

**Board of Selectmen Agenda
Municipal Center Resource Room
Tuesday, March 21, 2023**

7:00 PM

- Call to Order
 - Pledge of Allegiance
 - Chairman Announcements
 - Citizen's Forum
-
1. Presentation of the RJM Award by Douglas Police Department
 2. Follow-up Discussion with Open Space Committee Chapter 61B/Walnut Street – Possible Votes
 3. Follow-up Discussion for Compactors with BOH – Possible Votes
 4. Whitinsville Fish & Game Change of Officers for ABCC – Possible Votes
 5. Building Condition Report for Fire Department – Possible Votes
 6. Comp Reform Presentation – Possible Votes
 7. Grant Acceptance – Possible Votes
 - Local Cultural Council
 - Town Clerk - Early Voting Grant
 8. Designate BOS Member for Public Safety Communicators Negotiations – Possible Votes
 9. Close ATM & STM Warrants – Possible Votes
 10. Meeting Minutes – Possible Votes
 11. Town Administrator's Report
 12. Open Session for Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting
 13. Executive Session
 - a. Contract Negotiations
 14. Adjournment

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Note: Times are estimates unless denoted as a Hearing.

The Town of Douglas is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2023
MEETING MINUTES

Attendance: Chair Kevin Morse, Vice Chair Mike Fitzpatrick, Tim Bonin, Hal Davis, Town Administrator Matthew Wojcik.

(0:03 TS) Chair Kevin Morse called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

(0:08 TS) Pledge of Allegiance

(0:27 TS) Chairman Announcements: NONE

(0:32 TS) Citizen's Forum: NONE

1. (0:40 TS) Presentation of the Richard J. McLaughlin Award by Douglas Police Department
This year's community service award is being presented to Lisa Meade. She has been taking care of the seasonal plantings and the granite water trough on Main Street since the retirement of Mr. Colonero many years ago. She has received several nominations from the community, and she has made an impact to the community and her efforts are appreciated and deserving of this award. Another nominee was Jean Rignotti who works with children at the library, and she will be presented with a donation in appreciation of her efforts to our community and there will also be a donation made to Lisa Meade for her spring plantings. The award reads:
The 2022 Officer Richard J. McLaughlin Community Service Award presented to Lisa Meade, in appreciation and recognition of her continued commitment to the community through volunteerism and selflessness presented by the McLaughlin Family in cooperation with the Douglas Police Department.
2. (4:47 TS) Follow-up Discussion with Open Space Committee Chapter 61B / Walnut Street –
Possible Votes: Mike Fitzpatrick has recused himself from discussion.
Members of the Open Space Committee present to discuss the agenda item are Vice Chair Lisa Moczymski, Gordon Larrivee, Becky Kalagher, and Kathy Richards. They would like to discuss why they are interested in Walnut Street property and the future goals of the committee through communication with the board. The committee would like to know if there has been any comments or recommendations from Town Council after their last meeting for this parcel to be taken out of chapter 61B. The committee did ask if Metacomet Land Trust had any resources to put towards this and they do not at this time. Sue Perkins the Chair of the Open Space Committee and Lisa Moczymski contacted the owner of the property because it appears that the assessor's maps had not been updated to reflect the new configuration of the boundaries that she had established with her engineer for house lots along Walnut Street. Ms. Moczymski showed a plan of the parcels to the board. The property owner stated that she may be willing to entertain a discussion with the town about a portion of the land that would not be able to be made into a buildable lot for possible access to reach the parcel behind her property that the town owns, the current lots being proposed do not currently abut the town owned property. So the committee does not see that value of adding the previously discussed lot to the town's holdings. So at this point they are going to wait and see what the land owner will decide with

the lots, and continue communication with the property owner and the portion that does about the town's property.

(18:57 TS) Motion that the Town does not exercise the first refusal on the Walnut Street Lot 1 property made by Tim Bonin, 2nd by Hal Davis. All members in favor.

The Open Space Committee would like to also meet with Matt Benoit and review the process for the steps taken to come before boards and committees for future acquisitions.

3. (20:08 TS) Follow-up Discussion for Compactors with Board of Health – Possible Votes

The Board of Health is not present so they will pass over this discussion.

(20:50 TS) Mike Fitzpatrick has rejoined the discussion

4. (20:55 TS) Whitinsville Fish & Game Change of Officers for ABCC – Possible Votes

(21:30 TS) Motion to approve the change of officers made by Tim Bonin, 2nd by Hal Davis. All members in favor.

5. (22:00 TS) Building Condition Report for Fire Department – Possible Votes

TA Wojcik stated that they are looking to address several situations at the fire station which is air quality that the town has retained the services of the engineering firm MacRitchie. They were supposed to finishing up on the backup generator replacement project that the town added HVAC to that contract and paid \$8000 for them to review the situation at the station and then gave them the go head to add it to the contract for electricity. To this point it has not been a timely interaction, and Mr. Wojcik has sent emails requesting status and what the next steps are. The notion was that they would take out those items of the project that could be done immediately and get them done immediately and that would include sequestering all the turnout gear in its specific space and then evacuating the air from that space and bringing in clean air. The options are waiting for MacRitchie to get the ball rolling or have the towns new "house doctor" Weston & Sampson take it over and terminate the contract with MacRitchie. Because MacRitchie has not gotten this project started or finished there is a quote in the boards packets for temporary trailers for sleeping quarters to get staff away from the interior of the building. The quote is for 12 months and is \$21k each and he said he would get two of them. The board asked how this would be funded and TA Wojcik responded the Jeanne Lovett is not here to ask that but he stated that the most readily available source would be ARPA funds but he is uncertain what is left. Mr. Fitzpatrick stated that there is about \$36k left in ARPA funds. TA Wojcik stated that the way it would work is that there would be a mandatory posting under Massachusetts law for quotes not for advertising, so if he received 3 quotes or at least 2 responses and 1 written choosing not to quote that would be sufficient to meet the Massachusetts procurement laws and they would go from there. TA Wojcik has also been working with the town's insurance broker to find a solution to the unions concern about insurance coverage.

(29:00 TS) Open Session for Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting

TA Wojcik inquired with Gallagher, the town's insurance consultant and they are looking into benefits the Town of Stoughton has for their firefighters that consists of screening tests for early protection and prevention. Some union members asked about the difference between what they currently have with CBA coverage, versus the new benefits and how employees that are not covered by the town be affected. TA Wojcik stated that this coverage would go above and beyond the minimum CBA coverage and is not sure how people not covered by the towns insurance would be affected but offered to show them the provisions of the coverages and compare them for themselves if they would feel more comfortable doing that. Assistant Chief Manning asked if they could have some guarantee from the town that if the \$12k dollars

budgeted for the screening tests is not enough until they can figure out the insurance part that the funding for it would be supported, particularly for the members that are not on the town's insurance coverage. The board and TA Wojcik stated that if the amount is in the budget that they continue to build it into the budget. Looking over the lease quote it would be \$11,027.12 per unit so estimated \$23k for both trailers. The board and the union discussed any additional costs for the trailers like electricity, and that would have to come out of the operating budget, and that the chief and assistant chief would need to decide where they would want the trailers to be. Mr. Bonin asked if there was any way this could be funded through the operating budget and TA Wojcik responded that there is no way to fund it out of the budget at this time.

(45:20 TS) Motion to encumber \$30k dollars for the acquisition of the rental of 2 trailer units for the fire department made by Mike Fitzpatrick, 2nd by Tim Bonin. All members in favor.

6. (46:00 TS) Comp Reform Presentation – Possible Votes

TA Wojcik respectfully suggests moving this discussion down to be before his report to the board.

7. (47:00 TS) Grant Acceptance – Possible Votes

- Local Cultural Council

This grant is in the amount of \$8,100 submitted by Lisa Freeman.

(47:23 TS) Motion to accept the \$8,100 dollar grant made by Tim Bonin, 2nd by Hal Davis. All members in favor.

- Town Clerk – Early Voting Grant

This is for the FY23 early voting reimbursement in the amount of \$4,285.52, submitted by the Town Clerk Chirs Furno.

(48:00 TS) Motion to accept the \$4,285.52 grand made by Hal Davis, 2nd by Mike Fitzpatrick. All members in favor.

8. (48:15 TS) Designate BOS Member for Public Safety Communicators Negotiations – Possible Votes

Kevin Morse stated in an email to Matt Wojcik that he would volunteer for the position unless anyone else is interested in it. Mike Fitzpatrick stated that he would be willing to do it as well if needed.

(49:15 TS) Motion to appoint Kevin Morse for the position of Public Safety Communications Negotiations as representative from the Select board made by Hal Davis, 2nd by Tim Bonin. All members in favor.

9. (49:42 TS) Close ATM & STM Warrants – Possible Votes

Chief Vinson and Assistant Chief Manning are present to defend why they believe that the ambulance funds should be able to be used for the fire department cruiser request. The board had decided at the last meeting that they didn't agree to use the ambulance reserve receipts for this purpose, they believe that they should only be used for ambulance. Assistant Chief Manning went before the Capital committee with this request as well and will present their stance on the boards concern whether this vehicle directly supports the ambulance department. She would like to stress that this vehicle absolutely supports the ambulance, especially COVID. The hospitals following COVID are full, and the emergency personnel are stuck at the hospitals longer so the ambulances cannot get back to the respective towns in the normal timely fashion and have to use Mutual Aid more. When the ambulance is out of town this command vehicle contains medical equipment to be able to help in that situation. The town of Douglas only has 4 full time paramedics and Chief Vinson and Assistant Chief Manning are 2 of them. Assistant Chief Manning further explained the need for this vehicle for the ambulance department and how it directly supports the ambulance department. Another issue is that she continues to use her personal vehicle to respond to emergencies that is not appropriately equipped that she is expected to be on call 25-7 for, which could be a liability to the town. They believe that \$13,631

a year for 5-years to lease-purchase this vehicle is well worth it for the support of the ambulance staff and saving lives. The town has in the past in 2004 purchased this vehicle out of the ambulance receipts reserved for appropriation for this purpose. Mike Fitzpatrick asked TA Wojcik if they would have to vote every year at town meeting for the next 5 years to make this annual payment out of the ambulance receipts, and TA Wojcik stated that he believes that you would be encumbering the full amount to have it be a one-time vote at town meeting. So Mr. Fitzpatrick asked why not just buy the vehicle outright instead of leasing it. Assistant Chief Manning stated that leasing the vehicle was just another option to spread the payments and the amount being taken from the ambulance fund out over time. They discussed the purchase or lease of the vehicle back and forth with the options. The board feels that if this is going to go to town meeting that they think it would be more beneficial to buy the vehicle outright instead of paying interest, and Mr. Fitzpatrick asked TA Wojcik if there was any way to be built into the budget going forward if they were to start out with leasing it and if not that he thinks it should be bought outright. The board asked the Chiefs' if they would like to keep the warrant article to take the \$60k or amend it to the yearly payment of \$13k+ for 5 years, and they responded that they would leave that decision up to the board and to the town administrator. TA Wojcik recommends the \$60k and not having to pay interest on leasing. Chief Vinson stated for the record that they actually need 2 cruisers, but they are only asking for 1 and the board asked why if they need 2. Chief Vinson stated that they have not had favorable feedback for asking for 1 so if they get this one today, they are going to talk to TA Wojcik about putting the second one in the budget for next year.

(1:29:16 TS) Motion to put on the annual town meeting warrant to transfer \$60k dollars from the ambulance receipts for appropriation to purchase the fire department cruiser made by Tim Bonin, 2nd by Hal Davis. All members in favor.

(1:29:36 TS) Motion to close the annual and special town meeting warrants made by Mike Fitzpatrick, 2nd by Tim Bonin. All members in favor.

10. (1:30:13 TS) In-Person Early Voting / Vote by Mail – Possible Votes

Chairman Morse stated that he has no problem with early voting but has issue with vote by mail. The Town Clerk is requesting that the board vote to approve in person, vote by mail, early voting for the annual town election that will be held on May 9th, for April 27th from 8:30 – 4:00, May 1st from 8:30 – 4:00, May 2nd from 8:30 – 6:00, May 3rd from 8:30 – 6:00 and May 4th from 8:30 – 4:00.

(1:31:32 TS) Motion to approve the early voting as presented made by Mike Fitzpatrick, 2nd by Hal Davis. All members in favor.

11. (1:31:55 TS) Meeting Minutes – Possible Votes

(1:32:10 TS) Motion to approve February 7, 2023, meeting minutes made by Tim Bonin, 2nd by Mike Fitzpatrick. All members in favor.

(1:33:10 TS) Motion to approve the February 21, 2023, meeting minutes made by Mike Fitzpatrick, 2nd by Tim Bonin. All members in favor.

- Agenda item #6 (1:33:25 TS) Comp Reform Presentation – Possible Votes

TA Wojcik handed out to the board members a packet of the comp reform with rates of increase and pay along with an explanation of why the comp reform is something that the town is doing. TA Wojcik went over the explanation of some of the pay rate increases and pay for union staff and non-union staff. There is also explanation in the packet for comparing outside positions to the town of Douglas comparable positions and also things that they chose not to do with the comp reform. He went over in a general overview what is in packet and spoke to the management scale. TA Wojcik spoke about the changes he proposed to the Board of Health office assistant position. He wanted to mention that they wanted this

program to benefit the hourly personnel more than the management staff. TA Wojcik has already incorporated the salary changes into the budget and the budget is balanced. He will present this to the finance committee when it is all buttoned up for and finalized for presentation. He also stated that the budget will be in the black and it will be the select boards decision what they would like to do with that money, whether they want to reinstate some of the expenses budget amounts that were cut or make adjustments to other numbers.

12. (2:06:156 TS) Town Administrator's Report

TA Wojcik wanted to put the board on notice when they came into the office the day of the snowstorm, they had a notice that the bank that the town uses to invest in the overnight lending had CD's at Silicon Valley Bank for \$30k dollars and they are currently in process of investigating more deeply what this means for the town. The FDIC covered all the deposits, so the town was made whole.

Tradition Energy stated electric prices are coming down and may not stay or come back down to for a while so now is the time to go to bid and get a good low price. TA Wojcik will get a briefing in about a week on the results of the bidding process. The town price will go up a little bit but will still be low around 12.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked what about the expenses accounts that were frozen for the budget comp reform. TA Wojcik said that he took from the Tree Warden and froze snow and ice, both accounts that typically have free cash transfers at town meeting.

(2:15:50 TS) Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Mike Fitzpatrick, 2nd by Hal Davis. All members in favor.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephenie Gosselin
Recording Secretary