

Minutes of the Board of Selectmen Meeting

This meeting was called to order on Tuesday, May 3, 2022 at 6:00PM in the Town Offices. Jason Petraitis and John Tripp present.

Mr. Petraitis announced that last night there was a tie in the Annual Town Election for the position of Board of Selectmen. Mr. Kiley declined to stay on as the holdover position until a run-off election can be held.

Mr. Tripp moved to nominate Jason Petraitis as Chairman of the Board of Selectmen; Mr. Petraitis seconded the motion. So voted.

Mr. Petraitis moved to nominate John Tripp as Vice-Chairman of the Board of Selectmen; Mr. Tripp seconded the motion. So voted.

Mr. Petraitis asked about the next special election, we need to wait 10 days to see if someone requests a recount. After that we have two options: to hold another special election as soon as possible which will cost about \$3,000.00 or wait until the primaries in September which will be more cost effective for the Town. Both Mr. Petraitis and Mr. Tripp are leaning towards waiting until September.

Derick Veliz, Selectmen from Warren, was present to discuss a free Town Alert app that he's offering to North Brookfield. He works for a company that does a lot of tech and this simple app helps municipalities communicate with their residents. Lately officials have been having problems with Facebook and social media in general. Town Alert consists of two apps, one for the residents and one for Town Officials. Residents will not need to create a username, just download the app and select North Brookfield. This app will allow Town Officials to put information out quickly and simply, residents will get notified but won't be able to comment or respond in the app. Mr. Petraitis said he loves the idea of this app and asked what would happen if an employee quit, how do you stop access? Derick said its easy, someone would be designated as an admin, they can sign into the website and easily delete the user/employee. Derick said he is offering this app for free to North Brookfield for life. Mr. Petraitis asked the process of getting it setup. Derick said we should get a list together of who will have access, he'll show us how to set it up, then they'll be a promotional period to get the word out to the public. Mr. Tripp moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to accept Derick Veliz's offer of the Town Alert App for free, and further to appoint Ashley Barre as the administrator for this app. So voted.

Mr. Petraitis asked when we should get started setting this up, Derick said he'd come back whenever we're ready. Mr. Petraitis said he could meet with us again on May 17th at 6:00pm in the Town Offices and thanked Derick for coming out and generously donating this app to North Brookfield.

Shiela LeBlanc was in to discuss ARPA. Mr. Petraitis asked if she was willing to do the paperwork (reporting), she said yes but she'll have to call to get setup since Dale Kiley was the main name for reporting.

Special Election: Mr. Petraitis discussed the special election needed since there was a failure to elect. The election costs about \$3,000 to run and has to be in a certain time frame. At this point we're looking at the middle to end of July as the earliest we can hold the election, but we could wait until September Primaries to hold both elections at the same time and save money. Shiela LeBlanc said she'd have to

adjust the Town Clerk's election budget if we have the Special election separate from primaries and she's not sure of the Town's response. Mr. Petraitis noted the budget is extremely tight and we may not have the extra money. Shiela also questioned if July was a good time for the election since many people are on vacation, you may get push back. Mr. Petraitis spoke to Michelle Thayer (interim COA director), she wanted to wait as there may be construction at the Senior Center (polling location) during the Summer. Mr. Petraitis thinks we should have the election in September, we still have Mr. Tripp and himself on the Board and if something happened where they couldn't form a quorum, they could have Town Counsel step in. Shiela asked if the Town Moderator, Jim Caldwell, had any opinions on it. Mr. Petraitis said that Jim would rather have it sooner than later, and although Mr. Petraitis agrees it would be better to get a third board member as soon as possible, there is still the question of how to fund it. Shiela said it would cost closer to \$4,000 when you consider paying people, cost of absentee ballots, and postage.

Shiela wanted to discuss two budget issues: the new hire at the PD and two articles on the Special Town Meeting warrant that have no funding sources (Tree Warden salary and fuel costs). Mr. Petraitis asked what would happen if the Article to rescind money dedicated to storm water issues on Summer Street passed. Shiela said it would go back into Free Cash in the Fall. Shiela questioned if you could have the Special Election in July and then transfer from Free cash in the Fall. Mr. Petraitis said he doesn't want to deficit spend. Shiela noted the Town is in the red \$70,000 in the Snow and Ice account and said the Selectmen need to be at Finance Committee meetings. Both Mr. Petraitis and Mr. Tripp said they would attend. Mr. Petraitis asked for Shiela's thoughts on the Police Department budget. She said they are \$10,000 in the hole and still need \$18,000 to cover the new hire from July through September. Mr. Petraitis said Chief Smith was confused when he said he had the money in his budget to pay for the new employee. He will ask the Chief to get this situation handled before Friday. Mr. Tripp moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to have Ashley set up a meeting among herself, Chief Smith, and Shiela LeBlanc to resolve the issue before Friday. So voted.

Camp Atwater-Mr. Petraitis said the owners of Camp Atwater have been doing renovations and repairs. John Couture is not sure what to charge, and the past the Board of Selectmen have waived fees because they are a non-profit. This year they will only be holding day camps and hope to complete repairs over the Fall and Winter to open again for over night camping next year. Mr. Tripp moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to waive permit fees for Camp Atwater. So voted.

Senior Center Construction, Pay: Mr. Petraitis said when the Senior Center is shut down for Elections we pay the employees, should we pay them during construction? Mr. Tripp moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to pay the Senior Center employees during construction. So voted.

We will schedule an executive session next week at 6:30PM to continue Union negotiations with the Police.

We need to send a letter to Green Gold Group telling them the Board of Selectmen has changed and we need to put another person on the advisory board.

At 7:00PM Mr. Tripp moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to enter into executive session for reason 1, to discuss physical condition of a public officer. So voted. Roll Call: Petraitis, yes; Tripp, yes. Mr. Petraitis noted the Board would only exit executive session to adjourn.

At 7:44PM the Board came out of executive session. Mr. Tripp moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ashley Barre