



Board of Selectmen

Ware Town Hall, Meeting Room, 126 Main Street

Regular Meeting Minutes – Thursday, August 6, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.

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

Phone: 929-205-6099

Present: Selectman Nancy Talbot, Selectman Thomas Barnes, Selectman John Morrin, Selectman Keith Kruckas, Town Manager Stuart Beckley, Executive Assistant Mary Midura, PCD Town Planner Rebekah DeCoursey

Present Via Zoom: Chairman Alan Whitney

Meeting Opened remotely by Chairman Whitney

- **Change of Polling Location for State Primary September 1 and November 3 General Election**

Selectman Morrin questioned the location; Selectman Talbot noted the WJSHS gymnasium.

Selectman Morrin questioned transportation; Selectman Talbot noted there will be advertisement of the location on the town website and on reverse 911 call.

Selectman Kruckas made the motion to approve Change of Polling Location to the WJSHS gymnasium for State Primary September 1, 2020 and November 3, 2020 General Election.

Selectman Morrin seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.

- **Consideration of Quorum Change for Town Meetings**

Selectman Talbot explained a formal vote must be made for the August 17 Special Town Meeting and all town meetings to December 31, 2020. Selectman Kruckas noted the important issue should have more than 25 to decide the vote, and stated that “given the fact it’s not dedicated, could be by raising taxes or any appropriations.” He stated his concern that “we’re leaving it up to 25 people to make that decision. Selectman Morrin noted there were 100 last time.

Chairman Whitney noted his concern that quorum is set at 100 and we only get 90, and have to re-do.

Selectman Talbot noted that the rationale was due to Covid-19 restrictions and the meeting will be outside. But if the meeting is set at 100 and we get 99, meeting cannot be held.

Selectman Barnes questioned how to make sure to get 75? Selectman Kruckas stated “we have to do our due diligence and get the word out, residents need to know it could possibly affect their taxes, affect a lot of things. Selectman Talbot noted the State must be notified of the quorum at least 10 days prior to the meeting. The Board discussed a quorum of 25 or 50 or 75. Selectman Talbot noted that

due to the timeline, vote by mail applications, public gatherings' restrictions, that this must be decided.

Selectman Kruckas made the motion to approve a Quorum Change to 75 for Special Town Meeting on August 17, 2020 and any Town Meetings to be held until December 31, 2020. Selectman Barnes seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.

- **Request for Subordination**

Mr. Beckley noted that this item was on the August 4, 2020 meeting that was cancelled due to weather, and this item is time-sensitive. The bank requests the Town be in second position.

Selectman Talbot (requesting through the Chairman to allow this vote as this topic was listed on the August 4, 2020 agenda, meeting cancelled due to weather, and the topic is time-sensitive) made the motion to authorize the Town Manager to approve the Request for Subordination. Selectman Morrin seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.

Selectman Kruckas asked Mr. Beckley if actual numbers will be ready by the Special Town Meeting; Mr. Beckley noted there will be estimates. Selectman Kruckas noted that hard, concrete numbers and needed, "the days of writing blank checks are done." Chairman Whitney stated the need for the engineer's numbers.

Selectman Talbot stated "I presume that we should have approximated costs within \$10,000" after engineer's input. Mr. Beckley noted the proposal is approximately \$400,000, we are asking to fine-tune within \$10,000. Selectman Kruckas asked if this included legal and other costs; Mr. Beckley answered yes.

Selectman Kruckas asked if anything was set up for the building next door; Mr. Beckley noted that the Building Inspector and Fire Chief were there on August 5, 2020. The report is not completed. Selectman Kruckas noted he has been asking for the last two months on this, and how can we justify if this comes back next year, concrete answers are needed now. Chairman Whitney asked Mr. Beckley to get those numbers and copy to all Board members.

Selectman Morrin questioned the back-up plan, as Chairman Whitney asked where we are in that situation. Mr. Beckley noted we waited the appeal period with Mr. Barenboym, now will contact him and his engineer, it is still his order until October 1, 2020 to tear down the building.

Chairman Whitney noted that if the Town does not get this vote, we must assume Main Street project will be delayed. Selectman Morrin noted the building is dangerous and something needs to happen.

Selectman Barnes noted he attended a meeting for empty storefronts and grants, had the blight and slum designation, any help as backup on this? Mr. Beckley answered not those programs, also looked at other grants. The legislature is working on an economic development bond bill, and a transportation bond bill. Senator Gobi is working on earmarks that may assist. This has an economic impact on the Town of Ware, so these may apply. The issue is the Town has no ownership of that property, it is privately owned, so grants do not apply to this building.

Selectman Barnes asked if the town takes down and acquired the building, could the town be reimbursed by a grant? Mr. Beckley noted "if an earmark, yes" but "if a grant, unlikely". Mr. Beckley noted a step by step legal process to get paid back and have liens but that does not include ownership of the property.

Selectman Kruckas stated this was the "third meeting on this topic and we've not had the town attorney here." Chairman Whitney asked Mr. Beckley to have, by Tuesday, an outline of next steps, if we don't get the money, with specifics, costs and time frames. If we don't get the vote, what is the plan, how long will it take?

Selectman Talbot asked Chairman Whitney if he was suggesting a special meeting so we are all cognizant of the backup plan. Chairman Whitney noted he will be out of town next week. Selectman Kruckas noted the plan should also include loss of contingency money up to \$750,000 needs to be added up and laid out on paper.

Selectman Barnes asked If Ludlow has to leave, would they be able to come back without us paying additional fees? Chairman Whitney noted this is not probable.

Selectman Kruckas asked Mr. Beckley why no work has been done recently; Mr. Beckley noted the electrical contractor is next to do work.

Adjournment

Selectman Kruckas made the motion at 4:27 p.m. to Adjourn the Regular Meeting. Selectman Talbot seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.

Attest: 
Mary L. Midura, Executive Assistant to
Town Manager

