

MINUTES OF TOWN OF BERKLEY SELECTMEN'S MEETING OF 9/2/2020

SELECTMEN IN ATTENDANCE: George F. Miller, Chairman

Dean R. Larabee, Clerk

TOPIC		ACTION
	Meeting Convened at 6:00pm in the Moitoza – Pettey Hearing Room	
Minutes	Minutes September 2, 2020 - Regular Session	Larabee motioned to table, Miller 2 nd
Personnel Board	Taken out of order. Interview for Assistant Librarian position with Amy Mursko. Mr. Miller noted that it is just a formality because the Board likes to participate with the trustees to make sure they know who is being hired. He asked her if she lived in Berkley and she stated she has lived here for almost 10 years. Ms. Mursko stated that she has volunteered with the Friends of the Library for 5-6 years and is familiar with being at the Library. Mr. Miller asked how many applicants there were for the position. Ms. Boute, Library Director, stated that there were only 2. It was stated that it was a natural fit for Ms. Mursko and also noted that she was apart of the PTO. Mr. Miller appreciated her coming on board.	Larabee motion to hire, Miller 2 nd voted
New Business	Mr. Miller asked Ms. Nancy Thompson, a member of the Council on Aging, if she had any interest in going into an executive session to which Ms. Thompson responded with absolutely not. The Town Administrator conducted multiple interviews with people regarding the issue. Mr. Miller stated that he would like to hear from the individuals that she did interview to get a real time description of what occurred. The first person to be interviewed by Ms. Martin-Sterling was Ms. Margret Morroff, Chairperson of the COA. Ms. Morroff stated that last fall, Ms. Cynthia Crimlisk, was hired as the Council on Aging Director, so that the COA Board will no longer have to do the tasks a director should deal with. She noted that with the pandemic, there was not much that Cindy could do and the state had no guidance at this point. Mr. Miller asked Ms. Crimlisk if it was okay that she was being talked about in a public setting and not executive session. Ms. Crimlisk said it was fine. Ms. Morroff continued by saying that they were unable to send out their monthly newsletters because Bristol Plymouth usually prints them, but due to the pandemic, the school has been closed. Once the COA center had closed, Ms. Crimlisk had been doing more work in the center, such as filing, organizing, etc. Ms. Morroff stated that she began to get emails asking what Cindy was doing. Mr. Miller added that just because someone feels as if they aren't doing their job, doesn't mean they are directing someone. Ms. Morroff stated that she had been in contact with Ms. Crimlisk and Ms. Martin-Sterling and did know what was going on. She stated that she did not have any problems until Ms. Thompson started taking things over. Ms. Morroff said that someone should not be calling other COA, fitness instructors, the state, or the Board of Health as a board member, after it was already discussed on how things were going to be handled. Mr. Miller said that he sees an issue with someone contacting other people who have already been in contact with the director. However, he does not see a problem with someone else contacting the state or other COA to see how they're handling things. Ms. Morroff stated that the information Ms. Thompson received should have been brought up to the director and not in the middle of a board meeting. Ms. Morroff mentioned that she has no problem with others doing things, but there is a way to present it and the chain of commands starts with Cindy. Mr. Miller noted that in the past, people had pushed for a COA director. Ms. Morroff stated that they are down to 3 board members and one left because she did not want to have to deal with any of the issues anymore. Mr. Miller said that he had read what Ms. Crimlisk had wrote in the interview and asked if she had anything else she would like to add. Ms. Crimlisk stated that she started this position 51 weeks ago that night. She said that for the first couple of months, everything was running smoothly. She also noted that she had gone to a training program in February through the Executive Office of Elders Affair. Ms. Crimlisk admitted that she did not know everything a COA did but was given good information and informed her that a Council on Aging is actually an advisory board, not a supervisory board. Mr. Miller stated that the Board of Selectmen do their best not to meddle in the COA because they know what they are doing. Ms. Crimlisk said things started to change when she brought that information forward to the board and then went	Informational, no action made

into the pandemic. She stated that she started to gather things together in the center. She also put together a list of every single person in Berkley who is over the age of 60 to see who she would most have to concentrate on during the pandemic. She also ordered an abundance of PPE to have when they do open. Ms. Crimlisk stated that during all of this she continued to be questioned. She said she felt like people thought she was doing nothing and wasting her time and constantly felt like her job and position were being undermined. Ms. Crimlisk said that she was told that the caterer for the 2021 Christmas party have already been contacted and tentatively booked although it was supposed to be her responsibility. She explained that she does not want to see the COA die out and she came here to give back to the town. Mr. Miller stated to Ms. Crimlisk that she doesn't need to defend her job but gave a good background of her perspective. Ms. Thompson stated that she printed a response to all of the accusations to avoid rambling and to save time. Mr. Miller asked if Ms. Morroff or Ms. Crimlisk had said anything inaccurate as far as what she has done. Ms. Thompson said yes. Ms. Thompson started by explaining the catering issue for the 2021 Christmas Party. She did admit to calling the caterer, but to see if he was available, what it would cost, and told the vendor to pencil them in. Ms. Thompson also did admit to calling Cindy to know what was going on and cannot help what her interpretation of it is. Mr. Miller stated that it was a unique situation because if a citizen in town, and not a member of the COA, was calling asking what was going on or what she was doing, it would probably be handled in a different way. Mr. Thompson stated that she did call other COAs to bring information back to each meeting. She stated that she did not act on her own, she brought the information back. Ms. Thompson said that she did hear from Norton COA and described what they had been doing. She also said that a list was compiled and given to Ms. Morroff who then gave the information to Ms. Martin-Sterling. Ms. Morroff stated that this information was false. Ms. Thompson apologized if the information was misinterpreted. Mr. Larabee said that it may be more beneficial to have one person talk at a time. Mr. Miller stated that sometimes if someone has a quick objection it's okay to let them get it out to have a conversation amongst adults to get to the bottom of something. Ms. Thompson continued by saying that the courtesy phone calls were deemed a great idea. Ms. Thompson continually reached out to Ms. Crimlisk asking when the list of seniors and phone numbers would be done. It then became an issue of privacy invasion. Mr. Miller stated that he thought none of this would happen and things would have been worked out if it wasn't for COVID. Ms. Morroff stated that they could not do the phone calls because she was advised that it was not public information. Ms. Thompson stated that she brought back suggestions from other COA. Another idea that was decided on was to send out post cards to seniors. Ms. Thompson stated that it took 2+ months because the printer was on vacation, but did eventually happen. She also noted that at every meeting, Ms. Thompson would ask about the Newsletters. She stated that, historically, they did not send out newsletters in the summer months because Bristol Plymouth was closed. She stated that she thought the COA needed to communicate more with the seniors during this time, not less. Ms. Thompson stated that when she initially contacted the fitness instructors, it was mid-March. When she found out that others were doing outdoor activities, it made her question why can't we? Ms. Thompson stated that she asked Ms. Crimlisk if she had reached out to any instructors and Ms. Crimlisk told her that she could not get through to any of them. Ms. Thompson said that she got impatient and called them and reached all of them except for 1, in one day and told them to call Cindy to set things up. Mr. Miller stated he does not see a problem in someone making inquiries to gather information. He also stated that he thinks it is something a council member should be doing for the better of the group. Discussion continued. Ms. Thompson, referencing a COA meeting that occurred on September 3rd, stated that Ms. Morroff screamed at her during the meeting to get her off the board. Ms. Morroff stated that it never happened. Mr. Miller stated that tempers can run high and a lot of people think that when you volunteer for a board, that it is all fun and excitement and it's not. Ms. Thompson stated that she did not want to have a meeting with the Board of Selectmen. She wanted to sit down with Ms. Morroff, Ms. Crimlisk, and Ms. Martin-Sterling and work everything out. Reading from her letter, Ms. Thompson stated that her intention was not to cause trouble. She also stated that she thinks the COA, including herself, have failed miserably to meet the needs of the seniors and removing her from the board will not help the community. Mr. Larabee asked Ms. Thompson if she was asked to gather this information. Ms. Thompson stated that she did it at her own free will. Mr. Larabee asked if it was unusual for members to gather information. Ms. Morroff stated that pre-director, it was not unusual and as a group they would gather information. Now

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that there is a director, she believes that the information should go through the director. Ms. Morroff stated that she disagrees that the COA hasn't been taking care of the seniors. Mr. Miller stated that everyone has different opinions but believes that the town, in general, does not do enough for the seniors. Mr. Larabee stated that assuming intent was positive, he thought that there was a communication or protocol gap for how information is given back. He asked how information is generally presented to the committee and discussed. Ms. Morroff stated that she thinks it should go to the director first and not presented in front of the board. Mr. Miller suggested, as an advisory board, wouldn't it be more beneficial to vote on and fine tune the information given first and then bring it to the director? Discussion continued between Ms. Morroff and Mr. Miller. Ms. Crimlisk stated that she believes that if a board member has an idea, it should be done in a formal format so it would be easier for the board to discuss so she can work on it and go on the agenda in a certain way. Mr. Larabee stated that with a new director, there is a need to come up with a protocol to follow the mission of the organization and to have a means and a method of how things are conducted. Ms. Morroff said that the COA was in the process of redoing the bi-laws and adding to the description of the director. Mr. Larabee noted that this is a group of very passionate people who are working very hard for the community, there just needs to be a way to channel it. Mr. Miller stated that reaching out to trainers or vendors is the job of the director, but reaching out to gather information to bring to the board is fine but it is what you do with it afterwards is what matters. The power of the council is not from an individual, it comes from a group. Mr. Miller also stated it is important to know your place in an organization, but it needs some fine tuning. Mr. Miller gave a suggestion of having clearer understanding of the protocols and what to do. He stated that it is not a huge problem, it just appears to be. He noted that the Town Administrator is always available to meet with people and to work out issues. Mr. Miller stated that he is not going to motion to remove anyone. Ms. Morroff stated that she did not want to remove anyone but just wanted the situation to end. Ms. Morroff also noted that there is not much they can do right now because of the state and that the COA has a whole different set of rules to follow being attached to the town hall. Mr. Miller asked that they please try to work together and to not give up. He thanked and appreciated everyone coming in. Ms. Thompson thanked everyone for coming in to support her, but stated that they are supporting the Council on Aging and the seniors in this town.

Meeting Mail

On July 24, 2020 the governor signed into law to include June 19th, Juneteenth Holiday, a legal holiday.

Informational.
Larabee motion to file, Miller 2nd voted

New Business

Site Plan review of Padelford St project. Mr. Miller noted that the Planning Board had a meeting the following night. Ms. Martin-Sterling explained that they were wrapping things up and working out little details. The Planning Board wanted to make sure that the Board of Selectmen didn't have any concerns about it. Mr. Miller stated that he had met with the developer early on and is pleased to see that it is essentially what he described before they were deep into the process. Mr. Miller said that they are looking at a relatively large convince store of 6,000 sq feet, a bank of 3,500 sq feet, and a mix used commercial building of 11,250 sq feet located right off the highway on Padelford St. Ms. Martin-Sterling stated that it was no storage units for any misconceptions. She also mentioned that there is no use for the 11,000 sq ft commercial building yet. There is speculation of what it could be but are not confirming or denying.

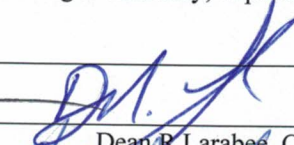
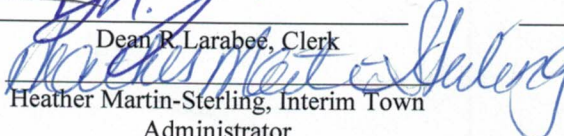
Informational, no action made

Letter from Board of Assessors regarding appointment vs elected board. Mr. Miller noted that last meeting when Ms. Russo was present, she advised the Board that she was in favor of making the Board of Assessors an appointed board and not an elected board. Mr. Miller stated that Ms. Russo's opinion must have changed because according to a letter from the Board of Assessors, they had an official vote and unanimously disapproved of any attempt to make the Assessors appointed vs elected. After quick research, Ms. Martin-Sterling noted that under Section 24 of Chapter 41, they can be elected or appointed.

Larabee motion to file, Miller 2nd voted

Town Administrators Report	Ms. Martin-Sterling stated that she had nothing to new to add. As a reminder, she mentioned that the Planning Board's public meeting is next Thursday for the special permit on the basketball courts and site plan.	Informational, no action made
Public Input	<p>Richard Peterson, the land lord and owner of 541 Berkley St. Mr. Peterson noted that he came in the other day and met with Ms. Martin-Sterling about the possibility of the Town of Berkley applying for a grant to help a traffic situation. Governor Baker put out money for towns and municipalities to make it safer for businesses. It is called the Shared Streets Grant and is to proposed to help make the streets safer for social distancing. He noted a problem in front of his building with the traffic flow. His commercial building, Chaos Fitness who is run by his son, has over 150 ft of frontage. Mr. Peterson stated that the traffic flow is crazy in and out of that area. He also noted that inexperienced pizza drivers from Doughlicious are zooming in and out of the parking lot at all hours, creating a hazardous situation. Mr. Peterson is looking to make it safer for those who work out in the parking lot of the gym and for himself. Mr. Miller asked how he was planning to tying in the grant to his situation and what would be the solution. Mr. Peterson stated that he wanted jersey barriers and this grant will allow the town to get their foot in the door. He noted that the grant application expires September 23rd. Ms. Martin-Sterling explained that she thinks the grant doesn't offer what they are looking for. The grant is to promote outdoor dining, better bus roots, walking and bike paths and to support increased safety. Mr. Miller suggested applying for the grant anyways but could not guarantee that it would go to exactly what Mr. Peterson is looking for. Discussion continued. Mr. Miller appreciated and thanked Mr. Peterson for coming in but could not guarantee anything. Mr. Peterson understood and stated that it was his best shot at getting what he wanted and getting the towns support. Mr. Miller suggested that he could reach out to the police department regarding the traffic issues. Mr. Peterson stated that he has sent multiple letters in the past; 2005, 2011, and 2019. Mr. Miller stated that he did not recall those letters and noted that there is only so much the Board of Selectmen could do. Mr. Peterson stated that the delivery drivers are not the main problem but are the latest problem. He stated that the neighboring building has become a beehive of activity. He mentioned that it is good but it is unsafe. He also mentioned that there is not enough parking on that property for the 3 businesses and bi-laws have been pushed aside. Mr. Miller stated that that is what happens with a special permit, they decide they are going to go outside of those bi-laws. Mr. Miller asked if he could put up a fence. Mr. Peterson stated that he does not think he should have to flip the bill to rectify the situation because he has fought it every time. He noted that it is a civil matter and a shared responsibility. Mr. Miller stated that he does not mind looking into solutions but does not think the town can take the responsibility for a business that gets a lot of business. Discussion continued. Mr. Miller stated that in fairness, if they do get the grant, some should go to him for bringing the grant to their attention and stated that they will do their best to handle the problem. Mr. Peterson provided copies and information to Ms. Martin-Sterling. Mr. Miller appreciated and thanked Mr. Peterson for coming in.</p> <p>Ms. Martin Sterling added that the state has awarded the town an MVP grant for \$15,000 which is going to get storm water up and running and got support from fire, police, planning board, etc. She stated that her goal is to get a storm water committee so that it doesn't fall all on the Highway Department. Mr. Miller appreciates the efforts from everyone.</p>	Informational, no action made
Adjournment	Mr. Larabee stated that the next meeting is Thursday, September 24 th and 6:30 PM in the Council on Aging room.	Informational Larabee motion to adjourn, Miller 2 nd voted


George E. Miller, Chairman


Dean R. Larabee, Clerk

Heather Martin-Sterling, Interim Town Administrator


Wendy F. Cochrane, Member