

## Selectboard Regular Minutes

Ware Town Hall, 126 Main Street, Ware, MA 01082

Tuesday, December 03, 2024, at 6:30 pm

*(Items may have been taken out of order per posted agenda)*

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Board Members Present: Nancy Talbot, John Desmond, John Cascio, Terrance Smith

Board Members Remote: None

Board Members Absent: Joshua Kusnierz

Remote Participation: Stanley Ciukaj (Ware Community Television),

Public in Attendance: Daniel Bigda, Eva Lowe, Gary Willard, Jane Agnew, M. Kay Moulton, Stuart Beckley, Nicole Croteau

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### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Nancy Talbot opened the meeting at 6:30pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS & OPENING REMARKS FROM CHAIR

Town Manager Stuart Beckley announced that the Ware Hazard Mitigation Public Forum is tomorrow evening at the Senior Center starting at 6:30pm. Once the mitigation report is approved, this will allow the Town to apply for grants to help implement improvements in areas of concern.

### CONSENT AGENDA

- Approval of Minutes
  - November 19, 2024
- One Day Liquor Licenses
  - Requested by Workshop13, located at 13 Church Street, Ware, MA, all from 6:00 to 10:30pm
  - 2024-39 – Nearly New Years Shokazoba & DJ Baby Deer, December 28, 2024 (All Alcoholic)
  - 2024-40 – Ward Hayden and the Outliers, December 06, 2024 (All Alcoholic)
  - 2024-41 – Drum and Dance, December 14, 2024 (Beer & Wine)
- Special Event Permit
  - 2024-21 – Ware Center Meeting House, Annual Tree and Wreath Stroll, Town Hall-Great Hall, December 7 & 8, 2024, from 10:00am to 4:00pm
- Approval of 2025 Meeting Dates

Chair N. Talbot read the consent agenda items. No further discussion.

**MOTION** by Board Member Terrance Smith to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Board Member John Cascio. No further discussion. All in Favor 4/0/0.

### APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

None

### SCHEDULED APPEARANCES

None

## OLD BUSINESS

- Approval of Firefighters Contract in Open Session

Stuart Beckley, Town Manager, informed the Board that the contract was just received from the Town Attorney late today and will be on the next agenda.

**MOTION** by Clerk John Desmond to table approval of the Firefighters contract until the next meeting.

Seconded by Board Member John Cascio. No further discussion. All in Favor 4/0/0.

## NEW BUSINESS – PART 1

- Request to Schedule a Dangerous Dog Hearing for December 17, 2024, at 6:40pm, regarding one dog from 8 Desantis Drive.

Chair N. Talbot read the legal ad as presented in the packet. No further discussion.

**MOTION** by Clerk John Desmond to schedule the public hearing for December 17, 2024, at 6:0pm. Seconded by Board Member John Cascio. No further discussion. All in Favor 4/0/0.

## COMMENTS & CONCERNS OF CITIZENS

Clerk John Desmond asked if the Pavement Management Plan could be updated by PVPC. Town Manager, S. Beckley stated it could be at updated and will ask for a quote.

Continuing, Clerk J. Desmond would like to present the replica Boston Post Cane to the oldest Ware resident in January 2025.

Board Member T. Smith requested that the employees start to keep track of the resources spent on Mary Lane Hospital site. Such as time from the Building Commissioner, Fire Chief, Town Manager, water usage from the sprinkler breaking, attorney/legal expenses, etc.

Cynthia Bourcier provided a quick update since the initial request dated September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024; still waiting for a response on what permits have been issued to Baystate. Residents and community members are sending letters of complaint to Senator Elizabeth Warren requesting her to contact the Attorney General's Office to investigate the alleged missing \$10 million dollars from the Trust fund.

## NEW BUSINESS – PART 2

- Review and Approve renewal applications of ABCC, Common Victualler, Entertainment, Automatic Amusement Devices, Lodging Licenses, and Car Dealer Licenses: Class I, II, III.

Executive Assistant Nicole Croteau read the list of license holders seeking renewal for the 2025 season. It was noted unless all information was submitted then licenses would be held.

**MOTION** by Board Member Terrance Smith to approve all licenses that submitted all the required information and hold any incomplete applications. Seconded by Clerk John Desmond. No further discussion. All in favor 4/0/0.

- Forward the following two amendments to the Planning Board for a public hearing:
  - Rezoning of Mechanic Street, Parcel Id's 57-0-166, 57-0-167, from Highway Commercial to Commercial Industrial;
  - Amend the Town of Ware Use Table to include 'Warehousing' as a permitted use in the Highway Commercial District.

Chair N. Talbot explained to the Board Members that the Selectboard recommends zoning amendments to the Planning Board for changes and then the Planning Board holds a public hearing. Then the amendments are placed on the Warrant as an Article for approval at a Town Meeting.

Board Member T. Smith advised that any voting member (Selectboard and or Planning Board member) who is related to or has a financial interest in these particular zone changes should abstain.

**MOTION** by Clerk John Desmond to recommend the two proposed zone changes be forwarded to the Planning Board. Seconded by Board Member John Cascio. No further discussion. All in Favor 4/0/0.

Discussion: Daniel Bigda is requesting the zone change because he would like to construct a building to be used for paper, lumber, etc. storage while working with the railroad company. Again, Board Member T. Smith stated any elected official who is related to or has financial benefit should abstain from voting.

## **TOWN MANAGER REPORT & UPDATES**

Town Manager Stuart Beckley provided the following updates:

- December 14<sup>th</sup> is Wreaths Across America starting at 10:00 am at Veterans Park
- December 14<sup>th</sup> is the annual Ware Flair Holiday Drive-Thru at Grenville Park, from 5:00 to 7:00 pm.
- The Town was awarded two grants:
  - \$200,000 for construction of the Grenville Park bathrooms and the restroom upstairs in the Town Hall Great Hall to be converted from one unit to two units.
  - \$50,000 from the MVP Grant was awarded
- The Town is moving forward with the expansion of the Grenville Park land purchase from the Special Town Meeting in November.
- Clerk John Desmond asked if there is any update on the pool grant. Town Manager S. Beckley stated there should be an update by the end of the year and if not awarded then the Town will move forward with the splash pad design and would be on the Town Meeting Warrant.
- Improvements in the Town Hall to the Assessor's and Tax Collector's office are moving forward to creating teller-type windows.
- The Charter Review Committee would like to have an insert in the tax bill and will be on the next agenda for approval.
- The Water Department sent letters to residents who still have old meters seeking owners to replace the meters for a more accurate reading.
- The Tax Rate – Single Rate will be \$15.06, which is a decrease but also means the values are up so the tax bills may increase.
- The pay scale for nonunion and part-time employees is complete. Each position has a grade and the grade corresponds to the pay scale.
  - Board Member T. Smith asked if all employees are on the same scale regarding vacation and sick time. Know from the past, a few employees/departments were not.
    - The Town Manager explained that all employees are now equal for vacation time, according to the charts in each contract.
- Board Member John Cascio asked if there is an update on the Buckley Court pump station repairs. At this time, the Town is waiting for quotes and currently having trouble finding an architect.
- Board Member John Desmond if the DPW Director's email was hacked today and yes it was. Sorry for any inconvenience.
- Executive Assistant Nicole Croteau reminded everyone that the parking ban is in effect from December 1 to March 31 and parking permits are available in the Executive Assistant's office, \$30.00 per permit and free for Veterans.

End of report.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** to adjourn by Clerk John Desmond at 7:04 pm. Seconded by Board Member John Cascio. No further discussion. All in Favor 4/0/0.

Minutes for December 03, 2024, respectfully submitted by,

*Nicole Croteau*

Executive Assistant to Town Manager & Selectboard