



TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON MASSACHUSETTS

December 7, 2020 Selectboard Meeting via Zoom

1. CALL TO ORDER

- a. Chairman Bannon opened the meeting at 6:00 pm, those “present” via zoom: Ed Abrahams, Kate Burke, Leigh Davis, Bill Cooke, and Town Manager, Mark Pruhenski.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. July 1, 2020
 - i. E. Abrahams made one correction to the minutes – item 7 should read “Tate Coleman”.
- E. Abrahams made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 1, 2020 meeting as amended; 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.

3. SELECTBOARD’S ANNOUNCEMENTS/STATEMENTS

- a. S. Bannon scheduled a goal setting meeting for Wednesday, January 27th, 2021.

4. TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

- a. HWW Updates- DPU request
 - i. Email received from Department of Public Utilities (DPU) advising that they are concerned with the discolored water. DPU has requested information from HWW.
- b. Memorial Field Improvements
 - i. Town entered into an agreement with Benchmark Development to secure improvements to Memorial Field in exchange for access to the rear property for Phase II of their project. Improvements include new backstops, new dugouts, and baseline fencing. Improvements were supposed to be completed by December 1st but have not been completed yet.
- c. GBPD Overview-Chief Walsh
 - i. Chief Walsh summarized various grants that the Police Department have received. Grants include:
 - 1. Municipal Road Safety Grant – \$11,955
 - 2. 911 Support and Incentive Grant – \$44,133
 - 3. 911 Training Grant – TBD
 - 4. 911 EMD Grant – \$840
 - 5. Bulletproof Vest Grant – \$2,070
 - 6. Massachusetts Emergency Management Grant – \$2,700
 - 7. HRSA Grant – \$1 million over 3 years
 - 8. Department of Justice STOP School Violence Grants – \$365,828
 - ii. E. Abrahams asked about the Municipal Road Safety Grant. He asked how enforcement would change based on this grant. Chief Walsh explained that there would be more traffic enforcement patrol (includes more than normal officers on traffic patrol at certain times).
- d. M. Pruhenski stated that there is still a vacancy on the Great Barrington Housing Authority board. There are also 2 vacancies on the Housatonic Improvement Committee.

5. CONVENE AS SEWER COMMISSONERS

E. Abrahams made a motion to convene as the Sewer Commissioner; 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.

- a. Sewer abatements for the period of January 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020

E. Abrahams made a motion to approve the abatements as presented; 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.

E. Abrahams made a motion to convene back to the Selectboard session; 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.

6. LICENSES OR PERMITS

- a. Recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals on the Special Permit application from Dan and Jenna Huggins, for the expansion of a nonconforming home at 45 Pearl Street, filed in accordance with Sections 5.5 and 10.4 of the zoning bylaw.
 - i. Dan and Jenna Huggins stated that they applied for this special permit as their home on 45 Pearl Street has been in their family for generations, but their family is growing so they are looking to add a modular addition to the current home.

E. Abrahams made a motion to send a positive recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals for the Special Permit application for 45 Pearl Street; 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.

- b. Recommendation to the Planning Board on the Special Permit application from Great Barrington Development, LLC, c/o Jon Halpern, PO Box 216, Southfield, MA 01259, for the conversion of a former nursing home at 148 Maple Avenue to a multifamily use, filed in accordance with Sections 8.10 and 10.4 of the zoning bylaw.
 - i. Charles Ferris spoke on behalf of the Great Barrington Development LLC. The project includes converting a vacant nursing home to a 48-unit multi-family development. The ground size will not change, but there will be third floor added – square footage will increase from 33,000 sq ft to 44,000 sq ft. Road setback will not change.
 - ii. Nick Felton shared blueprints and images of the proposed project.
 - iii. L. Davis questioned what the prices would look like. Sam VanSant said the studios would be approximately \$1,000, one-bedroom apartment would be \$1,400, and two-bedroom apartments would be \$2,300 per month. The leases would be at least one-year. L. Davis also asked if there would be any apartments available for those with disabilities. N. Felton said there will be 3 apartments that are fully handicapped accessible, and the remaining would be handicapped accessible. On-site laundry, garbage, and recycling would also be available.
 - iv. E. Abrahams asked if any trees would be planted along Route 23 and for more information on paving. N. Felton said that tree planting has not been planned yet, but it is possible. As far as paving, 3% paved area is planned to be added. E. Abrahams also asked if parking allocations will be included in the lease and S. VanSant confirmed that it would be.

- v. Barbara Barack, of 6 Cornwall Drive, is concerned with increased traffic flow and lack of foliage.
- vi. Catherine Emberlin, of Sheffield, asked about pricing for the housing.

E. Abrahams made a motion to send a positive recommendation to the Planning Board for the Special Permit application for 148 Maple Avenue; 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.

37 participants (7 panelists and 30 attendees)

- c. Host Community Agreement for Coastal Cultivars, LLC, for a retail marijuana establishment at 454 Main Street.
 - i. P. Puciloski explained that they will probably not be able to give the first annual charity contribution to the Dewey Academy, as they will not be in Great Barrington.

E. Abrahams made a motion to approve the Host Community Agreement for Coastal Cultivars LLC; 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.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Appointment to the Tree Committee.

E. Abrahams made a motion to approve the appointment of Yarisa Yapple to the Tree Committee; L. Davis 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.

- b. Wastewater: Asset Management application.

E. Abrahams made a motion to accept the Wastewater Asset Management application; 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.

- c. GB Roadway Asset Plan, Crosswalk Safety, and RR Street Dining 2021-Presentation by BETA Engineering.

- i. Tony Garro shared a status summary presentation for the GB Pavement Management Program.
- ii. L. Davis asked if any other local towns use this program. T. Garro said that about 150 towns in New England are beginning to utilize this program.
- iii. S. Bannon asked how the numbers projected compare to other towns (\$11 million of work). T. Garro said Great Barrington is in the middle range. S. Bannon asked how often the pictures should be updated. T. Garro said every 3 to 4 years, an audit would be completed and new pictures would be taken, but it could also be done annually.
- iv. Kien Ho shared an evaluation presentation on the Main Street crosswalks.
- v. S. Bannon asked if RRFB could be put on state highways. K. Ho said that they can be used on state roads.
- vi. C. Ferris shared that he feels crosswalk safety on Main Street should be a priority. C. Ferris said he has seen blinking lights embedded into the pavement on the sides of the crosswalks. L. Davis agrees that this is an urgent priority.
- vii. B. Cooke asked if the RRFB lights are being considered for other crosswalks as well. K. Ho said for now, the RRFB lights are only being considered for the two Main Street Crosswalks.
- viii. K. Ho also shared a presentation on Railroad Street Shared Streets/Dining.

- ix. B. Cooke asked if the planters would be on the South Side of the street as well. K. Ho said due to the curbing, they did not plan to have planters there.
 - x. S. Bannon asked if there are any message signs that do not look like construction zone signs. K. Ho said there are permanent signs available that look more formal.
 - xi. E. Abrahams asked about the 14 foot travel lane, as wider lanes normally encourage people to drive faster. K. Ho said that is the perception, but 14 feet is necessary for larger vehicles, such as fire trucks.
- d. Conservation Restriction for 165 Monument Valley Road from BNRC (#16698).
- i. Narain Schroeder explained that the conservation restriction is a requirement of the Conservation Land Tax Credit Program.
 - ii. B. Cooke asked if there are any existing trails. N. Schroeder said that there are existing trails, and that the long-term goal is to create a trail from Great Barrington to Stockbridge.

E. Abrahams made a motion to accept the Conservation Restrictions; 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.

- e. Request that the Selectboard forgive the remaining payment due on a Housing Rehabilitation Loan granted under the FY14 Great Barrington-Sheffield CDBG Housing Rehabilitation.
- i. C. Ferris represented Mr. and Mrs. Thorton. Mr. Thorton lost his job and broke his hip, which created their financial hardship.

E. Abrahams made a motion to forgive the remaining payment due on the Housing Rehabilitation Loan granted under the FY14 Great Barrington-Sheffield CDBG Housing Rehabilitation; L. Davis 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.

f. Selectboard License and Permit Fees

The Selectboard will be looking for a recommendation from the Finance Committee regarding abatements and will discuss this recommendation at the December meeting.

- g. Vote on the maximum useful life of the departmental equipment being financed with the proceeds of the borrowing authorized by the vote of the Town Meeting passed June 22, 2020 (Article 6).
- i. S. Carmel Explained the purpose of this item to the Board.

E. Abrahams made a motion to certify that the maximum useful life of the departmental equipment listed, to be financed with a portion of the proceeds of the \$3,628,500 borrowing authority by the vote of the town passed, is hereby determined pursuant to General Law, chapter 44 section 7.1 to be as follows:

- 2 Police Cruisers – borrowing amount \$127,500 (maximum useful life 3-5 years)
- Highway Dump Truck – borrowing amount \$230,000 (maximum useful life 8 years)
- EMS Service Vehicle – borrowing amount \$60,000 (maximum useful life 10 years)
- 6 Police Portable Radiosx – borrowing amount \$46,500 (maximum useful life 5 years)
- Roadside Mower – borrowing amount \$180,000 (maximum useful life 10 years)
- Mowers – borrowing amount \$32,000 (maximum useful life 5 years)
- One-ton Roller – borrowing amount \$30,000 (maximum useful life 15 years)

Fire Equipment – borrowing amount \$35,500 (maximum useful life 10 years)
Speed Trailer – borrowing amount \$12,000 (maximum useful life 10 years)
Parks Equipment – borrowing amount \$60,000 (maximum useful life 20 years)
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.

8. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Dog Park- Responses from Parks/Cemeteries/Con-Com
 - i. Follow up from the September 21st meeting, M. Pruhenski stated that the Parks Commission, Cemeteries Commission, and Conservation Commission did not have a suggested suitable Dog Park location. M. Pruhenski will continue to search for a location.

9. CITIZEN SPEAK TIME

10. SELECTBOARD’S TIME

- a. E. Abrahams stated that certain neighborhoods in Great Barrington have excessive speeding problems. E. Abrahams is looking for a way to highlight multiple neighborhoods that have this problem and address them all at one time, rather than piece-by-piece.

11. MEDIA TIME

- 1. ADJOURNMENT Chairman Bannon adjourned meeting by unanimous consent at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Brooke M. Morehouse
Recording Clerk*