid postcard for them to send back – all they have to do is sign it to say they are still living in town. A lot of confusion, people thought they already did this census, but they really did the Federal census, not the town one. She is having a lot of issues with the time clock in the office and have sent them out to get repair four times since she has started. She does have a contract with them, but the problem is when it breaks, she does not have a spare, so and it can take them a day or two to come out to fix it. She is not sure if she should purchase another one to have as a backup.

She added that she may run short for what was budgeted for payroll for Tara if she was to assist her at the STM as it was not planned. it wasn't planned.

163 Plymouth Street

Health Agent Valery wanted the Board aware of a trailer that is on the edge of the road at the above location, and he see it as a personal safety issue. Garron said zoning enforcement. Andrews thought it was probably more Police if it is a parking issue.

Andrews thinks it would be useful if they have these meetings once every six weeks to give everybody an update on what is going on as it will help make the town more successful. He understands that they may not all agree on everything but as long as they have the same information better decisions can be made.

GENERAL MAIL / DISCUSSIONS

Building Inspector

Andrews recused himself from this discussion.

Last Paycheck for Robert Piccirilli

On July 13th the Board voted to extend Rob Piccirilli's temporary appointment to 2020 then the Board took no action on July 20th. Normally what happens is if a person leaves other than for a resignation or retirement a paycheck is issued to that person on their last day, and since that person's employment has been terminated for one reason or another and we are required under State law to supply them with their final paycheck. The Treasurer/Collector and the Town Accountant need something in writing confirming Mr. Piccirilli's last day of employment was July 20th in order to provide a last paycheck to him.

Assistant Building Inspector

William Kelly resigned as Assistant Building Inspector as of July 23rd. The Board was asked if they wanted to start the process of hiring a new Assistant. Garron asked Seelig to start the process of hiring a new one.

Alternate Building Inspector (1)

With the resignation of Kelly, the Town does not have a Building Inspector or and Assistant Building Inspector until Mr. James begins on August 2nd. The State provided a list of qualified individuals and David Tonis of E. Bridgewater wrote that he would be willing to work on two days a week schedule, \$40 per hour with a four-hour minimum. He is a certified as a local inspector and a building commissioner. The Board was asked if they wanted to appoint him as an Alternate Building Inspector for the week. Garron said it would make sense to have someone.

Moved by DiSesa and second by Garron, the Board unanimously voted to appoint David Tonis as an Alternate Building Inspector for a week.

Alternate Building Inspector (2)

Mr. Perry, who will be starting on August 2nd, is not certified as a local inspector at this time and certified local inspectors cannot approve Certificates of Occupancy, only certified Building Commissioner/Inspectors of Building can do this work. The Board was asked if they wanted to appoint Tonis as an Alternate Building Inspector for Certificate of Occupancy work on the same bases as above. This will cost approximately \$16,640 each year. DiSesa suggested contacting Mr. Carmichael, the Special Building Inspector, to see if he would be willing to issue Cos. Seelig will reach out to him.

Use of Town Hall Green – CoA Ice Cream Social

Moved by DiSesa and seconded by Garron, the Board unanimously granted the Council on Aging's request to use the Town Hall Green on September 10th, from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. for an ice cream social/singo.

70 Oak Street

Seelig talked with Chief Viveiros about the complaint from the Gibbons regarding 70 Oak Street. He has asked that the complaint be heard in executive session, which is one of the permissible reasons to go into executive session. He stated that the agenda is going to have to show one way or the other what we are doing.

Andrews stated that Seelig is meeting with Jack Nolan tomorrow so see what he suggests regarding the posting of the agenda and then bring it back to the BOS.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Moved by Garron and seconded by DiSesa, the Board voted as follows to enter into Executive Session at 9:07 p.m. to discuss Sergeants, Patrol Officers, Firefighters, Highway, "Mixed-Unit", Police Chief, Fire Chief & all unions at the SLRSD & HES:

Gordon C. Andrews - Yes

Troy E. Garron - Yes

Ashley A. DiSesa - Yes

as discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Town.

Moved by DiSesa and seconded by Garron, the Board voted as follows to enter into Executive Session at 9:07 p.m. to discuss Halifax Solar v. Halifax (tax abatement case) Halifax v. Marble (zoning/building permit enforcement case):

Gordon C. Andrews - Yes

Troy E. Garron - Yes

Ashley A. DiSesa - Yes

as discussing strategy with respect to litigation in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Town.

Moved by DiSesa and seconded by Garron, the Board voted as follows to enter into Executive Session at 9:07 p.m. to discuss Gordon C. Andrews v. Town of Halifax, et al - appeal of ZBA decisions on Petition 868 & 869 17MIS 000507; Gordon C. Andrews v. Town of Halifax, et al - appeal of ZBA decision on Petition 915-20 83 CV000256; Gordon C. Andrews v. Town of Halifax, et al - appeal of ZBA decisions on Petitions 922 & 924 20 MISC000372; Gordon C. Andrews v. Town of Halifax, et al - Civil Damages - Civil Action No.: 1:20 cv – 11659:

Gordon C. Andrews - Recused

Troy E. Garron - Yes

Ashley A. DiSesa - Yes

as discussing strategy with respect to litigation in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Town.

DiSesa announced that no statement would be made at the end of the Executive Session and the Board would not reconvene in open session.

MEETING ADJOURNED

McSherry & Seelig were asked to leave Executive Session at 9:41 p.m. therefore unsure of the time the Board came out of Executive Session or adjourned their meeting.

Ashley A. DiSesa
Clerk

/pjm

Documents referenced during Board of Selectmen's Meeting – July 27, 2021

Agreement for Recodification of the Zoning By-Law

Request from Congregational Church - use Town Green – Blessing of the Pets & flea market

7/16/2021 email from Paul Nixon – withdrawing request for six 1-day liquor licenses

7/7/2021 letter from FEMA – revised flood insurance rate map

7/12/21 email from Karen Fava – petition against Curtin Oil

Request from the CoA - use of Town Green – ice cream social & singo