

# Housatonic Improvement Committee Meeting

November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023; 6:30pm

Housatonic Community Center (the Housy Dome)  
1064 Main St, Housatonic, MA 01236

## **Members present:**

Angela Lomanto (chair)  
Scott Shortt (vice chair) (virtually)  
Eric Gabriel  
Louise Goldsmith  
Beverly Nourse

## **Members absent:**

Ben Elliot

**Eric made a motion to open the meeting at 6:33PM. Louise seconded this motion. The meeting was opened with a unanimous yes vote, 5-0.**

Angela read Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18 as well as MGL. c. 30A sec. 20F regarding recording meetings.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Eric made a motion to accept the minutes as written, Louise seconded this motion. The minutes were accepted via a unanimous vote, 5-0.

## **The first item was Committee Vacancy**

There is still a Committee vacancy.

## **Angela requested to speak about the request from the Trustees of the Library.**

Ruby Chang has requested further support for CPA funds. Eric requested further explanation, specifically what happens if the Library doesn't get the money from the state but is granted the CPA funds. Chris Rembault, attending the meeting virtually, stated that his understanding was that the money wouldn't be spent if the grant wasn't secured; the money would stay in the fund. Eileen Mooney stated that there is no meeting of the Libraries or the CPA on the calendar in the next few days. Angela asked the Committee if they had any input. Eric made a motion to support Angela writing a letter of support for the Ramsdell Library. The Committee voted yes 5-0.

## **The second item on the agenda was areas of work for the Committee.**

Angela thanked Chris for coming to the meeting, and handed the floor over to him to explain the Cook's Garage report. Chris stated that the building is in rough shape, and needs attention. He then discussed the market study for potential uses for the building, and proposed budget. The town had the well water tested by the EPA, and stated the Selectboard the now has the opportunity to decide if they would like to put the building out for RFP or choose to demolish it. Angela asked for clarification regarding the rights to the well and water, and Chris reported that the building technically owns 50% of it, with the abutting building owning the other 50%. Chris went on to explain that using the well water would be challenging to use as a public drinking water source for many reasons. Eric asked for clarification about what uses could be allowed with the water. Chris said further information is still needed.

Angela reported that she has not yet heard back from Joe Aberdale regarding joining a meeting, and that Karen Smith required a white paper from the Committee clearly stating their vision and requests for the Housatonic Community Center. Eric informed the Committee that the Department of Public works has plans to work on the floors and various trip hazards. Angela prompted the Committee to think about how they would like to see the building used. Scott asked how the building is used now, and Angela said she would reach out to Karen to see how it has been utilized historically.

Angela wanted to further discuss Scott's list of priorities, and asked if anyone had an update regarding Housatonic the Beautiful taking on event planning. Angela said she would reach out to Lauren and invite her to the next meeting. Scott asked about the transition of Party in the Park to Housatonic the Beautiful, and Eric stated that this year would likely be planned by the HIC this year.

Angela asked what the status of the school is, and what it will look like in June. Eric stated that it looks like it will be under construction at that time. Angela stated that she will get a brief press release together for the event so it can get on the town calendar. The Committee debated the date of the event, Saturday the 8<sup>th</sup> or Sunday the 9<sup>th</sup>. Angela said she would send out a list of potential vendors from last year, and the Committee members would reach out to see what their availability and preference is.

Angela went on to discuss next steps for vacant real estate in the Village. Scott said he would make a list and a map, and share it with the Committee.

Eric reminded the Committee that the Housy Hustle is taking place on Thanksgiving morning- registration starts at 8:45AM, and it starts at 9:30AM.

**The final agenda item was Citizen Speak.**

Angela proposed the next meeting be on Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. The Committee agreed on that date at 6:30PM.

Eileen Mooney from the media was present.

Eric made a motion to adjourn at 7:30pm, Angela seconded. The Committee voted unanimously to adjourn with a 5-0 vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30PM.

Respectfully submitted, Eric Gabriel