

Monday, September 13, 2021  
***Hanson Board of Selectmen***  
Selectmen's meeting room, Town Hall  
Open Session

Members Present: James Hickey, Matthew Dyer, Laura FitzGerald-Kemmett, Joseph Weeks  
Members Absent: Kenny Mitchell  
Others Present: Lisa Green, Town Administrator; Greer Getzen, Executive Assistant; Phil Schaeffing, Plan Facilitator (virtual); Steven Moberg, IT Director

**I            CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Dyer called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II            PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING MEETINGS**

Mr. Weeks read the public announcements and upcoming meetings. Chairman Dyer also asked for a moment of silence to honor the lives lost on 9/11.

**III           JOINT MEETING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett first introduced Ken Sweezy and Jim Garanitis, additional members of the Committee, who were present for their next presentation. She then explained that the presentation about to take place detailed the blueprint and steps that the town could take in order to revitalize Main Street and the town in general.

Phil Schaeffing, Plan Facilitator, began the presentation by briefly describing the Rapid Recovery Plan Program as a competitive planning grant offered through the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development. The goal of the RRP Program is to develop actionable, project-based recovery plans that would help commercial areas recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic with a focus on small businesses. The focus area of Hanson for this project includes the South Hanson Village (the general area around the MBTA Commuter Rail Station) with the hope to expand dependent upon the success of this study area. Currently, the project is in the third phase which focuses on the draft plans as they develop into the final plans.

Mr. Schaeffing explained that all of the recommendations would fall into one of the following 6 categories: public realm, private realm, revenue and sales, administration capacity, tenant mix, and cultural/arts. The first recommendations fall under the first two categories, and they look to improve the pedestrian environment near the MBTA Station including the feasibility of walkability along Main Street/Route 27 and how to better connect the station to the surrounding areas of town. The second part of this recommendation looks to improve the building facades and business storefronts within the study area, and the final aspect of this recommendation focuses on encouraging more housing within the study area to bring more residents and foot traffic to this specific part of town.

The final set of recommendations focus on the later categories in the list beginning with a recommendation to promote local businesses within Hanson and the region in order to increase sales, and encouraging community members to "buy local". A related project would include facilitating third-party technical support for local businesses to create and improve online sales and marketing efforts. Another recommendation focuses on identifying local history and natural resources within the public realm to increase general community engagement with the surrounding area. Mr. Schaeffer then described another aspect of the proposed plan in which they would assess

zoning in the study area and implement improvements to facilitate a business environment. The goal would be to simplify the requirements with zoning to improve user-friendliness. Finally, Mr. Schaeffer explained the final recommendation of conducting town-wide visioning to define South Hanson Village's role in the community, and develop an understanding of the shared vision for South Hanson Village.

The next steps for this project include submitting a final RRP Plan to the Mass. DHCH by October 8, continuing to work with local businesses and property owners, apply for potential funding opportunities, and finally to develop the projects and implement the funding as capacity allows. Discussion was then opened to the meeting, and Mr. Hickey questioned the funding capabilities of some of these projects to which Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett reiterated that this is an initial step of developing a plan of action, and the next steps will include prioritizing and assessing the options the town may have available.

#### IV

##### **NEW BUSINESS**

###### **Update from the IT Director on the Department**

IT Director Steven Moberg thanked the Board and the town for their continued support through the past few weeks since coming aboard, and noted that he is still in the evaluation stages of joining the department and hopes that some of the changes being made will continue to improve the department as set up by the previous IT Director. Ms. Green further noted that Mr. Moberg has been wonderful for the town and has been working diligently to improve security with the technology associated with the town to prevent any breaches or violations of private information. Another focus of the department since the addition of Mr. Moberg to the team has been social media and the upkeep involved with community engagement through social media, and they hope to increase communication and outreach through the use of social media.

###### **Discussion appointment of Antonio DeFrias to Town Planner Position**

Chairman Dyer briefly explained to the audience that upon interviewing Mr. [DeFrias] the previous week with the help of Ms. Getzen and Ms. Green, the three were incredibly impressed with his credentials and wanted to move ahead with the appointment process quickly as competition to fill the Town Planner position is fierce in the area.

Mr. DeFrias briefly summarized his credentials for the Board and emphasized that his experience primarily lies in land surveying. He has much experience in developing and designing projects that must meet certain standards in order to be approved, and his familiarity with the requirements of different aspects of project design is extensive. After a series of questions from different members of the Board, the discussion was concluded.

**MOTION** by Mr. Hickey, seconded by Mr. Weeks, to appoint Mr. DeFrias to the position of Town Planner subject to the approval from the Planning Board.

**MOTION** by Mr. Hickey, seconded by Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett, to amend the appointment of Mr. DeFrias to a recommendation to appoint to the Town Planner position. ***Voted 4 - 0***

##### ***Appointments***

###### **Joshua Adams - Board of Assessors**

Kathleen Keefe and Patricia O'Kane of the Board of Assessors explained that after an individual stepped down from the Board in August, they had been looking to fill the vacancy.

**MOTION** by Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett, seconded by Mr. Hickey, to appoint Joshua Adams to the Board of Assessors. ***Voted 3 - 0 (plus the additional votes from the Board of Assessors)***

**T.J. Roffey - By-Law Review Committee**

Mr. Roffey briefly explained to the Board that he has an interest in the function of local government, and reviewing the By-Laws would be right up his alley. While he doesn't have specific experience with By-Laws, his position on the Conservation Commission has opened his eyes to certain aspects and he is willing to learn along the way.

**MOTION** by Mr. Hickey, seconded by Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett, to appoint TJ Roffey to the By-Law Review Committee. ***Voted 3 - 0***

**Michael Means - Highway Mechanic**

Mr. Jameson of the Highway Department made a recommendation to the Board to appoint Mr. Means to the position of Highway Mechanic based on his skills and qualifications.

There were concerns over certifications, however Mr. Jameson explained that while Mr. Means does not hold certifications in this field, the previous candidates who held this position also did not hold certifications as that would create conflict with salary and would be beyond the means of the Town. However, he does not have any concern over the lack of certification due to the general experience that this candidate has.

**MOTION** by Mr. Weeks, seconded by Mr. Hickey, to appoint Mr. Means to the position of Highway Mechanic. ***Voted 4 - 0***

**Accent Donations for the Month of August**

**MOTION** by Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett, seconded by Mr. Weeks, to accept the donation of \$81 from CandyLand Icecream for the 200th Anniversary Committee. ***Voted 4 - 0***

**Review and Adopt Employee Corrective Action and Warning Forms**

Ms. Green explained to the Board that upon reviewing the personnel procedures that the town has in place, she found that there weren't any formal forms in connection with disciplining employees should they need. In response, Ms. Green drafted two options for the Board to review and possibly recommend. The first form is called the Corrective Action Form which would be used if there are any employee job performance or conduct issues, and this would identify if the action being taken is in the form of a verbal or written warning. This allows the town to document anything that happens between employees and the town that would then go into personnel filing.

Ms. Green further explained that the second form she drafted will only be distributed to the employee if a written warning is needed, otherwise they will only receive the first form as documentation of the verbal warning and corrective action that had taken place. A brief discussion followed wherein members of the Board suggested corrections to perfect the form, and the Board thanked Ms. Green for taking the initiative to act on something like this.

**MOTION** by Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett, seconded by Mr. Hickey, to accept these forms subject to the corrections discussed with the Board members. ***Voted 4 - 0***

### **Review Town Administrator's Performance Appraisals**

Chairman Dyer began the discussion by explaining that each member of the Board had one-on-one conversations with Ms. Green regarding the performance appraisals as conducting those meetings should be private. [recording of meeting cut out for about 30 seconds]. At this point, Ms. Green stepped out so the Board could discuss the performance appraisal.

Chairman Dyer continued the discussion with different members of the Board concerning Ms. Green's outstanding job thus far as Interim Town Administrator. There was slight conversation regarding the Board's due diligence to ensure they are appointed the right person to the right position, and so there was some confliction on having enough information to appoint Ms. Green without having gone through a Town Meeting yet.

Mr. Hickey posed the clarifying information that this was simply a discussion on dropping the "Interim" language in her position title, and that she was technically still contracted with them until August of the following year. They as a Board had already done their due diligence when selecting her for the "Interim" position, and by dropping that language, Ms. Green will have more freedom to complete Town Administrator responsibilities.

**MOTION** by Mr. Hickey, seconded by Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett, to change Ms. Green's position title from "Interim Town Administrator" to "Town Administrator". ***Voted 3 - 0 - 1 with Mr. Weeks abstaining.***

### **Discuss Ms. Green attending the ICMA conference from Oct. 1 - 6.**

Ms. Green explained that the ICMA is the International Community and Municipal Association, and this is a country wide association that works with municipalities and managers. Ms. Green was awarded a scholarship for this conference back in July and booked travel tickets before realizing this would take place during the Town Meeting. Ms. Green has decided to leave this decision up to the Board noting that this conference would be very beneficial to her position, but she respects the will of the Board.

Chairman Dyer wanted to primarily set the precedent explaining that a previous Town Administrator had been absent for the Town Meeting and they were still able to successfully hold Town Meeting. He then opened the discussion up to the remaining members of the Board. Ms. Green assured the Board that she would provide full set up for the Town Meeting to compensate for her absence.

The Board approved Ms. Green's request to attend the ICMA conference.

### ***One Day Liquor Licenses***

**MOTION** by Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett, seconded by Mr. Hickey, to approve the requested One-Day Liquor Licenses. ***Voted 4 - 0***

### **Vote Recommendations on Special Town Meeting Warrant articles**

Chairman Dyer first informed the Board that, due to interest of time, they had not yet received the recommendations from [Fincom?], and he wanted to poll the Board to either vote on the recommendations without those assessments or to meet in the very near future to allow more time for more recommendations to come in. Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett noted that she would prefer to wait out of respect for the opinions of [Fincom?]

Ms. Getzen emphasized to the Board that they would have to meet within the week in order for adequate time to send the Warrant to print. With the Finance Committee meeting the following night, the Board would have to meet after then to receive proper recommendations from reputable sources. The Board agreed to meet Thursday to make their recommendations.

#### **Execute October 4, 2021 Special Town Meeting Warrant**

Ms. Green informed the Board that it would be best to wait until they complete their recommendations before executing the Special Town Meeting Warrant. There was a long discussion with a meeting attendee wherein the Board discussed the potential missteps along the way of placing articles on the Warrant, and this was specifically in relation to [ARTICLE #] and the money reportedly dedicated to the school district.

#### **Draft Debit Card Policy for Town Administrator, Police, Fire, and the Highway Department**

Ms. Green informed the Board that this was a policy drafted by the Town's Treasurer/Collector in response to a decision made previously by the Board allowing the above departments access to a debit card for emergency purchases. The policy addresses many different types of potential scenarios that they expect to see in order to ensure proper use of the card.

**MOTION** by Mr. Weeks, seconded by Mr. Hickey, to approve the above described policy.

In discussion on this motion, Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett expressed concern over the absence of a maximum cap written into the policy, and Ms. Green agreed to amend it to include that aspect out of an abundance of caution.

**MOTION** by Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett, seconded by Mr. Hickey, to approve the debit card policy contingent on the above described changes. **Voted 3 - 0**

### **V**

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

##### **Approve meeting minutes for Board of Selectmen meetings 8/10/21 and 7/27/21**

**MOTION** by Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett, seconded by Mr. Hickey, to approve the Board of Selectmen meeting minutes for 8/10/21 and 7/27/21. **Voted 3 - 0**

##### **Approve meeting minutes for Board of Selectmen meeting 10/13/20**

**MOTION** by Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett, seconded by Mr. Hickey, to approve the Selectmen meeting minutes for 10/13/20. **Voted 3 - 0**

### **VI**

#### **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Ms. Green updated the Board on recent events, as follows:

1. Ms. Green provided the Board with an update from the de-regionalization study. It was originally estimated that they would have the study completed by the end of August/ beginning of September, however due to the amount of data they had received it is all still being processed. They now hope to have the report to the Board by mid-October.
2. Ms. Green informed the Board that the construction has commenced on the cell-tower behind the Middle School. Hopefully this will soon resolve the issues with cell service in areas of the town.
3. The location of the Special Town Meeting scheduled for October 4, 2021 at 7:30 has been changed to the gymnasium. Up to 200 chairs will be set up.

VII

**ADJOURNMENT TO ATTEND WAGE AND PERSONNEL TO BE FOLLOWED BY  
EXECUTIVE SESSION**

*MOTION* by Mr. Weeks, seconded by Mr. Hickey, to adjourn the Selectmen meeting to attend Wage and Personnel. *Voted 4 - 0*

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Guindon  
Minutes Clerk