

# BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

May 7, 2020

Town Hall

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

## **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 Stephen Matellian – 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. *Brett Simas, aye, Maureen Dwinnell, aye,*
- Staff, when I call your name, please respond in the affirmative. *Derek Brindisi, Town Manager aye, Sandra Hakala, Executive Assistant, aye. State each staff members' name.*
- Anticipated Speakers on the Agenda, please respond in the affirmative. *None*

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

*Excerpt from Finance committee meeting minutes* - "Derek Brindisi discussed how the district recertified the budget and the challenges of having a town meeting in this environment with an override article. Noted to have an override question of \$260,000 to include BVT funding is 1<sup>st</sup> option.

Derek discussed our reserves free cash over 700,000 with 300,000 committed and over 2M in stabilization thus transferring the \$260K from reserve is 2<sup>nd</sup> option. The 3<sup>rd</sup> option would be to look at current FY21 budget. Derek has concerns about 3<sup>rd</sup> option because if we start to cut, would be difficult to deal with more cuts in the fall. He noted there is a current spending and hiring freeze.

9C cuts was detailed and how it could affect Upton if made by Governor in the fall.

40 Brett Simas – looking to take override off the table and trying to make cuts now is difficult. He  
41 is in favor of using reserve funds. Maureen agrees with Brett and does not want to make cuts at  
42 this time.

43  
44 Stephan Matellian asked if other BOS is willing to look at current operating budget. Current  
45 increase of \$500,000 over FY20.

46  
47 Paul Flaherty does not want to look at cuts at this point. Discussed the handout and the fact  
48 school documents are on the website.

49  
50 Paul Flaherty states one place to look at is road money but it would put a deficiency in the road  
51 plan and is not recommended. If monies are taken from stabilization it will put budget in a  
52 deficit of \$260K for FY22. Stabilization is for rainy day fund and it is pouring outside. May  
53 need more rainy-day funds next year but this is today. Paul Flaherty noted a previous override  
54 approved for the school has been collected on the Town side for the last 8 years. Recommending  
55 funds be taken from stabilization.

56  
57 Jonathan Calianos agrees with all views. Concerned there is was no funding to stabilization for  
58 this year. He is thinking we may need stabilization in the future and discussed the options of  
59 taking the funding from road article. Town has spent over \$500k last year and another \$500k for  
60 this year. Costs should be cheaper this year. Jonathan wonders why we are not taking some of  
61 the road money to solve the school issue. He discussed if it was possible to spend \$900k of road  
62 work can be done this year. He noted there is a possibility to look at free cash as well with our  
63 balance.

64  
65 Stephen Matellian stated over the last 6-8 years, supplemental money for roads.

66  
67 Rick McGuire is concerned about unemployment and what the future will hold. He is willing to  
68 look at stabilization and/or road funds. Rick noted a 2/3 vote will be needed for stabilization.

69  
70 Shawn Craig inquired what would happen if 2/3 does not pass, what is back up plan. It was  
71 noted Free cash could also be used to fund the schools. If funds are used from stabilization  
72 would like to see it replenished.

73  
74 Discussion that if stabilization does not pass, deficit would also be reviewed in November.

75  
76 Derek Brindisi stated he has encouraged the Town adopt the DLS best practices to meet the goal  
77 of having stabilization of 10% of budget. Upton has worked to do that. Thus, we have those  
78 monies for recession and not have to cut services such as police officers. Recommends to  
79 stabilization first. This gives us flexibility for cuts in the operational budget in the fall. Road  
80 money is available however we could also look at OPEB for funding.

81  
82 Paul Flaherty discussed the history of the school stabilization account that was rolled into the  
83 Town's general stabilization. Transferring the monies from that fund keeps the promise made.

85 Nick Ensko should take override off the table and does not like the idea of taking from roads. He  
86 recommends taking the funds from stabilization.

87  
88 Maureen reiterated her support for stabilization. Brett acknowledged the idea of the road monies  
89 but residents look at roads has making progress and it is uncertain what the future will hold. He  
90 is still recommending stabilization.

91  
92 Paul Flaherty move to recommend transfer 260k from stabilization for education/RM seconded.

93 Roll Call Vote:      Paul Flaherty      Aye  
94                            Jonathan Calianos      Aye  
95                            Rick McGuire      Aye  
96                            Shawn Craig      Aye  
97                            Nick Ensko      Aye

98 It was note ballots have been printed and new ballots would need to be printed.”

99  
100 **Motion #1:** Selectman Simas made motion to reopen the warrant May 8, 2020 – May 15 2020.

101  
102 Brett Simas, aye, Maureen Dwinnell, aye, Chairman Matellian, aye

103  
104 **Motion #2:** Selectman Simas made motion to rescind -

105 BALLOT QUESTION 1: Shall the Town of Upton be allowed to assess an one million two-hundred  
106 twenty-nine thousand one hundred thirty-five dollars (\$1,229,135.00), for the purpose of  
107 funding the Town's assessment for the Mendon-Upton Regional School District (one million one  
108 hundred seventy-one thousand six hundred ninety-seven dollars (\$1,171,697.00)); and for the  
109 purpose of funding the Town's assessment for the Blackstone Valley School District (fifty-seventy  
110 thousand four hundred thirty-eight dollars (\$57,438.00), or any other sum, for the fiscal year  
111 beginning July 1, 2020

112  
113 Brett Simas, aye, Maureen Dwinnell, aye, Chairman Matellian, aye

114  
115 **ADJOURN MEETING**

116 **Motion #3:** At 8:06pm Selectman Simas made motion to adjourn.

117  
118 Brett Simas, aye, Maureen Dwinnell, aye, Chairman Matellian, aye

119  
120 Respectfully submitted,

121  
122 Sandra Hakala

123 Executive Assistant