



Office of the Board of Selectmen  
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Randall V. Becker, Chairman  
Andrew Jolda, Vice-Chairman  
Earl Gabor, Secretary  
Lisa Kontoes  
Thomas Klebart

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, August 23, 2021 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 6:04 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 Andrew Jolda, Selectman Lisa Kontoes, Selectman Earl Gabor, Selectman Thomas Klebart, Gregory Balukonis, Robert Rucci, Jensen Mejia, Attorney Davis Julian, Janet Stoica, Anne Violette (via Zoom meeting), Town Administrator Doug Willardson, 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.

Chairman Becker noted at the meeting opening no one was participating via Zoom.

**Meeting Minutes**

**Motion by Selectman Gabor, seconded by Selectman Klebart, to approve the meeting minutes of August 9, 2021. Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.**

### **INTRODUCTION OF GREG BALUKONIS – INTERIM TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:**

Chairman Becker stated this moment was very bittersweet. He stated it was less than two weeks away from Mr. Willardson's departure. The Board thanked Mr. Balukonis for coming in and accepting the position of Interim Town Administrator. Mr. Balukonis stated it was great to be in Webster. He thanked the Board of Selectmen for their support. He stated he is currently a resident of Milford. He previously served five years in Dudley. He stated Webster and Dudley have a lot of shared services, so he was able to work closely with Mr. Willardson previously. He stated he retired from Dudley in June 2019. He worked for the Federal Census Department as a Supervisor for a couple of years. He stated he recently was the Acting Town Administrator in Blackstone for seven months finishing up when they appoint their permanent Town Administrator. He stated he has seen everything and looks forwards to hitting the ground running. The Board of Selectmen welcomes Mr. Balukonis and stated they look forward to working with him. Mr. Balukonis stated he has recent experience in Blackstone in helping with the Town Administrator Search Committee. Chairman Becker asked how the Town Administrator market was. Mr. Balukonis stated it is pretty good, noting at least a half dozen qualified candidates candidates. Mr. Willardson stated the town could not have asked for a better interim.

**Anne Violette join the meeting via Zoom.**

### **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S JOB DESCRIPION, GOALS, AND ATTRIBUTES – DISCUSSION:**

Chairman Becker stated the intent of this discussion was to provide the job description, goals and attributes to the Town Administrator's Screening Committee. He stated he would like to provide the Screening Committee with copies of the performance reviews. Mr. Willardson stated he had forwarded the Screening Committee the draft job description and brochure provided to the Selectmen at the last meeting.

### **PROVIDE DIRECTION TO TOWN ADMINISTRATOR SCREENING COMMITTEE:**

Chairman Becker thanked all of the Department Heads and residents whom stepped up to volunteer. He stated he would like to stress confidentiality. He stated the Screening Committee will be provided their own email account. Selectman Gabor also stressed the importance of confidentiality.

### **STS. CONSTANTINE & HELEN CHURCH - "ONE DAY" LIQUOR LICENSE REQUEST:**

Chairman Becker asked if this has been reviewed by the Police department. Mr. Willardson stated they will have a Police Detail and there will be no parking allowed on Lake Parkway.

**Motion by Selectman Gabor, seconded by Selectman Jolda, to approve two "One Day" Liquor Licenses for Sts. Constantine & Helen Church, 37 Lake Parkway, Webster, MA for Saturday, September 11, 2021 from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Sunday, September 12, 2021 from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.**

### **CLASS II LICENSE APPLICATION – ROBERT RUCCI:**

Robert Rucci came forward. He stated he recently purchased the property located at 27 Thompson Road. He stated he previously had two car dealership that were in business for over twenty years. He stated he is now semi-retired and was looking to sell specialty cars. He stated he is looking for approval to sell up to three cars. He said he will most likely sell one car a month. He said he just wants to keep busy with the recent passing of his wife. He stated he has enough parking outback and room for one or two cars on the side. He said with specialty cars there isn't a need to showcase them because most people are communicating online and make appointments to come see the car.

**Motion by Selectman Gabor, seconded by Selectman Klebart, to replace the previous vote to approve the Class II License Application for Robert Rucci, 27 Thompson Road, Webster, MA 01570. Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.**

Mr. Rucci stated after speaking with Mr. Willardson the address will be defined as 25 Thompson Road.

**Motion by Selectman Gabor, seconded by Selectman Klebart, to approve the Class II License Application for Robert Rucci, 25 Thompson Road, Webster, MA 01570. Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.**

### **HOST AGREEMENT – FLORENCIA, LLC:**

Mr. Willardson stated the proposed Host Agreement is similar to the existing Host Agreement the town currently has with other marijuana distributors. He stated he feels Florencia, LLC is a good fit for the town. He stated they met with the Police Chief and he is on board with this agreement. Selectman Gabor asked where the point of sale would be for each transaction. Mr. Mejia stated the point of sale would be conducted online. All sales would be recorded in Webster. All of the items in the vehicle are already paid for before they are loaded into the truck. Chairman Becker asked for a time frame of when they will become operational. He stated he wouldn't want to see this become stagnant. Mr. Mejia stated they are receiving support from The Vault and they have offered to assist in getting the business going. He stated The Vault has an interest with the business as they have partnered to deliver for them. Attorney Julian stated it will be operational within a year. Mr. Mejia stated they will begin delivering for The Vault, and then they will put their own system together that will allow them to process their own transactions. Mr. Willardson stated once the Host Agreement is approved they will go to the Planning Board. He stated that will coincide with them applying to the Cannabis Control Commission. Attorney Julian stated the carrier license will take roughly 7-8 months before it is operational and the delivery license will take 1 year to 18 months before it is operational. Selectman Kontoes asked if there was any special language needed for the agreement with The Vault. Mr. Willardson stated no, it was an agreement between those two companies and not the Town. Chairman Becker asked if the five-year term was due to a restriction. Attorney Julian stated Host Agreement are restricted by the CCC to five years. Selectman Klebart asked what the farthest distance they will deliver. Mr. Mejia stated they will focus in Worcester and look at other markets that needs delivery services. Mr. Willardson stated with the delivery license they can deliver anywhere in Massachusetts.

**Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Gabor, to approve the Host Agreement with Florencia, LLC as presented. Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.**

**GREGORY BALUKONIS – ACTING INTERIM TOWN ADMINISTRATOR CONTRACT – AS AMEDNED:**

Selectman Jolda stated on page 4, section 7B of the contract, the per diem amount has been updated to \$90.00 per hour at a day minimum of 7 hours. The amount will total \$630.00 a day.

**Motion by Selectman Gabor, seconded by Selectman Jolda, to approve the amended contract to reflect the per diem language on page 4, section 7B as updated to \$630.00 a day.**

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

**BOARD OF HEALTH REGIONALIZATION – DISCUSSION:**

Mr. Willardson stated the Town of Dudley has been without a Health Director for some time. He stated the State is urging all municipalities to make regionalization of health services a priority. He stated regionalizing services is a growing trend. He stated joining with Dudley would benefit the town. Ms. Stoica, Webster Board of Health Chairperson, stated she has concerns that a single Board of Health Director shared with Dudley could handle an emergency. Mr. Willardson stated the two new regional positions will be shared, noting the town is the ultimate manager of the two new regional positions. Mr. Willardson stated the two regional positions will be housed in Webster. He stated Webster will benefit from this. Chairman Becker stated there is no provision in the proposed contract for additional personnel if needed. He asked if there will be a true-up. Mr. Willardson stated it will be based on inspections. He stated the first-year cost is locked and then they can look at what services Dudley is using. Selectman Gabor asked if vehicle maintenance, insurance, retirement and other expenses are factored into the split cost. Mr. Willardson stated they will add additional language to include these costs.

**Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Kontoes, to approve regionalizing with the Town of Dudley, with the additional costs noted above added to the contract. Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.**

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING RESTRICTION ASSUMPTION – 60 LAKE STREET:**

Chairman Becker stated the Board voted at the last meeting for the property at 60 Lake Street to be sold with the Affordable Housing Restriction. This agenda item was an agreement between the new owners to assume those same restrictions.

**Motion by Selectman Gabor, seconded by Selectman Klebart, to accept the Affordable Housing Restriction Assumption on 60 Lake Street, Webster, MA. Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.**

## **FY21 CDBG GRANT PAPERWORK:**

Chairman Becker stated he has a note from Community Director Carol Cyr stating that the 2021 CDBG, amounting to \$825,000 for Phase 2 of Granite Street, Cutler to East Main and Riverwalk – easement/acquisition to continue Riverwalk project along Davis Street has not been generated but is looking for a vote from the Board to authorize the Chairman to sign the paperwork once it is generated.

**Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Kontoes, to approve the FY21 CDBG grant paperwork, amounting to \$825,000, Phase 2 of Granite Street, Cutler to East Main and Riverwalk – easement/acquisition to continue Riverwalk project along Davis Street and to authorize Chairman Becker to sign on the Board's behalf. Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.**

## **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- Hot Dogs with Doug, Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

### 1. Public Health and Safety

#### a. Police

- i. Arrest made in connection with the August 4<sup>th</sup> shooting on Pleasant Street.
- ii. Drug Taskforce made arrest at Price Chopper after suspect fled from Pearl Street.
- iii. National Night Out held on August 5<sup>th</sup>.

#### b. Fire

- i. Heavy rains last week flooded Fire Headquarters basement through exterior stairwell. Working with insurance company to clean it up.
- ii. Sept 12<sup>th</sup> Tri-State Firefighters Met at Memorial Beach.
- iii. Fire 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary parade and muster on October 10<sup>th</sup>.

#### c. Coronavirus

- i. 78 cases total over the last month. 43 Not vaccinated; 35 vaccinated breakthrough cases. 22% are children 0-18; the highest percentage age bracket.
- ii. Free COVID clinic Sept 15<sup>th</sup> at Bartlett High parking lot. Available for all, not just students.

#### d. Recreation

- i. Shakespeare in the Park moved to August 25<sup>th</sup> @ 7:30 p.m.
- ii. Splash and Dash at Memorial Beach postponed to Sept 4<sup>th</sup>.

### 2. Financially Responsible

- a. Finance team is working on year end close.
- b. Florencia host agreement negotiated.

### 3. Economic Development

- a. Creating draft ARPA grant program for local businesses and non-profit organizations. Carole Marchand was just appointment Chairman of the Economic Development Committee

- b. Met with Wine Studio/Pizza. Working to help him be ready to open in October.
  - a. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District creation with the Town of Dudley. Will allow property owners to apply for TIF agreements for mixed-use properties.
4. Maintain Infrastructure
- a. Town Hall roof. Agreed to additional repairs. Crew being reassigned.
  - b. Water Main Improvements. Last week Caracas completed testing the 2<sup>nd</sup> (and final) leg of Whitcomb Street. Bacteria samples & pressure test passed so the entire Whitcomb main can be active.
    - i. This week Caracas is installing 8" DI main on Lincoln Street. They've installed approximately 1150 LF on Lincoln Street from East Main Street to Washington Street. Approximately 650 LF remain on Lincoln Street.
    - ii. The tie in with Lincoln Street at Ray Street is on private property. The crew performed a test pit here at the start of the project and we have a Right of Entry Permit for the work but will need to inform the property owners a few days in advance of the tie in.
  - c. Granite street full depth reclaim project to start later this month. Pre-construction meeting tomorrow; construction to start within two weeks.
  - d. 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase of East Main Street sidewalks out to bid now. Bids due Sep 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - e. Coordinating MVP grant program, hold public hearings in October.
  - f. Meeting with MassDOT on Thursday regarding Exit 3 (was 2) interchange.
5. Effective Delivery of Services/Operations
- a. Hired two foremen for the Water Department.
  - b. Hiring two grant-funded regional public health employees. Interviews this week.
  - c. Interviewed candidates for the Health Director position.
  - d. New online bill pay system operational; clerk's office to go live this week.
  - e. Working on transition memo.

**DOUG WILLARDSON FAREWELL:**

Chairman Becker stated the Board was coming down to the end of Mr. Willardson's last meeting. Selectman Jolda stated is has been a very fast five years. Selectman Gabor stated Mr. Willardson made some positive moves for the town. Selectman Klebart stated he was impressed with all of the positive changes Mr. Willardson was able to accomplish in a short amount of time. Selectman Kontoes thanked Mr. Willardson for his energy and enthusiasm he brought to the town. Mr. Willardson thanked the Board for their kind comments. He stated he would like to announce that he and his wife, Lisa, are expecting their fourth child. Chairman Becker stated he looked back and took a walk down memory lane. He stated during his interview Mr. Willardson was said to be young, has three years' experience as an Assistant Town Administrator and was a breath of fresh air. He also noted it was stated that the town would chew him up in a week. He stated Mr. Willardson brought positivity and humor. He stated the town would not be the same without his tenure here. Chairman Becker thanked Mr. Willardson and stated he would miss him. He wished Mr. Willardson, Lisa and the children the best. Chairman Becker read a proclamation from the Board. Mr. Willardson stated the town has made a lot of progress. He stated that started with the support of the Board of Selectmen and went through to the Department Heads and employees.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Gabor, to adjourn at 7:24 p.m.**

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

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

**Next Meetings:**

September 13, 2021, Board of Selectmen’s Meeting 6:00 p.m. Webster Town Hall, 350 Main Street, Webster, MA 01570