



Board of Selectmen

Ware Town Hall, Meeting Room, 126 Main Street

Regular Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, January 5, 2021 at 7:00 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

Passcode: 01082

Phone: 929-205-6099

Present: Selectman Keith J. Kruckas, Selectman Thomas H. Barnes, Selectman John J. Morrin, Selectman Nancy J. Talbot, Town Manager Stuart Beckley, DPW Director Gilbert St. George-Sorel, Fire Chief Chris Gagnon, Police Chief Shawn Crevier, Executive Assistant Mary L. Midura, WestComm Dispatch Center Director Erin Hastings

Absent: Selectman Alan G. Whitney

Present via Zoom: Treasurer Erica Brunell, WRN Editor Eileen Kennedy, Tighe & Bond engineer Michael Schrader, Superintendent of Schools Dr. DiLeo

Meeting Opened by Vice-Chairman Kruckas

Opening Remarks, Announcements, and Agenda review by Chair

Selectman Barnes commended the Fire and Police Departments for their work at the fire at 18 Parker Street.

Selectman Morrin commended John Piechota, Parks Director, and the Parking Committee for their work.

Consent Agenda

- Approval of November 24, December 8, and December 22, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Selectman Talbot made the motion to table approval of minutes to January 19, 2021. Selectman Morrin seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent (Selectman Whitney).

Scheduled Appearances

- **Water Filtration Plant Funding – Tighe & Bond**

Michael Schrader, engineer from Tighe & Bond, reviewed the Power Point with the Board of Selectmen. He noted all Capital Improvement projects with a 10-year window. He recommended this list be updated annually.

Funding alternatives to consider are A) 100% Water Rate Funded, B) 25% General Fund Contribution, and C) 50% General Fund Contribution. These options apply to the cost of the filtration plant only and based on quarterly fees. He also reviewed cost impact to residential customers. Selectman questioned how raising rates earlier would affect these projections. Mr. Schrader noted he could calculate based on rate changes. Mr. Beckley noted that the Board would need to decide which option to pursue. He will come back to the Board with options based on Capital Improvements and the budget.

- **Dr. DiLeo, Superintendent of Schools**

Dr. DiLeo noted that the School Committee met on December 23, 2020 and discussed triggers to remote learning would be 2 weeks in the red and a 5% positivity rate. The 2nd quarter ends on January 27, 2021, with 25 students returning and CDC challenges. She noted there are 3 models which could be switched immediately, following DESE and allowing for safety and social and emotional needs of students and staff. She noted that 9 families have transitioned from hybrid to remote this week. Selectman Morrin questioned the plan and why the School Committee meets remotely and not in person. Dr. DiLeo noted that the School Committee must also follow safety protocol.

- **Regional Dispatch Proposal**

Chief Crevier, Chief Gagnon, and Erin Hastings, WestComm Dispatch Center Director, presented the benefits for the Town to join a regional dispatch center. The presentation noted State 911 and grant funding with a \$3.5 million budget. Chief Crevier noted the professionalism and training of a regional dispatch, with local police ability to address all situations quickly. Chief Gagnon noted that there is great need for “boots in the street” and to bring the system up to date. Ms. Hastings noted the extensive training of dispatchers. There is need for the Town to submit a letter of interest. Chief Crevier and Chief Gagnon noted they will come back to the Board on February 2, 2021 with options and recommendations.

Selectman Talbot made the motion to pursue regional dispatch and submit a letter of interest. Selectman Barnes seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent (Selectman Whitney).

Old Business

- **Building Inspector Update – Main Street Buildings – Continue to February 2, 2021**

Selectman Kruckas questioned the CDA vote to transfer remaining funds; Mr. Beckley noted the CDA will meet on January 11, 2021. He also noted that 92-104 Main Street is partially boarded, the Building Inspector sent the owner a \$500 fine, and a contractor is looking at the building for purchase or demolition. The Board discussed enforcing a lien on insurance, and a bylaw to mandate owners hold insurance. Mr. Beckley noted this can be an article on the next Town meeting in May, and legislation would be needed. Selectman Kruckas requested a letter from the town attorney with recommendations.

- **Review of Special Town Meeting Quorum**

Selectman Talbot noted that she has spoken with Representative Smola, and there may be legislation in the coming weeks regarding town meetings.

Selectman Talbot made the motion to maintain a quorum of 75 for the January 19, 2021 Special Town Meeting, pending legislation. Selectman Barnes seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent (Selectman Whitney).

- **Information on Proposed Carnival September 2022**

Selectman Morrin noted the project idea originated with the Parks Commission to hold a Carnival at Memorial Field in Fall of 2022. The carnival would include a beer garden, rides, vendors, and local artists. Proceeds would benefit the veterans in town. Selectman Morrin noted he would keep the Board updated.

- **Update – MA DOT Regarding Overpass on East Street – Continued to February 2, 2021**

- **Quabbin Feasibility Study**

Mr. Beckley noted there is a process with Massachusetts Water Resources Authority. Selectman Kruckas requested consulting Hadley and other towns.

Selectman Talbot made the motion to table discussion to February 2, 2021. Selectman Morrin seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent (Selectman Whitney).

New Business

- **Request Change “Downtown Parking Committee” to “Downtown Improvement Committee”**

Selectman Morrin noted the committee’s goal to continue improvements to the downtown.

Selectman Barnes made the motion to change the name of the Downtown Parking Committee to the Downtown Improvement Committee. Selectman Talbot seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstention (Selectman Morrin), 1 Absent (Selectman Whitney).

Selectman Kruckas questioned possible closing of the wound care at BMLH; Mr. Beckley will call for information. Selectman Barnes noted the value of this facility.

Comments and Concerns of Citizens - none

Selectman Barnes would like to have two people trained with FAA drone certification. He noted a drone would be very useful with building inspections and conservation issues.

Selectman Barnes noted the sign on Old Belchertown Road and Rte. 32 intersection on the guardrail which blocks view of oncoming traffic.

Selectman Barnes suggested the use of iPads or Chromebooks to load Board of Selectmen’s meeting documents to save on paper use.

Selectman Kruckas requested the status of the Senior Center repairs. Mr. Beckley noted the approximate cost is \$12,000. The Town has a \$5,000 per building insurance deductible. Selectman Kruckas noted this needs accountability. Mr. Beckley state the estimated repairs fix the coils, but the controls will still need repair as the system is from 2007.

Selectman Morrin asked about the Beaver Lake Road safety zone. Mr. Beckley noted this has not changed.

Selectman Morrin asked that the Wood List be posted on the Town website. No deliveries have yet to be made.

Selectman Morrin asked that the new parking rules be posted in the local newspaper. He questioned any TIF contracts. Mr. Beckley noted the only TIF is with Ware Senior Housing on South Street.

Selectman Talbot noted that the Board of Selectmen has authority to modify or update water regulations.

Town Manager Report

Upcoming meetings:

January 11 – Community Development Authority CDBG hearing

January 19 – Special Town Meeting

Great work by the Fire Department in suppressing the fire on Tuesday at 18 Parker Street. The first truck on site quickly had the fire under control. Also, great, and brave work by the police officers on scene in clearing the building of residents. The Building Inspector’s report on the property is attached. The Town is reaching out to Red Cross to learn of any residents’ needs.

With the update of the State metrics numbers, Ware is now classified as a high-risk community. The State DPH has reached out to have the Town attend a webinar on Monday regarding additional steps to take.

With the Federal passage of the next COVID aid package. The CARES Act was extended to December 2021. This will permit the Town to continue to expend funds for COVID purposes, while the previous deadline had been today. The restaurant food program worked wonderfully with generous support by the seven participating restaurants. As the Town plans the use of the remaining CARES funds, this will be one way to provide food to families affected by the virus.

The DPW has established a drop off for holiday trees at the Robbins Road lot.

With regard to the memo from the Community Development Authority regarding the re-allocation of funds, the CDA will hold a public hearing on January 11 on the 2019 grant program. At a future meeting, the CDA will be seeking approval from the Select Board to remove the unsafe structure at 13 Parker Street.

Adjournment

Executive Session: M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a) #2 Conduct Strategy Sessions for Negotiations with Non-Union Personnel

Selectman Talbot made the motion at 9:04 p.m. to Adjourn the Regular Meeting to go into Executive Session: M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a) #2 Conduct Strategy Sessions for Negotiations with Non-Union Personnel, NOT TO RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION. Selectman Morrin seconded the motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent (Selectman Whitney).

Selectman Alan G. Whitney	Absent
Selectman Keith J. Kruckas	Yes√
Selectman Thomas H. Barnes	Yes√
Selectman Nancy J. Talbot	Yes√
Selectman John J. Morrin	Yes√

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