

MINUTES OF TOWN OF BERKLEY SELECTMEN'S MEETING OF 12/8/2021

SELECTMEN IN ATTENDANCE: George F. Miller, Chairman, Dean R. Larabee, Clerk, Wendy F. Cochrane, Member

TOPIC		ACTION
	Meeting Convened at 6:03p.m. in the Moitoza – Pettey Hearing Room	
Minutes to be approved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. October 7, 2021 Meeting Minutes 2. October 27, 2021 Meeting Minutes 3. November 2, 2021 Meeting Minutes 	Cochrane to motion to approve and sign, Larabee 2 nd , all voted.
Personnel Board	Board to review and approve side letter for Public Employees Local Union 272.	Cochrane to motion to approve; Larabee 2 nd , all voted.
Personnel Board	Board to promote Sgt. Newhook to Detective Sgt. Sgt. Newhook was present, along with many of the Berkley Police Department Officers, including Berkley Police Chief Scott Labonte. Chief Labonte stated Sgt. Newhook has many years and experience in the department and does an excellent job. He also stated this promotion was a long time coming. All voted to promote Sgt. Newhook and congratulated him.	Larabee to motion to promote; Cochrane 2 nd , all voted.
Personnel Board	Board to promote Officer Realini to Sgt. Officer Realini was present, along with many of the Berkley Police Department Officers, including Berkley Police Chief Scott Labonte. Chief Labonte stated Officer Realini will be in good hands and his experience in the department will carry over. All voted to promote Officer Realini and congratulated him.	Larabee to motion to promote; Cochrane 2 nd , all voted.
Personnel Board	Board to accept resignation from COA Director. Chairman George Miller stated she will be missed by many. Wendy Cochrane recused herself from the motion to vote, as she is on the COA Board. Board to approve MOA and release of claims. Wendy Cochrane again recused herself from the motion to vote due to being on the COA Board. Dean Larabee motioned to release claims and amend the motion to give authority to the Town Administrator to sign on the Board of Selectmen's behalf.	Larabee to motion to accept; Cochrane abstained due to being on COA Board; Miller 2 nd , all voted.
Old Business (taken out of order)	Board to review and discuss update on Myrics St. Field Project. Chairman George Miller stated he looked at the survey, and that the area was smaller than once believed. Andrea Perry from the Berkley Historical Commission stated the Commission wants to settle what the Berkley Athletic Association wants and what the Historical Society can fit. She stated the Berkley Athletic Association (BAA) changed the size of the soccer field, from 100-300 yards down to 100-130 yards. They (BAA) want the current ball field re-done, with the newly proposed area needing a well, irrigation, and lighting, storage shed, benches, and electricity. There was also a proposal for a playground area and a walking path. Andrea asked what their authority is with the Historical Society. George Miller stated the project would be scaled back due to space and money involved, and that the BAA are to maintain the fields, as there is not a lot to work with. He stated money received from the state for COVID-19 relief could possibly go toward it. Dean Larabee stated the vision of this project and the prior vision is different. Andrea Perry stated she had a petition for a grant, and people wrote letters for what the field could be used for. George Miller stated to bring this up to the BAA and figure out how it will go, and highly suggested a soccer field, because it's something they don't have. Wendy Cochrane suggested a joint meeting with the Historical Commission and the BAA. George stated he wanted it to be an open meeting, at first he wanted the meeting to happen before Christmas, but after discussion with Wendy Cochrane, the decision was to hold it 1 week after the new year. He stated the Selectmen will look into funding for this project, and to let the public know about the meeting. Civil Engineer Byron Holmes stated he would need the Conservation Commission to approve wetlands line, and to hire a local landscape architect or engineer. George Miller stated the BAA could contribute the work themselves. Town Administrator Heather Martin-Sterling was asked to be granted authority to sign for Conservation Commission Application. Andrea stated she has a list of volunteers to cut down trees and excavate. The name of the field will potentially be "The Grove at St. Yves Field". George Miller stated he wants plans in motion after the first of the year.	Larabee to motion to approve Heather Martin-Sterling to sign Conservation Commission Application; Cochrane 2 nd , all voted.
Personnel Board (taken out of order)	Board to accept resignation and approve open position for Highway Department. Wendy Cochrane motioned to accept resignation from Michael Pires and to allow Highway Surveyor Robert Rose to post new position as soon as possible due to inevitable inclement winter weather.	Cochrane to motion to accept & approve; Larabee 2 nd , all voted.

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Personnel Board (unforeseen by Chair)	Board to accept resignation from the Children's Librarian, Cynthia Quinn-Beckwith, unforeseen by the Chair. The resignation was put into place as of December 4, 2021. The Librarian did give a 2 weeks' notice.	Cochrane to accept resig. as of 12/4/2021; Larabee 2 nd , all voted.
Meeting Mail	Board to review letter from Xfinity regarding Programming Advisory. George Miller noted different channels will be added, and that there will be a price increase from \$54.95 to \$59.95 per month. He also stated the NBCSN channel will cease to operate.	Cochrane to motion to file; Larabee 2 nd , all voted.
Meeting Mail	Board to review letter from Berkley Public Schools regarding surplus items. The Selectmen as well as the Town Administrator were in agreeance that the items were obsolete and they wouldn't be needed.	Cochrane to motion to file; Larabee 2 nd , all voted.
Meeting Mail	Board to review letter regarding a Cease and Desist letter. Town Administrator Heather Martin-Sterling stated they (owners of property on Plain St. East) brought the letter in hoping the BOS would meet sooner than they did; she did inform them the meeting was tonight and there was a timeframe. They are asking Building Inspector Joseph Biszko to overturn the cease and desist order, which he did not. They are appealing the order through the CBA. George Miller stated the BOS cannot overturn the decision from the Building Inspector.	Cochrane to motion to file; Larabee 2 nd , all voted.
Meeting Mail	Board to review letter regarding the MMA Annual Meeting and Trade Show. George Miller stated to Town Administrator Heather Martin-Sterling he will let her know if he will be attending.	Larabee to motion to file; Cochrane 2 nd , all voted.
Meeting Mail	Board to review letter from the Department of Telecommunications. Wendy Cochrane stated it had something to do with telephone poles in the area.	Cochrane to motion to file; Larabee 2 nd , all voted.
New Business (taken out of order)	Chairman to update Board on the Senior Center. Co-Chair Margaret Moroff expressed how she wanted to keep the COA going, and wants to know what's going on with the center now that the Director is resigning. She states she is taking the month of January to assess the needs of the Senior Center, and that only one person should do it. She stated every event scheduled in December will go on as planned. Under the Other Duties Clause, Treasurer Chloe Defaria is helping with the COA newsletter. Margaret stated there will be some changes to the schedule. She also stated that she is retired and is not capable of computer work. George Miller told her to coordinate with Town Administrator Heather to see who could help her with computing.	Information only; no action needed.
New Business	Board to review and approve license renewals. The following license types are to be renewed; liquor, common victualler, restricted music, Class I auto, Class II auto, Class III auto, and Class G auto. Wendy Cochrane motioned to renew the following Common Victualler Licenses: Dunkin Donuts, Amatos, American Legion Post #121 (contingent upon approved fire inspection), Prestige, Boondocks, Dough Licious, and Nouria Energy. Wendy Cochrane motioned to renew the following Liquor Licenses: American Legion Post #121 (contingent upon approved fire inspection), Country Side Pizza & Restaurant, Country Side Package, Prestige, Boondocks, and Berkley Farms. Wendy Cochrane motioned to renew Restricted Music Licenses for American Legion Post #121 (contingent upon approved fire inspection), Boondocks, and Dough Licious. Dean Larabee motioned to renew Class I Auto License for Camping World. Dean Larabee motioned to renew Class II Auto Licenses for St. Yves, James King Jr. Bryant Auto, Perry Motors, and William Fraser AI Enterprise. Dean Larabee motioned to renew Class III Auto Licenses for Rt. 24 Auto - Kahn, Used Auto Parts/Berkley Auto, John Uronis - John's Auto Salvage, Kevin Flint - Flint's Auto Parts. Dean Larabee motioned to renew Class G Auto Licenses for Peter Kopczyk, Used Auto Parts - James King, and Herbert Flint.	Cochrane to motion to renew Common Vic, liquor, and restricted music licenses; Larabee 2 nd , all voted. Larabee to motion to renew Class I, II, III, and G Auto licenses; Cochrane 2 nd , all voted.
New Business	Board to approve and sign ABCC 2022 forms. Town Administrator Heather stated the BOS has to approve the 2022 Seasonal Population Increase Estimation Form, which is zero. They also have to approve Renewal Certificates on all liquor licenses, with the exception of Dough Licious Pizza, as they chose not to renew their liquor license.	Cochrane to motion to sign & approve ABCC 2022 forms; Larabee 2 nd , all voted.

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New Business	<p>Board to review Attorney General's request for participation in Opioid Subdivision Settlement. The Attorney General is looking for support in signing settlement participation form from the J&J settlement. George Miller asked if the Board wants to be a part of it. He stated the towns receive \$537 million, with 15% as the baseline. Town Administrator Heather stated the Board can vote to authorize her to sign for the settlement forms to send to the Attorney General's Office. George Miller states to contact the Board of Health to see if it's needed. Dean Larabee motioned to join the settlement and to authorize Heather Martin-Sterling to sign for it.</p>	<p>Larabee to motion to join settlement & authorize Martin-Sterling to sign; Cochrane 2nd, all voted.</p>
Town Administrator's Report	<p>Heather Martin-Sterling to discuss ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act). The ARPA national fund is \$8.7 billion; of that, the Town of Berkley received \$717,084, and has already received 50% of those funds. Bristol County received approximately \$110 million, which they will disperse out per capita to Bristol County members who were on the 2020 census numbers, keeping 10% for county projects. The Town of Berkley is looking to receive a little more than \$1 million from Bristol County. The towns have to apply for this. The portal for applications on the county side is expected to open next week. There is no guarantee the requested funds will be received based off the application. Once it is approved, the town will receive the money in 60 days, and second half of that will be received no later than April 2022. There will be a case by case basis on how the funds are distributed, and it will go to shovel ready projects first. The funds have to be obligated by 12/31/2024 (Berkley & County), and has to be captured and spent by 12/31/2026. Heather Martin-Sterling then lists the eligible uses for APRA funds. She mentioned one of the eligible uses that is equity-focused, which could be used for the Myrics St. project. She then lists the ineligible uses. The steps ARPA has put into place is to have some type of public input. She suggests the Town of Berkley have some type of presence through a combination of communications, such as mailings, social media, and the town's website. Heather notes that the type of software for a survey monkey can be covered through ARPA funding. The survey could give the townspeople different scenarios on how the funds are spent. All projects, especially on the county side, have to go through the Town Auditor to receive guidance on whether or not the project can be used, and to assist in the application process for the county money, along with the Town Council. Heather then lists the ways in which other towns are spending their money. Once approved by the Town Auditor, the Town of Berkley is allowed to fund water and sewer projects, such as the Holloway St. project, and storm water through ARPA. Heather asks the Board for input or ideas for the ARPA funds. Wendy Cochrane asked if the sidewalks and sewer could be eligible. Heather stated in order for the sidewalk to be fixed, the cistern tank would need to be fixed first. She doesn't know if it falls into the eligible category, as the cistern tank is not drinkable water. There has been money set aside from the Building department to fix this problem; Wendy stated she'd rather use the ARPA funds if possible. George Miller agreed about needing more sidewalks, especially on Main Street. Heather will be reaching out to the Town Auditor to receive guidance on eligibility.</p>	<p>Information only; no action needed.</p>
Town Administrator's Report	<p>Heather Martin-Sterling to discuss the Holloway St. update. She stated she attended a meeting at Taunton City Hall regarding the drinking water for the 3 residents of Holloway St. There was a discussion about extending the existing line all the way down Holloway St, with some work done on the the County St. side. There was also talks of replacing the existing line. The City of Taunton is asking the Town of Berkley to contribute some funds for it. Heather reached out to them for a cost estimate, but has not received one yet. She stated they are close to closing out on the project. Heather is looking by the last meeting in January for the Board to be signing off on the agreements and the IMA's to move it forward. She will schedule a meeting between Town Council and Waste Management in the near future.</p>	<p>Information only; no action needed.</p>
Town Administrator's Report	<p>Heather Martin-Sterling to discuss the BP school update. She stated that the City of Taunton wants the Town Clerks of surrounding towns to write letter for an extension of 120 days to the MSBA for the election. She asks the Board if the letter should come from them with their concerns on holding the election on January 29, 2022. George Miller stated he does not want the election to bed held in January due to the possibility of inclement weather; states it's not fair if some towns could close the election due to a snowstorm while other towns could potentially stay open. Wendy Cochrane stated she attended the meeting at City Hall last Friday, and that according to the Taunton City Clerk, the clerks from most communities</p>	

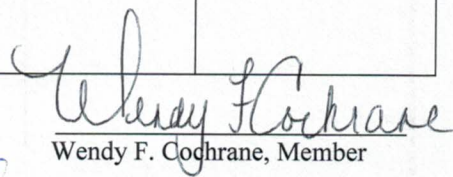
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	<p>had concerns with getting an election ready for January. Heather Martin-Sterling states the re-precincting of towns is why the election was pushed up. Some towns are sending letters but some are not. Heather Martin-Sterling asked if the Board would want to support asking the MSBA for an extension of the 120 days, and the letter would come from the BOS, and sent to the City of Taunton tomorrow morning. George Miller supports the project, as well as vocational training. He is in favor of sending the letter and to address it with the Town Clerk to have her send one as well. Heather Martin-Sterling stated the letter to the MSBA will be put on the agenda for the virtual meeting on Wednesday, December 15, 2021, and to then ask for the extension. She will get the letter to Taunton tomorrow. A vote was called to issue letters to the MSBA asking for a 120 day extension on the election deadline.</p>	<p>Larabee to motion to send letter; Cochrane 2nd, all voted.</p>
Finance Committee Update	<p>Chairman of the Finance Committee Joe Freitas to discuss budget, as it pertains to free cash. He suggests to the Board to prepare 2 budgets; the first one will be voted on in June, the second one to be voted on at the Special Town Meeting in November. The FAC will be holding a meeting in the future to discuss how to fund highway capital equipment. Mr. Freitas states the 1st half of the split budget could be spent on items that are absolutely necessary, and the flood of July/August/September warrants could be held off to see if it is needed by the 2nd half. He stated a split budget would make department heads more accountable for spending. George Miller stated it may be more work for all involved (i.e. the Town Administrator and the Treasurer's office), but may be worth it.</p>	<p>Information only; no action needed.</p>
Public Input	<p>Wendy Cochrane recognized the Garden Club for the decorations around Town Hall. She also wants to go back to holding a Citizen of the Year award, and to put it on the next agenda (12/22/2021).</p>	<p>Information only; no action needed.</p>
Adjournment	<p>Wendy Cochrane motioned to adjourn the BOS meeting @ 8:30 pm.</p>	<p>Cochrane to motion to adjourn; Larabee 2nd, all voted.</p>


George F. Miller, Chairman


Dean R. Larabee, Clerk


Wendy F. Cochrane, Member


Heather Martin-Sterling, Town Administrator