

# MINUTES OF TOWN OF BERKLEY SELECTMEN'S MEETING OF 01/17/2024

SELECTMEN IN ATTENDANCE: Joe Freitas, Chairman, Tabitha K. McCrohan, Clerk, Wendy F. Cochrane, Member

TOPIC		ACTION
	Meeting Convened at 6:00 p.m. in the Moitoza – Pettey Hearing Room	
New Business	<p>Board to host discussion with Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School representatives. The Chairman thanked Dr. Alexandre Magalhaes, Superintendent-Director and Ms. Nadine Rose, School Business Administrator for their attendance. Dr. Magalhaes and Ms. Rose offered a status update and guidance. They have not yet gone to bond, but are currently taking BANS as needed. The project total is \$305,000,000.00 and the MSBA has authorized a grant for 62.25%, the remaining balance is left to the communities to pay; all Towns are assessed by a minimum local contribution set by MA. The state gives figures based on per pupil assessment. The Board questioned if there is a risk of less than favorable rates based on timing and it was noted that while the future can't be predicated, there is hope of lower rates. The current state of the project is on Phase I and on target. Total completion of the new campus by 2027.</p> <p>Board to host Assessor for tax assessment explanation and discussion for public forums. Gary discussed how assessment works. A system called CAMA is used for appraisals and must be passed by the DOR. The Tax Recap Sheet is how the DOR sets the tax rate.</p> <p>Board to host discussion regarding COA Director position. Ms. Margaret Moroff, Chair of the COA asked to post the position again; she would like to freeze the Administrative Assistant position and open the Director position. She noted that having both an Administrative Assistant and Director would be ideal, but understands that funding is not currently available for both. The Board noted they would review and discuss further in an Executive Session to be scheduled at a later date; the Town Administrator noted he would work to schedule same with the Board and Ms. Moroff. The Board voted to table the matter.</p> <p>Board to review and possibly grant a long-term Lease of 2 North Main Street to the Berkley Historical Society. Mr. Perry and Ms. Waterfield Jones spoke as representatives of the Historical Society. The Chairman agreed that the best use of the building is for Town artifacts and as a museum. The Chairman also noted that the building must always also remain as a "failsafe" should there be an issue within our Town Hall building for usage for Town operations. The Board questioned the benefit of a lease vs. an at-will tenancy. The Assistant Town Administrator noted she would do the research and work to draft the appropriate documentation; the Board voted to extend the current agreement with an expiration date of March 31, 2024.</p>	<p>Information Only; No Action Needed.</p> <p>Information Only; No Action Needed.</p> <p>McCrohan to motion to table, Cochrane 2<sup>nd</sup>; voted.</p> <p>McCrohan to motion to extend, Cochrane 2<sup>nd</sup>; voted.</p>
Appointments (taken out of order)	Board to review and possibly appoint Aaron Fernandes to the Agricultural Commission. The Board voted to appoint.	McCrohan to motion to appoint, Cochrane 2 <sup>nd</sup> ; voted.
New Business	<p>Board to review and vote on Police Details for all upcoming elections. The Board voted to approve.</p> <p>Board to review letter from the Office of the Town Clerk regarding the Annual Town Elections Calendar. The Board voted to approve.</p> <p>Board review and possibly sign Agreement between the Town of Lakeville and Town of Berkley. The Chairman questioned from where the additional funds noted on the Agreement would be funded and the Town Administrator confirmed it would come out of the ACO budget. The Board voted to sign.</p>	<p>McCrohan to motion to approve, Cochrane 2<sup>nd</sup>; voted.</p> <p>McCrohan to motion to approve, Cochrane 2<sup>nd</sup>; voted.</p> <p>McCrohan to motion to sign, Cochrane 2<sup>nd</sup>; voted.</p>



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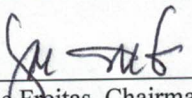
	Board to designate non-municipal donation from Berkley Botanicals. The Board voted to table.	McCrohan to motion to table, Cochrane 2 <sup>nd</sup> , voted.
Meeting Mail (out of order)	Board to review Taunton River Stewardship Council 2023 Annual Report. Mr. Joe Callahan of Faira Farm Road spoke as the Berkley Council Member and President of the Watershed Alliance. Clerk McCrohan read the notice into record. The Chairman thanked Mr. Callahan for coming to the meeting and his continued support on the matter. Mr. Callahan noted that he would love to see the Board work towards acquiring more open space and preservation. The Board voted to file and post.	McCrohan to motion to file and post, Cochrane 2 <sup>nd</sup> , voted.
New Business (taken out of order)	Board to discuss attendance at the Berkley Community School public forum on January 24, 2024. Superintendent Melissa Ryan came in to speak and noted that there has already been a series of focus groups that have occurred. The upcoming focus groups will be to review security, systems maintenance, equipment and furnishing. The goal of the public forum will be to provide an opportunity for parents and members of the community to attend, discuss and provide an update. It was noted that the public forum will be an online session, but the school will also be open for those unable to connect online. The Board voted to file and post.	McCrohan to motion to file and post, Cochrane 2 <sup>nd</sup> , voted.
	Board to review and approve an Application for a Special One-Day License to sell Wine & Malt Beverages at the Bay State Beagle Club. The Board voted to approve.	McCrohan to motion to approve, Cochrane 2 <sup>nd</sup> , voted.
	Board to review and possibly approve Financial Advisory Committee ("FAC") recommendations. The FAC recommended the approval of use of Town ARPA funds for a new police cruiser. The Town Administrator noted the approximate balance of \$126,000.00 in Town ARPA, which would reduce to approximately \$62,000.00 should the police cruiser be approved. Member Cochrane questioned the recommendation of use of Town ARPA vs. County ARPA. The Chairman noted the surety of using Town ARPA. The Town Administrator voiced that he believes the second Police Cruiser requested would be folded into the Capital Request Cycle. Member Cochrane voiced concern that she doesn't see the second Police Cruiser going forward through that cycle as there is much older equipment within the Town that she does not foresee the Finance Committee approving and that she felt purchasing the two Police Cruisers now to save approximately \$20,000.00 was the better decision. She felt it's a missed opportunity to not try to ask for County ARPA funds. Clerk McCrohan agreed that the potential savings is considerable especially given the fact that replacement is inevitable. The Chairman asserted that there are many other issues that could be funded through County ARPA; Chairman Freitas noted that if two Police Cruisers were purchased simultaneously, the majority of both ARPA funds would be nearly depleted and that leaves minimal space for other emergencies or issues that may arise. Member Cochrane voiced that she feels this is a mistake. The Board voted to approve the use of Town ARPA funds for one Police Cruiser.	McCrohan to motion to approve, Cochrane 2 <sup>nd</sup> , voted.
	Board to review and possibly sign First Amendment to Contract of Employment for the Berkley Police Chief. The Board voted to sign.	McCrohan to motion to sign, Cochrane 2 <sup>nd</sup> , voted.
Personnel Board	Board to review and possibly hire JoEllen Senechal as Assistant Tax Collector. Ms. Cochrane spoke in her capacity of Treasurer/Collector regarding Ms. Senechal's experience and her abilities. Member Cochrane abstained from voting due to a conflict of interest. The Personnel Board voted to recommend to hire Ms. Senechal effective January 4, 2024. The Board voted to hire Ms. Senechal effective January 4, 2024.	McCrohan to motion to recommend, Chabot 2 <sup>nd</sup> , voted.  McCrohan to motion to hire, Freitas 2 <sup>nd</sup> , voted.

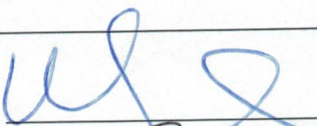


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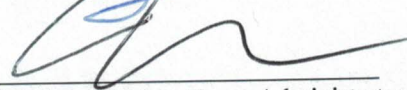
SELECTMEN IN ATTENDANCE: Joe Freitas, Chairman, Tabitha K. McCrohan, Clerk, Wendy F. Cochrane, Member

Meeting Minutes	Board to review and approve Meeting Minutes of January 3, 2024. The Board voted to approve.	McCrohan to motion to approve, Cochrane 2 <sup>nd</sup> , voted.
	Board to review and approve Executive Session Minutes of January 3, 2024. The Board voted to approve.	McCrohan to motion to approve, Cochrane 2 <sup>nd</sup> , voted.
Meeting Mail	Board to review Annual Report of the Bristol County Mosquito Control Project. The Board voted to file and post on the Town Website.	McCrohan to motion to file and post, Cochrane 2 <sup>nd</sup> , voted.
Town Administrator Report	The Town Administrator noted a request from the Freetown Town Administrator to waive permit fees. The Board approved the request. He offered an update regarding the cistern tank: a meeting was scheduled for Thursday 1/18/24, after which he will provide quotes and discuss funding sources. The Town Administrator has also organized site visits for a long-term security solution and noted that the South Entrance is again working with keycard access. He also noted that the Finance Committee is active and that he has distributed budgets to each Department.	McCrohan to motion to waive, Cochrane 2 <sup>nd</sup> , voted.
Finance Committee Update	The Chairman voiced the potential of a priority list and any additional thoughts that the Board should share with the Finance Committee prior to the start of the budget. The Town Administrator noted that he believes the Finance Committee will be happy to have public input and reminded that Board and the audience that the Annual Town Meeting is coming up, as well.	
Adjournment	The Board voted to adjourn with the announcement of the next meeting, which will be held on January 31, 2024.	McCrohan to motion to adjourn, Cochrane 2 <sup>nd</sup> , voted.

  
Joe Freitas, Chairman

  
Tabitha K. McCrohan, Clerk

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Wendy F. Cochrane, Member

  
Matthew Chabot, Town Administrator