

**Carver Select Board
Meeting Minutes
Town Hall- 108 Main Street
November 7, 2023 - 6:00pm**

In Attendance: Chair Mark Townsend, Vice-Chair Jim Hoffman, John Cotter, Sarah Hewins, Dan Ryan, Town Administrator Robert Fennessy and Assistant Town Administrator Elaine Weston

Chair led the Pledge of Allegiance and Ryan read the community prayer.

Joint meeting with Redevelopment Authority (RDA): Joint appointment for a vacancy on the RDA.

Present for RDA: Chair Johanna Leighton, Savory Moore & Patrick Meagher

Applicant James Elliman gave a brief recap of his relevant history. Leighton asked if he would consider to run for election if appointed? Elliman stated yes.

Townsend asked when the RDA meets. Savory stated the RDA meets the first Tuesday of the month. Townsend asked Elliman if he is available to attend the meetings. Elliman stated he is available. Hewins commented that his resume is interesting and looks appropriate for this role.

Motion by Ryan to appoint Elliman to the RDA, second by Hewins.

Roll call affirmative: Ryan, Cotter, Townsend, Hoffman, Hewins

Motion by Moore to appoint Elliman, second by Meagher.

Roll call affirmative: Meagher, Moore, Leighton

Motion by Moore to adjourn their meeting at 6:05pm, second by Meagher.

Roll call affirmative: Meagher, Moore, Leighton

Citizens Participation:

Donna Forand & George Cormier of South Meadow Village. Forand stated that South Meadow Village has been shut off from the Town of Carver. She thanked the Board for the signage and replacement of poles on the roadway. She stated

the entrance to Federal Furnace Road is dangerous, home health aides are getting lost due to lack of signage on Tremont St. She is requesting public safety presence in South Meadow Village & someone from the Board to meet with residents at the Village.

George Cormier has questions on the bridge. Townsend asked Cormier to refer all of these questions to the Town Administrator to get them answered.

Gail Willett of South Meadow Village is concerned for the potential for storms and communications.

Dan Ferrini read a statement for a petition to have a special town meeting to change the general by laws for large lithium battery storage facilities. Informational sessions will be held at the Library at a later date. Any questions on this can be directed to carverconcernedcitizens.com

Dave Geizer of South Meadow Village in regards to the elevation of the pond. Believes that if the level was being watched, the wash out could have been prevented.

Presentation of Citation to Jim Forand: This is presented for his dedication and efforts in raising money for area veterans by riding his bike 3,800 miles from Massachusetts to California.

Eversource Pole Public Hearing: Tye Chair called the hearing order. Julie Longa of Eversource stated that the pole is for 52 Center Street, the work should take 1-2 days and if a Police detail is needed, they will request it.

Ryan asked if Fennessy had the opportunity to look at the site. Fennessy stated that he did, and that the pole will provide electrical service the new home on Center Street.

There was no public comments.

Hearing was closed. Motion to approve by Ryan, second by Hoffman.

Vote 5-0

Administrator Update:

Ward Street Closure update: The town has been working diligently with the Engineering firm, who is now conducting test borings on the soil in the vicinity of

the erosion, and is surveying the damage and formulating a design plan, which is necessary before construction of the roadway is able to begin.

- A necessary emergency filing of a Request for a Determination of Applicability is being prepared by the Engineering firm.
- The Engineers will oversee the test borings that have begun of the soil conditions below water grade to assist in developing the reconstruction plan.
- Additional signage, including a display board relative to the detour, have been placed along the detour route. This should make it a little easier for those unfamiliar with the South Meadow Village, and perhaps the route, to be able to navigate to the village.
- The airport cut across has been successful for emergency vehicles and has dramatically cut emergency response time to the South Meadow Village.
- The town has been updating the South Meadow Village residents through their association and has placed updates on social media, including the town's website.
- Upon completion of the plan and the total cost to repair, we may be required to hold a special town meeting to fund the repairs. However, we will not know that until the final plan is submitted.

Ryan asked if the design firm as given a schedule. Fennessy stated the first firm quoted 12 weeks and another firm quoted 2-4 weeks and we are one week in. Once work starts it should be completed in approximately 4 weeks. Fennessy stated that these aren't promises as the Town wants to be sure it is done right and safely.

Cotter asked when the engineering done, what is the funding source. Fennessy stated depending on the cost, it could be through the reserve fund, or earth removal funds.

Ryan asked if there were state emergency funds available. Fennessy stated every stone has been turned over as far as that and no outside funding has been available to date.

Purple Heart Community Status: Lisa Eriksson, Assistant Veterans Agent present. Eriksson stated the Purple Heart is the highest distinction a service member can

achieve. Purple Heart day is celebrated on August 7th every year. Townsend read the proclamation.

Motion by Ryan to approve Carver as a Purple Heart community, second by Cotter.

Vote 5-0

Cranberry Point Energy Review fund: Fennessy advised the Board that a review fund is being requested by the Fire Department for inspections for the Town in regards to the project. Assistant Deputy Chief Jesse Boyle stated the account is funded by the applicant, the account will start with \$10,000 and he will work directly with the third party review to be sure everything is in place. The Fire Department has jurisdiction and the inspectors will work on behalf of Assistant Deputy Chief Boyle. The developer Cranberry Point has no input on who the inspectors are. Hewins compared it to applicants to the Planning Board, using our own engineer. Ryan asked what happens if the developer refuses to replenish the funds. Boyle stated the Fire Department has the ability to not approve or finalize the project. Boyle stated this should not take more than a few months. Ryan asked if this would cover the annual inspection clause. Boyle stated this is one time just for plans review. Any left-over funds would be returned, and the funding is not for ongoing inspections and maintenance.

Motion to approve the contract with Cranberry Point Storage, LLC and to establish a review fund, second by Hoffman.

Vote 5-0

Ch. 61A Right of First Refusal- 0 Lakeview St: Ryan requested an update on the timeline and requirements. Fennessy stated that if the Select Board is in favor of purchasing the property, the Board would have to vote at a public hearing, and within 120 days would need to pay the deposit. A Town Meeting would need to be prior January 12th to secure funding prior to the 120 days as well and title research and environmental assessment would also need to be done.

Town Planner Thomas Bott stated the Board has 120 days to exercise their option and after that, the Board has 90 days to close. The day that the contract needs to be executed and funded is January 12th.

Ryan asked what the benefit is to the Town to move forward at this point. Hewins stated that one of the Select Board goals is to build affordable housing and she believes it can be done and the parcels can be transferred to the Redevelopment Authority.

Hewins stated one of the Select Board's goals is to obtain more affordable housing and that this property can be deeded to the RDA for development. Hewins would like to see the Town move forward with obtaining the land.

Bott stated the Town will have control over what is being built and how. He stated this is an investment in the future and due diligence needs to be done and this is another opportunity to build affordable housing. If the Town does not build it, there will be three single family homes built by the developer. Hewins thanked Bott for his diligence on this.

Hoffman asked Bott if houses can definitely be built on this property. Bott stated it is zoned and perked for three single family homes. As far as affordable homes, the Town would need to go through a local initiative process through the Department of Housing and Community Development which is a comprehensive permit and known as a 'friendly 40b'. Bott noted that the 'anr' (approval not required) process has been done so only a permit would need to be pulled, there is no special variance needed.

Hewins noted that the Town would have control over what is placed on the site.

Ryan asked if there is time to accomplish this process in the tight timeline and who would be doing it. Bott stated there are a lot of resources through the Town Administrator and is confident it can be accomplished.

Cotter is concerned about the number of units and spending \$400,000 and getting to the state's goal of 10% affordable housing. Bott stated the goal for affordable housing should be to build as many as possible in the manner that the Town wants. Cotter asked how long it will take to see the returns. Bott stated the Town will get it back. Cotter asked who owns the bogs on the property. Bott stated the bogs that are part of the property lines can be deeded back to the bog owner.

Monty Sief, Property Manager for ADGA present. Sief gave a brief background on the property. Sief stated the property line is an easement, and whoever purchases the property will need to give an easement to ADGA to continue farming the bog. There were initially two lots approved worth \$150,000 each. The prospective developer worked with the Planning Board to get 3 lots approved. The agreement between the developer and ADGA was that if they could engineer the plans for three lots, ADGA would sell them the land for \$400,000. This took work and money invested from the purchaser and is outlined in the purchase and sale agreement. It is Sief's understanding that the Town has 120 days to execute. In addition, the property was purchased in 2019, irrigation was replaced and bogs were replanted. Over \$300,000 was spent on improvements on the bog.

Doug Crane from Jack Conway Real Estate stated that ADGA has a listing agreement to sell this property with a 5% commission agreement. The current purchase and sale is a 2% commission agreement because the new construction would be under a listing agreement with Jack Conway Real Estate for the new homes. He would like to know if the town would pay the commission.

Hoffman asked how many affordable units could be placed on the property. Bott stated there are 3.26 acres and there could be 4 units per acre -approximately 12 units depending on the design.

Bob Gosselin is the perspective buyer. Gosselin stated he put money into the property including paying the engineer to have the land subdivided and getting the perk test done and would not have put money into the land if he knew he may not be able to purchase the property.

Motion by Hewins to hold a public hearing on November 28 at 6:00pm and work with Town Counsel to get everything done in time, second by Hoffman.

Motion to amend the motion to hold a public hearing on November 29 at 6:00PM, second by Hoffman.

Vote 4-1 (Cotter)

5-minute recess at 7:37pm

Update on Town Administrator and Select Board goals and objectives:

Select Board goals:

1. Continue to assess and choose projects for ARPA funding – completed
2. Continue working to broaden citizen participation on boards and committees – ongoing
3. Making sure the town budget process for next fiscal year is started earlier and finished earlier than the past. Also, making sure Financial Management Policies are followed during the budget process – Townsend suggested putting this on the next agenda.
4. Support and endorse an updated Housing Production Plan, an updated Master Plan and an updated Open Space and Recreation Plan- all of which are currently out of date. Hewins stated the Town is still in limbo with the open space plan.
5. Work preemptively -when opportunities to build affordable housing or to acquire important open space parcels occur – get the job done.
6. Health & safety of Carver residents. Includes aquifer protection and clean drinking water.
7. Management of taxes through Business Development and Financial Management – attracting new businesses and paying off debts earlier.
8. Revenue Driven-work with Planning Board to develop strategy for new growth that balances the agricultural nature of the town while providing needed funding for town operations.
9. Create policies and procedures for appointed committees that are in adherence to Town Bylaws.

Townsend asked if the Board wanted any additional items (other than #3 on the next agenda). Hewins stated she would like an update on the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Town Administrator Goals:

1. Work with department heads to bring previously approved ARPA projects to completion – ongoing
2. Work with the Finance Director to manage the budget process - in progress
3. Review shared expenses with school and town – in progress

4. Return all non-union employees to 75/25 healthcare benefits- as they were promised when they were hired so that the town does not lose key people in 2025. Fennessy advised that this should be shifted to be a Select Board goal.
5. Return Conservation Agent position to full-time as it should be – Fennessy is going into the budget increasing the hours of the Agent. However, it will be dependent upon how many hours the Agent is able to take on.
6. Good Select Board decision making by providing thorough and accurate information – he strives to do this every day.
7. Process capture and improvements for town operations (budget/capital process) - he strives to do this every day.
8. Detailed budget timeline with drop dead delivery dates for budget components for capital and operational expenses Final delivery of budget and capital finances 30 days before town meeting – budget is going according to timeline, however t is challenging with a part time finance director.
9. Make recommendations/alternatives to reduce legal costs related to town expenses.

ABCC 2024 Seasonal Population Estimate Form:

Motion to approve the Seasonal Population of Carver of 11,645 by Hewins, second by Hoffman.

Vote 5-0

Annual License Renewals:

Approval licenses including of Liquor Package Store- All Alcoholic, Liquor Package Store – Wine and Malt, Liquor – Restaurant, Entertainment, Automatic Amusement Device, Common Victualler, Class II, Class III and Commercial Garage contingent upon taxes paid, required inspections completed and insurance up to date by Ryan, second by Cotter.

Continuation of Town Administrator Update:

NCWD – MIDDLEBORO:

Last meeting, he noted that he discussed an emergency situation in which the town had to go onto Middleboro water through the Middleboro connection. That period lasted several days and the water in NCWD tank was restored.

This led to discussions with Middleboro about the agreement to place a meter at the connection and to look at not only emergency purchase of Middleboro water for the NCWD, and perhaps review short and long term resolution relating to pressure and quality issues. It was agreed that the discussions would continue between the two towns and the NCWD commissioners in the near future.

Veterans Day observance:

Veteran's Day is Saturday, November 11th. In compliance with union contracts, the town hall and other municipal buildings will be observing veteran's day of Monday, November 13th, so town building will be closed. However, the schools will be open on Monday.

BUDGET:

After the finance director's resignation last month, we have brought on George Samia as an interim finance director. George recently retired from the position of finance director for the town of Foxboro, and previously has served in that role, as well as town administrator, in the town of East Bridgewater. George has initially been working on setting up the financials for the tax classification hearing, as well as projection the revenues for the town and budget preparation

As we moved into the preparation of the FY25 Budget, all departments have submitted a requested budget, and the interim finance director, the asst. town administrator and I have been meeting with the department heads to go over the budgets and make adjustments. I continue on the goal of having a preliminary budget to the finance committee and select board by the end of November.

Salvation Army Kick-Off:

The second annual Salvation Army Kettle Kick-OFF, is scheduled for next Tuesday, November 14th at 4-5:30pm at the town hall gazebo.

It will be a festive event, with traditional Holiday Sing-Along , Hot Chocolate, Tree/Gazebo Lighting, and a Special gift to honor all Veterans in attendance.

Fennessy noted that every single cent that is raised in Carver by the Salvation Army is earmarked to stay in Carver to help those in need.

Fennessy acknowledged our veteran agent Lisa Eriksson for again coordinating this special event.

Approval of 2024 Licenses:

Motion to approve all licensees as posted in the agenda contingent upon taxes paid, taxes completed and insurance coverages in place by Ryan, second by Hewins.

Vote 5-0

Minutes:

Motion to approve minutes of October 6, 2023 by Cotter, second by Ryan.

Vote 5-0

Motion to approve minutes of October 10, 2023 by Ryan, second by Cotter.

Vote 5-0

Motion to approve minutes of October 17, 2023 by Ryan, second by Cotter.

Vote 5-0

Select Board Community Announcements:

Ryan: None

Cotter: None

Hewins: Reminded residents to donate to Shane Gives Thanks Food Pantry

Hoffman: Wished the Carver High School football team good luck this Friday

Townsend: The Carver Scouts are hosting breakfast at the Sportsman's club

Next Meetings: November 21

Motion to adjourn at 8:00pm by Ryan second by Hoffman.

Vote 5-0

Listing of Exhibits: Public Comment speaker Donna Forand passed out a document to members of the Board entitled, "Emergency Board meeting"; application of James Elliman; Eversource pole hearing documents; documentation on being a Purple Heart community; contract and documentation on establishing a review fund with Cranberry Point Energy Storage; documentation on Ch. 61A for Lakeview St. & application documents; Select Board and Town Administrator goals and objectives; Listing of 2024 license renewals; ABCC seasonal population form; minutes of October 6, 2023; minutes of October 10, 2023; Minutes of October 17, 2023