

**Carver Select Board  
Meeting Minutes  
Town Hall- 108 Main Street  
March 19, 2024 - 5:00pm**

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

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

Motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to G.L. 30A, Section 21 (a) (2) to discuss strategy in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel (Assistant Town Administrator, Elaine Weston) and/or to conduct negotiations with non-union personnel (Assistant Town Administrator, Elaine Weston) if discussion would have a detrimental effect on the negotiation position of the Town, and to return to open session by Hoffman, second by Hewins.

Roll Call: Affirmative – Hewins, Hoffman, Townsend, Cotter, Ryan

**Citizens Participation:**

None

**Vote regarding Assistant Town Administrator, Elaine Weston, to serve as Interim Town Administrator**

Motion to appoint Elaine Weston as Interim Town Administrator effective March 25, 2024 pursuant to Chapter 3 of the Carver Town Bylaws by Hewins, second by Hoffman.

Vote 5-0

**Vote to authorize Elaine Weston, Interim Town Administrator to be the Authorized Representative, and to authorize Kim Walsh, Finance Assistant to be the Temporary Authorized Reporter/Preparer, of Plymouth County American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grants on behalf of the Town**

Fennessy stated that this is a requirement from the ARPA Laws for an appointment to be made by the Select Board to sign off on these.

Motion to approve Elaine Weston, Interim Town Administrator to be the authorized Representative, and to authorize Kim Walsh, Finance Assistant to be the Temporary Authorized Reporter/Preparer of Plymouth County American Rescue Plan Act grants on behalf of the Town by Hoffman, second by Ryan.

Vote 5-0

**Appoint Interim Town Administrator Town Administrator, Elaine Weston to the Carver, Marion, Wareham, Regional Refuse Disposal District**

Motion to appoint Interim Town Administrator, Elaine Weston to the Carver, Marion, Wareham, Regional Refuse Disposal District upon swearing in by Hewins, second by Hoffman.

Vote 5-0

**American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) update on status of projects and approval of additional requests**

Fennessy reviewed the ARPA spreadsheet to the Board.

He reviewed the projects that have been approved by Plymouth County, Select Board approved and reimbursement request submitted to Plymouth County for ARPA, Select Board approved waiting for reimbursement to be submitted to Plymouth County and Select Board approved and are being used for Federal Funds that were received but won't be qualified for Plymouth County for ARPA.

The Board of Health requested two items:

- 1 – Decommissioning of 22 private wells on Plymouth Street. This is required by DEP and the average cost of per well is \$1,000.
- 2 – Purchase of two electric SUV vehicles by the Board of Health, Building department, Conservation Commission and Assessors. This cost is an estimate of \$47,000 per vehicle.

Motion to approve the decommissioning of the wells and be paid through ARPA by Cotter, second by Hewins.

Vote 5-0

Motion to approve the purchase of two vehicles by the Board of Health, Building department, Conservation Commission and Assessors by Hewins, second by Hoffman.

Hewins amended the motion by using the language "up to two vehicles", second by Hoffman.

Cotter asked if there is another project that the Town would like to do before the purchase of the vehicles, can the vote be taken back.

Fennessy confirmed this.

Vote 5-0

**Avenues of Honor: Formation of Committee**

This was approved at Town Meeting and the Select Board will need to come up with a makeup of this committee.

Townsend asked if the Board Members had any suggestions.

The Board discussed and came up with the following formation:

- Two employees from the Veteran's Department: Agent & Assistant Agent
- Two Members of the Select Board
- Three Veteran's from the General Public

This committee will honor Veteran's with flags on the poles around Town. This could include their picture, name, etc.

These flags can be rotated to honor different Veteran's.

Motion to form the Avenues of Honor committee consisting of two employees from the Veteran's Department: Agent & Assistant Agent, two members of the Select Board and three Veteran's from the general public at large by Hewins, second by Ryan.

Vote 5-0

Motion to appoint Hewins and Ryan to this committee by Hoffman, second by Cotter.

Vote 5-0

**Review of Annual Town Meeting warrant articles: Community Preservation Committee report & Recommendation; Senior/Veteran Tax Work off Program**

Senior/Veteran Tax Work off Program:

Motion to place this on the warrant by Cotter, second by Hewins.

Vote 5-0

Town Assessor, Joe Roche is in attendance.

Roche explained that there are not many senior work off people in this program and that increasing the amount from \$1,000 to \$1,500 would not make a big impact.

Motion to recommend this by Hewins, second by Ryan.

Vote 5-0

Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Report & Recommendation:

Motion to place this on the warrant by Hewins, second by Hoffman.

Vote 5-0

Motion to recommend this by Hewins, second by Hoffman.

Discussion:

Cotter asked if the CPC has taken a vote on this.

Weston confirmed that they have, but has not received the official vote.

Cotter stated that he would like to have more information and further explanation on the numbers.

Vote 5-0

Discussion and possible vote on Town Administrator finalist process

Townsend stated that he has met with the Chair of the Screening Committee, Patrick Meagher and Meagher stated that there are four finalists that they will be forwarding to the Select Board.

Townsend suggested the following three step process once the Board receives these finalists:

1 – Conduct Public Interviews

2 – Invited the applicants back to meet one on one and for the Board members to meet with each candidate. Townsend ran this step by Town Counsel and they confirmed that this will not impact the Open Meeting Laws.

3 – Once those steps are completed, the Board will come back together and discuss. Members will then go out to the candidates Towns to see if they can speak to Town chiefs, departments, etc. to get a feel for the candidates background.

Hewins recommended that this could also be done over the phone due to members schedules.

Ryan suggested that before meeting one on one, that a list of questions could be created.

Townsend explained that those are a more casual conversation and suggested that a list will not be needed.

Hewins explained that when you have a more casual conversation and one on one, you will be able to receive more information.

Townsend informed the committee that a subcommittee be created to negotiate the contract when the process gets to that point.

Motion to appoint Cotter & Townsend to be part of the negotiating process by Ryan, second by Hoffman.

Vote 5-0

**Town Administrator update:**

Fennessy stated that his last day as the Carver Town Administrator is Sunday, March 24<sup>th</sup>. He wished Elaine Weston success as she takes on the responsibilities as the Interim Town Administrator.

Fennessy noted that the new Finance Director, Karen Preval, will begin work for the town on March 25<sup>th</sup> and the new Payroll and Benefits Coordinator, Christine Criasia in the finance department, who will begin work on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, and the new Conservation Agent Emil Assing, will begin his duties on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Fennessy noted that Weston has been brought up to speed on various policies and issues that will need her attention over the next few months, such as the North Carver Water District, the ARPA program, the Gateway insurance process, and the PFAS and Opioid litigation.

In his final message to the Board, Fennessy stated the following:

“First, I leave here, not to get away from Carver, but to take care of personal medical issues in my family. Months ago, we found that it was difficult for me to be away for a full time job that often extends well beyond the routine 35 hours, and has with a 2 hour a day commute.

My choice, which was extremely difficult to make, was best for my family. So, here I am at the end of my time in Carver, and I leave with one regret, and that is that I am leaving a position and a town that I love, and a staff that I have come to admire as both colleagues and friends.

So, if I may, I would like to offer my thanks some people here, who had an impact on my time as town administrator:

To the whole Select Board, led my entire time here by the Chair, Mark Townsend, I want to thank each of you for your collective support and confidence that you placed in me as your town administrator.

To my direct staff, Elaine Weston, Shelby Roy, and Nancy Hubbard for all that you accomplish on a day to day basis in our office, which all made my job easier and more pleasurable, I thank you.

To my professional management team of Department Heads, whose continued diligence in working towards operational efficiency (sometimes during very trying conditions), has been very impressive; thanks to each of you.

To the support staff of the town hall and other departments, most notably Kari Boss, Jill Martins, Michele Bremer, Christine Sylvia, Jen Mueller, and Lisa Eriksson, I want to thank you all for always picking up the ball and running with it to support all your department’s needs.

And to all the other employees, officials, and volunteers of the Town of Carver, who have helped make my stay here both memorable and enjoyable, I again say thanks.

And finally, to my four Chiefs... Chief Tom Walsh, Chief Marc Duphily, Chief Craig Weston, and Chief Mike Ryan, I want to thank each of you for the professional manner in which you manage your departments.

You have shown me how a public safety department should be run in a municipality, and you do so by displaying a sincere professionalism, competency and most importantly compassion.

As I leave, I sincerely hope that my presence has had a positive and lasting effect on the staff, public officials and the residents of the town, because clearly they have all had an impact on me.

Over the past four months after a decision was made to leave, I often said to my family and friends that I had wished that Carver was my first and only town to work in, and not my last... however, in hind sight, what better way for me to go out than to go out after being in a job that I love, with staff whom I appreciate and respect.

So, again, thank you to everyone, and I'm sorry for making this sound like an Oscar nominee winner's speech!"

**Approval of Minutes:**

**March 5, 2024; -**

Motion to approve by Cotter, second by Ryan.

Vote 5-0

**Executive Session minutes of Feb. 27, 2024 -**

Motion to approve and not for release by Ryan, second by Cotter.

Vote 5-0

**March 5, 2024 –**

Motion to approve as amended and not for release by Hewins, second by Hoffman.

Vote 5-0

**Request for approval of MS Bike Race: June 29, 2024 from approximately 10:00am – 3:00pm**

Motion to approve the MS Bike Race for June 29, 2024 by Cotter, second by Hoffman.

Vote 5-0

**Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of meeting**

None

## **Select Board Announcements**

Ryan – Thanked Fennessy for his time and everything he has done for this Town.

Cotter – Echoed Ryan’s statement

Hewins – Thanked Fennessy as well and for being the person who he is. He will be missed.

Townsend – Echoed everyone’s statements and state that Fennessy came on board during a difficult transition and was able to turn things around. He is very thankful for him as a Town Administrator and friend.

## **Next Meeting: March 26, 2024**

### **Motion to adjourn by Ryan at 6:28pm, second by Hoffman**

**Exhibits:** ARPA Spreadsheet, Article 8 Community Preservation Committee Report & Recommendations, Article 11 Senior/Veteran Tax Work off Program, Request for MS Bike Race