



# MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA

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SELECT BOARD • TOWN HALL  
Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts 01944-1399  
Telephone (978) 526-2000 FAX (978) 526-2001

## MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD

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February 6, 2023

6:30 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting, Meeting: ID 876 1009 6600 Passcode: 441565 Mobile: 1.646.558.8656

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ms. Jaques, Chair, Ms. Harrison, Vice-Chair, Ms. Bilotta, Mr. Sollosy, and Mr. Round (remotely)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**STAFF PRESENT:** Town Administrator, Mr. Federspiel, Executive Assistant, Debbie Powers

**GUESTS:** Harbormaster Bion Pike

**PRESS:**

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Ms. Jaques called the Select Board meeting to order at 6:30pm and five members were present by roll call.

**Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items:** None

**Chairman's Report & Action Items:** The Board reviewed the Action list.

**1. New Alcohol License Hearing – Aspect Athletic Club, LLC:**

*Ms. Harrison moved to open the public hearing for Aspect Athletic Club, LLC; Ms. Bilotta seconded. Motion unanimously approved by roll call vote.*

Jessica Pletka, owner and operator, of Aspect Athletic Club, LLC. explained her operation plan for the Manchester Athletic Club. She stated she took over the operation of the MAC in October and is applying for a new alcohol license, instead of a transfer. The café is located in the same location as the previous owners.

Ms. Harrison asked about the floor plans and where the alcohol is stored. Ms. Pletka answered that everything is in the same location as before and all alcohol is separate and controlled 24 hours/7 days of week.

*Ms. Harrison moved to close the evidentiary portion of the hearing; Ms. Bilotta seconded. Motion unanimously approved by roll call vote.*

*Ms. Harrison moved to approve the alcohol license application from Aspect Athletic Club, LLC; Mr. Sollosy seconded. Motion unanimously approved by roll call vote.*

**10. Consent Agenda:**

*Ms. Harrison moved to approve the consent agenda , Ms. Bilotta seconded. Motion unanimously approved by roll call vote.*

**2. Alcohol License Change of Managers:**

**a. American Legion**

**b. The Mooring Restaurant**

*Ms. Bilotta moved to approve the Change of Manager applications for the American Legion and The Mooring Restaurant; Mr. Sollosy seconded. Motion unanimously approved by roll call vote.*

**9. Liaison update:**

Ms. Bilotta spoke on the Planning Board and which articles they were bringing forward. They were adult entertainment, senior housing, mini ADU and redefine the existing ADU zoning law. She asked if the Town is working on a creating a process to track ADUs. Mr. Federspiel answered that the Interim Town Planner has been working with the Principal Assessor and trying to track how many units we have now, which is difficult as they haven't been tracked before. It will be easier when new permits are issued.

Ms. Harrison spoke on the school budging hearing scheduled for Tuesday at 7:00 pm. She felt the School Finance Subcommittee and the School Board are not entirely in agreement with the proposed budget. She spoke on the turf field and the school may have enough in the reserves to pay for the replacement fields, but they have been told by their bonding advisors that having a large reserve fund would be advantageous if they went for a major borrowing right now.

Mr. Federspiel explained that the schools will be retiring a good portion of the High School debt next year, which will drop the debt payment around \$350,000 so a new bond for 1.2 million will come in lower then what the school has been paying. The general feelings were to borrow the money rather deplete the reserves but the voters will ultimately make that decision.

**7. CZM Coastal Vulnerability Steering Committee:**

Mr. Federspiel explained that Sue Croft has been working to obtain volunteers for the Coastal Vulnerability Steering Committee and a Select Board member should serve on the committee.

The Board discussed who would serve and it was decided that Ms. Harrison would be the member and Ms. Jaques as the alternate.

*Ms. Bilotta moved to ratify the Coastal Zone Management Coastal Vulnerability Steering Committee nominees as listed; Mr. Harrison seconded. Motion unanimously approved by roll call vote.*

**3. Potential Excluding Truck Traffic Hearing Discussion:**

Mr. Federspiel explained that this is just a preliminary discussion to decide whether or not to move forward with the formal process to hold a hearing on excluding truck traffic on Jersey Lane. Ms. Jaques asked if the Board had any questions.

Ms. Bilotta asked what initiated this agenda items. She explained she took a drive by the location and noticed two signs up. She asked if someone wanted one or both signs to come down or is someone asking why they went up.

Mr. Federspiel explained a resident asked the Town to grant permission to put up a no through truck sign due to concerns of the one area of the road where it is extra narrow and curvy and some trucks have gotten stuck. It was not a formal designation but it might help eliminate a truck trying to pass through. He stated he gave approval for the first sign but not the second. Some residents were concerned about the signs and how they came about, so this is why this item is before you tonight.

Mr. Round stated he felt that no trucks are going up there unless they have a reason and going through would be a big challenge to them.

Mr. Sollosy thought maybe GPS was the problem. Ms. Jaques commented she has lived on Forster Road and it is not a road that trucks are going to use to get from point A to point B.

Ms. Harrison asked if we could move the sign that states it is a private road to the public portion of the road. Mr. Federspiel explained if the road is open to public travel, you can't exclude anyone from the road unless you put a truck exclusion on the road.

Ms. Jaques opened up the discussion to the public comments.

Bob Reed, 12 Forster Road, spoke on the history of Forster Road. He explained he created and installed, with the advice of the Chief of Police, the private way sign. He stated that any sort of signage would have to be approved by all the landowners. He feels that no one would use the road as a short cut. The town only plows for fire safety and it does not give the town the right to make any changes to the road. It sounds like a solution to a problem that does not exist. He also asked how it would be enforced.

Davis Keniston, 16 Jersey Lane, stated he has plenty of photos of semi-trucks traveling from Forster Road onto Jersey Lane. He explained a situation that involved a semi that wipe out a portion of his property. The upper part of Jersey lane only has 3 houses and we are to maintain that portion of the road. He initiated this issue because Jersey Lane is being used as a shortcut and the road is deteriorating. He is looking to have traffic that would serve Jersey Lane to use Jersey Lane and traffic to serve Forster Road to use Forster Road to limit the through traffic. Both signs were put up by the DPW and the first sign was designed by himself.

Jim Moroney, 8 Jersey Lane, have been a resident over 25 years on Jersey Lane and stated that the road is extremely narrow and no one would take the road as a short cut. If they do, they are lost and won't do it again. The town should not discourage trucks from using the road.

James Elder, 14 Jersey Lane, stated that his residence is at the point of where the public section changes to the private section. He agrees that the truck traffic is problematic. Trucks have knocked over his stone wall. He would be in support of anything that can be done to cut traffic down on Jersey Lane.

Bill McConnell, 17 Jersey Lane asked if the exclusion would pertain to cars traveling the road. He explained that a number of neighbors have been stopped and were told they should not use the road unless they live there. What is the level of enforcement of this and would the homeowners need to stop the trucks or contact the police themselves.

Ms. Jaques stated she felt that the majority of comments the Board has heard are not in favor of pursuing a truck traffic exclusion. She asked the Board for their thoughts.

Mr. Federspiel explained that the only way for the police to issue a warning or a ticket would be to officially post the road as a truck exclusion route. It would only apply to commercial truck traffic that is not making local deliveries.

Ms. Bilotta felt that this is not a cut through, and she also is not in a favor of a sign that can not be enforced. She believes if we can't enforce it, we should not have the sign.

Mr. Sollosy stated there are a lot of gray areas here and it goes beyond tuck traffic.

Mr. Keniston stated it is a cut through but it not a cut though to get back to town but it is a for Forster Road. The traffic is damaging the road and if we don't control the traffic up to Forster Road the road will not be maintained as it should be.

Sarah Mellish, 11 Bennett Street, stated that the majority of traffic on Bennett Street is for Forster Road. She feels that it is inappropriate to exclude traffic on any road in town.

The Board does not feel they should pursue a truck exclusion on Jersey Lane.

Ms. Bilotta asked what happens to the two signs that are there. Mr. Jaques stated that Mr. Keniston can put them on his property or they will be taken down.

#### **4. Manchester Affordable Housing Trust Update:**

John Feurbach updated the Board on the Manchester Affordable Housing Trust and the Housing Authority. Tonight's discussion is to update the Board and for guidance on the Pleasant Street property. The RFP that was written, did not produce any applications. He spoke with some developers who expressed interest in the properties and they let him know we were looking for too much in the proposal. It was suggested to issue a Request for Qualifications. It was decided to move forward on the RFQ but should we take out the Pleasant Street property. He asked the Board tonight the status of the Pleasant Street property and does the Board still think it is variable for housing and when it would become available.

Ms. Jaques stated that Town Meeting approved the non-binding vote to obtain proposals. She asked the rest of Board for their comments.

Ms. Harrison explained she is in support but we need to have the School Street site cleared and Town Meeting would need to vote to approve the move of the DPW. That would take some time. There are also other options the Town could consider on the site.

Mr. Sollosy explained there are a lot of moving parts. He feels that the housing authority sites are delayed due to the Pleasant Street property and as a result nothing happened.

Ms. Bilotta stated she would like to move forward with the RFQ stating what the Town has presently but to also let them know that the Pleasant Street property may become available. She asked about the Facility Master Plan and when that should be available. She also asked to add the draft Facility Plan to our action items list.

Mr. Round stated that the developers need to look at the Affordable Housing sites to determine if they are economically feasible independently of Pleasant Street. It needs to be made clear that it can work without the Pleasant Street property.

Chris Olney explained that a lot has changed with federal money for housing and this was not available when the RFP went out. The only way to find out is ask developers. The Select Board agreed that the Trust should proceed with an RFQ process noting that the DPW site on Pleasant Street may or may not be available for redevelopment.

#### **5. Harbor Master Plan Discussion:**

Harbormaster Bion Pike spoke on the Harbor Management Plan. He explained the plan would be looking at every aspect of the harbor and putting it into one resource that people can use when it is time to discuss new ideas for development, protection or expansion of the harbor. The major component of the plan in coastal communities is sea level rise and this plan would help guide the town when there are changes in or around the harbor. He recommends to hire a consultant to put together the work and to develop a local plan. The HAC does not want to be the lead but there are members that would like to take part on any Task Force the Board puts together.

Ms. Bilotta stated if the Board is putting together another task force, she asked that the Harbormaster for information on the roles and responsibilities of the HAC and the Task Force and what he needs them to do. She explained that the committees should not overlap.

Mr. Round asked if the Harbormaster had any opinion on who would Chair the Task Force. Mr. Pike commented once the group is identified, the members should choose who the chair would be amongst themselves.

Ms. Jaques stated the Harbormaster will bring back his recommendations for the Task Force.

#### **6. Regional Dispatch Outreach Plan Discussion:**

Mr. Federspiel informed the Board that excellent progress continues to be made on the switch to the regional dispatch center. March 1 is the new date for the regional center to start answering calls. We have updated the website and there have been articles in the Cricket and Gloucester Daily Times. North Shore Regional Dispatch will be attending the Board's next meeting and will hold an open house at the center shortly after. He asked the Board for any further outreach suggestions.

Ms. Jaques suggested to have representatives of the center come early to have a meet and greet time and answer any questions the public may have before the meeting.

Mr. Round asked when the updated equipment will be installed at the Police Station. Mr. Federspiel answered he will get an update from the Police Chief.

Ms. Harrison asked when will the station go dark on the midnight shift. Mr. Federspiel stated the earliest is July 1<sup>st</sup> but it would depend on the Board's decision on staffing.

#### **7. Quarterly Review – Town Administrator:**

Ms. Harrison asked what the most critical problem is at the moment? Mr. Federspiel thought it would be the decision on the public safety staffing, finalizing the budget and union negotiations, which may not be completed by early March. There will be some guessing regarding budget impacts and that is always a challenge. Ms. Harrison asked how long the Interim Town Planner be staying. Mr. Federspiel explained that the Interim Town Planner is willing to stay longer than the intended six months, as long as the position remains part-time.

Mr. Round asked if part time is enough for the Town Planner going forward. Mr. Federspiel explained there maybe some short comings due to the hours. In the past, the Planner has provided support to the Open Space and Recreation Committee and Affordable Housing Trust, he feels that level of support will not happen if the planner is part-time.

Mr. Federspiel explained that the zoning amendments, the MBTA zoning efforts and the permitting process of the Planning Board take up most of her time. He stated the Finance Committee discussed this at their last meeting and he will be presenting a few opinions to the Board and Finance Committee soon.

Ms. Jaques asked how his delegation was coming along? Mr. Federspiel stated it is going okay but there is always room for improvement. He explained that Town Hall staff already have full plates and asking someone to take on a special project or two would be challenging.

Ms. Bilotta stated she appreciated that he took her feedback from last quarter and implemented the action item follow up. She thought dispatch was going very well and she appreciates the creative budget solutions he has done for staffing challenges. She is concerned that the Town is not communicating and demonstrating evidence on the savings that the team has achieved. She would like to see some charts at Town Meeting visually showing those savings. Also, she encourages his team to think differently about how we communicate our financials and work levels to the residents.

#### **8. Town Administrator's Report: Streamlining Agendas, Dog Hearing Update**

1. **Streamlining Agendas:** He explained four possible considerations:
  - a. **Appointee interviews:** Have board/committee chairs and one or two of you conduct interviews outside of your meeting time and make recommendations for you to ratify
  - b. **Tree Hearings:** delegate these to the Tree warden
  - c. **National Grid Hearings:** have DPW and Grid sit down ahead of time to spell out appropriate conditions for your ratification
  - d. Provide language for motions as part of my briefing memo

2. **Follow-up to the recent dog hearing:** Per the attached report in the packet, we have confirmation that the owners have complied with your order and have completed the various requirements spelled out in the Board's decision. The animal control officer will continue to monitor for compliance.
3. **Skating at Masco Park:** As part of the grant funding, the Town received for new ways of bringing people downtown in the off-season, the idea of an artificial ice skating rink in Masconomo Park is being pursued. Merchants are enthusiastic about it. Ms. Marletta is leading a group that is pulling the details together – aiming for setting this up for a couple of weeks in March. More to come at your next meeting.
4. **Upcoming Meetings:**
  - a. School District Budget hearing Tuesday, 2/7
  - b. Joint FinCom/SB meeting, Thursday 2/9 – Public Safety staffing and budgets
  - c. PB meeting Monday, 2/13 – CST project presentation; MBTA Zoning discussion
  - d. Select Board next regular meeting TUESDAY 2/21

9:02pm *Ms. Bilotta moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Sollosy seconded. Motion unanimously approved by roll call vote.*

**Meeting Materials:**

Alcohol License Documents  
Steering Committee Volunteers  
Consent Agenda Items  
Town Administrator's report

**Upcoming Meetings:**

February 21, 2023  
March 6, 2023