



Board of Selectmen

Ware Town Hall, Meeting Room, 126 Main Street

Regular Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, November 10, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

~~6:30 p.m. Executive Session: M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a) #1 Discussion of Character of Employee~~
CANCELLED

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 at Town Hall: Selectman Alan G. Whitney, Selectman Keith J. Kruckas, Selectman Thomas H. Barnes, Selectman Nancy J. Talbot, Selectman John J. Morrin, Town Manager Stuart B. Beckley, Building Inspector Anna Marques

Present via Zoom: Health Department Director Judy Metcalf, Superintendent of Schools Dr. DiLeo, Water Filtration Plant Contact Andy Lalashius, School Business Manager Andrew Paquette

Absent: None

Meeting Opened at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Whitney, with a moment of silence for all veterans

Opening Remarks, Announcements, and Agenda review by Chair

Selectman Barnes thanked Mark Avis, Veterans' Agent, all veterans, and Stanley Ciukaj, Ware Community TV general manager, for the Veterans ceremony which will air on November 11, 2020 at 1:00 pm on Channel 15. Selectman Kruckas thanked the Knights of Columbus for the Halloween event at Grenville Park. He noted that better advertising should be done for voting, such as use of the electronic signs, town hall sign, and robo-call. Selectman Morrin thanked the Parking Committee for its work to date and noted the work of John Piechota and the Parks Department.

- **Announce No Overnight Parking on Town Streets, December 1, 2020 (or first snowfall) – March 31, 2021**

Chairman Whitney announced the No Overnight Parking. Mr. Beckley noted he is talking with Police Chief Crevier and DPW Director St. George-Sorel regarding the possibility of allowing on-street parking when there is no snow event.

Consent Agenda

- **Approval of Meeting Minutes of October 20, 2020**

Selectman Talbot made the motion to approve the meeting minutes. Selectman Barnes seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstention (Selectman Kruckas).

Scheduled Appearances

- **Updates:**
 - **Judy Metcalf, Health Director**

Ms. Metcalf noted the good news of the vaccine that may be ready by December, with more data needed. Each person must receive two doses, with first round of vaccines going to first responders, doctors, nurses. Next round of doses would go to high-risk individuals. The bad news is that a second wave will be during this fall and winter. She noted 8 cases in 3 days this week, more in hospital, with ICU at 50%. The State is gearing up for more ICU facilities, but we are better than were in the Spring, with excellent testing, testing on demand, and free testing at the Eastfield Mall. It will be a tough fall and early winter. People must prioritize regarding group gatherings. Masks must be worn at all times, per the Governor's order. Curfew in Massachusetts is 10 pm through 5 am. Be vigilant and take care of each other. This vaccine is very different and must be stored at -80 degrees. The Governor may use National Guard to set up logistics of distribution.

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

Dr. DiLeo noted that the school year is moving forward, with 51 students returning from remote to hybrid. There are still 46 families that choose to remain remote only. Dr. DiLeo thanked Judy Metcalf for her continued great support of the schools. A few cases were reported when students were remote, and a few had close contact reported. The impact would be on all families, so continued masks, social distancing, and hand washing are very important.

Selectman Morrin questioned if there is room for the 51 students; Dr. DiLeo said Yes. Selectman Morrin questioned if paraprofessionals or others replace teachers? Dr. DiLeo stated No. Selectman Morrin questioned if there were substitutes; Dr. DiLeo noted that other staff in the building are utilized. Selectman Morrin questioned Dr. DiLeo's favorite grade; Dr. DiLeo noted she prefers to tie shoes.

Selectman Kruckas noted Judy Metcalf's announced retirement, thanking her for staying on until Spring to help the transition for her replacement.

- **Anna Marques, Building Inspector**

Selectman Kruckas asked about the gutters and roof at Town Hall; Ms. Marques noted the roof outside the Assessors' office and stairwell need to be customized and the gutters are copper, with deterioration. She will be getting quotes this week. The portico entrance had water over the sides and the front wall. The contractor will be working on weather-sealing the great hall. Selectman Kruckas noted the Board asked for a structural engineering report for 114 Main Street and the building next door. Ms. Marques noted the existing building survey to determine whether to be torn down or is salvageable. Selectman Kruckas stated this was requested six months ago. Selectman Morrin stated the town should be aggressive as these buildings are dangerous. Ms. Marques stated that the owner was required to put up fencing. The Board asked for an update at the next meeting.

- **Andy Lalashius, Water Filtration Plant**

Mr. Beckley introduced Mr. Lalashius. Mr. Lalashius joined the meeting via zoom. The Board noted the importance of a contact person on this project.

Old Business

- **Approval of School COVID bills**

The Board continued discussion of the bills. Selectman Morrin questioned when the decision was made by the schools. Andrew Paquette, Business Manager for the schools, noted that the School Committee voted in August on these bills, and now is waiting for the Board of Selectmen to vote to approve. He noted that the Board was informed of these upcoming bills at the May 19, 2020 meeting. He stated that the Department of Education advised acceptance of Sections 12 and 13, and these are 42% settled. Selectman Morrin noted that the Board needs correct information for such a decision.

Selectman Morrin made the motion to Accept Options and Approve Bills presented. Selectman Talbot seconded the motion. The motion failed on a vote of 4 No, 1 Yes (Selectman Talbot).

- **Update on Main Street project**

Mr. Beckley noted that the sidewalks should be paved in two weeks. The Board advised Mr. Beckley to push National Grid to complete the lighting, as the sidewalks are very dark.

- **Update on Palmer Motorsports Park**

Mr. Beckley noted discussion with Senator Gobi and the Town of Palmer. Palmer sent a letter to the Palmer Motorsports Park several years ago regarding the noise levels.

New Business

- **Letter from Health Director RE: Forefront Solar**

The Board discussed extension to May 2021 per the Health Director's letter indicating repairs to be completed by Forefront Solar.

Selectman Kruckas made the motion to approve Extension of the Agreement with Forefront Solar to May 2021. Selectman Barnes seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.

- **Set Special Town Meeting Date, Approval of Warrant**

Resident Kim Mongeau proposed an additional article to forgo pay of Selectmen who are not up to date on their taxes. Selectman Kruckas stated he would abstain as this is directed at him. Selectman Morrin questioned why this article would not pertain to anyone elected. The Board did not take a vote on this proposed article.

Selectman Talbot made the motion to Set Special Town Meeting for Monday, November 30, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. at Ware Junior Senior High School. Selectman Barnes seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.

- **Set Tax Classification Hearing for Tuesday, November 24, 2020**

Selectman Talbot made the motion to Set Tax Classification Hearing for Tuesday, November 24, 2020 at 7:10 p.m. Selectman Morrin seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.

- **Policy Presentation, First Packet**

Selectman Talbot made the motion to Table to December 8, 2020. Selectman Barnes seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.

Comments and Concerns of Citizens

Kim Mongeau suggested funds should be set aside each year for the voters to consider items such as the Main Street situation at Annual Town Meeting.

Mr. Beckley noted that Selectman Kruckas has previously suggested dedicating funds to specific purposes.

Chairman Whitney noted this may work for the Town of Ware to review yearly.

Selectman Morrin noted pipe replacement should be included.

Cathy Cascio noted that people are upset that tax dollars may be used to take down buildings. She stated there

should be a policy with legal steps in place to handle building issues. Mr. Beckley noted that Southbridge has a bylaw for unkempt and abandoned property. Building Inspector Marques noted that building owners must pay an annual fee toward this bylaw. Selectman Talbot noted that town counsel can advise.

Cathy Cascio congratulated the Knights of Columbus on the great job of the Halloween event. She encouraged residents to shop locally but noted that the sidewalks are detrimental.

Jack Cascio noted he was glad this Board will hold building owners responsible. He asked the status of the vote to make the Board of Selectmen as fire commissioners to have a weak chief. Mr. Beckley noted this vote went to the State Legislature, specifically to Representative Todd Smola. It may be heard this session or by January. The initial vote was on June 29, 2020. Selectman Talbot note the process has been slowed due to elections and covid. Mr. Cascio asked why this took five months. Chairman Whitney noted internal conversations to get things done in a timelier manner.

In answer to Selectman Kruckas' s comments about online comments and criticism, Kim Mongeau-Ring identified herself as the person who runs the Facebook page known as Ware News and gave her contact information.

Selectman Barnes questioned the progress of the Old Belchertown Road bridge work; Mr. Beckley stated the work is complete, but inspections may be needed before formal opening.

Selectman Barnes stated he wanted the Board to discuss the Route 9 underpass at the next meeting.

Town Manager Report

Upcoming meetings:

November 12. Senior Center, USDA Water Treatment Plant public forum 2

November 24, Board meeting, Assessors Tax Classification hearing

Main Street. The conduit has been installed and the contractor stated they would pour the concrete sidewalks next week.

Capital Planning: The Capital Planning Committee has been meeting to review department requests for equipment and maintenance. These are included in the Town Meeting Warrant. The financial team will review and make recommendations on which items to directly fund from available funds and free cash, and which items to borrow for.

The House Ways and Means Committee has issued its draft FY2021 budget. It very closely (within \$2800) matches the revised budget submitted by the Governor, so there is a level of confidence that the large aid and expenses will hold through the budget process

Attached are updates and responsive information from DPW, Police, Building, and the Treasurer/Collector.

As noted on the memo from the DPW director, the Old Belchertown Road bridge construction is nearly complete. They will seal the seams and pave next spring MassDOT has not indicated if an inspection is necessary. The bridge will hopefully be open in the next week or so.

Water bills have been mailed. A reminder that collections are now at Town Hall. For those that have a "bill pay" system, the Town asks that residents update the mailing address to Town Hall at 126 Main Street.

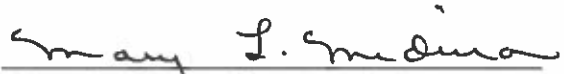
Thank you to the Knights of Columbus, Parks staff and volunteers for a very successful Halloween drive through on October 30.

Adjournment

Executive Session: M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a) #2 Conduct Strategy Sessions for Negotiations with Non-Union Personnel, #3 Litigation

Selectman Barnes made the motion at 8:50 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, #3 Litigation, NOT TO RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION. Selectman Kruckas seconded the motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.

Selectman Alan G. Whitney	Yes√
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

Minutes Taken at home via Ware Community TV15,
with permission from Chairman (due to foot injury)

