



Town of Bellingham

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

10 Mechanic Street

Bellingham, Massachusetts 02019

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

November 23, 2020

The November 23, 2020 Selectboard meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Michael Connor. All members of the Board were participating in the Arcand meeting room with the exception of Mr. Spencer and Mr. Martinis who were both participating via Zoom technology. 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. Therefore, this meeting was accessible to the public via the Zoom online option.

FY2021 Tax Classification Hearing

Mr. Connor read the public hearing notice for the FY2021 Tax Classification hearing and recognized CFO Mary MacKinnon who presented an overview of the process. Mrs. MacKinnon stated the hearing does not set the tax rate but rather the percentages associated with the Town's "split" rate. Mrs. MacKinnon explained the split is currently at a factor of .89 and has been for several years. She went on to state her recommendation is to maintain the split at .89 due to the impact of the recent proposition 2½ override as well as the implementation of the stormwater utility fee. Mrs. MacKinnon stated the Town's residential tax burden continues to be well below the region even with the increase from the proposition 2½ override.

Chief Assessor Betsy Cournoyer presented an overview of property values and the strengthening housing market. Mrs. Cournoyer indicated "new growth" for the year ending June 30, 2020 reached \$1.5M thanks in large part to the Lincoln Properties distribution center and several housing developments. Mrs. Cournoyer indicated FY22 will likely have much less growth based on current activity, however, FY23 should be strong considering the number of projects which are in the planning stages.

Mr. Connor suggested the Town look at ways to recognize the low tax burden Bellingham enjoys compared to other communities in the region. Mrs. MacKinnon stated there may be ways to present this information on the Town's website.

Mrs. MacKinnon directed the Board to the required motions for consideration.

On a Grant/McNulty motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to accept a residential factor of .89 for FY21 tax classification purposes.

On a McNulty/Grant motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to accept an FY21 small business exemption of 10%.

On a McNulty/Grant motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to not accept a residential exemption for FY21.

On a Grant/McNulty motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to accept an exclusion for FY21 of \$740,000 for water debt repayment.

On a Grant/McNulty motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to continue the Public Hearing to December 7, 2020 at 7PM.

On a McNulty/Grant motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to authorize the execution of the loan documents related to the permanent financing of the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust loan number CWT-19-13 all as outlined in the attached document entitled "Vote of the Board of Selectmen" and attached to these minutes.

On a Martinis/Grant motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to accept a \$10,000 donation from Amazon to be used for the Fire Department related to equipment.

On a McNulty/Grant motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to accept a \$5,080 Elections COVID Response Grant from the Center for Technology and Civic Life.


On a Grant/McNulty motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to abate the capital improvement, sewer, stormwater, trash and water charges in the amount of \$2,569.88 for the month of October.

On a McNulty/Spencer motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to accept the November 2nd minutes as submitted

Mr. Connor suggested the expiring appointments for various Board, which are typically made in March, be listed on the Town's website. He requested the Board see the list at a future meeting.

On a Martinis/Spencer motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Fraine", written over a horizontal line.

Denis C. Fraine
Town Administrator