



Town Of Webster
Massachusetts Est. 1832

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Randall V. Becker, Chairman
Earl Gabor, Vice-Chairman
Lisa Kontoes, Secretary
Thomas Klebart

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, January 5, 2022 6:00 P.M.

Selectmen's Meeting Room
Webster Town Hall, 350 Main Street, Webster, MA
via conference call in accordance with Governor Baker's
emergency "Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the
Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §20"

MEETING OPENING: At 6:01 p.m., Chairman Becker called the meeting to order in the Selectmen's Meeting Room, Webster Town Hall, 350 Main Street, Webster, MA. The following individuals were present: Chairman Becker, Selectman Lisa Kontoes (via Zoom meeting), Selectman Earl Gabor (via Zoom meeting), Selectman Thomas Klebart (via Zoom meeting), Town Accountant Timothy Bell, Kevin Paicos, Nicholas Adamopoulos, Chairman, Leslie Baker (via Zoom meeting), Monique Pierangeli (via Zoom meeting), Sarah Sansom (via Zoom meeting), Elaine Davies, Mark Rogers, Robert Whitelaw (via Zoom meeting), Mark LaPete (via Zoom meeting), Town Accountant Timothy Bell, Interim Town Administrator Greg Balukonis and Executive Assistant Courtney Friedland. The Board stood and took the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Becker stated on March 12, 2020, Governor Baker issued an Executive Order modifying certain requirements of the Open Meeting Law, to enable public bodies to carry out their responsibilities while adhering to public health recommendations regarding social distancing as fully stated on the agenda. As further explained on the agenda, the Executive Order relieves public bodies from the requirement in the Open Meeting Law that meetings be conducted in a public place that is open and physically accessible to the public, provided that the public body makes provision to ensure public access to the deliberations of the public body through adequate, alternative means. On June 16, 2021, Governor Baker signed into law An Act Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency. This Act includes an extension, until April 1, 2022, of the remote meeting provisions of his March 12, 2020, Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

The Board of Selectmen Secretary announced the name of each attendee who attended via Zoom.

Meeting Minutes

Motion by Selectman Gabor, seconded by Selectman Kontoes, to approve the meeting minutes of December 15, 2021. Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR SCREENING COMMITTEE - REPORT AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF CANDIDATES:

Chairman Becker thanked Mr. Adamopoulos as Chairman of the Town Administrator Screening Committee and all of the members for their hard work and dedication throughout the process. He also thanked Mr. Paicos, the Committee's Consultant. Mr. Adamopoulos stated he would also like to acknowledge all of the members for the Screening Committee for their excellent work. He said they have three great candidates to present. He stated all their meetings were held in a professional manner. He stated they received 25 resumes and narrowed it down to ten candidates they wanted to interview. He stated two of those candidates backed out. He stated after conducting all of the interviews there was a clear top three. He stated the top candidates have current Town Administrator experience with similar size communities. He stated anyone of these candidates can lead the town. Mr. Paicos stated the three candidates being presented to the Board of Selectmen are Ronald San Angelo, Richard LaFond, and Jennifer Callahan. Mr. Adamopoulos stated they looked for strong financial backgrounds. He stated the Screening Committee feels comfortable with the Board of Selectmen choosing any one of these candidates. Mr. Paicos stated Webster picked an outstanding Screening Committee. He said they really did a great service to the town by choosing these three candidates. He stated semi-finalists are kept confidential. Selectman Klebart asked Mr. Adamopoulos to describe the process used to interview candidates. Mr. Adamopoulos stated Mr. Paicos provided the Screening Committee a rubric on different criteria. They could also allocate points for additional notable aspects. He said it was very clear while scoring there were three top candidates. All interviews were with people with ties to Massachusetts. He stated all three candidates are very easy to google. He encouraged the Board of selectmen to use that information when conducting the interviews. He said each candidate is different. Chairman Becker suggested that when conducting the interviews each Selectmen ask a question and go around the Board. Mr. Paicos stated he has some draft questions. Mr. Adamopoulos stated the Board of Selectmen should use Mr. Paicos in the process as he is very knowledgeable and has a good feel for Webster. Chairman Becker stated the Board of Selectmen should determine which candidate is the best fit for the town and move quickly to secure that person.

Mr. Paicos handed out his notes for discussion. He stated each Selectmen should have five interview questions. He said each Selectmen can email him their questions individually and he can go through them to prevent duplicates and ones that could cause legal implications. He suggested the Board of selectmen vote a candidate on January 11th or soon thereafter. He stated two candidates are actively pursuing new positions and one is a finalist in another community. He did note that the finalist in the other community would prefer the position in Webster. Chairman Becker stated the intent of the Board is to have a conversation about the candidates after the last interview. Doing it quickly would be best for the town. Selectman Kontoes, Selectman Gabor, and Selectman Klebart agreed. A decision should be made on Tuesday night unless something comes up during the interviews which causes them to postpone the decision. Mr. Paicos suggested the Board conduct a written poll vote to start. He stated usually an immediate consensus happens. Mr. Balukonis stated he thought it was a great idea. Mr. Paicos stated it saves time. Selectman Kontoes stated she was also in favor of the poll voting because it was an unbiased approach. Selectman Klebart agreed. He said the Board of Selectmen should have an idea of who is the best candidate. Selectman Gabor stated it was a good process to follow.

Chairman Becker suggested the Board of selectmen appoint two members to negotiate a contract. Mr. Paicos stated the town can go with their contract or the candidate can propose a contract. The Board of Selectmen would like the current contract compared to the standard MMA contract. The Board of Selectmen should go into Executive Session after choosing a candidate to strategize the non-union contract. Mr. Paicos stated you want to go into negotiations with all Board members on the same page. He said the Board will be able to set parameters. He said not to be afraid to ask poignant questions. Selectman Klebart asked if any COVID protocols will be in place. Chairman Becker stated they may have to limit the number of seats in the room and set up a separate viewing area. He said N95 masks will be available and the room will be cleaned. Chairman Becker thanked Mr. Adamopoulos, all

the Committee members and Mr. Paicos for their hard work and requested both attend the meeting Tuesday, if possible.

OPEN MEETING LAW COMPLAINT:

Chairman Becker stated the Board received an Open Meeting Law complaint on December 10, 2021, regarding the November 8, 2021 Board of Selectmen's Meeting. Mr. Balukonis stated the complaint alleged the Board of Selectmen violated the Open Meeting Law by not listing the exhibits and other documents used by the Board in the Minutes of their November 8, 2021 meeting. He said the Board will correct this by re-voting those minutes at their next meeting. He said the Board of Selectmen have been in compliance with these items moving forward.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

1. COVID-19

- Webster had 205 new cases reported, 84 breakthrough cases in isolation, 32 cases in children under 19, and 2 deaths. The Statewide positivity rate is reported in excess of 21%, and there is no reason to believe Webster is not at the same percentage.
- There have been 4 positive cases and 2 suspected Covid-19 cases in Town Hall over the past 2 weeks. Testing is ongoing with employees who is symptomatic or a close contact. The Water/Sewer Dept. and the SWCCC also have several confirmed cases, which potentially impact staffing levels. Chairman Becker stated he wanted to recognize SWCCC Director Greg Lynskey for the outstanding work he has done in the Dispatch Center. He stated it is very tight quarters in there and Mr. Lynskey has done a fantastic job trying to keep everyone safe and the center staffed. Selectman Kontoes stated these numbers are what the State is aware of, but they are actually higher since some tested positive with at-home kits and weren't reported.
- The situation is being carefully monitored and, if necessary, the town may need to close public buildings to the public beginning the end of the week and ending on or about Jan. 18th (employees would still be present in-house during any closure). The most up to date numbers from MA DPH and recommendation from the Health Dept. will guide the decision in the next few days. KN95 and N95 masks are available to staff.

2. Cannabis HCA

- A tentative host community agreement has been tentatively reached with Canvas LLC for a cannabis retail store at 4 Town Forest Road. Mr. Balukonis does not recommend action on it until the Board has clarity of 2 previous HCA's negotiated with the Boathouse and Florencia. The Boathouse was issued an HCA in November 2020. Florencia has an HCA issued in August 2021. He requested the Board invite each of these businesses into an upcoming meeting to determine what plans they have for opening a cannabis establishment. Chairman Becker suggested Mr. Balukonis reach out to Boathouse and Florencia and determine their intentions before having them before the Board.

3. Budget & Capital

- The FY 2023 budget and capital guidelines are being issued to all departments this week. Updates to the 5 year capital plan are due on Jan. 14th and budget proposals due on Jan. 28th. Either myself or the incoming Town Administrator will finalize capital and budget recommendations for submission to the Board and Finance Committee. Regardless, the

process has commenced and everyone is aware of the calendar deadlines over the next few months.

4. Memorial Beach Incident

- It was brought to Mr. Balukonis attention that several hunters were using Memorial Beach as a staging area over the weekend. While duck hunting is legally permitted on the Lake so long as it is in excess of 500' from the nearest residence, no permission was given for persons to be walking on town property with shotguns. Rep. McKenna and Greg spoke with representatives from MA Fisheries & Wildlife who affirmed they did not allow persons to use Memorial Beach as a staging area, despite comments from individuals to the contrary. The Town may want to post the Town owned beach and boat ramp as not serving as a staging area or no hunting weapons allowed. Town Counsel would need to weigh-in as to whether the prohibition is in the form of a policy or bylaw. Chairman Becker stated the board of Selectmen should set up a policy regarding the use of town owned land for hunting. A major concern is the possibility of other boats using the area where hunting is taking place.

Motion by Selectman Klebart, seconded by Selectman Gabor, to approve the Town Administrator's Report. Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: At 7:56 p.m.,

Motion by Selectman Gabor, seconded by Selectman Klebart, to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares.

- SEIU Local 888 Clerical, SEIU Local 888 DPW, MassCop Local 473, Teamster Union Local 170 – Discuss Contract Extension

Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.

ADJOURNMENT: The Board re-entered open session at 8:15 p.m. Motion by Selectman Gabor, seconded by Selectman Klebart to adjourn. Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.

Next Meetings:

January 10, 2022, 5:00 p.m. at Webster Town Hall, Selectmen's Meeting Room, 350 Main Street, Webster, MA 01570

January 11, 2022, 6:00 p.m. at Webster Town Hall, Selectmen's Meeting Room, 350 Main Street, Webster, MA 01570

**Respectfully Submitted,
Courtney Friedland, Executive Secretary to the Board of Selectmen**

EXHIBITS:

1. Draft Meeting Minutes from December 15, 2021 Board of Selectmen's Meeting
2. 12/30/21 Correspondence from Kevin Paicos: Town Administrator Screening Committee Report, Committee Member's Interview Questions, Draft Interview Questions, and Sample Interview Questions
3. Document: Jennifer Callahan Cover Letter and Resume
4. Document: Richard LaFond Cover Letter and Resume
5. Document: Ronald San Angelo Cover Letter and Resume
6. 12/10/21 Open Meeting Law Complaint
7. 12/13/21 Correspondence from Attorney Brian Riley Re: Open Meeting Law Complaint
8. Revised Draft Meeting Minutes from November 8, 2021 Board of Selectmen's Meeting

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