

July 11, 2022

The Selectboard meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Don Martinis. All Board members were in attendance and participating in the Arcand Meeting Room. Also actively participating in the meeting was Town Administrator Denis Fraine and Administrative Assistant Hilarie Allie. This meeting was accessible to the public either in-person or via the Zoom online option.

Public Hearing – on the application of Huang Wang Inc. DBA Bamboo Express, Zhongwu Huang, Mgr. for the transfer of the Restaurant All Alcohol & Common Victualler License from Bamboo Express Inc. Premises is located at 15 North Main Street, Suite B6 & B 7.

Mr. Martinis read the public hearing and continued the Public Hearing so the next agenda item could be completed.

Mr. Martinis welcomed the Bellingham Fire Department as well as the Norfolk Fire Department. Fire Chief Gentile explained that Captain Robert Provost of Bellingham and firefighter Alexa Bethoney of Norfolk were in the right place at the right time. While they were at Work Out World they witnessed an elderly patron collapse and go into cardiac arrest. With their quick actions they were able to revive the individual and keep stable until the paramedics arrived. Captain Provost and firefighter Bethoney were given letters of commendation from Chief Gentile as well as proclamations from the Selectboard. They were thanked for their actions that day and told they made the residents of Bellingham and Norfolk proud as a result.

Public Hearing Cont.'d – Attorney Meihuei Hu introduced herself and explained that she is representing Mr. Zhongwu Huang who was with her this evening. She explained that he is the principal holder of Huang Wang, Inc., the proposed manager as well as the chef. Mr. Wang has been in the restaurant business for 7 years mainly working as a hibachi chef and has been looking to purchase his own business. He and his wife will be running the business together. Attorney Hu stated they are excited to spend their time and effort to build the business and commit themselves to Bellingham.

Mr. Martinis asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak on behalf of the public hearing to which no one responded.

On a Martinis/Connor motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to close the Public Hearing.

On a Grant/Connor motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to approve the transfer of the Restaurant All Alcohol & Common Victualler License from Bamboo Express Inc. to Huang Wang Inc. DBA Bamboo Express, Zhongwu Huang, Mgr. The premises is located at 15 North Main Street Suite B6 & B7.

Peter Marano, Superintendent of Schools – Update

Mr. Peter Marano presented before the Board with a general update on the school with regards to the budget, student enrollment, school programs, transportation and various other subjects.

- Mr. Marano explained the budget process starts in October when he begins meeting with the administration team to start building the budget. They start at zero and work towards building the full budget by looking at many factors such as student learning options, inflation, IT, student poverty and low-income needs, special education and building facility needs. Approximately eighty percent of the budget is contracted salaries and the remaining twenty percent comes from non-salary expenses such as contracted services, utilities and tuition paid outside the school district. The budget is then presented to the school committee for approval and then it is subsequently approved by the residents at Town Meeting in the Spring.
- Mr. Marano stated the school is a member of NESDEC – the New England School Development Council. They provide a comprehensive student enrollment study on an annual basis. They look at past years and future years and driving factors such as the number of births in town and the number of expected births and trends in housing developments. The results show the student enrollment is decreasing and has been doing so the last 10 years. As of June 30th, the total student enrollment is 1900 and NESDEC anticipates by 2031 the total student enrollment will be 1500. This is a trend they are seeing all over New England. Families are having fewer children and families have other schooling options such as vocational schools, charter schools, school choice, home schooling and private schools. Mr. Marano pointed out the student enrollment for grades K-3 has been consistent but grades 8-12 sees a decline. It is their goal to provide programs and opportunities for these students to stay in Bellingham.
- Mr. Marano was excited to talk about some new positions that were added for FY23. He was most excited about two new positions that were added for a program known as innovative pathways. Innovative pathways is a series of courses that students can take starting in grade 9 and continue through 12 grade. This program will lead to certification and can also lead to a career path and/or internships. The two pathways being added are manufacturing and engineering and health sciences with a goal of adding a couple more pathways in the next year. This is a new program across the state and it has been approved by the Department of Education. As far as curriculum Mr. Marano touched upon a new ELA program being introduced to all grades across the board as well as a collaborative with all the schools in the Blackstone Valley School District known as BVExel. This program gives students non-traditional course offerings that will expose them to career options that they wouldn't necessarily be exposed to just at their individual high school. It is being funded by a grant.
- Mr. Marano welcomed Mr. Mike Roche to touch upon transportation. Mr. Roche stated the school department recently purchased 3 vans to reduce the cost of out of district transportation. They have been able to use these vans for numerous other situations as well and have seen a huge value in cost reduction by purchasing

these vans. They pointed out that the transportation budget had been consistently increasing each year by roughly 12% but with the purchase of these vans the transportation budget increased only minimally. Mr. Marano stated they have been working with a transportation consultant to look for ways to save in transportation costs and stated they have already went out to bid for the 2023-2024 school year. They will also include in their options the cost of self-operating.

- Mr. Marano explained that there is a new development going in in Town and as a part of the decision process the developer will be donating \$20,000 per building permit towards the schools and they felt this would be a great opportunity to have a centralized preschool facility adjacent to the High School. It opens up great opportunities with regards to chapter 74 funding which is what the Town would receive for a vocationally program as well as early childhood certification with innovative pathways. Currently the School Department is exploring a feasible study and architectural analysis and then they will go from there.
- The final topic Mr. Marano touched upon in his presentation was school security. He stated that entrapment entrances have been built at BHS, BMS and KMA and plans to have them built at DiPietro and Stallbrook are underway. Security cameras are at BHS, BMS and KMA and a few at DiPietro and his goal is to add more at the elementary level. They are monitored by the technology director, the principals and the police department. They have a Raptor program which is a security software program which allows teachers to provide real time information to anyone in the building if there is a security breach at the school. They will continue training their staff with Alice (alert lockdown inform counter and evacuate) which is the response to an intruder in the building. The new school resource officer has already been trained in Alice and is excited about the opportunity to train the staff this fall. The Board reiterated that the ultimate goal is to go back to two resource officers.

After a brief discussion, the Board they thanked Mr. Marano for coming in and providing an update. The full presentation can be found here:

https://www.bellinghamma.org/system/files/uploads/superintendent_update_2.pdf

Gifts/Grants Acceptance

On a McNulty/Sahin motion the Board unanimously voted 4-0 (Mrs. Grant temporarily stepped out of the room) to accept the gifts and grants as listed herein, with said expenditures to be under the direction of the parties noted:

Fund#	Amount	From	For/Purpose	Spending Authority
2768	\$10,000 (provisional until signed contract received sometime in August)	MA Libraries Board of Commissioners	"Open for Business" to offer training and support to the business community	Library Director

On a Connor/Grant motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to approve the FY22 Fiscal Year End Transfers as presented by the CFO. Please see attached for details.

Jessica Small, Halo Beauty Salon – One Day Beer & Wine Permit Request

Ms. Small introduced herself as one of the owners of Halo Beauty Salon and stated that the salon would be hosting an open house on Sunday July 17th from 12PM – 3PM and they would like to serve sangria. Mrs. Allie confirmed that she had turned in all the required paperwork.

On a McNulty/Grant motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to grant a One Day Beer & Wine Permit to Halo Beauty Salon for Sunday July 17, 2022 from 12PM – 3PM at their location of 334 Hartford Ave.

Remote Participation

The Board continued their discussion on remote participation in light of the fact that the governor's executive order to allow for all boards and committees to meet via a remote function will be coming to an end on July 15th. Mr. Fraine explained the House and the Senate have both turned in different versions of a bill to extend the option to hold remote meetings but no conclusion has been met. Mrs. Grant stated she is in favor of allowing remote participation of the public to meetings but doesn't feel the Town should adopt a remote participation policy allowing board members to participate by vote via a remote option. Her feeling is if you have made a commitment to be on a board or committee, you should make your best effort to attend the meetings in person. Mr. Fraine explained if no extension on the remote participation is granted and the Board takes no action this evening on adopting a policy, then after July 15th all Board members must be in person to participate in votes. It was the Board agreement that they would wait to see what would happen at the state level.

Brian Norton – Conservation Commission

As a recap the Board received a letter from Mr. Norton in July 2021 stating he needed to relocate out of the Town of Bellingham and was hoping to continue to serve on the Conservation Commission. The Board approved this request to allow him to continue to serve with further review of his resident status in six months' time. Mr. Fraine stated that Mr. Norton currently still resides in Franklin but wishes to continue serving on the Conservation Commission. Mrs. McNulty asked whether or not the commission would like him to remain on and Mr. Fraine stated they would. Mr. Martinis stated he would like to see him remain on the Commission as they need qualified experienced individuals. Mr. Sahin asked if Mr. Norton was experienced enough to stay on the Commission and the members affirmed he was.

On a Grant/McNulty motion the Board voted 4-1 with Mr. Connor opposing to allow Mr. Brian Norton to continue serving his 3 year term on the Conservation Commission. Under discussion Mr. Connor stated he does not vote for nonresidents and was under the impression that Mr. Norton said he was moving back to Bellingham. Mr. Martinis stated that his original intent was to move back. Mr. Connor feels people shy away from the Conservation Commission because of the same leadership and if other people would step up they may have an easier time getting people to join.

On a Sahin/Grant motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to approve the May abatements in the amount of \$818.20.

On a Grant/McNulty motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to open the Fall Town Meeting warrant with a close date of August 26, 2022.

Town Administrator Report

Mr. Fraine presented the Board with an agreement and release for a settlement the Town has reached with Cummins Inc. for damage the company caused to a Town fire truck while it was in their possession for repairs.

On a McNulty/Connor motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to approve the Settlement Agreement and Release between the Town of Bellingham and Cummins, Inc. Please see attached.

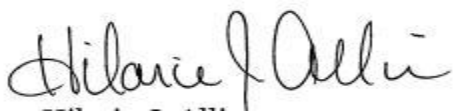
Mr. Fraine presented the Taunton Street and Nason Street Calming Study. It shows that you cannot just arbitrarily start putting up traffic signs. Mr. Fraine stated there are some concepts that make sense for Taunton Street particularly the solar powered speed limit signs. The report also mentions speed humps. Mr. Fraine stated he would eventually like to try something like this in Town he's just not necessarily convinced this would be the right road for it. Mr. Martinis pointed out that the study showed traffic is going anywhere between 30-32 mph and the speed limit is actually 30 mph but posted at 25 mph.

On a Grant/McNulty motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to authorize the Town to purchase 2 flashing solar speed limit signs to be installed on Taunton Street.

Mr. Fraine stated that the current municipal electricity aggregate program that we have had for the past 6-7 years will be expiring. Every resident is enrolled in this program unless they opt out. The Town has a firm that will competitively bid new rates for the generation portion of the electric bill come September. If the Town isn't happy with the rates they can opt out of the program.

On a Grant/McNulty motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Hilarie J. Allie". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name of the signatory.

Hilarie J. Allie
Administrative Assistant