

# BOARD OF SELECTMEN – TOWN OF NATICK

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## NATICK POLICE STATION COMMUNITY ROOM

July 10, 2019

7:00 PM

**PRESENT:** Chairman Michael J. Hickey, Jr., Vice Chair Susan G. Salamoff, Clerk Jonathan Freedman, Richard P. Jennett, Jr., and Karen Adelman-Foster

**ALSO PRESENT:** Town Administrator Melissa A. Malone, Deputy Town Administrator for Operations William D. Chenard, and Deputy Town Administrator/Finance Director John M. Townsend

The Chairman called the meeting to order at approximately 7:10 p.m. in Open Session, noting that a quorum was present and that the meeting had been duly posted.

### **CITIZEN'S CONCERNS**

None.

### **DISCUSSION AND DECISION**

**A. Berkshire Oaks, Inc. – Request to Occupy a Public Way:** Ms. Tiffany Kinder appeared on behalf of Berkshire Oaks, Inc. The request is to occupy certain public ways and spaces in Town on July 16, 2019 in connection with a film shoot (with film-related activity to take place over a three-day period – July 15-17, 2019). Locations were discussed and considered in the vicinity of Town Hall (along East Central St. and Lincoln St.), the Public Safety Complex and adjacent streets, and near the intersection of Main St. and West Central St. (near Stucchi Jewelers). Ms. Adelman-Foster moved to authorize the film crew to occupy public ways on July 16, 2019 at the locations generally discussed and identified, with exact locations and details to be finalized in consultation with the Town Administrator and the Public Safety Officer. Mr. Freedman seconded the motion. 5-0-0 approval.

**B. Approve Request for Exemption from Town By-Laws Ch. 41, S. 4 re: Garry Coles:** After a brief discussion among Board members, Mr. Jennett moved to approve the request for exemption from Town By-Laws Ch. 41, S. 4 for Garry Coles. Ms. Salamoff seconded the motion. 5-0-0 approval.

### **C. Board Discussion Regarding Administrative Matters to Facilitate Planning, Communication,**

**Efficiency, and Other Topics of Interest to Board Members:** The Board met with Ms. Malone, Mr. Chenard, and Mr. Townsend and was also joined by Mr. Steve Levinsky for a retreat-style discussion of planning, communication, efficiency, and other topics of interest and concern, including the following:

- Constituent inquiries
  - Board members desire better clarity as to how inquiries are and or recommended to be handled, as well as visibility into how and when they are resolved.
  - Discussion considered whether there is a need for more administrative support staff, but Ms. Malone indicated that she did not see a need for such additional staff at this time. Rather, she preferred to focus on efficiency, including implementing better technology and practices to track and resolve inquiries.
  - Ms. Malone noted that there are platforms available that allow residents' concerns to be tracked from beginning to end, and provide informative data points.

- Planning and Executing on Board/Administration Priorities
  - Board members expressed interest in status of various strategic initiatives, major projects, progress vs. goals and objectives, efforts to fill vacant leadership positions, etc.
  - Ms. Malone provided an overview as to her thoughts about reorganizing the structure of the BOS/TA's office (including a modification of the existing Community Services Director job description). The Director would focus on strategic capital partnerships, executing/implementing initiatives, and be a more "outfacing" and "influence" position. Ms. Malone touched on the structure of the BOS/TA office itself, including thoughts about reorganizing the physical set-up of the office to allow staff better ability to focus on priority matters.
  - It was agreed that Ms. Malone would report back further on this overall topic by the end of August. Mr. Jennett asked that the Board be kept apprised of developments with key staff positions.
  - Ms. Salamoff inquired about the future of the Community Services Guide. Ms. Malone envisions a "community-wide" guide; i.e., not limited as it was previously to events, services (etc.) under the Department of Community Services.
- Upcoming Budget Season
  - Ms. Adelman-Foster expressed concern with the lengthy, tense nature of the FY20 budget process.
  - Board members concurred, expressing support for a more collegial process for FY21 but acknowledged that achieving this is not the sole responsibility of Town Administration.
  - Mr. Jennett inquired about budget projections. Mr. Townsend noted that Town Administration is working on long-term forecast with financial indicators (out to FY 2024).
  - Mr. Freedman emphasized the need to nurture interpersonal relationships and suggested that certain relationships – in particular, with the School Department – were in need of attention and currently impeding the Administration from bringing certain matters to closure, etc.
  - Mr. Hickey emphasized Ms. Malone's considerable skills and talents in many areas, but reported perception by some that she can be seen as dismissive of competing points of view. He echoed Mr. Freedman's sentiments about the need to build manage key stakeholders effectively.
  - There was considerable discussion about the historical relationship between the schools and municipal leadership, and acknowledgment that the Town has many different constituencies that must cooperatively work together.
- Communications
  - Mr. Jennett expressed concern that, at times, he feels he is not up to speed on certain matters, and urged Ms. Malone to redouble efforts to keep the Board informed.
- Other Issues of Interest/Concern to Board Members
  - Retirement Board. Several Board members expressed concern with the Administration's recent proposal relative to the Board's appointment to the Town's Contributory Retirement Board. Ms. Malone noted that the Board is the chief policy-making body of the Town. As such, she felt that the Board should have increased involvement in the Contributory Retirement Board given the importance to Town employees, and the dollar amount that is annually transferred and overseen by that Board. Further, Ms. Malone felt that the public discussion regarding the appointment was healthy and important to Town employees and the community.
  - "Audit" of Certain Town Financial Matters. Several Board members expressed concern with the lack of resolution regarding issues identified publicly back in January, and that the issue has become a point of contention rather than a collaborative agreement on what ought to be done, as it appeared to be when Ms. Malone and Dr. Nolin first spoke "jointly" about the matter in public earlier in the year.

- Roles and Responsibilities. Ms. Malone suggested the need to continue to revisit, discuss, and be clear on the respective roles and responsibilities of the Board vs. the Town Administrator/Administration. She feels that there is sometimes a lack of clarity amongst Board members and the Administration as to the expectations and understandings in this regard. The Board appreciated this feedback.

Mr. Levinsky, who attended the meeting to help facilitate discussion, recapped the key points and themes from the evening.

The Board did not take any votes or formal actions during this agenda item.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Mr. Jennett, seconded by Mr. Freedman, the Board unanimously voted on a roll call vote to adjourn the Board of Selectmen’s Meeting at approximately 9:25 p.m.

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Jonathan Freedman., Clerk

Submitted by Michael J. Hickey, Jr., Chair

July 10, 2019 Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes Approved by the Board of Selectmen on \_\_\_\_\_, 2019

**All documents used at this Board of Selectmen meeting are available at:**  
<https://naticktown.novusagenda.com/agendapublic/MeetingView.aspx?MeetingID=666&MinutesMeetingID=-1&dctype=Agenda>