



Town of Bellingham

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

10 Mechanic Street

Bellingham, Massachusetts 02019

Tel: 508-966-5800 * Fax: 508-966-4425

May 8, 2023

The Selectboard meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM in the Arcand Meeting Room by Vice Chairwoman Kelly Grant. It is to be noted that the former Chairman, Don Martinis was not re-elected, and Cynthia McNulty resigned the morning of this meeting. Actively participating in the meeting were the following Board members: Mrs. Grant, Mr. Connor, Mr. Sahin and newest elected member Mr. Hennessy. Also actively participating in the meeting was Interim Town Administrator Beth Cornell-Smith and Administrative Assistant Hilarie Allie. This meeting was accessible to the public either in-person or via the Zoom online option.

Mrs. Grant welcomed the newest Selectboard member, Mr. Mike Hennessy. Mr. Hennessy was elected at the most recent Town Election.

Reorganization

The meeting was turned over to Mrs. Allie who asked the Board for nominations for Chairman. Mrs. Grant made a motion to nominate Mr. Connor as Chair, seconded by Mr. Connor. Mr. Hennessy made a motion to nominate Mr. Sahin as Chair, seconded by Mr. Sahin. Mrs. Allie called for a vote for Mr. Connor's nomination, and he received two in favor, two opposed. Mrs. Allie called for a vote for Mr. Sahin's nomination, and he received two in favor, two opposed. After some discussion, Mrs. Grant nominated herself as Chair seconded by Mr. Connor. Mrs. Allie called for a vote and Mrs. Grant received two votes in favor and two votes opposed. The Board was unsuccessful in reorganizing and therefor the Board remained the same. The meeting was turned back over to Mrs. Grant.

Cultural Council Interview

Mrs. Grant welcomed Mr. Kevin Staley and asked him why he would be interested in joining the cultural council. Mr. Staley stated he recently moved into Town with his wife and they feel it's a great Town with many nice places to organize events. He explained that he currently is a project manager at Wayfair but previously working with the Baker/Polito Administration reviewing grants for housing and economic development side and therefore believes he can understand the state funding for the cultural council grants. Mr. Connor stated it is refreshing to see a younger face want to be involved and Mr. Sahin stated he appreciated his willingness to volunteer his time.

On a Connor/Hennessy motion the Board unanimously voted 4-0 to appoint Mr. Kevin Staley to the Cultural Council for a 3 year term effective May 8, 2023.

Interim Town Administrator Appointment

Mrs. Grant explained that the Board originally appointed Mrs. Cornell-Smith as the Interim Assistant Town Administrator but after advisement from Town Council will need to correct that appointment to Interim Town Administrator as there is no Assistant Town Administrator noted in the Charter.

On a Grant/Connor motion the Board unanimously voted 4-0 to modify the previous vote of Beth Cornell-Smith taken on April 2, 2023 and ratified on April 5, 2023 from the Interim Assistant Town Administrator to Interim Town Administrator retroactive to April 2, 2023.

Year End Transfers

Mrs. MacKinnon explained that these are routine year end transfers that are made when there is going to be a deficit in an operating budget account. Transfers are made to pull funds from an account that will most likely end up with a surplus. The transfers were presented to the Board.

On a Connor/Hennessy motion the Board unanimously voted 4-0 to approve FY23 Year End Transfer #1 as presented by Mary MacKinnon, CFO.

On a Connor/Sahin motion the Board unanimously voted 4-0 to approve FY23 Year End Transfer #2 as presented by Mary MacKinnon, CFO.

Mrs. MacKinnon stated the preparations for the Annual Town Meeting are well underway and the Board received the draft copy of the finance committee report and recommendations before this evening's meeting. She stated motions have been drawn up and will be reviewed by Town Counsel and then a trial run will take place with the Board prior to Town Meeting.

Committee Opportunities for Board Members

Mrs. Grant stated that there are a few committees with openings for Selectboard members. She stated a Selectboard member is needed for the Road Committee, Capital Improvement Committee as well as the OPM Selection team for the Water Treatment Plant Upgrade. Mr. Hennessy stated he would be willing to volunteer his time on the Capital Improvement Committee. He will be appointed with our June appointments. Mr. Sahin stated he would be willing to volunteer his time on the OPM selection committee as well as the roads committee.

Mr. Sahin inquired about Mr. Martinis' position on the Charter and Bylaw Review Committee and Mrs. Grant confirmed Mr. Martinis (though a Selectboard member previously) is a member at large on that committee.

On a Connor/Grant motion the Board unanimously voted 4-0 to re-appoint Sharon Blanchard to the Commission on Disability for a 3 year term.

On a Connor/Sahin motion the Board voted 3 in favor and 1 abstention by Mr. Hennessy as he was not on the Board at that time, to approve the April 10th and April 27th minutes as submitted.

Old Business

At the request of Mr. Connor last year, the Board put together a list of ongoing projects/issues in Town that they wanted to see through or continue to have updates on. Mrs. Grant asked that we add this to our agenda to update the newest Board member, Mr. Hennessy.

Mr. Hennessy inquired about the Meehan properties and Mrs. Grant advised that the Hartford Ave Adaptive Overlay Committee would be presenting a zoning change for that area at the Annual Town Meeting.

New Business

Mrs. Grant announced that Mrs. McNulty, Selectboard member, had resigned that morning and the Board needed to discuss options. The Board can decide to hold a special election to fill the vacant position or continue to run as a 4 member Board until the next scheduled election which would be May or June of 2024. After some discussion about the timing parameters and cost of the election the Board agreed to wait to make their final decision about filling the open position until the Selectboard meeting that follow Town Meeting.

Mrs. Allie presented the meeting dates for the remainder of the year and the Board discussed and all agreed to what was presented and Mrs. Allie will post with the Town Clerk.

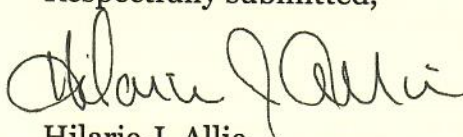
Mr. Sahin stated he would like Mr. Riedle to provide the Board with a general update regarding the road construction and time table of the projects at the next meeting. Mrs. Grant stated she would work with him to set that up.

Mr. Connor addressed Mr. Sahin with concerns about his chairman nomination. Mr. Connor stated it was his opinion that the Board needed someone with more experience and he felt there was no one on the Board with more experience to lead at this time then himself. Mr. Hennessy responded and said it was his opinion that Mr. Sahin has the leadership it takes to lead the Board. He stated Mr. Sahin provided him guidance throughout the election process and he watched one year's worth of meetings to form this opinion as well. Mrs. Grant stated she agreed with Mr. Connor. Though she has the outmost respect for Mr. Sahin's drive to serve it was in her opinion that the Board needed someone with more experience at this time. Mr. Sahin stated his main purpose is to work for the people and he feels he can do that successfully in the chairman position. He further stated the Board would work better together as a group with better communication and transparency. After further discussion, the Board agreed that they would discuss reorganizing at a later date.

Mrs. Cornell-Smith requested an executive session to discuss negotiations for the newly hired Fire Chief and Police Chief. All members of the Board were polled by Mrs. Allie and all voted in the affirmative.

On a Grant/Connor motion, the Board unanimously voted 4-0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 PM with no further business to be discussed at the conclusion of the executive session.

Respectfully submitted,



Hilarie J. Allie
Administrative Assistant