



Tuesday, October 17, 2023

Hanson Select Board

Camp Kiwanee

Open Session

Members Present: Laura FitzGerald-Kemmett, Joseph Weeks, Edwin Heal

Members Absent: Ann Rein, David George

Others Present: Lisa Green, Town Administrator; Lynn McDowell, Executive Assistant; Emily Sprague, Administrative Assistant; Ann Donner; See sign in sheet for attendees

I CALL TO ORDER

Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett called the meeting to order.

II EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Mr. Weeks, seconded by Ms. Rein, to adjourn to Executive Session, pursuant to Open Meeting Law, Chapter 30A Section 21 (a)(3)), Chapter 30A Section 21 (a)(3)), Chapter 30A Section 21 (a)(7)), and will return to Open Session upon completion of that meeting. ***Voted 4 – 0***

Roll call – Weeks -Aye; FitzGerald-Kemmett-Aye; Heal-Aye; George-Aye

The Select Board returned from Executive Session at 6:29pm to continue Open Session.

III ONE DAY LIQUOR LICENSES

1. 11/11/2023 – 4:00pm – 9:00pm – Michelle Pierce – Wedding

Tabled.

IV APPROVE OPEN SESSION MINUTES

1. October 10, 2023

Tabled.

V NEW BUSINESS

1. General updates
 - a. Town Administrator

Ms. Green applied for and was awarded Community Compact grant for a Capital Improvement Plan. She is working with Mr. Milisi and the Collins Center to develop the document. Once he receives the draft, Mr. Milisi share with the Capital Improvement Committee for comments and feedback. Once it is completed, there will have annual updates, providing an overall picture.

She thanked the IT department, noting the great job it is doing increasing the Town's social media presence across several platforms. The newsletter is now being shared externally, with the October update due out soon. For the November version, the spotlight will highlight the Veterans' Agent and the Assessors' offices. If anyone would like to include an article or has a suggestion, please reach out to Ms. Green directly.

b. Town Accountant

Mr. Kinsherf shared now that Town Meeting has passed, there is currently the town meeting, funds are:

- \$1.4M Free Cash,
- \$1.4M Stabilization Fund,
- \$200,000 School Stabilization Fund for capital projects,
- \$145,000 Camp Kiwanee Retained earnings,
- \$772,000 Ambulance Fund,
- \$1.4M Water Surplus Balance

Which he noted placed the Town overall in solid form. Initial budgeting forecasting is predicting a similar deficit as last year, but believes the budget can be balanced. He is meeting with Mr. Madden to discuss projections as well as the five-year forecast. Reviewing revenue and expenses, he noted while revenue is increasing at a solid 3% annually, expenses are trending to be close to 6%. He recommended, as there is funding in Free Cash, to deposit \$200,000 in the Stabilization Fund, which would total \$1.6M. Then work on the FY25 budget.

He created all accounts related to approved Town Meeting articles and are now in SoftRight. He requested all, if do not have access, to please get it and review department/committee line items for accuracy. The more eyes reviewing the happier he is as it produces a better product in the end.

c. Town Planner

Mr. DeFrias shared under the OneStop grants program, the Town received a \$90,000 grant for pedestrian improvements on Main Street by the MBTA station. Verdantas is doing the work for the Town. It has done a drone survey to create the preliminary design.

Also, through OneStop, the Town received a \$60,000 grant related to updating the Master plan. Old Colony Planning Council is meeting with the Planning Board to assist. The Planning Board also created a related steering subcommittee, to move forward with the process.

The Planning Board held a public hearing on September 11, 2023 for the MBTA zoning. A second grant, in the amount of \$20,000, was received by Mass Housing Partnership to complete work for compliance, to be completed with the assistance of VHB Engineering.

Mr. DeFrias, using a Commonwealth of Mass template, is creating a preliminary zoning bylaw draft to address the MBTA area.

Mr. DeFrias applied for a \$500,000 Complete Street grant for improvements to the intersection of Liberty and Winter, in front of Town Hall.

Regarding the FY24 OneStop grants, he anticipates receiving news within the next two weeks of the results of grants; hoping for the Town to receive at least one or two.

Ms. Green added that the Town will be applying for the Green Communities grant, focusing on heating pumps for Town Hall. She is also applying for grants to supplement the cost of two hybrid police cruisers.

d. IT Director

Ms. Green provided the updated of IT projects addressed during the past six to twelve months as Mr. Moberg was unable to attend.

For the Town's website, Mr. Moberg is partnering with Strategic Capital Solutions, who is reviewing the site map and all links, documents, etc. Next step will be reaching out to departments and boards/committees to update their respective pages. Design changes are under review. Once completed, will then commence building the site.

He is in the process of migrating from VMware version 7 to version 8. During this, he discovered an issue with the second host server. He is working to resolve the hardware issue.

New phones have been successfully installed at Town Hall, Fire Station, and Senior Center/Library without any major hurdles. The call quality and functionality has greatly improved and met with happy staff. Highway and Camp Kiwanee are scheduled next followed by the Police department.

He is exploring grant options with MIIA to purchase cybersecurity training for the Town. It will provide an opportunity control information that's shared and minimize any possible threats, with daily reporting. The platform will also provide training in all thing related to the work place. HR, Work place Safety, just to name a few.

He is close to completing our the multi factor authentication (MFA) project Outlook web access and VPN. His is also researching grant opportunities to increase Microsoft licensing up 100 as the Town's insurer (MIIA) requires every desktop/laptop connected to use MFA.

Earlier this year the Town migrated from onsite spam solution to a cloud version, offering additional support, services, and protection from spam, malware, and phishing attacks. This proved beneficial as there was a major attack and thankfully, the Town migrated before the vulnerability was discovered.

He also rolled out a new computer protection software that will cut costs and offer more services. It is backed by a security operations center team; if they notice any strange activity, the IT department will be alerted with the infected computer isolated from the network.

Lastly the department is working to update the new website by documenting the current website site map and links. Committees and boards should expect a call to confirm what is on it as well as what needs to be updated and deleted.

2. Strategic Planning update session

Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett welcomed Ms. Donner, who facilitated past meetings and agreed again this evening, providing any guidance/support. Ms. Donner thanked the Board for asking her back again.

Ms. Donner stated she would like to the group expand into a different area during the breakout sessions:

- Internal Communication, within Town Hall and
- External Communication, through the community and social media
- Facilities and Land use

She suggested each group brainstorm ideas for thirty minutes and regroup to share ideas.

Internal Communication

A. General Discussion

The Fire Chief noted, due to recent events, his department has been meeting weekly with the Building, Health and the Town Administrator. All have found it to be very positive and would like to continue with all departments participating.

All staff working for the Town needs to have a town email. For the phones, the IT department is still updating, but expects to have all employees on the same phone system within the next few months.

B. Key Actions Updates

1. Monthly department meetings, with a different department head leading the meeting.
 - a. Rotating locations.
 - b. Would like to invite non department heads; depending on issues on the agenda
 - c. Possible to include a member of the school committee or superintendent's office
 - d. Provide additional networking and sharing of resources
2. Create a general interdepartmental email group
 - a. Something that will provide more concrete information than announcing department closures
 - b. Google Docs or SharePoint implementation
3. Create a shared calendar announcing all Town events
 - a. Internal vs external announcements,
4. General call and answer sheet for citizen concerns
 - a. List of common questions with answers

- b. The initial responder needs to take detail information – question/concern, name, best way to contact – then forward to the specific department to address specific concern.
 - i. Provides resources – calendar, extension list, meeting schedule
 - ii. Prevents callers being bounced to various departments, causing frustration
 - iii. The Select Board office is not reception.

External Communication

A. General Discussion

Mr. DeFrias shared the highlights of the group discussion, primarily how to provide timely information to the community.

Ms. Donner asked what is the next steps for these. Mr. DeFrias noted the IT department is in the process of creating a new Town website; it would be best to implement this discussion point within the it. Mr. Milisi followed with encouraging students to visit/tour town hall as well as other town buildings. Ms. Dias questioned the best way to inform new residents to the Town of the services available; how to create a welcome kit and where to make it available.

B. Key Actions Updates

- 1. Better use of social media.
 - a. Consistent updating/posting on Facebook and Instagram
 - b. Utilization of X/twitter and Tik Tok.
 - c. Update Town website to have active social media links
 - d. Improved utilization of the Town's sign boards.
- 2. Town newsletter
 - a. Posted on the Town's website and emailed to subscribers.
- 3. Better use of Whitman–Hanson Express
- 4. Better use of Whitman-Hanson Community Access
 - a. As posting are on a community board, no additional charge to the Town.
 - b. Spotlight department heads and committee activity
 - c. More uploads to YouTube
- 5. Hold Town Hall Open House
 - a. All Departments available to address citizens questions and concerns
 - b. Town Administrator and Select Board will have limited hours
- 6. Outreach to involve younger citizens
 - a. Work with the superintendent and school committee
 - b. Student media production

Optimization of Town Assets/ Properties

A. General Discussion

Mr. Milisi shared his group posed the following questions:

- Is it serving a public purpose?
- What are the maintenance costs?
- If not using, what is the opportunity to rent, lease or sell?

He then highlighted the need to have a person to oversee the facilities and maintain status updates. This position could be funded through:

- Renting or leasing property
- Selling Town-owned land, providing a gain from sales as well as receiving reoccurring revenue from taxes

Using the net present value will for all assets may also provide additional resources the Town is not currently utilizing.

The Select Board suggested it may be time to do a comprehensive asset review of all of the Town buildings, enabling a needs prioritization of each building. Ms. Green will coordinate with Mr. Glass and Mr. Baker.

There is a complete list of Town-owned land with a list of abutters. There is an opportunity for the Town to offer landlocked properties to abutters, thus providing additional tax revenues. Mr. DeFrias created the report and offered to forward via email.

Following this point, the Fire Chief questioned if the IT department could create a shared drive for documents to post to website. Ms. Green will discuss with Mr. Moberg about acquiring SharePoint.

B. Key Actions Updates

1. Need to do a complete inventory of all properties, as well as an assessment of conditions.
 - a. What is the net present value
2. Determine the purpose serving the Town
3. Determine maintenance costs
4. If not using – why
 - a. Possibility of renting, leasing or selling
5. Outsource management
 - a. Using the proceeds for other land asset needs
6. Board of Assessors office vital to this discussion
7. The Town would benefit hiring a Facilities Director/Manager to oversee

On behalf of the entire Select Board, Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett thanked everyone for taking the time and work every day for the Town. It was extremely grateful to see everyone here, taking the time to work on these projects and cross sharing of ideas.

She asked Ms. Green to discuss the communication aspect and the best way to execute at the next department head meeting. For the asset optimization, the Select Board needs to take a closer look and delve into the properties already owned. Prioritizing will be key.

VII**ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Mr. Weeks, seconded by Mr. Heal, to adjourn. ***Voted 3 – 0***

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn McDowell

Strategic Planning Session Attendance:

Name	Department	Attend
Adam Valachovic	Parks and Fields	
Ann Rein	Select Board	
Arlene Dias	Board of Health/WHCA rep	yes
Charles Baker	Select Board	
Charles Barends	Fire Department	yes
Corrine Cafardo	Library	yes
David George	Select Board	yes
David Mansfield	Conservation	yes
Diane Cohen	Hanson Community Preservation	
Don Ellis	Planning Board	
Edwin Heal	Select Board	yes
Elizabeth Sloan	Town Clerk's office	
Emily Sprague	Administrative Assistant	yes
Eric Kinsherf	Accounting Office	yes
Frank Milisi	Capital Improvement committee	yes
Frank Schellenger	Conservation	
Gilbert Amado	Health Department	yes
Jamison Shave	Highway	yes
Jeanne Sullivan	Treasurer-Collector Office	
Jerry Davis	Water Department	
Joe Campbell	Planning Board	
Joe Gumbakis	Veterans Department	
John Kemmett	Hanson Community Preservation	yes
Joseph Weeks	Select Board	yes
Karen Stoller	Library	
Kerry Glass	Building Inspection	yes
Kevin Perkins	Board of Health	
Kevin Sullivan	Finance Committee	
Kurt Tarvis	Historical Commission	
Laura Fitzgerald-Kemmett	Select Board	yes
Lee Gamache	Assessors Office	
Lisa Green	Select Board	yes
Lynn McDowell	Select Board	yes
Mary Collins	Council on Aging	yes
Michael Casey	Police Department	
Michael Miksch	Police Department	
Michael Dugan	Finance Committee	
Peggy Westfield	Hanson Cultural Council	
Pepper Santalucia	Finance Committee	
Phil Clemons	Conservation	
Robert O'Brien	Fire Department	yes
Shirley Schindler	Hanson Community Preservation	
Sean Buckley	Zoning Board of Appeals	
Steve Moberg	IT Department	
Teresa Santalucia	Hanson Housing	
Tony DeFrias	Planning Department	yes