

Tuesday, November 02, 2021  
***Hanson Board of Selectmen***  
Selectmen's meeting room, Town Hall  
Open Session

Members Present: James Hickey, Kenny Mitchell, Matthew Dyer, Laura FitzGerald-Kemmett, Joseph Weeks

Members Absent:

Others Present: Lisa Green, Esq, Town Administrator

**I CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Dyer called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance. There was a moment of silence for Jim Daley that passed about this week. Mr. Daley was a teacher, a coach and an instrumental figure for the Town of Hanson.

**II PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING MEETINGS**

Mr. Weeks read the public announcements and upcoming meetings.

Chairman Dyer thanked Ms. Green, The Police, Fire, Water and Highway Departments for all the help during the storm. Town Hall was closed for two days due to no power and the servers being down.

**Purple Heart Town Presentation**

Mr. White, Veteran's Agent, announced that the Town of Hanson is now a Purple Heart Town. A Purple Heart Town is an expression of gratitude to the sons and daughters of the community who gave their lives or were wounded to protect American freedoms. The VFW in Halifax paid for a "Purple Heart Town" sign on behalf of the military order of the Purple Heart. Mr. White will order more signs to display this huge honor. Mr. White read the proclamation of Purple Heart Community designation. Town of Hanson recognizes August 7<sup>th</sup> annually as Purple Heart Day. Citizens and organizations are urged to display the American flag, as well as other public expressions of recognition of our Purple Heart recipients.

**III OLD BUSINESS**

**Resignations**

Chairman Dyer mentioned that the Board of Selectmen and Greer Getzen, Former Executive Assistant, came to an agreement to go separate ways. Ms. Kemmett said that there was no buyout for the Executive Assistant position. There was no separation agreement.

Chairman Dyer recognizes Diane Cohen's resignation from the Recreation Commission effective December 1, 2021. Ms. Cohen was thanked for all her years and work on the Recreation Commission.

***MOTION*** by Mr. Hickey, seconded by Ms. Kemmett (with regret), to recognize Diane Cohen's resignation from The Recreation Commission. ***Voted 5-0.***

**Appointments**

***MOTION*** by Mr. Mitchell, seconded by Ms. Kemmett, to appoint Mr. Santalucia to Parks and Fields Commission. ***Voted 5-0.***

**MOTION** by Mr. Kemmett seconded by Ms. Mitchell, to appoint [Mary Mercier] to the New Democratic Registrar to fill the vacancy of the retired Registrar, Donna Spencer. **Voted 5-0.**

**MOTION** by Mr. Kemmett, seconded by Ms. Mitchell, to appoint Benjamin Fletcher to the Disability Committee and the Nathaniel Thomas Mill Committee. **Voted 5-0.**

**One Day Liquor License**

**MOTION** by Ms. Kemmett, seconded by Ms. Mitchell, to approve a one day liquor license to [Elias No Deal?] on November 19, 2021 from 7pm to 11pm. **Voted 5-0.**

**IV**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Insurance Coverage for the Maquan Building**

Ms. Green explained to the Board that the insurance premium for the building has increased to \$38,000. The budget is \$30,000 for this line item. A vote was requested for the Board to request a reserve fund transfer from the Finance Committee for \$8,000. Ms. Green also mentions that premiums increase the longer a property is vacant. Ms. Kemmett asked about looking into investigating premium reduction options. Mr. Hickey mentioned that the budget last year was roughly \$25,000. Ms. Green agreed that she would ask the insurance company for ways to lower the premium. There were further discussions regarding the potential future uses for the Maquan Building.

**MOTION** by Ms. Kemmett, seconded by Mr. Mitchell, to have the Finance Committee transfer \$8,000 from the Reserve Fund to cover premium for insurance coverage for the Maquan Building. **Voted 5-0**

**V**

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

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

1. Ms. Green addressed the storm, damages and power outages that occurred last week. Storm was a lot worse than was anticipated. There was 100% power outages and cell towers weren't working. All the departments, along with the IT Director, Stephen Moberg, worked diligently to make sure messages out to the public. Town Hall does have a generator, but the servers were down. Efforts are on the way to have contact list updated before the harsh winter is upon us. Mr. Moberg is currently looking into a system that will send broadcast messages to by phone. Ms. Green also mentioned efforts to work on a storm section on the Town website.
2. Ms. Green informed the Board that she was in receipt of four Cares Acts checks totaling \$684,000. Many of the checks were for the schools' technology, remote learning (chrome books), vaccination clinic, PPE equipment and cleaning supplies.
3. Ms. Green updated the board on the personnel vacancies. Currently, interviews are being conducted for the Administrative Assistant for the Town Planner. There were quite a few resumes for the Municipal Assistant in the Treasurer Collectors Department. Resumes for the Executive Assistant for the Board of Selectmen will be reviewed this week. Interviews will be conducted within the next two weeks. The Custodian position has been posted as well.
4. Ms. Green responded to Mr. Mitchell's question regarding securing the Hawk's building. She explained that there was a delay with getting quotes as a result of the storm, but the Building Commissioner is actively working on getting the proposals.

## **BOARD OF ASSESSOR PRESENTATION**

Denice Alexander, Assistant Assessor, referenced the classification booklet that outlines the required actions that will be voted on by the Board of Selectmen. Today the Board of Selectmen will vote on will vote on 1. *Uniform Tax Rate or Split Tax Rate*; 2. *Residential Tax Exemption*; and 3. *Small Business Exemption*.

### ***1. Uniform Tax Rate or Split Tax Rate***

Based on the current information, the tax rate is estimated at \$15.09 per thousand for FY22 as a single tax rate. Residential is the Town's primary class at 93%. The commercial industrial and personal property combined make up 7%. Adopting a split rate would shift the larger burden on the commercial industrial property owners. The Board of Selectmen have always voted to maintain a single tax rate. The Board of Assessors recommends voting on a uniform tax rate.

**MOTION** by James Hickey, seconded by Kenny Mitchell to adopt a uniform tax rate for the Town of Hanson as recommended by the Board of Assessors. **Voted 5-0**

### ***2. Residential Tax Exemption***

On pages 7 and 8 of the classification booklet, Ms. Alexander explains the 3 year comparison of the values of the average residential condos, commercial industrial and single family. The values have increased each year and are expected to keep increasing. The Residential Tax Exemption is for class 1 residential property owners that own and occupy their property. A percentage is applied to exempt a dollar amount of value that is exempt from taxation. This exemption is typically adopted in communities that have higher rental properties (eg., Boston, Brooklyn, Cape & Islands, etc.). Historically, Hanson has opted not to adopt a residential exemption. The Board of Assessors recommends to not adopt the residential exemption.

**MOTION** by Kenny Mitchell, seconded by Joe Weeks to not adopt Residential Tax Exemption. **Voted 5-0.**

### ***3. Small Business Tax Exemption***

Ms. Alexander explained that legislation added this option to the property tax classification law in 1994. It is the responsibility of the Board to decide if the small business exemption will be adopted for the Town of Hanson. Adoption of this provision does not guarantee that the reduction in taxes will be passed on to the small business owners, as the exemption is applied to the real estate. For example, Shaw's Plaza is under \$1,000,000 and employs less than 10 employees. During 2020, the Plaza owner would qualify for this exemption, but not the individual business owners. According to the Department of Employment & Training, Hanson has 47 businesses that would qualify for the Small Business Exemption; if each is situated in a property that is assessed under \$1,000,000. 29 businesses occupy properties yet do not own the property. This would work only if property owners passed the savings to the business owners. There are only 18 businesses that would actually benefit from this exemption. Historically, the Town of Hanson has opted to not adopt a Small Business Tax Exemption. The Board of Assessors does not recommend adopting the Small Business Tax Exemption.

**MOTION** by Kenny Mitchell, seconded by James Hickey to not adopt the Small Business Tax Exemption. **Voted 5-0.**

*Ms. Alexander notified the Board of the excess levy capacity for FY22. The excess levy capacity for FY22 is \$14,241.73. This does not require a vote. This is a notification as part of the classification hearing.*

**MOTION** by James Hickey, seconded by Ms. Kemmett to close the hearing. ***Voted 5 – 0.***

Respectfully submitted,

Lucia Silveira  
Executive Assistant