



Tuesday, May 9, 2023

Hanson Select Board

Select Board's meeting room, Town Hall

Open Session

Members Present: Laura FitzGerald-Kemmett, Joseph Weeks, Edwin Heal, Ann Rein, James Hickey

Members Absent:

Others Present: Lisa Green, Town Administrator; Lynn McDowell, Executive Assistant; Frank Serreti, Powers and Sullivan; Eric Kinsherf, Interim Town Accountant; State Senator Michael Brady;

I CALL TO ORDER

Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance

II PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING MEETINGS

Ms. Rein read the public announcements and upcoming meetings.

III APPOINTMENTS

1. Appoint Camaron King as Town of Hanson Highway Intern

MOTION by Mr. Hickey, seconded by Mr. Weeks, to appoint Camaron King, 784 Union Street, Duxbury, MA, as the Town of Hanson Highway Department Intern. ***Voted 5 – 0***

2. Vote to appoint John Sidlauskas to serve as a member of the Hanson Historical Commission

Mr. Sidlauskas stated he worked previously with the Massachusetts Historic Preservation Corp and he is a history buff. He would like to give back to the community and believed this to be a good fit. He has no conflicts to impede the appointment.

MOTION by Hickey, seconded by Mr. Weeks, to appoint John Sidlauskas to serve as a member of the Hanson Historical Commission for fiscal year 2024. ***Voted 5 – 0***

IV NEW BUSINESS

1. Presentation of Citations for James Hickey

State Senator Michael Brady was honored to attend and represent the Town of Hanson to present a citation to outgoing Select Board member Hickey. He read the official citation from the

Massachusetts Senate, which congratulated and thanked Mr. Hickey for his dedicated public service to the Town of Hanson, including six years of a Select Board member.

He did note that the Senate is reviewing the budget, as it is out of Ways and Means, and reviewing the revenue. There will be more local aid and revenue. The Senate placed holds related to a tax proposal and a tax break; both are still being debated. Regarding estate taxes, he is part of a committee reviewing the possibility of raising the amount before those inherit will be taxed; this is addressed further once the budget is finalized. If there are any needs or questions, please feel free to contact his office.

Ms. FitzGerald-Kemmett read the citation from the Town of Hanson, and each member of the Board thanked Mr. Hickey for his support and leadership. All enjoyed working with him and will miss his wealth of Town knowledge he was always eager to share.

Mr. Hickey thanked Senator Brady and each member of the Board. He also shared his intention to join the Council on Ageing, as well as some other opportunities, so he will be around.

2. May 2023 Town Meeting Recap and Lessons Learned

The Select Board discussed the workings of Town Meeting and how to improve going forward.

There was consensus of enforcement of deadlines for receiving articles. Correspondence will be forwarded early July with the deadlines for articles and supplemental materials, with no exceptions. The Board appreciated several meetings to discuss the articles with department heads and committee members present their requests. There was a disconnect with submission changes on articles.

It also suggested taking the first draft of the warrant and recirculate to the committees and departments, ensuring what is in the warrant is what should be there. This will improve quality control. For the order of articles, legal counsel does final review. There are historical practices, and it may revert back, but the Board has the prerogative for ordering. Nothing legally was impermissible.

With so many handouts it would be helpful to create a consolidated handout packet. With the development of the updated website, it should be possible to post the complete warrant and create links for individual articles. It suggested Ms. Green meet with WHCA to schedule committee presentations for complex warrant articles or a televised round table discussion.

The Board also highlighted the change in start time for the high attendance. It also noted that attendees do not need to stay for the entire meeting but it is helpful to be in there for some of it.

Ms. Green reminded the Board of posting and printing requirements. With last minute changes, whether updates to supplemental information or changes in formatting, that creates additional handouts. Going forward it needs to be after final review by Town Counsel and copy forwarded to the printers, no changes. It can instead be posted to the website.

Mr. Kinsherf suggested when the articles are received, they each need to include an executive summary in plain language. Upon receipt of the drafted article, it is inserted into the warrant, then returned to the original sender for a second review by a second deadline. He also suggested adding to the website with each article linked to its detail.

3. Discuss FY23 Budget preparation

Mr. Kinsherf is looking forward to developing the budget as well as some forecasting. For the School, prior to having budget conversations he advised moving forward the education reform conversation first, then meet with the School committee.

Ms. Green will schedule, looking at dates in early June. The Select Board suggested inviting both the Finance Committee and the Capital Improvement Committee. Ms. Green stated she will make it open to all who are interested. The consensus was to make this a separate meeting the the Select Board meeting. Ms. Green will also forward the de-regionalization study.

4. Discuss FY22 Audit Presentation

Mr. Serreti, from Powers & Sullivan, introduced Kevin Sullivan, who is a senior auditor who coordinated this year's Town audit, as well as doing the prep work for the FY23 audit. Mr. Serreti thanked Town Administrator, Interim Town Accountant, Treasurer-Collector and the rest of the Finance team for the cooperation and assistance received.

He then read through the financial highlights of the report.

- For results, able to issue an unmodified opinion on financial statements, which is the best to receive. All reporting deadlines were met and the information received was accurate. No weaknesses noted in internal controls.
- For financials, free cash total \$1.5M at the end of 2022; general fund balance total \$6.2M with \$1.3M allocated to special articles and \$870,000 related to the School Stabilization fund. An additional \$1.3M was allocated for 2023 budget, with a balance of \$3.8M. This is a healthy fund balance, above the 10% desired by rating agencies.
- Collections for real estate and personal property tax are strong, with a 99% collection rate.
- General fund balance increased \$377,000, revenues were \$405,000 over budget, with expenses approximately \$1M under budget.
- Free cash was used to balance the budget, with no overspending on budget items. There is a strong budget process and budgetary control.
- OPEB Trust did not receive a contribution for 2022, creating a loss due to market conditions. This will remain the same until funding increases and occurs regularly.
- Net pension liability with Plymouth County Retirement Association, there was \$10.4M at December 2021, a decrease of \$2M due to a good year with investments.
- No new long-term debt was issued. Debt service is about 1.5% of appropriations, lower than average.

Regarding federal awards – the Town spent \$1.2M

- Most was spent on Covid Relief fund, with the majority of the funds passed on the Schools, which are subrecipient. The Town is missing the signed agreement for this; going forward it will need to have an agreement in place to be compliant. There were no issues with the charges as strong monitoring was in place with the reimbursement process. This allowed an unmodified opinion with a single audit and no deficiencies in internal controls.

Management letter –

- Critical in nature but no findings of significant deficiencies.
- There were three prior year comments, two are considered resolved and the third is one the auditors share with all clients.
 - Uncollectable receivables – resolved
 - Adopt fraud prevention policy – resolved
 - Conduct fraud risk assessment – put in for all clients; the Town is reviewing options

The Board noted for the OPEB trust, it needs to do better with funding. The trust is set up, with funding at 1%. Mr. Serreti suggested developing a plan that includes the percentage that works for the Town and deposit in the account. The Town will then qualify for higher discount rates as the funding increases. The Board will discuss further with the Interim Town Accountant.

The Board highlighted the work done by Town employees to reduce control needs from several to just one. It also appreciated having a third party validate the hard work accomplished.

5. Accept Joan Minuitti's resignation from the Zoning Board of Appeals

MOTION by Mr. Hickey, seconded by Mr. Weeks, to accept Joan Minuitti's resignation from the Zoning Board of Appeals, with regret. ***Voted 5 – 0***

6. Accept James Armstrong's resignation from Maquan School Reuse Committee

MOTION by Mr. Hickey, seconded by Mr. Weeks, to accept James Armstrong's resignation from Maquan School Reuse Committee, with regret. ***Voted 5 – 0***

The board suggested creating a new committee from groups that would be using this space to discuss how to use the space and present to the select Board.

V COMMITTEE UPDATES

- No updates

VI ONE DAY LIQUOR LICENSES

1. 05/20/2023 – 5:00pm – 10:00pm – Mary Bain – Wedding
2. 06/15/2023 – 6:00pm – 10:00pm – Brandi Leoncello – Birthday party
3. 06/25/2023 – 1:00pm – 6:00pm – Jack Johnson – Graduation party
4. 07/08/2023 – 11:00sm – 4:00pm – David Blaisdell – Celebration of Life
5. 08/27/2023 – 2:00pm – 6:00pm – Melissa Macheras – Party

6. 09/30/2023 – 6:00pm – 10:00pm – Zachary Corcoran – Wedding

MOTION by Mr. Hickey, seconded by Mr. Weeks, to approve the one-day liquor licenses as printed on the agenda. ***Voted 5 – 0***

VII APPROVE OPEN SESSION MINUTES

1. April 11, 2023
2. April 18, 2023
3. April 25, 2023
4. May 1, 2023

MOTION by Mr. Hickey, seconded by Mr. Weeks, to approve the meeting minutes as printed on the agenda. ***Voted 5 – 0***

VIII TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

- Ms. Green updated on Maquan bid. Nine bids were received, with the winning bid coming in at \$875,000 winner. However, it did not have all the forms needed and Ms. Green needed to reject it and go with the next bid of \$936,666. But the announced bid winner is protesting the rejection, claiming the Town violated procurement laws. Ms. Green shared this with Town Counsel. She is not certain how long the process will take as it needs to go to the Attorney General's office for the final decision. She can start application process for the ARPA portal and reached out to Capital Strategic Solutions for assistance with the process.
- She thanked all for assisting with May Town meeting. There were some issues but she appreciated the takeaways to make the process better for October.
- With the approval of articles, she met with Human Resources Services to review the human resources policies and procedures manual, drafting any necessary updates. She is meeting with John Madden for the forecasting financial analysis. She stated it may take up to six months for a presentation.
- The bylaw codification is complete; Mr. DeFrias is reviewing. There will be no change in the substance; the language will reflect that of the Town. Once complete there will be a legal review, which will include integrating the new bylaws and changes from the past Town meeting.
- The Fire Department received an earmark of \$60,000 for rescue training. Both she and the Fire Chief extend their thanks to Representative Cutler and Senator Brady for their assistance.
- She is leading a Department Head meeting on May 16 focusing on the Collins Center. It is part of a wage and classification review, which will also update job descriptions. After speak with all department heads, there will be a salary survey with the surrounding towns.

- Ms. Green updated the Board regarding the ARPA funds.
 - The funds allocated at Town Meetings are Treasury funds, which are already in the Town's accounts. \$945,000 in total was allotted, however some allocations were higher than the quotes received. The Town now has about \$400,000 available for other projects.
 - For the Plymouth County portal, there is currently \$1.69M available. The requirements with these funds are much more stringent. There are categories, with specific sub-categories. She plans to use these funds for the Maquan project but needs to meet the subcategory properly. And there is more than one subcategory available; she needs to focus on which will be the best option. She also noted that all the funds need to be allotted by December 2024 but do not need to spend until December 2026.

IX ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Weeks, seconded by Mr. Hickey, to adjourn. ***Voted 5 – 0***

*Respectfully submitted,
Lynn McDowell*