



# MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN • TOWN HALL  
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## MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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January 6, 2020

6:30 p.m.

Town Hall, 5

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ms. Driscoll, Ms. Jaques, Mr. Bodmer-Turner and Mr. Steinert

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mr. Boling

**STAFF PRESENT:** Town Administrator, Mr. Federspiel, BOS Clerk, Ms. Hunter, Executive Assistant BOS/Town Administrator, Ms. Nathan, Communication and Community Engagement Coordinator, Ms. Marletta, Council on Aging Director, Ms. Hammond

**GUESTS:** Architect, Mr. Harden

**PRESS:** *Cricket Publisher*, Ms. Brown

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Ms. Driscoll called the BOS meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Ms. Driscoll asked for a moment of silence in the memory of Athena Thibodeau. Ms. Thibodeau worked in the Library and the Town Treasurer's and Accountant's offices and was a much-admired resident.

Ms. Driscoll stated the meeting is being recorded by Studio 1623 (Cape Ann TV) for future broadcast and recorded by Ms. Hunter for accuracy in minutes. She asked if anyone was recording the meeting to please let her know and requested attendees silence their cell phones.

**0. Items not on the agenda** – There were no requests to comment on items not on the agenda.

### **1. Cornerstone Church Options & Presentation**

Mr. Federspiel stated the Cornerstone Church option provides the Town with up to 3-years to close on the building at the appraised price of \$1.2M. The Town is currently waiting for cost estimates to convert the Church to a Senior Center and lawyers are working on the final Purchase and Sale Agreement.

Mr. Harden offered some background on his role in the Cornerstone Church project indicating he met Ms. Hammond when his 82-year-old father relocated to Manchester from ME and he was interested in identifying community resources to help his father. Additionally, Mr. Harden is also helping the Church with their new building.

Mr. Harden believes the proposed senior center is a good way to repurpose the Cornerstone Church building. In initiating a project like this, Mr. Harden stated it is important to look at codes, life safety issues, egress, handicap accessibility, elevator and all the needs of the Seniors in the community.

- New stairs are proposed for the back corner of the building
- A limited access elevator is proposed to replace one of the stairways in the front of the building
- First floor will contain entry vestibule, reception area and information area, Director's office, shared office for Veteran Services, Public Health Nurse and visiting doctor, small conference room, computer library area, arts and crafts area, fitness center with equipment, exercise room for classes, public toilets, elevator and machine room, coat closet and second means of egress.
- Second floor primarily will hold a large multi-purpose room, commercial kitchen, office for Activities/Program Coordinator, storage for tables, chairs and fitness equipment, public toilets and second egress.

Mr. Harden stated the building is of a suitable size for the Senior Center. The building has been well maintained, is in good shape and will convert successfully to meet the needs of the senior community.

Mr. Bodmer-Turner asked about flooding and dampness in the mechanical room/basement. Mr. Harden stated there had been flooding in the mechanical room and at one point the furnace needed to be replaced. He proposes raising the floor in the mechanical room and working to secure the perimeter against flooding. There has never been a flood to the main level.

Mr. Steinert asked how the property looked on the FEMA map and how far could the water rise. Mr. Federspiel stated he will verify the FEMA information.

Mr. Driscoll asked about the driveway and parking. Mr. Harden stated there is room to park 12 cars in the back of the building and the van could make a 3-point turn. However, he believes the van will have a dedicated place in the front of the building for drop off and pickups. Ms. Hammond stated Rockport's Senior Center had only 3 parking spaces and no van services and it was not a problem for the senior center.

Mr. Steinert asked if the proposed Senior Center was the best use of the property and believes it is in the Town's interest to explore all options. Ms. Hammond replied that several options had been explored by the Town and believes this is a perfect building for the Senior Center. Ms. Driscoll stated the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor would work for meeting space, classes and Parks and Recreation.

Mr. Steinert indicated he believes parking is an issue. Mr. Federspiel stated that is the one drawback but does not believe it is a fatal flaw. Mr. Harden stated there is parking available behind Town Hall and if necessary, a dedicated van could ferry people back and forth to the center.

Ms. Hammond stated Council on Aging vans currently run 5 days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and if necessary additional hours can be added. Additionally, programming will be better managed in a new dedicated facility. The Board thanked Mr. Harden for his presentation and work.

Ms. Jaques asked for clarification on the purchase option; if either party did not wish to continue the terms of the option how would that work. Mr. Federspiel replied the Church could bow out only if they failed to raise the money for their new building, but the Town could walk away by simply not exercising the option. Mr. Bodmer-Turner stated the option expires in 3-years.

Ms. Jaques also asked for clarification of “as is” stating 3-years is a long time in the life of a building. Mr. Federspiel stated if there was a material decline or deficit in the building it would be a change in the condition and in Article 3 of the option agreement allow for the Town to state there is a change.

Mr. Steinert questioned if the Town had fully explored this was the best use of the building and would like to know if the Town Planner has reviewed all possible uses of the property. Ms. Jaques stated the purchase does not lock the Town into the use of the building. The building becomes a Town asset.

Ms. Driscoll asked Mr. Federspiel if the Board needed to accept the Option Agreement this evening or if the decision could wait to the next meeting. Mr. Federspiel stated the decision could wait to the next meeting when the Purchase and Sale Agreement is finalized.

## **2. Update on Fire Chief Hiring**

Mr. Federspiel stated there are six semi-finalists for the Fire Chief position. On January 22<sup>nd</sup> and January 23<sup>rd</sup> working with the consultant candidates will go through a series of exercises to assess their ability to handle personnel issues, prioritize workday demands and more. At the end of the assessment the field will be narrowed to 2 or 3 candidates who will have final interviews with the search committee who will advance one finalist to be interviewed by the BOS.

Mr. Federspiel asked if Board members were interested in observing and participating in the final interviews. Additionally, Mr. Federspiel is recommending a formal final interview at a Board meeting.

Mr. Bodmer-Turner stated he was interested in participating in the process, but he may need to recuse himself depending on who the final candidates are.

Day One timeline is 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Day Two timeline is 8:00 a.m. to Noon

## **3. Update on Communication & Community Engagement Activities**

Mr. Federspiel introduced Ms. Marletta to the Board and stated she has been in her position for a month and a half. In that time, she has created the first newsletter, been introduced to Department Heads, started working on revamping the Town web site, expanding the Town’s presence on social media, started planning for training of Boards and Committees and formatting the Master Plan summary.

Ms. Marletta stated she has enjoyed getting to know everyone at Town Hall and looks forward to bridging communication with the residents. Her goal is to use lots of

methods to communicate including social media, the Town website, quarterly newsletters and the *Cricket*.

She has met with Ms. Beckman and discussed her ideas about the training timeline for Committees and Boards. She is working with Civic Plus a company offering government website design solutions to build Town e-government communication systems.

Mr. Steinert asked if Ms. Marletta was identifying all the constituents in the Town like seniors, parents and new move-ins. Ms. Marletta stated she is the mother of 3 school aged children, her in-laws live in Town and she hears chatter from lots of groups. She believes updating the web site, working on social media and mapping out multiple forms of consistent communication will positively impact communication in Town.

Mr. Steinert asked how she measured the success of communication. Ms. Marletta stated for web site and social media platforms there are analytical methods to identify number of followers and hits to the sites. 2,500 newsletters were mailed in real estate tax bills and put in the library and post office. Additionally, Ms. Marletta will participate in Council on Aging events to determine the best way to communicate with the fastest growing population in Town.

Mr. Bodmer-Turner recommended adding the web site at the end of Dates to Remember list to drive traffic to the web site for additional information.

#### **4. FY 21 Budget and Process – Discussion**

Mr. Federspiel stated throughout the budget process, “FY21 Budget and Process” will remain a standing item on the Board’s agenda. Tomorrow evening the Finance Committee will meet with Mr. Dam and Mr. Desrosiers to discuss the DPW Operating and Capital Budgets.

#### **5. Consent Agenda**

- BOS Minutes – December 2, 2019, December 9, 2019 and December 16, 2019
- MIAA Voting Delegate

*Ms. Jaques moved to approve Mr. Federspiel as the MIAA voting delegate for the Town; Mr. Bodmer-Turner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Ms. Jaques moved to approve the minutes of December 2, 2019, December 9, 2019 and December 16, 2019; Mr. Bodmer-Turner seconded the motion. The motion passed with Mr. Steinert abstaining from approving the minutes of December 2, 2019.*

#### **6. Correspondence**

- Letter from Dept of Housing & Community Dev. Re: Award of Small-Town Housing Choice Capital Grant
- Invite to the Kick-Off of 375<sup>th</sup> Celebration
- Request from Planning Board for Joint Meeting re: Master Plan Partnering Initiative

- Comcast Cable Communications, LLC Petition for Determination of Effective Competition
- Letter from MASSDOT re: Center St. Culvert Project Eligibility Notification

Mr. Bodmer-Turner took exception to the letter from Comcast Cable specifically referencing the “effective competition” statement. He stated there is no competitive service in the Town, Comcast is slow to respond to customer’s needs and the price of service continues to increase. He asked what could be done and stated it seems like they have a monopoly.

Mr. Federspiel suggested a letter to Comcast indicating the Board of Selectmen do not agree with their statement on “effective competition” and would like to see better service, options and pricing for the Town. Mr. Bodmer-Turner is interested in working on the letter to Comcast with Mr. Federspiel.

## **7. Town Administrator’s Report**

- 1) **Construction Update:** Waterline work on Ocean Street is shut down until spring. Work is being completed on sewer lines around the Harbor Loop. Final work of streetlight conversion will be completed in the next weeks. This has been a long process.
- 2) **Proposed Tree Policy:** Included in your packets for comments and questions. Mr. Dam and Mr. Federspiel will review fully with the Board at a meeting in February.
- 3) **Eagle Scout Ceremony:** This Saturday Ms. Jaques will be there to present proclamations from the Board.
- 4) **Cocker’s Boat Yard:** Expansion plans are under review with the Planning Board. Conservation Commission and Harbormaster have also reviewed the plans; Harbormaster Bion supports the project. Expansion plan call for new floats and docks adding 2,500 square feet of dock to the Boat Yard. Neighboring property owners have been notified.
- 5) **Staffing Updates:** Beth Heisey and Cyndie Manos have retired. Beth’s replacement in the Building Dept. is Cara Cutone and Cyndie’s replacement, Genna Grasso starts on January 27<sup>th</sup> in the Treasurer/Collector’s Office. We are having some challenges in hiring replacement police officers. Chuck Dam will remain on paternity leave through February but will be available for meetings.

8. **Other Matters, as May Have Not Been Reasonably Anticipated by the Chairman – Discussion Only.** There were no additional matters discussed this evening.

*Ms. Jaques moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Steinert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

## **Meeting Documents:**

- Cornerstone Church Presentation
- FY21 Preliminary Budget Book
- Consent Agenda items as listed

- Correspondence as listed
- Town Administrator's Report

### **Upcoming BOS Meetings**

- January 21, 2020, BOS Meeting
- January 28, 2020, MERSD Budget Presentation at Essex Elementary
- January 29, 2020, Joint Meeting with Finance Committee re: Capital Budget Review
- February 3, 2020, BOS Meeting
- February 18, 2020, BOS Meeting