

Draft Minutes

Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

Attending

Selectboard:

Dot Maggio (Chair)
David Jones
Stan Noga
Gwen Tanza

Town Officers: Guy Tanza (Town Clerk,
videographer)
Mark Bills (Road Supervisor)

Members of the Public:

Peter Barus (Recorder)
FACTV (Videoconference recording)

Call the meeting to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 p.m.

Changes to the agenda if any

Changes were made to agenda order.

Review / Approve Minutes

Regular meeting minutes from January 5, 2022

Corrections were made.

Ms. Maggio moved to approve the minutes for January 5, 2022, as amended. Second by Mr. Noga. All in favor.

Special meeting minutes from January 12, 2022

There was discussion; corrections made.

Ms. Maggio moved to approve the minutes for January 12, 2022, as amended. Second by Ms. Tanza. All in favor.

Members of the Public

Old Business

Vote to use Australian Ballot & mail to residents

Ms. Maggio reviewed pertinent legislation, noting required informational hearing.

Ms. Maggio moved that the Town of Brookline vote by Australian ballot at Town Meeting, February 28, 2022. Second by Mr. Jones. All in favor.

There was discussion of the logistics of ballot distribution; of no funds made available by the legislature for proactively mailing ballots this year.

Draft of Town Meeting Warning Review & Approval vote.

Mr. Jones read the Warning in its entirety as part of the following Motion:

Mr. Jones moved to approve the 2022 Town Meeting Warning, as read. Second by Ms. Maggio.

There was discussion; Mr. Jones discussed Fund One, with total for operating expenditures excepting recycling and appropriations, to be voted in Article 3; and the Highway Fund expenditures amount, minus budgeted revenues; noting that the two totals would equal the municipal taxes.

On the Motion, all in favor.

It was noted that Mr. Mello's signature line would be removed, as he was not present.

Town Report discussion

Mr. Jones suggested a brief and concise Report covering Budget, Brookline estimated tax rates, consolidated balance sheet, BMH and schoolhouse funds, dog report, vital records, delinquent taxes. There was discussion, whether mention of the informational hearing would reach voters before that hearing. Ms. Maggio will send information to the listsrv. Mr. Noga suggested publishing on the town website. Mr. Jones noted that the state must receive it in digital form, and will circulate for proofreading.

Mr. Jones will send the warning and spreadsheet to the Auditors for estimated tax rate and balance sheet.

Informational Hearing Details

Mr. Jones suggested discussion of the Warning and the agenda for the Informational Hearing, for the February 2 regular meeting agenda. There was discussion of holding the meeting remotely. Mr. Tanza noted that the governor had waived in-person requirements.

The Informational hearing will be held February 23, 2022, at 6:30 p.m., by videoconference.

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Mr. Tanza will post the candidate form on the internet, for candidates to respond with their certificates of eligibility. Mr. Jones noted that the candidate forms were due two days previously. Mr. Tanza explained having obtained a waiver from the Secretary of State's office, and will attempt to have the deadline extended from January 24 to 28; and noted that the form must be filed with the Town Clerk, and that petitions with signatures had been waived.

Mr. Jones noted that this timeline would affect the production of ballots, and suggested an announcement soon. Mr. Tanza will keep Mr. Jones informed of developments.

There was discussion of officeholder changes; the optimal number of ballot pages; publicizing vacant offices; making clear that the town will be voting on these positions by Australian ballot, which precludes floor discussion; of the Moderator position; of remote meeting administration. Mr. Jones offered to do one of the two major tasks, reading the Articles, or administering the videoconference (it being impossible to do both at once). For **Next agenda**.

Discuss, sign and file Contract for Highway Maintenance / Winter Plowing and Materials with AS Clark and Sons 2 year contract won Sept 2020 expires Sept 2022. Sent via email as attachment

Ms. Maggio discussed addenda to be circulated with the contract documents; and noted that the contract expired at the end of two years; that no changes had been made.

Mr. Jones moved to table the matter until the next meeting. Second by Mr. Noga. All in favor.

F. Request for Proposal Review for Brookline Meeting House Bat Removal, Carpentry Repairs, Painting Steeple

The committee had met the previous night, and Ms. Maggio had circulated new language for the RFP. It was suggested that the matter should be tabled until the building commissioners and other interested parties had been able to hold discussions.

Tabled for February 2 agenda.

New Business

Reports

Town Clerk Report - Guy Tanza

Mr. Tanza reported a busy office, dog licenses selling, getting out ballots, absentee ballots first or second week in February and available at office or on the town website; a ten-day window; the project digitizing the books proceeding; an uptick in refinancing, very busy; and noted that the public may visit the office without an appointment.

Selectboard Chair Report - Dot Maggio

1. Health Officer & ACO - Dogs vs. Ducks incident report followup

Ms. Maggio reported on unvaccinated dogs; had visited after the incident, finding animals in good health; and noted that licensing needs to be completed by the owners.

2. Health Officer & ACO - Dog Bite Report from Springfield Hospital Residential Rabies

Quarantine Ordered - till January 28, 2022 Brookline Dog is registered and UTD on Rabies Vaccine

Ms. Maggio reported on the bite incident; the dogs were registered and up to date on vaccine; and will visit on January 28 to check on the animals' health and complete paperwork.

3. FEMA - Brief update

Ms. Maggio discussed work on identifying pictures from the storm damage; had signed off with FEMA on the 11th; and noted some roads remained to be repaired.

C. Building Commissioner Report - Bruce Mello

Mr. Mello not present.

Draft Minutes

Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

D. Any other reports - discussions from selectboard member(s)

Mr. Noga discussed the reapportionment map, that a committee in Montpelier had reworked it; that the issue with Brookline was that the committee would be meeting January 27 or 28, and should be attended by someone from the town; and changes to the district. Mr. Jones noted the opportunity to express concerns. Mr. Tanza concurred. There was discussion. Mr. Tanza suggested email to all interested members of the board of civil authority, seeking feedback. Mr. Jones observed that there was consensus that the changes were not favored by the town. Mr. Tanza noted that a special meeting could be held if necessary. Mr. Tanza will call the secretary of state to ask whether such a meeting could be held by videoconference on short notice, and report to the board.

E. Road Supervisor Report - E. Mark Bills

Mr. Bills reported that more crushed stone had been applied to rutted areas, holding up well; one of the truck drivers had noticed a bulge in one of the grader tires, so the wing plow was not used; the last tire service indicated another year of use expected, and it was not good practice to replace one tire at a time; Chesterfield Tire had a used tire that might work in this case, and the change might be made in place; a price should be forthcoming soon, possibly lower if they were servicing others in the area, such as school buses at West River Transportation. Mr. Noga cited experience in the tire business, and approved of Mr. Bills' approach to obtaining a lower price.

Mr. Bills had discussed closing Putney Mountain Road with Mr. Pickering; as a class 3 road, it was thought that it was the town's obligation to maintain the road; there was discussion of Newfane closing a road with barricades and signs; it was thought that closing would be safer; that if the road could be a class 4, it could be legally closed, though still maintained. Mr. Pickering had advised proceeding; signage had been placed, a stop sign at each end, and a 3' x 4' "Road Closed" sign in an obvious position, as well as a triangle and an orange plaque saying "No Through Traffic." To forestall damage or theft, Mr. Bills had placed signs at a height that would be difficult to remove without considerable effort, but easy to remove in Spring. Mr. Bills had VTRANS to ask about closing a class 3 road, and Mr. Pickering had advised doing whatever would make the situation safer, and will continue to discuss the matter. A third truckload of salt and a sand delivery had been received. There was discussion of various location and conditions.

Ms. Maggio had written to thank Mr. Clark.

Communications

Regular Mail

- Re: Governor signed Act 38, affecting the authority of the town health officer, offering animal cruelty investigation training, etc. (Ms. Maggio had obtained Level One certification so far).

E-Mail

- Re: Signage request to Putney
- From the Auditors, re: Elected Auditors have reviewed the financial statement for the town report; surplus \$2,153; Highway fund deficit: \$52,254; general fund: \$78,148; highway fund: \$151,952. An unattributed payroll item may be the delinquent tax collector's salary.

There was discussion. Mr. Jones noted that a special meeting may be necessary in light of this new information.

Pay Orders

Payroll Warrant

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Payroll Warrant #22-28 dated January 19, 2022, in the amount of \$1,709.89. Second by Mr. Noga. All in favor.

Accounts Payable Warrant

Ms. Maggio moved to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #22-29 dated January 19, 2022, in the amount of \$16,907.43. Second by Mr. Noga. All in favor.

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Set Agenda

Special Meeting if needed

Regular Meeting February 2, 2022 @ 6:30 PM

Administration of the remote informational meeting
ballot

Tabled highway contract, RFP discussion

Informational Meeting

February 23, 2022, at 6:30 p.m., by videoconference.

Adjourn the meeting

Ms. Maggio moved to Adjourn. Second by Mr. Noga. All in favor.

The meeting was Adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, Recorder, January 20, 2022