

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

September 22, 2020

Virtual Meeting

Chairman Brett A. Simas; Selectman Maureen Dwinnell; Selectman
Stephen A. Matellian; Town Manager, Derek S. Brindisi; Sandra Hakala,
Executive Assistant

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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 concerning imposition on strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, meetings in the Town of Upton are being conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. 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 as provided for in the Order.

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As a preliminary matter, this is Brett Simas – Chair, Board of Selectmen. Permit me to confirm that all members and persons anticipated on the agenda are present and can hear me.

- Members, when I call your name, please respond in the affirmative. *Stephen Matellian, aye, Maureen Dwinnell, aye,*
- Staff, when I call your name, please respond in the affirmative. Derek Brindisi, Town Manager aye, *State each staff members' name.*
- Anticipated Speakers on the Agenda, please respond in the affirmative. *None*

REVIEW MEETING AGENDA

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Review [DPW Feasibility Committee Volunteer Application](#)

Motion #1: Motion made by Selectman Matellian to appoint Jonathan Moen to the DPW Feasibility Committee.

Second: Selectman Dwinnell, Unanimous, Chairman Simas
Brett Simas, aye, Maureen Dwinnell, aye, Steve Matellian, aye

Discuss [Proposed EDC Composition and Charge](#)

Recently the Selectmen unanimously voted to disband the RFP Committee and believed there may be an opportunity to combine the EDC and RFP Committee. As a result, EDC Chair David

Ross discussed the Committee's recommended expansion and charge. Ross stated the EDC is comprised of five members and one alternate. "We felt the best course of action would be to have a seven-member committee with no alternates." An updated draft of the Committee's new charge will be reviewed at the Selectmen's next meeting.

Motion #2: Motion made by Selectman Dwinnell to have a seven-member Economic Development Committee with no alternates.

Second: Selectman Matellian, Unanimous, Chairman Simas
Brett Simas, aye, Maureen Dwinnell, aye, Steve Matellian, aye

INVITED GUESTS

7:05 Public Hearing – [Rushford & Sons](#)

Chairman Simas opened the Public Hearing:

Notice is hereby given, under Chapter 138, Section 15A, of the MGLs that a Public Hearing will be held *Virtually on Tuesday, September 22, at 7:05PM on the application of Rushford & Sons Brewhouse, LLC 8 Grove Street, Upton, MA for an On Premises §12 Farmers Series Pouring Permit. The description of the premises is as follows: Single floor 2100 sf. 1500 sf taproom, 600 sf brewery/manufacturing area.

The Chair closed the public hearing.

Motion #3: Motion made by Selectman Matellian to approve the Licensing Authority Certification adding the hours of operation to include Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, 2-10PM Saturday, 10AM to 10PM, and Sunday 11AM to 5PM.

Second: Selectman Dwinnell, Unanimous, Chairman Simas
Brett Simas, aye, Maureen Dwinnell, aye, Steve Matellian, aye

DISCUSSION ITEMS cont.

Execute [IMA with Northbridge – Conservation Agent](#)

The only difference in this agreement from the previous is the increase in hours (from 11 hours to 15 hours in Upton and eight hours to 15 hours in Northbridge).

Motion #4: Motion made by Selectman Dwinnell approve and execute the IMA with Northbridge – Conservation Agent.

Second: Selectman Matellian, Unanimous, Chairman Simas
Brett Simas, aye, Maureen Dwinnell, aye, Steve Matellian, aye

Review [STM Draft Warrant](#)

The first article on the draft warrant was a request from the Economic Development Committee to acquire a parcel(s) of land located within the Upton Center Business District. Although not specifically mentioned in the article, Town Manager Derek Brindisi explained the parcels included the vacant parking lot across from the Knowlton Risteen building, vacant open space land that runs along the side of Warren St., and land located across from the VFW that connects to Heritage Park.

Selectman Matellian said the article was “far too ambiguous to even be on a draft warrant. Selectman Simas said the article was put on the draft document just as a placeholder.

Article 2A is a request for \$19,000 of Community Preservation Act funding to install a water connection from the town’s water supply to a community garden on Mechanic St.

Article 2B is to transfer \$296,575 from CPA funding to meet the eighth-year payment of debt service owed on the Town Hall Renovation bonds. The Town Manager explained this was the only article on the warrant that would require a vote.

Article 2C is a request to utilize CPA funding to purchase 66 acres of land off of East St. for \$320,000.

Article 3 is to pay the town’s union firefighter’s retroactive pay going back to fiscal year 2020 and a portion of fiscal year 2021.

Discuss Town Meeting Quorum

A town meeting quorum in Upton is 40 voters. The Selectmen discussed the state’s latest guidelines passed as a result of the pandemic that allows for a 10 percent quorum, which in Upton’s case, would be four voters. The final decision on the town meeting will be made at their October 6 meeting.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

- Officer Mansfield has been promoted to Sgt and two additional officers are actively onboarding, and a new Paramedic was appointed recently
- In the process right now on recruiting and interviewing for 2 full-time firefighter paramedics – consider holding October 20th, at 6PM for an opportunity to publicly congratulate them all
- Boylston has expressed an interest to partner for a town planner position budgeted at 40K
- Fowler bridge should be completed by the end of the week
- Concern about the new Mendon Street railroad crossing is being addressed by the RR
- The BoH has received the flu vaccine and hope to have a clinic scheduled at the Senior Center in the next week or so
- In working with the BoH letters will be issued to let businesses know that the plastic bag in Styrofoam ban will take place January 1

- Our Finance department continues to make strong headway as predicted. They are scheduling a refinancing of the town hall debt and right now with the low interest rates, and are projected to refinance and save the town over \$350,000 with a refinancing.
- Working again to get an E permitting program with code enforcement to be up and running as quickly as possible. Fire and BoH to follow.
- The Disability Commission held a meeting last week, they have completed their first pass for the RFP to bid for a contractor, to help with a transition plan.
- The town received a \$20,000 grant through the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program, spearheaded by Mike Penko

NEW BUSINESS

Fire and EMS Association asked Selectman Matellian to act as a liaison to just ask the BoS at a future meeting to consider allowing them to put up some small Christmas trees, approximately 20 trees and then have families actually donate and decorate the trees themselves in the Town Common.

ADJOURN MEETING

Motion #5: At 8:45pm Selectman Dwinnell made motion to adjourn.

Brett Simas, aye, Maureen Dwinnell, aye, Steve Matellian, aye

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Hakala, Executive Assistant