

Approved 2/13/2023

Town of Chelmsford Select Board Minutes
50 Billerica Rd., Room 204
Chelmsford, MA 01824

Regular Meeting MINUTES
January 30, 2023

Attending:

Virginia Crocker Timmins, Chair
Ken Lefebvre, Vice Chair
George Dixon, Clerk
Mark Carota, Board Member
Patricia Wojtas, Board Member

Paul Cohen, Town Manager

Please note that all documents referenced in these minutes are on file at the Town Manager's Office, 50 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford, Mass. The meeting was recorded by Chelmsford Telemedia.

Chair Timmins called the meeting to order at 6:00PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice Chair Lefebvre read the following announcements:

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

State Representative Simon Cataldo Office Hours

Representative Simon Cataldo will hold office hours in Chelmsford on Friday, February 3, from 9:30 to 11:00AM; his aide will also be in Chelmsford on Wednesday, February 1st from 12:30-2:30PM; both will be in Room 205 Town Hall. It is helpful, but not required, to send a note ahead of time to Rep. Cataldo's legislative aide at kyle.stapleton@mahouse.gov summarizing any issue you would like to discuss, and/or the time you plan to arrive.

ChelmsfordRIDE Information Night, February 7, 6:00PM

ChelmsfordRide Public Information night will be held on Tuesday, February 7th from 6:00-7:00PM in Room 205 Town Hall. For questions or more information contact Jen Melanson at 978-254-0446.

Chelmsford Works Career Services

MassHire Lowell Career Center staff will be visiting Town Hall the last Tuesday of every month in Room 206 from 12:00-7:00PM to meet with job seekers or employers. Come and learn how career center services can place you in a job, enroll you in a new training opportunity, or assist your business in finding staff.

Free At-Home COVID-19 Tests Available

Free at-home Covid-19 tests (2 boxes/person) are available for pickup at the Town Hall Health Department, Main Library, and the Senior Center. For more information contact the Chelmsford Health Department at 978-250-5241.

New Narcan Distribution Program

Free Narcan is available at various locations around Town. For more information contact the Chelmsford Health Department at 978-250-5241.

Narcan Training Sessions

Free Narcan training is presented by the Health Department on February 7th for session one at 1:00PM and session two at 6:00PM to be conducted at the Fire Department Lower Level Training Room. The

Approved 2/13/2023

training is open to all, and registration is required at www.chelmsfordma.gov. Learn how to recognize an overdose. Free Narcan given to all attendees.

Care Solace Mental Health Referral Service

Care Solace is sponsoring a free mental health referral service for residents and employees. For assistance contact the Health Department at 978-250-5241.

PUBLIC INPUT

Joe Knight of 11 Cushing Place appeared before the Board. He stated that he has been in contact with the police and fire departments about the increase in vehicles parking illegally along the rail trail between Brickhouse Pizza and Grist Mill Condominiums. Egress from Cushing Place onto Littleton Road is hampered by restaurant parking of patron vehicles and delivery vehicles along the rail trail fence. Safety issues arise by the number of children in the parking lot especially during high visitation of families during the summer months.

Town Manager Cohen stated that the issue is on the agenda for the Traffic Safety Committee.

COMMITTEE VACANCIES

Vice Chair Lefebvre read the list of current vacancies. Interested applicants can apply online at <http://www.chelmsfordma.gov> or through the Town Manager's office.

LICENSES

One Day Beer and Wine License: Craic Sauce, 51 Middlesex St., Suite 151, 2/1/2023

Brian Ruhlmann appeared before the Board. Craic Sauce is partnering with Navigation Brewing Co. for a welcoming gathering on February 1st at 51 Middlesex St. for tastings of its hot sauce along with beer. Patrons will sign up for one of three shifts from the hours of 3:00-9:00PM.

MOTION: by Vice Chair Lefebvre to approve the application for a one-day beer and wine license of Craic Sauce on February 1st from 3:00-9:00PM on the premises located at 51 Middlesex St., Suite 151. Seconded by Board Member Dixon. **Motion carries 5-0, unanimous.**

MICHAEL BROWN: CENTER BRICKHOUSE PIZZA ACTION PLAN

Michael Brown, co-owner of Brickhouse Pizza, appeared before the Board and reviewed the written action plan of the restaurant to address crowd control and building safety, including TIPS certification for all employees, crowd control and building capacity management. and clearly posted signs for consumption of alcoholic beverages and building capacity limits.

Discussion ensued. In response to Board Member Wojtas' question on the plan to determine 75% capacity, Mr. Brown responded that available seating capacity results in about 75%; at that point a physical count will be conducted. He also acknowledged that earlier steps could have been taken on the night of the event to manage crowd control.

Fire Chief Ryan addressed the activation and deactivation of the fire alarm on the night of the event. Insofar as the Fire Department is solely responsible for the deactivation of the fire alarm panel once it has been pulled, the meeting participants agreed that the action plan will be modified to include specific instructions to safeguard the key to the system to prevent unauthorized access.

Police Chief Spinney stated that meetings with management have been positive and communication will continue to prevent the "mayhem" of the event the night before Thanksgiving. Management has agreed to alert the police department ahead of time for any planned large-scale events.

Approved 2/13/2023

Chair Timmins stated the process of crowd management certification will raise employees' awareness of potential problems. Following discussion, it was the consensus of the Board that further disciplinary action will not be taken at this time.

REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

Police Chief James Spinney: Monthly Traffic Safety Committee Report

Police Chief Spinney appeared before the Board and reviewed the monthly Traffic Safety Committee report including current, pending and completed actions.

Discussion ensued. With regard to the report that accident data does not indicate chronic issues at the Stedman and Dalton intersection, Vice Chair Lefebvre noted that the real issue caused at that intersection is not speed but volume of traffic being diverted into the neighborhoods. Police Chief Spinney responded that there are no easy solutions as volume is everywhere, and any restrictions to traffic would have a widespread domino effect on all neighborhoods. His department will continue to monitor the situation.

In response to Town Manager Cohen's request for an update on the parking problem at Grist Mill Condominiums, Police Chief Spinney responded that parking restriping to ensure access to the emergency corridor will be completed in the spring. In the meanwhile, residents are asked to report any parking violations to the police department.

CCA Executive Director Lexy Lattimore: Quarterly Update

Lexy Lattimore, CCA Executive Director, appeared before the Board and presented her executive summary of Quarter 2 of the Chelmsford Center for the Arts including the following highlights:

- Audience building and theater
- Marketing
- Financial growth and contributions
- Statement of income and expenses
- Recommendations and plans

Discussion ensued. In response to Board Member Carota's question on feedback received thus far, Ms. Lattimore responded that feedback has been split. On the one hand, it has been positive from folks newly engaged around the theater and teen public programming; however, there have been "bumps in the transition" from staff juggling the demands between landlord and advocate for the community. Toward that end a four-phase plan was developed in August to set consistent business hours and its response to the wider community interest and what is fair for small and large groups. Ms. Lattimore was proud to announce the launching of the CCA website on Wednesday, February 1st.

Vice Chair Lefebvre commented on the importance of establishing strong programs like summer camps for maintaining recurring revenues while meeting demands for one-time rentals. Chair Timmins noted the strong advancement of a strategic plan in a short period of time.

Town Manager Cohen acknowledged that the transition has presented challenges with previous users and the vision for the future. He reported that the state earmark of funds had been received and that he fully expects that ARPA funds will be fully spent. He noted that the limited space of the facility will remain a challenge into the future and fiscal challenges will need to be addressed through state earmarks and ARPA funding, as well as pursuing grant and other fundraising efforts.

DISCUSSION REGARDING SELECT BOARD'S GOAL TO INVOLVE YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Chair Timmins reported that she had met with the school's K-12 Social Sciences Coordinator. Board Members are invited to attend civics and AP Government classes to gain student input on how to increase

youth civic engagement. Board Members Lefebvre and Dixon will attend the Civics class on February 10th at 8:23AM and Board Members Carota and Wojtas will attend the AP Government class on February 17th at 11:51AM. Board Members will listen more than speak, capture student input, and submit them in written form to the Board for discussion at a future meeting.

Discussion ensued on exploring ways to increase young adult civic engagement with input from Ms. Lattimore on effective ways of reaching this “millennial” target. She suggested Board Members informally participate in entertainment events scheduled in the spring at the CCA and handing out cards that ask for suggestions on how to make the community a more beautiful, fun and safer community. These “story telling” questions emphasize community building and can be easily analyzed qualitatively.

Following discussion, Board Member Wojtas will draft a proposal for moving forward with this initiative.

DISCUSSION REGARDING SELECT BOARD’S STRATEGIC PLAN AND GROWTH STRATEGY GOAL

Chair Timmins began the discussion on advancing the Town strategic plan and growth strategy. She suggested that the Board bring in a third party to facilitate the discussion. Town Manager Cohen stated that the Town could issue a request for expressions of interest. Vendors interested in pursuing the project would submit resumes and background qualifications to assist the Town in developing specific actions and goals over the next five years.

Discussion ensued. Vice Chair Lefebvre noted that the information would be valuable for the Board to assess the “size of the lift” in terms of the time commitment of the Board to go forward. Chair Timmins will work with the Town Manager in drafting the language for soliciting expressions of interest.

SCHEDULING OF NEXT LEGISLATIVE DISCUSSION

Chair Timmins noted the success of the discussion with the legislative team at its prior meeting. Following discussion, it was agreed that a letter would be drafted thanking the team for its appearance before the Board, and suggesting the next meeting to be scheduled on June 5th for the House Representatives. A meeting with Senator Barrett will be scheduled semi-annually.

TOWN MANAGER BID AWARDS

Town Manager Cohen presented the following bid awards for approval by the Board.

DPW Crack Sealing

MOTION: by Vice Chair Lefebvre to approve the bid award to Sealcoating, Inc. for crack sealing in the amount of \$56,767.00. Seconded by Board Member Dixon. **Motion carries 5-0, unanimous.**

DPW Traffic Markings

MOTION: by Vice Chair Lefebvre to approve the bid award to K5 Corporation for traffic markings in the amount of \$97,050.00. Seconded by Board Member Dixon. **Motion carries 5-0, unanimous.**

DPW Hot Mix Asphalt

MOTION: by Vice Chair Lefebvre to approve the bid award to Holcim NER, Inc. for hot mix asphalt in the amount of \$30,976.00. Seconded by Board Member Dixon. **Motion carries 5-0, unanimous.**

TOWN MANGER REPORTS

FY24 Proposed Capital and Operating Budget

Town Manager Cohen reported that the state had announced anticipated 1.6% growth over the present budget, and factoring in the new 4% millionaire tax surcharge, that would amount to a budget growth of 4%. Also, the state is revising its current fiscal year revenue upwards by \$110 million, which is to be applied to the state's unfunded pension liability. Projected municipal local aid is anticipated to be announced in mid-February. He then reviewed the FY24 budget including the following highlights:

- \$155.5 million budget – 4.01% increase
 - Chelmsford Public Schools - \$70.7 million; increase of \$3.2 million (4.74%)
 - General Government - \$35.4 million; increase of \$1.7 million (5.12%)
 - Nashoba Tech - \$3.9 million; increase of \$170,000 (4.57%)
 - Benefits and insurance \$30.2 million; increase of \$2.0 million (6.94%)
 - Debt service - \$11.0 million; decrease of \$552,000 (-4.79%)
- Fiscally responsible budget
- Budget priorities
- FY24 budget line item changes
- Revenue summary
- Five-year and ten-year fiscal year expenditures
- School department proposed budget
 - School department funding increases
 - State Chapter 70 education funding history
 - School per pupil expenditure and comparison
 - Enrollment and student/teacher ratio
 - Student teacher ratio FY22
 - Average class size and comparison
 - FY24 school department budget drivers
- Nashoba Tech estimated FY24 assessment
 - Nashoba Tech enrollment and per pupil expenditure
 - FY24 Nashoba Tech budget drivers
- Public Safety – Police
 - Police Dept call volume answered by cruisers
- Public Safety – Fire
 - Fire Dept call volume
- Employee compensation
 - Employee and retiree health insurance
 - Health insurance subscribers and health insurance premium
 - Middlesex County retirement assessment and assessment history
- Solid waste and recycling collection and disposal
- Property, casualty, and workers compensation insurance
- Medicare tax
- Debt: excluded and non-excluded debt service
- Full-time equivalent employees
- FY24 budget drivers
- Available FY24 new revenue sources
- Five-year and ten-year fiscal year revenue comparison
- Property tax revenue
 - FY23 average single-family property tax bill allocation
 - Property tax valuation and average single family property tax bill
 - Property tax comparison

Approved 2/13/2023

- State aid
- Local receipts
- Available funds
- Inflationary measure
- Structural changes to reduce reliance on property taxes

John Sousa, Finance Director, appeared before the Board. He reviewed the FY24 proposed capital budget including the following highlights:

- Municipal technology
- Municipal administration
- Public libraries
- Public safety – Fire Dept.
- Public works
- Municipal facilities
- School facilities

Draft Warrant for Spring Annual Town Meeting

Town Manager Cohen reviewed the draft warrant for spring annual town meeting. Discussion ensued. Mr. Cohen stated Article 18 allows the Town to cover the fee schedule of weights and measures over and above what the state allows. This increase is necessary due to the costs of these services.

Vinal Square Transportation Improvements Project

Town Manager Cohen reported that the State Highway Division's Project Review Committee has determined that the Vinal Square transportation improvement project is eligible for federal highway funding. He will continue to work with NMCOG in the execution of this project.

MEETING MINUTES

Announcement on Determination of Releasability of Executive Session Minutes

Minutes for Release: December 13, 2021, Joint with School Committee

and January 9, 2023, Segment 1

Minutes Not for Release: January 9, 2023, Segment 2

SELECT BOARD MEMBER LIAISON REPORTS AND REFERRALS

Vice Chair Lefebvre – no report.

Board Member Dixon – no report.

Board Member Carota

- Thank you to Barry Jefferson, who has stepped away from the Roberts Field Advisory Committee, for all his work on the Friendship Park and Roberts Field.

Board Member Wojtas

- Nashoba Tech Superintendent will present a draft of the FY24 budget this Friday, February 3rd to be following by a budget hearing on Tuesday, February 7th.

Chair Timmins

- David Koonce of the Conservation Commission has been getting reports of wildlife sightings. He is asking residents to email photos to him of the date, time, and location of these sightings, and he will post to Conservation Commission website. His email is dkoonce@chelmsfordma.gov.
- Dr. Lang, Dr. Hirsh and the School Committee participated in DEI training in January.
- Kindergarten registration was held on January 24/25th. Families unable to attend may complete the registration packet and return to the school central administration office between the hours of 8:00AM-4:00PM.

Approved 2/13/2023

- Planning Board hearings in February include new public hearing on February 8th for revised proposal for 270 Billerica Rd. and continued public hearings for zoning warrant articles as well as 264 Groton Rd. On February 22nd there will be a continued public hearing on Riverneck Rd. with an anticipated earlier start time of 6:30PM but watch for the official agenda posting.

Chair Timmins confirmed with the Board that an agenda item on February 27th will include the issue of litter caused by nip bottles being discarded on roadways, and Town Counsel will be present.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: by Vice Chair Lefebvre to adjourn at 8:29PM. Seconded by Board Member Dixon.
Motion carries 5-0, unanimous.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE: February 13, 2023

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Martin Barraford
Recording Secretary

Supporting documents:

- Rep Cataldo Chelmsford office hours
- ChelmsfordRide Info night
- Chelmsford works flyer
- Free Covid tests flyer
- Narcan locations and resources flyer
- Narcan training flyer final
- Updated CARE Solace flyer
- Committee vacancies as of 1/30/2023
- Craic Sauce one day license
- Action plan Brickhouse
- Crowd manager certificates BH
- TIPS certification BH
- Traffic Committee update 1/30/2023
- CCA Q2 executive summary Jan 2023
- CCA budget proposal Q2 Jan 2023
- Civic engagement
- Chelmsford Public Schools civic engagement 1/26/2023
- Strategic planning growth strategy
- Bid award recommendations 1/24/23
- FY24 budget presentation 1/30/23
- FY24 Town Manager budget Jan 23
- 2023 spring ATM list of warrant articles
- 2023 spring annual town meeting warrant
- Vinal Square safety improvements