



Board of Selectmen

Ware Town Hall, Meeting Room, 126 Main Street
Regular Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, April 5, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

6:30 p.m. – Executive Session: M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a) #6- Consideration of Purchase, Exchange, Lease, or Value of Real Property

7:00 p.m. Regular Meeting

Instructions for call in option: at or before 7:00 p.m., call the phone number below and when prompted enter the Meeting ID number. The platform is Zoom Meetings.

Join online: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7846041861> (the online option will require a download).

Meeting ID: 784 604 1861

Passcode: 01082

Phone: 929-205-6099

Present: Selectman Thomas H. Barnes, Selectman Nancy J. Talbot, Chairman Keith J. Kruckas, Vice-Chairman John J. Morrin, Town Manager Stuart B. Beckley, Executive Assistant Christopher J. Nolan, Bill Jackson, Robert Krasnecky, Anne Krasnecky, Joshua Kusnierz

Absent: Selectman Caitlin M. McCarthy

Present via Zoom: Stanley Ciukaj from Ware Community Television, Eileen Kennedy from Ware River News

Meeting Opened by Chairman Kruckas at 7:00 PM.

Opening Remarks, Announcements, and Agenda review by Chair

- Selectman Barnes wished Selectman McCarthy good health, as she was currently unwell.

Consent Agenda

- **Approval of March 1, 2022 and March 15, 2022 Meeting Minutes**
- **Special Event Permit Application: Rock the Park- fundraising event for Workshop 13- Saturday, June 18, 2022, 2:00-9:00 PM @ Grenville Park**
- **Special Event Permit Application: Band Concert/Fireworks, Saturday, June 25, 2022, 12:00-11:59 PM @ Grenville Park**
 - Chairman Kruckas asked that the Board treat the approval of the minutes and the special event permits as two separate motions.

Selectman Talbot made the motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of March 1, 2022, and March 15, 2022. Selectman Morrin seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes (Selectman Morrin, Selectman Barnes, Selectman Talbot), 0 No, 1 Absent (Selectman McCarthy), and 1 Abstain (Selectman Kruckas).

- Chairman Kruckas stated that he abstained due to not being present at one of these meetings.

Selectman Talbot made the motion to approve the Special Event Permit for Rock the Park on June 18th, and the Special Event Permit for the Band Concert/Fireworks on June 25th as submitted. Selectman Morrin seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent (Selectman McCarthy).

- Chairman Kruckas noted his grievance with the fact that a former proposal for a 400-acre solar project in Ware was showcased at a presentation at UMass that weekend, accusing the Building Commissioner, Planning Board, and Town Manager of leaking the info in violation of the Town's solar moratorium.
 - Mr. Beckley responded that the initial design plans for the proposed site are public information.
 - Chairman Kruckas stated that these details should not have been public, as no permit for the site had been approved.

Scheduled Appearances

- ~~7:05 PM Public Hearing for Application For New General On Premise Wine and Malt License, Workshop 13, 13 Church Street, Ware, MA (Cancelled at discretion of applicant)~~
 - Chairman Kruckas announced that the public hearing had been cancelled due to Workshop 13's decision to postpone the application process by a few months, in order to get all paperwork in order.

Old Business- none

New Business

- **Approval of Appointment to Youth/Community Center Committee: Kristin Dougas**

Selectman Barnes made the motion to appoint Kristin Dougas to the Youth/Community Center. Selectman Morrin seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent (Selectman McCarthy).

- **Request for Retiree Town Insurance**
 - Mr. Beckley introduced a letter from Mr. Paul St. Pierre, who sought to re-join the Town's insurance, but did not meet the eligibility requirements, as he was not on the Town's coverage when he left.
 - Chairman Kruckas voiced support for granting an exception to the typical eligibility requirements, arguing that Mr. St. Pierre served the Town loyally for thirty-seven years, and saved taxpayers money by not enrolling in the Town's insurance while employed here.
 - Vice-Chairman Morrin expressed concern about the Board setting a precedent for overriding eligibility rules by request.
 - Mr. Beckley stated that the Board could choose a specific date to extend coverage to Mr. St. Pierre, or it could allow him to start his enrollment on an 'as needed' basis.

Selectman Barnes made the motion to add Mr. Paul St. Pierre to the Town's health insurance coverage effective May 1, 2022. Selectman Talbot recommended that the Board choose to approve his coverage starting 'as needed' instead. Vice-Chairman Morrin stated that the Board would wait until the April 19th meeting to address this issue again after receiving legal clarification. Selectman Talbot seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent (Selectman McCarthy).

- **Approval of Warrant for Annual Town Meeting**
 - Selectman Talbot stated that the Annual and Special Town Meetings were once again being combined onto a single warrant.
 - Mr. Beckley noted that Article 25 establishes an account from marijuana revenue for road repairs,

with the percentage allotted for this purpose to be determined by voters (possibilities range from 25-100%).

Selectman Talbot made the motion to approve the warrant as presented for the Annual Town Meeting on May 9, 2022. Selectman Kruckas seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent (Selectman McCarthy).

- **Vote to Forward Proposed Zoning Amendments to Planning Board for Public Hearing**
 - Mr. Beckley stated that the proposed amendment was a single article placing a 1-year moratorium on solar battery storage.
 - Selectman Talbot noted that this issue would be discussed again at Town Meeting.

Selectman Talbot made the motion to forward the proposed zoning amendments to the Planning Board for a public hearing. Selectman Morrin seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent (Selectman McCarthy).

- Selectman Talbot noted that there had been a last-minute request from the Fire Chief for the Board to request a new Firefighter/EMT list to fill a vacancy in the Department.

Selectman Talbot made the motion for the Board to call for a new Firefighter/EMT list. Selectman Morrin seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent (Selectman McCarthy).

Comments and Concerns of Citizens

- Mr. Jackson asked if Tighe & Bond was the only firm working on the Water Treatment Plant project.
 - Mr. Beckley responded that Wright-Pierce was actually the firm doing the consulting for the filtration plant proposal, whose main goal is to reduce metallic contamination of the Town's water by bypassing the cistern currently in place.
- Mr. Jackson described his lack of faith in Tighe & Bond, stating that their error once forced the Town to foot a \$350,000 bill.
 - Chairman Kruckas responded that there was more behind this story than appeared and blamed the leadership of the DPW at that time for the events that occurred.
- Selectman Barnes clarified that a two-thirds majority would be needed at Town Meeting in order for the Town to borrow money for the Water Treatment Plant project. He added that at the 2021 Town Meeting, one individual successfully persuaded residents to vote against the project, which can be heard at the 1 hour, 6 minutes mark in the recording. Selectman Barnes stated that he felt this vote was a mistake.
- Mr. Jackson asked if any grant money was expected for the filtration plant project, and if Tighe & Bond had any role in the Town's projects.
 - Mr. Beckley responded that this money should become available through the State Revolving Fund, and that while Tighe & Bond had no involvement in the Water Treatment Plant, it was working on the screen system project at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, as well as some bridges.
- Mr. Krasnecky read a letter accusing an unnamed Town official of corruption, cronyism, and lack of transparency, asking the Board if they felt these actions were unacceptable.
 - Chairman Kruckas responded that these actions were completely unacceptable and expressed concerns over favoritism and unethical behavior by Town officials.


Town Manager Report

- The Finance Committee would be finished with its Departmental reviews after meeting with the DPW at their following meeting.
- MassDOT had been contacted about tweaking the signal pattern at the Main, West, and West Main Street intersection's traffic light.

- Grants Coordinator Jay Mooney was extremely active in completing grant applications for the Town. Additionally, the Town had just received a 3-year grant for \$200,000, which could be used to begin working on plans for a Youth/Community Center. He was also currently working on a grant for the Old Poor Farm Road culvert.
 - Chairman Kruckas thanked Mr. Mooney for all his work.
 - Mr. Beckley concurred that he has been outstanding for the Town since his hire.
- Chapter 90 Funds from the State revealed that Ware would be receiving an extra \$283,000 for transportation-related costs, including road repairs.
 - Selectman Barnes asked if the Town could add a feature to its website for residents to report potholes.
 - Mr. Beckley responded that this former feature on the website was eliminated due to lack of use, but the free software could be added again.
- Many noise complaints were received over the past weekend from the area of Town adjacent to Palmer Motorsports Park, which recently opened for the season. The Town of Palmer sent a cease-and-desist letter to the Motorsports Park in 2021, but no legal action had yet been taken.
- Chairman Kruckas accused Mr. Kusnierz of staring at him inappropriately, to which Mr. Kusnierz responded that he was simply listening to the meeting.
- Chairman Kruckas stated that the situation at the racetrack would continue to deteriorate if rumors he heard were true that the park owners planned to clear-cut a large section of woods adjacent to the track.
- Chairman Kruckas again accused Mr. Kusnierz of hostile body language.
 - Mr. Kusnierz again stated he was simply watching the meeting.
 - Vice-Chairman Morrin accused Mr. Kusnierz of muttering a threat under his breath.
- The Bank Street reconstruction project was moving forward aggressively, with Caracas Construction setting the ambitious end-date goal of July 1st.
 - This project would also resolve issues on Pleasant Street, along with troublesome recurring sewage backups on Park Ave.
- Promotional banners were in the process of being hung downtown.
- Chairman Kruckas asked about the status of obtaining a grant for an electronic display sign outside of Town Hall.
 - Mr. Beckley responded that the Town had applied for grants to cover this proposed purchase.
- The opioid lawsuit had finally come to an agreement, and the Town could expect its share of the payout at some point soon.
- Mr. Beckley thanked Tyson Foods for their surprise donation of nearly 700 frozen chickens to the Town, which had been distributed to residents on the Friday before.
- Chairman Kruckas asked about the status of HR's salary study, comparing wages for Ware employees to their positional counterparts in other communities.
 - Mr. Beckley responded that this data had just been studied extensively during the re-working of job descriptions and salaries that occurred within the past year.
- Vice-Chairman Morrin asked if the proposed restructuring of the DPW would involve changes to the Town Charter.
 - Mr. Beckley responded that it would not, but any changes would need to be approved by the Board.
- Selectman Barnes asked for an update on the East Street underpass sidewalk project.
 - Mr. Beckley stated that he was communicating with the contractor for this project, and would provide an update by mid-week.
- Selectman Talbot reminded residents that the Town Election would be held the following Monday.

Adjournment

Selectman Morrin made the motion at 7:40 p.m. to Adjourn the Regular Meeting. Selectman Talbot seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent (Selectman McCarthy)

Attest: 
Christopher J. Nolan
Executive Assistant to Town Manager