

Town of Brimfield
Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes – October 26, 2020
Brimfield Elementary School cafeteria, 22 Wales Road and Virtual

Current State of Emergency:

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Brimfield **[Board of Selectmen]** will be conducted in person and via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the town's website, at www.brimfieldma.org. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to virtually attend the meeting may do so in the following manner: WEBINAR allowing computer and phone participation. ~~No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted~~, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the Brimfield website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

Join Microsoft Teams Meeting

+1 508-387-3549 United States, Worcester (Toll)

Conference ID: 658 995 115#

Members Present: Chair; Mike Doyle, Vice Chair; Paul McCarthy, Member; Carolyn Haley, Member; Suzanne Collins, Member; Ryan Olszta, Recording; Admin; Carol Camerota (Virtual)

Others: Historical; Mark Connors and Bob Corry, Town Clerk; Bob Sullivan, Public Access; Bob Datz, Steve Rich; Tantasqua IT

Call to order: by (Doyle) at 6:30 p.m.

(Doyle) asked for a moment of silence for Tom Brown who passed away Saturday. This was a sudden loss for the community. (Olszta) added that Tom was on the Fire Department for 52 years as well as scout leader and was a huge role model for youth and adults. (Collins) confirmed he was a Scout leader for 30 years and how everyone loved him. Bell will be rung Saturday at 11:11 a.m. Outdoor service will be at the cemetery at Saturday at 10:00 a.m.

Payroll and Warrants:

Signed by the Board

Minutes:

Review & approve minutes of October 13, 2020.

Motion: by (Haley) move to approve minutes of October 13, 2020, seconded by (Collins), all in favor.

Reports of Officers, Boards, and Standing Committees:

Town Clerk hours discussion:

Early voting is still taking place, he will be late.

Veteran's Agent phone, purple heart signs:

(Olszta) reported that M. Avis shouldn't have 2 phones now just 1. When he started with the town the tradeoff was a phone in place of extra pay. An agreement made by a previous board. The number is listed on other town's websites. Uses his own iPad for VA forms and the phone for hot spots. There appears to be only 1 phone on the bill. Board agreed he is doing an effective job and is comfortable with the use of this phone.

(Doyle) pointed out that he is the only person that has a phone, even first responders use their own phones. (Olszta) asked that the number be removed from other towns websites. (Doyle) suggested that at the next budget remove the phone and increase his pay and decrease the expense line item.

Gazebo minutes:

Motion: by (Haley) move to approve minutes from October 19, 2020 Gazebo meeting, seconded by (Olszta), all in favor.

Grant Applications:

(Doyle) said he was not aware of all the grants that have been applied for so he started keeping track. Most recent being the IT grant from Community compact. Thanks to an awesome job from Steve Rich at the deadline. This built off of the 2019 grant (McCarthy) worked on and received. Current grant is for \$106,330 previously for this grant. (Olszta) applied for \$12,000 for a traffic safety grant. E. Pittsinger and (Olszta) are working on an ADA grant for ramps for \$183,000. J. Donovan has applied for \$2,700 for the Fire Department for flash lights. The Sr Center received or has applied for \$7-9,000 for a fitness grant, \$11,645 for a Title 3 grant. Instructor grants and a Mass DOT mini grant for computer of \$1,000.

7:00 p.m. Public Access

None

Reports of Officers, Boards, and Standing Committees: (cont.)

Gazebo update (Administrative only, no public discussion):

(Doyle) asked if Bob Corry would be able to answer for Mark Conners on the action items after the last meeting and the time line. B. Corry reported that they have had somewhat of a short fall in completing. The end cost for this project will be \$54,080 with Landscape Evolution's walkway. (Doyle) asked for their master plan. Corry described the 10' x 20' paved plaza which would connect to the ramp. Discussion of what would be an acceptable surface. (Olszta) thought stamped concrete was more acceptable. Corry expressed that they want to comply, but most communities have brick walkways, he will also take care of working with Landscape Evolution and Brimfield Community Partnership. (Doyle) had concerns over getting through the punch list and would like to see donations put in an account in order to track the balance. (Haley) suggested a revolving account.

M. Arsenault explained that the Gazebo is now set up as a special revenue donation account and works similar to a revolving. Mark Conners would like to see a partnership with BOS and Historical while the time frame is taking longer and should the funds come into the town which would help since he has a lot of projects going on.

(Collins) asked if Pioneer Valley could help? (Haley) felt with the culmination of members on Historical they should continue to meet. (Doyle) would be happy to help out with site plan and will work with Building Commissioner and ADA coordinator. (Olszta) will work with MassDOT regarding the sidewalks.

Corry spoke with Lamoroux Greenhouse about plantings for the common and light mitigation. All agreed that after material for the ramp and path are decided then work on plantings can continue. A site plan from Landscape Evolution is needed to be able to move forward. A thermometer on common was suggested to help fundraise and mass mailings.

Public access:

None

Town Clerk hours:

B. Sullivan would like to understand what the board's feeling is on additional compensation for extraordinary measures taken during the pandemic.

(Haley) asked what are other towns were doing. Sullivan said in response that other towns have already handled it according to their personnel policies. Then he gave an overview of elections and protocol for the State and local BOH's. 30 extra hours are being put in each week for all the extra work.

(Doyle) told B. Sullivan that the work he has done has been outstanding, If the situation doesn't go the way he would like it's not because he doesn't deserve it. The Town Clerk is an elected position with a salary voted on by the town. After speaking with the town Accountant and other financial experts in other towns, he does not see a way that the Selectmen can overrule without a special town meeting. B. Sullivan added that this was unprecedented and there must be something that can be done since we are not the only town addressing this.

(Collins) will check into the CARES Act regarding this and praised the Clerk and all the impressive help she received when early voting. (Haley) also thanked Sullivan for his hours as well.

(McCarthy) suggested that this should all be looked at now and for the future if this continues. With (Doyle) adding that increases should come according to election years.

B. Sullivan said he encouraged discussion with town counsel for the increased hours and issues but when asked for permission for this discussion with town counsel he was refused. He wanted to explore having the election be at a date of choosing. Brimfield's came 2 days beyond the States deadline. Several towns have gone to court to combine state elections with primary. (McCarthy) did talk to L. Goldberg at K.P. Law about doing this and was told it couldn't be done.

(Doyle) asked Sullivan to send an email with all his points and he will contact town counsel for their findings in writing. He also thanked Sullivan for all his work.

Spruce Tree at east side of common:

(Olszta) will make calls to find a company that will remove the tree at the east side of the common. The Tree Warden is unable to do anything because it is still a healthy tree. This tree was supposed to be taken down when new evergreen tree was planted.

Reports of Special Committees:

Special Orders:

Unfinished Business and General Orders:

Phone system update:

(Doyle) received an update on line carriers from Total Communications. The quote is less than the town is paying for Mitel currently. Board will move forward. By the end of October, the fiber should be complete.

Parking contract for School Dept at Highway update:

(McCarthy) said this will be on the School committee's agenda, but it has been hard to negotiate when there is nothing to negotiate. The biggest concern for highway will be plowing and the number of cars and buses. The rental contract should happen soon.

Gas pump contract status:

(Olszta) has looked at pumps with Highway Surveyor the pumps do not meet the definition of retail and won't need a contract. Scales are calibrated and are 100 % accurate. The town should be able to move forward with a simple agreement for payment for usage and maintenance. He also added that the Compliance Officer had never heard of agreements for municipalities.

New Business:

(Olszta) and (Collins) will be meeting with National Grid tomorrow on 2-way texting, new substations and trees that have been destroyed. Their findings will be discussed at the next meeting.

Sr. Housing fee:

(Olszta) was approached by seniors at Colonial Park with a complaint on pet guidelines. For those who have pets an additional fee goes into an interest-bearing account and the interest is going to the MSPCA. They would like to know the Legality of that. (McCarthy) thought the security deposit should be given back. This is a common fund for holding interest and the interest isn't given it back. (Olszta) will reach out and see what the remedy could be. Sounds like this is somewhat new. (Olszta) would like to create an outline of services the town offers for seniors.

Energy Services:

P. Marquis from the Planning board discussed with (Doyle) energy buying services for towns. Municipal services offer savings and better service to customers. (Doyle) will continue to communicate with Marquis on this.

Sign Bylaw:

(Doyle) called town counsel regarding the town's sign bylaw. The bylaw was poorly written, but Counsel thought we could separate it and enforce residential and commercial differently. Bylaw will need to be changed at a town meeting. (Olszta) felt that doing different enforcements would target businesses in town and appear anti-business and is not in favor.

Public Access:

B. Datz began addressing closure of annex due to Covid in late summer. He has been working on getting HD cameras at the annex. He has contacted vendors on 3 levels of work. He questioned the usage of annex for meetings during Covid and how many were allowed in the building and if the annex could be used for meetings. (Doyle) informed Datz that (Collins) would be meeting with him regarding these issues. Cost would be \$16,000 to \$32,000 at this point for equipment at the town hall and \$26,000 at the annex. (Collins) thought the town had already spent a lot of money upgrading equipment. The board agreed he should focus on the town hall and not the annex. Datz would like to offer collecting and recycling batteries for all departments.

Office Matters & Mail:

Adjourn:

Motion: by (Haley) move to adjourn at 8:27 p.m., seconded by (Collins), all in favor.

Upcoming Meetings: November 9, 2020 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Carol Camerota

Transcribed by: Carol Camerota

ACCEPTED: *MLZ* DATE: 11/9/2020

Documents Utilized for this meeting

MATERIALS FOR BACKGROUND AND REFERENCE

1. Meeting minutes of October 13, 2020