

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, AUGUST 13, 2019

The regular meeting for the Board of Selectmen convened at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room in the Town Office Building at 110 Main Street. In attendance were John R. Morrell, Edward S. Harrison, and Dr. Richard M. Smith. Also present were Town Administrator Evan Brassard and the media.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:

Mr. Harrison made a motion to accept the meeting minutes for July 23, 2019 – open session. Dr. Smith seconded, and it was unanimously VOTED.

Joint School Committee Meeting:

School Superintendent Cheryl Clarke, and School Committee members Jeffrey Lord, Emily Graves-Harrison, Andre Dubois, and Colleen Flynn, approached the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Harrison opened the joint meeting at 7:01 p.m.

Mr. Lord opened the School Committee meeting at 7:01 p.m.

Mr. Morrell explained the joint meeting is being held to fill a vacancy on the School Committee Board. There were three candidates being interviewed for the opening, and they were interviewed in alphabetical order.

First to be interviewed was Jamie Murphy, followed by Karen Nothe-Valley, and lastly Jesse Shea. Each candidate explained their background and answered questions by both the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee.

Following the interviews, the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen held deliberations to discuss who they felt would be the best fit for the position.

Everyone was in agreement all three candidates were very good, with each being special in their own way.

A roll-call vote was held as follows:

Jeffrey Lord: Jesse Shea
Emily Graves-Harrison: Jesse Shea
Andre Dubois: Jesse Shea
Colleen Flynn: Karen Nothe-Valley
Edward Harrison: Karen Nothe-Valley
John Morrell: Jesse Shea
Richard Smith: Jesse Shea

Mr. Lord said he was very impressed, they have three very qualified candidates and thanked them all for applying and for coming in.

Mr. Lord closed the School Committee meeting at 7:34 p.m.

Mr. Morrell closed the joint meeting at 7:34 p.m.

Pole Petition #1A3QD5N:

Paul Reisinger, a representative from Verizon New England, approached the Board of Selectmen on behalf of their pole petition request, to answer any questions the Board or abutters might have about the pole.

Dr. Smith read the pole petition into the record. It was noted the location is OK with the Water Sewer and Highway Departments. It was noted the pole location is right on the right of way for the town and the state. There wasn't anyone in the audience to speak for or against the petition.

Mr. Harrison made a motion to approve Pole Petition #1A3QD5N as read. Dr. Smith seconded, and it was unanimously VOTED.

Bike Race Review:

Mike Norton approached the Board of Selectmen and noted he has been putting bike races on for over 30 years. The race being proposed this year is a seven-mile loop instead of the thirty-three-mile loop they had the year before last. Last year he didn't put on a bike race. The race is fully supported by USA Cycling out of Colorado. Mr. Norton said he will take out the insurance policy, contact the Police Chief, have EMT coverage, and speak with the School once he has permission to hold the race from the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Norton explained the bike race is scheduled for Sunday, April 26, 2020 beginning at 8:00 a.m. and finishing around 4:00 p.m. There will be three waves; one starting at 8:00 a.m. running about an hour and a half, the second wave will start at 9:00 a.m., and the last wave will start at 1:00 p.m. The race will start at Monson High School, taking a right out of the parking lot onto Margaret Street. They will follow Margaret until State Street taking a right onto the private way at the Developmental Center to Route 32. The course then takes a right onto Route 32 to High Street, taking a right onto High Street to Margaret Street and finishing on Margaret Street in front of Quarry Hill community School.

Mr. Harrison made a motion to approve the Bike Race for April 26, 2020 as discussed. Dr. Smith seconded, and it was unanimously VOTED.

Cannabis Bylaw Discussion:

Mr. Brassard said he has been working with Town Planner Dan Laroche on the town's next step as far as the cannabis bylaw. Mr. Brassard noted both he and Mr. Laroche feel it's prudent to move the issue forward since the petitioned vote has taken place and failed to pass.

Mr. Brassard suggested the Board of Selectmen dissolve the Adult Use Marijuana Bylaw Committee to move forward on its own by letting him and Mr. Laroche be the official guides to the process.

Mr. Morrell asked if this bylaw will be really close to what the Bylaw Committee had been working on.

Mr. Brassard responded, yes, the petitioned bylaw is pretty close to what the Committee had been working on; and it's probably 90% what the committee had already constructed.

Mr. Brassard explained he and Mr. Laroche will take into consideration what the committee was working on and what the Committee was discussing at the time. They will also take into account what they've heard from residents since then and what they heard at Town Meeting, as well as take away any information in regard to a public hearing; and then put that together into a bylaw, present it to the Board of Selectmen to pull apart and tweak, and then send it to the Planning Board to prepare for Town Meeting.

Dr. Smith feels this is a much better approach; getting all the important input up front so we don't go to Town Meeting with questions from the Planning Board, etc. Everything will be addressed beforehand to present something to the residents that's already been vetted.

Mr. Harrison made a motion to dissolve the Adult Use Marijuana Bylaw Committee. Dr. Smith seconded, and it was unanimously VOTED.

Greene Room Productions:

Erin Greene-Wallace of Greene Room Productions was not present. Mr. Morrell noted there were a few things that came up during the last election and he had some concerns; also, a couple of people complained to him about their concerns about what happened as well. Mr. Morrell said he couldn't ignore that and wanted to bring the issues forward to the other Board members for discussion.

Mr. Morrell said he gave Mrs. Greene-Wallace ample time and three different opportunities to come in to a Selectmen's meeting to explain her side of the story, and she elected instead wanting to speak with the Selectmen individually. Mr. Morrell said even if Mrs. Greene-Wallace did that, the Board would still need a meeting in open session to discuss this if they wanted to take any action and to discuss just what action to take if they did so.

Mr. Morrell said what he was told, is serious enough to have Mrs. Greene-Wallace come before the Board as apparently Greene Room Productions had an event scheduled for two weekends prior to the annual town election. The event did not occur, and the weekend before the annual town election was held on Tuesday, and while all the equipment for voting had been set up, Greene Room Productions went in and moved it and held their event without permission. Moving the voting equipment is a violation of the law and the State could have called for a new election. The equipment wasn't tampered with, but it was moved around. The other thing that happened is the key to Memorial Hall given to Mrs. Greene-Wallace, under our policy, must be returned to the Selectmen's Office within 24 hours after the approved event is held. Mrs. Greene-Wallace never returned the key, even after two requests for her to do so. Mr. Morrell noted our policy states if the key isn't returned, it's a violation and you can't use the

Hall anymore. Mr. Morrell felt something should be done so this won't continue, not just by Greene Room Productions, but anyone else using the Hall, and he felt this needs to be discussed.

Dr. Smith asked Mr. Brassard to share Mrs. Greene-Wallace's side of things since he met with her.

Mr. Brassard said there is a problem with people breaking the 24-hour key return issue, and he has been working on a solution to that. Mr. Brassard said no one wants to come in to a meeting that is televised to have things they may have done or not have done correctly discussed. Mrs. Greene-Wallace did tell Mr. Brassard that she would be more than willing to speak with the Chairman and to let him hear her side of the event. She did acknowledge to Mr. Brassard the key was not returned and it was likely someone in her organization moved the voting booths.

Mr. Brassard stated he feels some of the responsibility falls on Greene Room Productions, as it's hard to keep track of all her people but that's what needs to happen. However, he also feels we haven't done that great of job policing the policy to a certain extent. Mr. Brassard noted there are a number of issues with building security with a number of groups that have used Memorial Hall in the past.

Dr. Smith asked if Mrs. Greene-Wallace had permission to use Memorial Hall on the date in which she used it, and was told no. Dr. Smith stated it's the Town's building and we are responsible for it and people can't just come in and use it whenever they want; and to do so when it is being used by another organization or during an election makes it even worse.

Mr. Brassard noted he feels there is a way forward where the space can continue to be used, yet take better control over when, who, and what time. Mr. Brassard noted this is not isolated to Greene Room Productions, but it is isolated due to the election issue. Mr. Brassard said there have been issues where someone has requested the use of Memorial Hall for a certain date and time and they have been in there before or well after that time, and not returning the key on time.

Dr. Smith said they can't change their date for an event without permission to do so.

Mr. Morrell said he would like to suggest meeting with Mrs. Greene-Wallace of Greene Room Productions, with the other two Selectmen and Mr. Brassard, to discuss this, being a little firm about how the Board feels about this and the building, to make sure she gets on top of her people and understands the seriousness of this.

Mr. Harrison questioned why this has to be done when Mr. Brassard has already met with Mrs. Greene-Wallace, and feels we are doing that right now in public if she is watching.

Mr. Morrell felt it's more effective if you personally tell somebody that you don't want to see that continue.

Dr. Smith said it doesn't bother him either way as long as Mrs. Greene-Wallace knows he is dissatisfied. The building is historical and something the town has worked on, restoring it and improving it. There has been a history of Memorial Hall being abused in the past which is why the policy was developed and

that's why we are trying to police it, so we either need a better policy, or it needs to be enforced better, but we can't have that going forward. Dr. Smith clarified he isn't saying she shouldn't use Memorial Hall, but felt she should receive a warning.

Mr. Morrell said he would absolutely go along with that, and let Mr. Brassard transfer the warning to her.

Mr. Brassard said he would like to propose to the Historic Commission and Building Maintenance Director, now that Memorial Hall has its own wi-fi and cameras and security measures in place, installing a programmable fob lock for keyless access that would instead use a swipe card as is done in the Town Office Building. This would allow the swipe cards to be programmed to open the doors at a certain time on a specific day, and to lock the doors as well automatically following the approved use. This process would give us the ability to better maintain control over the keys and access to the space.

Mr. Morrell wondered if a fob lock could be installed on a building that is a historic landmark.

Mr. Brassard said that's one of the things he would have to check on with the Historic Commission. Mr. Brassard said it would be installed on the side door by the handicapped ramp and not the front door for mobility purposes.

Dr. Smith wondered if it's a needed solution.

Mr. Brassard responded to him it is a needed solution, as over the years so many people have taken the key out and not everyone has returned it back on time, and one person said they can't find a key that was given to them for an event; with the fob lock if a key goes missing, you just turn it off, and the key can't be duplicated by anyone else.

Dr. Smith wondered how much a fob lock would cost.

Mr. Brassard responded for a decent lock, it would probably cost less than \$1,000 and it would come out of the maintenance line in the budget.

The Board of Selectmen were in agreement they are in favor of installing a fob lock on Memorial Hall.

Mr. Brassard said he will reach out to Mrs. Greene-Wallace to let her know of the Board's concern and to make sure it doesn't happen again.

Hospital Road Crossing – Train Concerns:

Mr. Morrell noted this issue was discussed about six months ago where the train was blocking the track for a considerable amount of time. On one occasion the resident said the road was blocked for an hour and she couldn't get back home without having to go all the way around.

Mr. Morrell noted the woman called him the other day and said it is happening again. It happened twice in the same day for a half hour each time. Mr. Morrell said he spoke with the Police Chief, and they now have it on record the complaints came in; and he feels we need to get ahold of the railroad again.

Mr. Morrell said his father worked for the railroad for fifty years and he told him you cannot block a public crossing for more than five minutes because it's an emergency vehicle access. To detour this crossing, it's a big trip around.

The Board of Selectmen agreed to have Mr. Brassard speak with his contact person at NECR.

54th Massachusetts Regiment Information:

Mr. Morrell explained one of his friends that grew up in Monson, Jerome Haley, now lives in Australia but comes back to town to visit his brother. Mr. Haley gave Mr. Morrell information he had gathered on "Swamp Angles the 54th Mass. Regiment". The 54th Mass. Regiment was a completely black soldier regiment. Three of the soldiers were brothers from Monson; Harrison Pierce, Solomon Pierce, and Warren Pierce. Mr. Haley researched this at the library, the Historical Society, and the Boston Museum. Harrison Pierce died instantly in action after being shot in the assault on Fort Wagner in South Carolina in 1863.

Mr. Morrell said he wanted to share this information with the town prior to passing it on to Dennis Swierad of the Historical Commission, who he feels would appreciate having this information.

Mr. Brassard said he spoke with Mr. Swierad today and he told Mr. Brassard the Historic Commission has the original sign-in sheet that was signed when they were enlisted and ready to go. There is also a picture in Memorial Hall of the gentlemen who went with the 54th Mass. Regiment; only one of the African American soldiers is in the photo. John Andrew was the Governor of Massachusetts from 1861 to 1866 and his portrait is in the same glass upstairs in the GAR Hall. Governor Andrew was the guiding force behind the 54th Mass. Regiment.

Mr. Brassard said it would be a great project to gather more information on this, as it's history we don't want to lose.

Correspondence was read and completed.

In Other Business to Come Before the Board:

- Mr. Morrell said he feels the Monson Rocks concert for the 50th Anniversary of Woodstock, went off very well. He went by the field at 11:30 Sunday morning and the place was as neat as a pin and looked really good, and he congratulated Monson Rocks for doing a great job and for cleaning up after.

Mr. Brassard said he heard they sold close to 300 tickets and earlier in the night there were probably close to 300 people in attendance. He spoke with the folks from Monson Rocks on Sunday morning and was told everything went off really well with no major issues. The only

issue Mr. Brassard noted was on Monday the “no parking” signs were still up which is a minor glitch.

Mr. Brassard said he believes M-PACT was there and filmed the whole event, and they should be coming out with something pretty soon.

Dr. Smith thanked Reed Coles for going forward with that. Mr. Brassard added David Beaudoin helped out with the power, Craig Levesque helped with the trailers, Curt Jameson, Jo Sauriol, and countless other people also helped out.

- Mr. Morrell said the Silver Street bridge was held up by the State by going back and forth on the drawings and precast that’s going to be put where the bridge is. MassDOT finally accepted the drawings so the project can move forward. Mr. Morrell said he spoke with Michelle Loglisci at the School Transportation Office and informed her it doesn’t look like the project will get started until the 1st of September or a little later, so it will definitely affect the school buses. Ms. Loglisci is working on getting a plan out to inform everyone in that area when and where the students will be able to get a bus. Mr. Morrell said this project should take about three weeks to complete.
- Mr. Harrison asked about the removal of the large boulder with the painted octopus on it at the intersection of May Hill Road and Bumstead Road.

Mr. Morrell replied it was a public safety issue. Someone brought it to his attention there was a driveway put in that was near the intersection. The driveway was 25 feet from the intersection which is acceptable and legal and the person said there is a sight restriction there due to the vegetation being high on the embankment between the driveway and the intersection. Mr. Morrell said he asked the contractor who built the house to take the embankment out by cutting it down quite a bit, and he did this at his expense. The person who was complaining about the sight restriction is the person who complained about the rock with the painted octopus on it being broken down and removed. Mr. Morrell said he has a lot of pictures of people who couldn’t see at that intersection with the rock in the way, and the police noted two accidents there with an unknown number of near misses. Mr. Morrell said they were taking care of public safety on Town property and they didn’t have to notify anyone the rock was going to be removed.

At 8:25 p.m., Mr. Harrison made a motion to adjourn from open session to go into executive session to discuss with respect to non-union personnel pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30A Section 21 (2) and collective bargaining or litigation pursuant to M.G.L. chapter 30A Section 21 (3), not to return to open session. Dr. Smith seconded, and it was unanimously VOTED.

Dr. Richard M. Smith, Clerk