

Selectboard Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, June 23, 2020, at 6:30 pm via Zoom

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83420944393?pwd=dmtJZHJleGErMGF2Mm5XZitQT2RSZz09>

Password: 120120

Dial-In: (929) 205 6099

Webinar ID: 834 2094 4393

6:30 pm 6:30 pm - OPEN MEETING

- CALL TO ORDER:
 - Chairman Bannon opened the meeting at 6:30 pm. Roll Call Vote; L. Davis, "aye"; K. Burke, "aye"; B. Cooke, "aye"; E. Abrahams, "aye"; and S. Bannon, "aye"; All in Favor, 5-0.
- SELECTBOARD'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/STATEMENTS:
 - K. Burke wants to set a date for another Goal Setting Meeting
 - S. Bannon agrees, and it will be soon.
 - E. Abrahams thanked staff and everyone for the smooth meeting (ATM) Monday.
 - S. Bannon appreciated the staff for all the time and effort to make the meeting Monday go smoothly.
- TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:
 - M. Pruhenski was appreciative of the passing of the operating budget by Selectboard this week.
 - He reminded everyone that the Annual Town meeting would reconvene this coming Thursday and that staff will do everything they can to get the word out, including a press release, web, and Facebook posts.
 - The Selectboard will again motion to pass over any citizen petitions with the intent to act on them at a Special Town Meeting date to be determined.
 - L. Davis is there an update on outdoor dining on Railroad Street.
 - M. Pruhenski has some notes. The plan is to start the outdoor dining on Railroad Street on June 26, 2020. On Friday and Saturday nights Railroad Street will be closed to traffic beginning at 4 pm. With no parking on the street. The tables will be 6 feet apart, with adequate distance for patrons to walk up the sidewalks. There will be live music on Fridays. An aside is that the restaurateurs will need to have Selectboard approval for alcohol beverage service in outside dining.
 - L. Davis asked if there would be a press release about the timing of this.
 - M. Pruhenski replied that there was a scheduled release going out.
 - M. Pruhenski explained there is typically a permitting process for putting merchandise out on the sidewalk; however, they waive that process and encourage storeowners to use the sidewalks as long as it does not block pedestrian traffic or create any ADA issues.
 - K. Burke wanted to remind everyone to wear masks, social distancing, still experience a pandemic, and be safe while we are out in public together.
- LICENSES OR PERMITS:
 - Janis Martinson/Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, Inc. for Seventeen (17) Temporary Weekday Entertainment Licenses for July 2, 3, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, 30, 31, August 1, 6, 7, 8, 2020 from 8:00 pm-8:00 pm-midnight at the Parking Lot, Daniel Arts Center, Bard College at Simon's Rock for a drive-in movie screening. (Discussion/Vote)
 - E. Abrahams made a motion to approve the temporary Weekday Entertainment Licenses for the Mahiwe Performing Arts Center, movie screenings; B. Cooke seconded; Roll Call Vote; L. Davis, "aye"; K. Burke, "aye"; E. Abrahams, "aye"; B. Cooke, "aye"; and S. Bannon, "aye"; All in Favor, 5-0.
- NEW BUSINESS:
 - SB – Ratify FY 21; FY 22 and FY 23 Union Contracts (DPW, Police and Libraries). (Discussion/Vote)

- Mr. Nick Dominello spoke of the three-year contracts beginning on July 1, 2020. He started with the Great Barrington Police Department Union contract.
- There will be a 2% raise increase for each Fiscal Year.
- One-time \$250, not-on-the-base payment to all officers.
- Increase in the overtime shift differential of just under \$300.
- The Officer in Charge hourly differential increase by \$0.25/hour.
- Officers who do not work a holiday will no longer receive holiday pay.
- Direct deposit is required.
- The education stipend has been increased.
- A stipend is available for officers who speak another language.
- Removed provision that vacations be paid in a lump sum advance.
- During a state of emergency, the Chief can move to a 12-hour shift. With anything over 8 hours qualifying for overtime.
- Changed the longevity to a November 1st date.
- Creation of a sick bank (across all three contrast).
- E. Abrahams made a motion to approve the MOA between the Massachusetts Coalition of Police, Local 350, and the Town.
- Extending and modifying the parties' s collective bargaining agreement effective July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2023, B. Cooke seconded.
- L. Davis, were there any concessions that the Town felt like it wanted that were not accepted during the negotiations.
- M. Pruhenski, the one the topic I'd like to discuss later is Civil Service. Overall, I'm pleased with the result.
- M. Pruhenski, the establishment of a concrete policy on the sick bank reduces the Town's liability, which had been noted by the auditors.
- The sick bank is now capped at 350 days, so the Town knows it's liability upfront.
- K. Burke, there are items related to 21st century policing that could be negotiated with these contracts, such as body cams, vehicle GPS. So I'm wondering if these are things that can be negotiated into the MOA at any time, or does it have to be at negotiation time.
- N. Dominello reminded the group that they were in open session and wouldn't recommend discussing contract negotiations. Still, in general, these things would have to wait for a successor contract unless the Union agreed to open negotiations again.
- L. Davis, so then the Civil Service, can be done at Town Meeting, so that's something that can be done outside the 3-year cycle.
- N. Dominello Civil Service is an item that does not necessarily need to be part of the decisional bargaining. It is separate and apart from the contracts.
- K. Burke, if the Town did approve this at the Town meeting, then it would only apply to new hires and not current Police Officers.
- N. Dominello Yes, if a town decides to vote and not be a part of civil Service any longer, it would only apply to new hires.
- Roll Call Vote, L. Davis, "aye"; K. Burke, "aye"; B. Cooke, "aye"; E. Abrahams, "aye"; S. Bannon, "aye"; All in Favor, 5-0.
- N. Dominello continued with the Department of Public Works contract.
- 2% increase per year
- Removed provision that previously paid employees for holidays they didn't work.
- Increased the holiday rate for certain holidays (2X New year's day, Christmas, or Thanksgiving.)
- Direct deposit became mandatory.
- Cell phone reimbursement with supervisor approval, up to \$100/year
- The Town would make a good faith effort to look at dental, health, and vision plans.
- The language addresses vacation has changed.
- Removed dated language about having to pay a service fee to be part of the Union.
- Increased the maximum sick leave buyback by about \$1,000.
- S. Bannon reminded the Board that they were in a public meeting. While he encourages questions, anything that a Board member would like to see changed would be considered negotiations and isn't in the Town's best interest to discuss in a public meeting.

- E. Abrahams motioned to approve the MOA between the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, Local #204, and the Town. Extending and modifying the parties' collective bargaining agreement effective July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2023, B. Cooke seconded.
- Roll Call Vote; L. Davis, "aye," K. Burke, "aye"; B. Cooke, "aye"; E. Abrahams, "aye"; and S. Bannon, "aye"; All in Favor, 5-0.
- N. Dominello went on to speak on the Library Union Contract
- The same 2% increase for the three years
- Modified the probationary period language.
- Part-time employees would receive a one-time payment of \$ 500.00 to defray the cost of health insurance.
- Increased the maximum sick leave buyback by about \$1,000.
- New sick leave bank
- Direct deposit is now required.
- Modified the days with Ramsdell and Mason and how they observe holidays.
- Removed to expand personal days to be what they were originally for.
- Modified the terms of parental leave so that they could take it after the first 3 months.
- E. Abrahams motioned to approve the MOA between the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, Local #204, and the Town. Extending and modifying the parties' collective bargaining agreement effective July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2023, B. Cooke seconded. Cooke seconded
- B. Cooke asked about an email that was received by the Board directly before the meeting. The email was from Patrick Hollenbeck, Chair of the Library Trustees.
- S. Bannon asked B. Cooke to read, (in summary) the Board of Library Trustees asked the Board to table ratifying the Library contract as they were not in agreement with the Modifications having to do with Ramsdell being closed on certain Sundays.
- Roll Call Vote; L. Davis, "aye"; K. Burke, "aye"; B. Cooke, "aye"; E. Abrahams, "aye"; and S. Bannon, "aye"; All in Favor, 5-0.
- Police Department – Presentation/Therapy Dog.
 - Office P. Stortie began by thanking everyone for their support and wants the community to know that issues have been raised and that the Department is aware. The accreditation process has drastically helped address many of the concerns raised by the community.
 - Just last year, they were able to train half of their officers in crisis intervention train. They learn how best to deal with mental health issues and de-escalation tactics.
 - They work with a clinician at the Brien center who is available for the officers to ask questions.
 - He has been working quite a bit of time putting together the Therapy Dog program.
 - Officer Balestro will be the handler.
 - L. Davis acknowledged that it would be a great addition to community relations.
 - B. Cooke added that he felt this would be good for the officers.
 - P. Stortie agrees this is an excellent benefit for the Department.
 - K. Burke, do we already have this dog? Is this the K-9 unit we see in Town?
 - P. Stortie, this is not the same program as with K-9 Officer Titan. This is a secondary K-9 unit, not in the traditional sense.
 - L. Davis, there is no direct cost to the Town. Will the vehicle need to be retrofitted. A 2014 K-9 vehicle will be traded in; however, all the equipment will be salvaged for this program.
 - P. Stortie, the assignments would be picked for the Officer and dog. For example, going to the Senior Center, walking in the downtown area, going into schools, reading programs at the library.
- C. SB – Approval of Outdoor Dining for the following Restaurants:
 - Bizen, Michael Marcus Manager, 17-21 Railroad Street
 - Baba Louie's, Paul Masiero Manager, 42 Railroad Street
 - 20 Railroad Public House, Benjamin Downing, Manager, 20 Railroad Street
 - Siam Square, Navaporn Zivasatianrach, Manager, 290 Main Street
 - Bizalion's Fine Food, Helen Bizalion Manager, 684 Main Street
 - Prairie Whale, Bettina Schwartz, Manager, 178 Main Street

- E. Abrahams made a motion to approve the outdoor dining alcoholic beverage requests of the above-listed restaurants; B. Cooke seconded; Roll Call Vote; L. Davis, "aye"; K. Burke, "aye"; B. Cooke, "aye"; E. Abrahams, "aye"; and S. Bannon, "aye"; All in Favor, 5-0.
- CITIZEN SPEAK TIME:
 - Dan Bailey, Housatonic, spoke of the Fiscal Policy in Town, the Town's strategic plans, and how he feels about the lack of adherence to this. He is very concerned and has many questions for the Selectboard. He will email his questions to the Board.
 - Is the Financial Policy just for the Selectboard and Finance Committee?
 - Do the other Boards and Committees get copies of the Fiscal Policy. If not, why not?
 - If those Committees were to receive the Policy, who would be responsible for ensuring that they are following it.
 - Patrick Hollenback voiced his concern over the Library Union Contracts explaining that the final agreement will hurt the residents of Housatonic and that there needs to be better communication between the Town Manager and the Library Board of Trustees.
- SELECTBOARD'S TIME: No one spoke at this time.
- 8. MEDIA TIME: No one spoke at this time.
- 9. ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Bannon adjourned the meeting at 7:37 pm7:37 pm. with all Selectboard in Favor.

Respectfully submitted, Jamie M. Minacci, Recording Secretary.