



Town of Bellingham

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

10 Mechanic Street

Bellingham, Massachusetts 02019

Tel: 508-657-2800 * 508-966-4425

June 15, 2020

The Board of Selectmen meeting was called to order remotely at 7:00 PM by Chairman Michael Connor using Zoom Technology. A roll call confirmed all members of the Board were participating including the newest Board member Kelly Grant. Also actively participating in the meeting was Town Administrator Denis Fraine and Administrative Assistant Hilarie Allie. The remote meeting was being monitored by Jim Kupfer, Town Planner and Zoning Officer. It was determined by Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place that no in-person attendance of Board members or any member of the public would be permitted at this meeting. This meeting was accessible to the public via the Zoom online option.

Reorganization

The meeting was turned over to Mrs. Allie who asked the Board for nominations for Chairman. Mr. Martinis made a motion to nominate Mr. Connor as Chairman, seconded by Mrs. McNulty with all members voting in the affirmative.

Mr. Connor asked the Board for nominations for Vice Chairman. Mrs. Grant made a motion to nominate Mrs. McNulty as Vice Chairman, seconded by Mr. Martinis with all members voting in the affirmative.

Zoning Board Interviews

- Jim Dunlea

Mr. Dunlea stated he has been a resident of Bellingham for 17 years. He has his MBA and is an IT consultant. He donates a lot of his time to various charities particularly Live Learn Love which provides financial assistance to single mother's with cancer. He is the incumbent Vice Chair on the Zoning Board of Appeals and has been a member for 7-8 years. He stated he would like to continue the opportunity to serve and welcomes the challenges and opportunities that the Board faces.

Mr. Martinis stated he would like to reappoint Mr. Dunlea during this critical time.

Mrs. McNulty asked Mr. Dunlea looking back on his experience with the ZBA what he would have done differently. Mr. Dunlea stated he would have voted differently on a few appeals. Mrs. McNulty went on to ask Mr. Dunlea what his perspective was on the two big developments that are before the Town currently. He stated he thought the 40B Curtis Pond project was good for the Town allowing the Town to reach the 40B threshold and have future projects back in the hands of the Town without state mandates.

Mr. Spencer asked how he would remedy spot zoning. Mr. Dunlea stated the rezoning approach at Town Meetings that Mr. Kupfer has taken charge of is the most appropriate approach.

Mr. Salisbury stated Mr. Dunlea is exceedingly fair with all matters that come before the Board and is always the most prepared member and recommended the BOS reappoint Mr. Dunlea. Mr. Gabrielle agreed.

- Rayan Shamas

Mr. Shamas has lived in Bellingham for 3 years and is currently working as a project engineer working on various projects across the US. He has lived in the US since 2004 before moving from Lebanon. He is aware of the 40B Curtis Pond project. He learned about the position on the Zoning Board from Larry Sposato.

Mr. Martinis asked Mr. Shamas if he has ever had a situation with his company when he had to go before a Town during the permitting process. Mr. Shamas stated he worked on a project with National Grid which required approval by a town. He also asked Mr. Shamas if he has ever attended a Zoning Board meeting or a Town Meeting and Mr. Shamas answered in the negative.

Mrs. McNulty asked him what would differentiate himself from Mr. Dunlea to receive the nomination tonight. Mr. Shamas stated he is a fast learner, pays attention to detail, is quick with technology and will dive into the laws.

Mr. Spencer stated there are a lot of special requests and variances that come before the Zoning Board and asked what his philosophy will be on making those decisions. Mr. Shamas stated he will base his decision on a balance of scientific view and whether it will have a negative impact on society and allow for a case by case needs investigation and will always give the resident a chance to be heard.

Mrs. Grant asked Mr. Shamas if he has the time to devote to this position. Mr. Shamas stated he used to travel a lot for work but in the current position he does not and has more free time now.

Mr. Salisbury asked Mr. Shamas what his take is on 40B's and what aspects are good and bad about the Town's zoning laws.

Mr. Shamas is for friendly 40B's and is excited for the opportunity to meet the threshold and believes the percentage exists for a reason. Zoning will bring with it some gray area projects and he plans to make appropriate decisions on each individual case.

Mr. Gabrielle asked Mr. Shamas what drew him to this position. Mr. Shamas said he is excited to bring a new perspective with his technology and engineering skills and hopes to add a lot of knowledge to the Board.

- Bryan Bradley

Mr. Bradley stated he moved to Bellingham when he was 2 years old and has lived here now for 27 years and purchased his first home 3 years ago. He works as an IT operations manager and serves as Chairman of the BVT advisory board. He spent 9 years in the Army as a mechanic and is a fast learner and wants to make a difference in the Town.

Mr. Martinis asked how his technical skills could make a difference on the Zoning Board. Mr. Bradley feels his experience as an operations manager could help make a difference. He stated he has attended both Zoning Board meetings and Town Meetings.

Mrs. McNulty asked Mr. Bradley what he could bring to the Zoning Board. Mr. Bradley stated he feels his experience as a resident could make a difference.

Mr. Spencer asked Mr. Bradley what his feelings are on the 40B that is currently before the Zoning Board and how he feels it impacts the Town. Mr. Bradley stated he thinks the 40B is exciting for the Town with minimal disturbance and great benefit.

Mrs. Grant asked what the biggest thing that has affected the Town with all the current change. Mr. Bradley thought the increase in traffic has been the biggest change and that will need to be addressed. Mr. Salisbury asked Mr. Bradley what his take was on the 40Bs in general and what he thought of the Town's Zoning Bylaws. Mr. Bradley thought it was important for the Town to meet the state's threshold and he stated the current Board does a great job handling each case uniquely and makes adjustments as needed.

The Board thanked all 3 candidates for their time and interest in this position and Mr. Martinis stressed again that he thought it was important to have someone with experience at this time so his vote would be to reappoint Mr. Dunlea.

On a Spencer/McNulty motion, the Board voted to appoint Mr. Ryan Shamas to the five-year vacancy on the Zoning Board of Appeals. The motion carried on a 4-1 vote with Mr. Martinis opposing.

Larry Sposato – Dog License Late Fee

Mr. Sposato stated he is proposing the Town either defer or waive the \$20 dog license late fee for those who have not licensed their dog this year due to the situation that some residents are in because of COVID. Waiving the fee for 2020 would result in a loss of revenue of roughly \$2000-\$3000. This requires approval of the Board as it is part of the Town's Bylaws. He stated the Town imposes these late fees starting July 1st then the state has a series of fines that start in August occur again in October and one last time in November. He has not heard what the state plans on doing.

On a Spencer/Martinis motion, the Board unanimously voted to accept the Town Clerk's recommendation to waive the late fee fines for dog registrations for 2020.

The Board discussed their upcoming meeting dates and determined that they will meet July 13th and August 17th if that date works for the annual cookout at the Senior Center and then pick dates again in August.

On a McNulty/Grant motion, the Board unanimously voted to ratify the Town Administrator's appointments per the attached list.

On a Spencer/McNulty motion, the Board unanimously voted to reappoint the various Board and Committee positions per the attached list. Under discussion Mr. Connor confirmed all appointees were Bellingham residents and it was determined Mrs. Grant would represent the Select Board on the Capital Improvement Committee.

On a McNulty/Spencer motion, the Board unanimously voted to approve the June 1st minutes as submitted.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Fraine stated to the Board that there is a list of Executive Session minutes for their review. Some are recommended to be approved and released and some should just be reviewed for approval without release at this time.

Mr. Fraine commended Mrs. MacKinnon and her office for all their hard work in getting receipts into FEMA and the eligible receipts submitted for the CARES Act and stated the Town just received a \$250,000 reimbursement.

On a Spencer/Martinis motion, the Board unanimously voted to approve the easement for the power line improvements by Mass Electric to the South Main Street standpipe building for the antenna lease with T Mobile.

Relative to the guidance from the state for Town Meetings, this year's Town Meeting will have to take place outside on the football field. Stop 'N Shop will be donating hand sanitizer and wipes. There will be a sound system and parking will be much like the fireworks parking. They will encourage residents to wear masks but there will be a no mask section as well. Mr. Connor asked what the procedure will be in the event of bad weather. Mr. Fraine stated they will have to make a determination earlier in the day and the meeting will need to be opened but then continued to the next day and they will continue to follow this procedure until the meeting takes place.

Town Hall is anticipating opening its doors on Friday June 19th. Mr. Aicardi determined that the occupancy load for the foyer will be 14 and a sign will be posted stating the same.

On a Martinis/McNulty motion, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Hilarie J. Allie".

Hilarie J. Allie
Administrative Assistant