

**SELECTBOARD & FINANCE COMMITTEE JOINT MEETING
& SELECTBOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 27, 2020, 6:00 PM
TOWN HALL, 334 MAIN STREET**

6:00 PM – OPEN MEETING: Chairman S. Bannon called the Joint Meeting to order at 6 pm. Those present were, Finance Committee Chair, A. O'Dwyer, M. Loubert, W. Curletti, T. Blauvelt, and M. O'Connor; Selectboard members, E. Abrahams, B. Cooke, K. Burke, L. Davis and Steve Bannon, and Town Manager, M. Pruhenski.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Selectboard and Finance Committee: Chairman asked for anyone present recording the meeting.

2. **Continuation** of Tax Classification Policy and Exemptions. (Discussion/Vote)

E. Abrahams suggested to hire a consultant who understands the Residential Exemption and the process to adoption of this type of Exemption; can't vote on something without enough information. K. Burke spoke that Provincetown used a Home Rule Petition, passed at Town Meeting, to use a Residential Exemption. S. Bannon agreed with E. Abrahams that a consultation should come first. A. O'Dwyer, wants to know the costs of a consultant.

Point of Order, by citizens. Chairman acknowledged her.

E. Abrahams made a motion, to have Town Manager, M. Pruhenski look for a consultant to come back to the Joint Budget Meetings with the cost of implementing it, B. Cooke, seconded. Chair allowed citizens to speak.

~Vivian Orlowski, Great Barrington, spoke of her volunteering, speaking as an individual. Cape Cod and Boston have more industry and more residents. Only 15% are second home owners, have older residents, and many strained homeowners.

Other towns in Massachusetts tried this tax system, didn't work for these communities. Finance Committee Minutes, August 2015, show this information. Provincetown has three key advantages. Only town is 10 miles away, has 3 billion dollars (Great Barrington, 1 billion) in value, and they have 1/2 the population and 3 x the valuation on property. A. O'Dwyer concerned about the legal fees and more expenses. M. Loubert is against the Residential Exemption. What will the qualifications for the consultant be? She is reluctant to consider it in this tax year.

~Vote: All in Favor to explore hiring a consultant, 10- 0.

3. **Finalize FY 2021 Budget Policy.** (Discussion/ Vote): A. O'Dwyer mentioned at the December meeting, about the three wording changes: to change the title, put "and" in between Budget & Financial policy; second, under strategic policy, to "strive for"; third under preparation, "participate in BHRSD, and keep no date".

E. Abrahams spoke to keep the Tax Levy as low of possible in considerations of the other goals and priorities.

E. Abrahams made motion to approve the changes, B. Cooke, seconded, All in Favor, 5 - 0.

W. Curletti made Motion to adopt the same language as Selectboard, M. Loubert seconded, All in a Favor, 5 - 0

4. Citizen Speak.

~ Ron Banks, Hollenbeck Avenue, thought this was talked about three years ago, at a meeting at the Firehouse. Feels Great Barrington is one of the high tax towns, \$15 per \$1000/ valuation. Talked about Town merchants going out of business, rents too high. Doesn't create a walkable Town.

~ S. Farina, Railroad Street, zero increase, doesn't need increase, it affects affordable housing. People can't live here, they move away.

~ D. Bailey, Housatonic, said that Housatonic is an "outpost" Great Barrington, what happens to these budget policies. It goes to Town Meeting, gets passed, then the costs go up for the Town. How does everyone get the information, need to see the broad picture.

5. Adjournment - Finance Committee, A. O' Dwyer, asked about the time of meeting, next week. Next meeting 5:30 pm February 4, 2020, Town Hall. W. Curletti made a Motion to adjourn, M. Loubert, seconded, All in Favor, 5 - 0.

SB – REGULAR MEETING

1. SB/BOARD OF SEWER COMMISSIONERS: Sewer Abatements

(January 1, 2019 – June 30, 2019) (Discussion/Vote) E. Abrahams made motion to accept the Sewer Abatements as presented in the memo from the DPW Superintendent, B. Cooke, seconded, All in Favor, 5 - 0.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

January 13, 2020 SB Regular Meeting.

January 16, 2020 SB & Pl Bd Joint Meeting.

E. Abrahams made a motion to approve the Minutes of January 13 & 16, 2020, K. Burke, made corrections to SB/ Planning Board Minutes; It was an Open Space meeting not Selectboard; B. Cooke, seconded, All in Favor, 5 - 0.

3. SELECTBOARD'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/STATEMENTS:

A. General Comments by the Board.

~ L. Davis submitted testimony today at the Joint Committee of Economic & Professional Licensure with Representative Pignatelli. He will be back here on February 5, 2020. K. Burke, spoke of the Open Space Meeting at Berkshire South at 5:30 pm on Thursday the 30th.

4. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

A. Department Updates: Police Department, with the graduation of the three new officers in June, will bring the police force up to full capacity. Oliver Brown finished his training for Parking Enforcement Officer.

- Council on Aging Director, Polly Mann was present to give an update - there were over 175 tax returns done this year. Received a grant from the State to be Regional, for 2 years, \$23,600, it will increase transportation and outreach. More businesses are donating fruit, vegetables, and pastries for 5 days a week. Improvements have been done to the HVAC, sound system, landscaping, and acoustic tiles.

B. Project Updates, Berkshire County, Diaper Drive, starts February 8 - 29, 57% increase in diaper needs. Town Hall will be a collection site. Will be posted on the Town's website.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. Application from Cellarbration, Inc., d/b/a Grape Finds, Joseph P. Smegal, Manager for a

transfer of All Alcoholic Package Store Liquor License to Table & Vine, Inc., Steven Gigliotti, Manager at 700 Main Street, Suite 2, Great Barrington, MA 01230. (Discussion/Vote)

- a. Open Public Hearing; E. Abrahams made motion to Open Public Hearing, Roll Call Vote; K. Burke, yes; L. Davis, yes; B. Cooke, yes; S. Bannon, yes; E. Abrahams, yes; All in Favor, 5- 0.
- b. Explanation of Project: Attorneys Peter Scrim and M. Gold. The space of present package store is very small. Big Y/Table & Vine wants to enlarge it and offer wine and liquor to enhance the food experience and to license the entire store with no separate checkouts for alcohol. Big Y/Table & Vine has 7 stores with liquor licenses.
- c. Speak in Favor/Opposition- K. Mc Cormick, Attorney, spoke in Favor. That Celebration has done a 20 year business and has been in compliance, It was time for the present owner to sell to Big Y.
- d. Motion to Close Public Hearing- E. Abrahams made motion to close the Public Hearing, B. Cooke, seconded, Roll Call Vote; L. Davis, yes, K. Burke, yes; B. Cooke, yes; S. Bannon, yes; E. Abrahams, yes; All in Favor, 5 - 0.
- e. Motion re: Findings-
- f. Motion re: Approval/Denial/Table- Ed Abrahams made a motion to approve the transfer of the All Alcoholic Package Store Liquor License from Cellarbration Inc., Joseph Smegal Manager to Table & Vine, Inc., Steven Gigliotti, Manager, B. Cooke, seconded, Roll Call Vote; K. Burke, yes; L. Davis, yes; E. Abrahams, yes; S. Bannon, yes; B. Cooke, yes; All in Favor, 5 - 0.

5. LICENSES OR PERMITS:

- A. Robin Vickery/Great Barrington Fish and Game for One Day Beer and Wine Liquor License for February 2, 2020 from 2:00 pm.to 10:00 pm at 338 Long Pond Road. (Discussion/Vote)
~ E. Abrahams made a motion to approve, B. Cooke seconded, All in Favor, 5- 0.
- B. Robin Vickery/Great Barrington Fish and Game for One Day Beer and Wine Liquor License for February 8, 2020 (rain date February 15, 2020) from 11:00 am – 7:00 pm at 338 Long Pond Road. (Discussion/Vote)
~ E. Abrahams made a motion to approve, B. Cooke, seconded, All in Favor, 5 - 0.
- C. Robin Vickery/Great Barrington Fish and Game for Eight (8) One Day Beer and Wine Liquor Licenses for every Sunday from February 16 – April 5, 2020 from 11:00 am – 7:00 pm at 338 Long Pond Road. (Discussion/Vote)
~ E. Abrahams made motion to approve, B. Cooke, made second, All in Favor, 5 - 0.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. SB – Appointment of two (2) members to serve on the Commission on Disability. (Discussion/Vote)

~ E. Abrahams made motion to appoint Denise Flynn, and Trevor Cobb, to the Commission on Disability, B. Cooke, seconded, All in Favor, 5- 0.
- B. Historic District Commission and Historical Commission – Updates.
Don Howe spoke of the Veterans' Monuments getting moved around. Wants to consider a permanent home for them, when steps on Town Hall are finished. Applied for grant from the Veterans Association. Wants to move them once in front Town Hall or the side of the building. Combined Historical Society CPC, approved funds to fix Trolley at Belcher's Square.

C. SB – **Continuation** - Right of First Refusal Waiver of Ch 61A land of Abigail Haupt, LLC, approximately 36 acres on Hurlburt and Alford Roads (Assessor's Map 31, Parcel 12A).
(Discussion/Vote)

~ Attorney Ira Kaplan spoke about the property on Hurlburt and Alford Roads comprising of Parcels 12 & 13, 36 acres in total, valued at \$ 617,500. 12A is not under Conservation Restriction, 11 acres are buildable and the other 70 acres are not buildable.

~ E. Abrahams made motion for the Selectboard not to exercise the right of first refusal, B. Cooke, seconded, All in Favor, 5 - 0.

7. OLD BUSINESS:

A. SB – Proposed Marijuana Article(s) from the Public Forum. (Discussion/Vote)

~ E. Abrahams made motion to send this Article to the Planning Board for a hearing, B. Cooke, seconded, All in Favor, 5. - 0.

B. SB – Housatonic School Re-Development Options for Moving Forward.
(Discussion/Vote)

~ L. Davis, spoke on behalf of the Economic Development Committee (EDC), that option 2 could get grants, wants to get staff support, doesn't want it to go on and on. To get an intern or part time person, didn't have numbers, grant writing would be staff hours. Grants are available for remediation.

~ C. Rembold, Assistant Town Manager, spoke on the Housatonic School, if the option, would add a part time staff member. We are not a developer. This is way over an intern position. Wants to correct L. Davis, that there aren't grants available to the Town owning the building. There are many remediation costs. Option one can go to a Developer, that person would have more experience.

~ S. Bannon, said a decision would not be made tonight.

~ E. Abrahams made motion to keep the conversation going about the Housatonic School and to come back in 60 days, B. Cooke, seconded, All in Favor, 5 - 0.

8. CITIZEN SPEAK TIME:

~ Dan Bailey, Housatonic, moving forward, the Selectboard need to have "blindness" off. Other Towns, Stockbridge and West Stockbridge have used their old buildings.

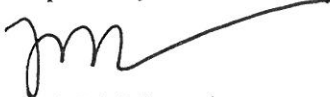
~ S. Farina, Great Barrington, the number of "pot shops", let the market decide on this. This is an opportunity to collaborate.

9. SELECTBOARD'S TIME: L. Davis spoke that West Stockbridge and Stockbridge made their buildings work. K. Burke asked to update the website with current Board & Committee openings.

10. MEDIA TIME: none

11. ADJOURNMENT: E. Abrahams, made motion to adjourn, B. Cooke, seconded, All in Favor, 5 -0. Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Jamie M. Minacci

Recording Secretary