

**Memorial Town Hall, 1 Library Street, Georgetown, MA 01833**

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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES**

**Memorial Town Hall**

**01/10/2022**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**7:00PM-General Meeting**

**Verizon channel 42/Comcast channel 9**

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**Selectmen Present:** *D. Dawes, Chair, Vice Chair P. Kershaw, A. Smith and G. Fowler.*

**Others Present:** *Orlando Pacheco, Town Administrator. Administrative Assistant, Maureen Shultz.*

**Not Present:** *D. Twiss*

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**7:00PM CALL TO ORDER**

*Invocation-Douglas W. Dawes*

*Pledge of Allegiance*

**NEW BUSINESS:**

*D. Dawes welcomed Mr. Orlando Pacheco, Town Administrator to his first meeting in the Town of Georgetown, Mass.*

**FIRE DEPARTMENT / SAFER GRANT:**

*Acting Fire Chief, Chuck Savage asked the Board for their approval to apply for a FEMA Region 1 Firefighters Safer Grant. This grant was applied for last year and the Town of Georgetown did not receive it. This grant would cover the salary of two (2) full time firefighters for three (3) years.*

*G. Fowler asked if Acting Fire Chief Savage has spoken to the Finance Committee on this commitment of covering the salary of Firefighters after the three years if the grant is awarded to the Georgetown Fire Department, gave an example of the same situation happening to the Police Department and the Finance Committee not being aware of the long-term financial impact.*

*Acting Fire Chief Savage will reach out and have a discussion with the Finance Committee on the remaining years that could be part of the grant if awarded.*

*P. Kershaw motioned the Board to give authorization to Acting Chief Savage on behalf of the Town to submit an application for the FEMA Region 1 Firefighters Grant Safer Grant, seconded by A. Smith. Roll Call vote was taken all in favor.*

### **TOWN ASSESSOR / TAX BILL UPDATE:**

*Thom Berube, Town Assessor updated the Board and the residents of Georgetown on the tax bills and how they are calculated. The following were discussed.*

- *4<sup>th</sup> Quarter tax bills issued in December 2021.*
- *Higher sale prices on homes.*
- *3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter tax bills reflect the full change over the last year.*
- *Current tax levy.*
- *12% reduction in the tax rate for FY22*
- *Property record cards can now be accessed directly from the Town Assessors website page.*
- *Record cards are normally updated in December.*
- *Home values went up 16%.*
- *Monthly sales report.*
- *More money for smaller homes.*
- *Spoke on two houses apart from each other – cape sold for more / colonial sold for less.*
- *Interest rates.*

*O. Pacheco, Town Administrator spoke on the Town becoming wealthier as far as real estate perspective, spoke on fixed income, property taxes, balance support to keep people in the Town.*

*D. Dawes mentioned all classes of people to be kept here in Town.*

*D. Dawes mentioned supply and demand on homes.*

*G. Fowler asked about what the Town can spend, can only spend two and half percent of the levy, budget can go up due to new growth, 12% reduction in the tax rate.*

*G. Fowler spoke on the Town's spending is more than last year and we need to stay within the budget, had a healthy increase in his own tax bill which went up 15%, driven by the market. we may have seen some of the biggest increases.*

*Contractor John Colantoni asked about taxes on land and if the same formula was used.*

### **LARKIN ROAD / Intermunicipal Agreement/ MOU with the Town of Newbury.**

- *David Schofield, Director of the Light Department & Marlene Ladderbush, Director of the Water Department both present and spoke on the following:*
- *Spoke on material changes that weren't there before.*
- *Language needed to be cleaned up.*
- *Working the easement is controlled by the Selectman.*
- *Site meetings have taken place.*
- *Moving of a fire hydrant.*
- *Underground pole is pretty far.*
- *Language good with David Schofield, Light Department Director.*
- *Easement controlled by the Board of Selectman.*
- *Discussion who will be in the shoulder / Light or Water Department*
- *Both Electrical & Water Department will work together on this project.*

- *Peer review not a deal killer –design cost is passed through the contractor -comes from the Newbury Side-Opens the door to have a problem with our specifications and implement their own. Confirming a peer review will be removed from the document.*

*D. Schofield stated the Town of Newbury did away with peer reviews however it is still in the memorandum.*

*Contractor John Colantoni stated that MASS DOT and US Army of Engineers have already approved the project. The Culvert needs to be ordered and the Town of Newbury is all set.*

*D. Dawes stated that all parties need to vote after language is all set.*

*G. Fowler asked where will the water be under the under the culvert, asked where the electric will be, a riser pole is where it will be placed over the bridge crossing bridge is not that big per D. Schofield, Light Department.*

*G. Fowler inquired about a bond requirement regarding the work and asked if the Planning Board required a bond, asked what happens if the work doesn't get done will it be covered maybe a question for the Town Planner, wants some reassurance.*

*P. Kershaw asked what is the Board's goal since the Board doesn't usually signoff on culverts.*

*O. Pacheco, Town Administrator stated it is not complicated we have to just coordinate on our side.*

*D Schofield everything looks good trying to protect the contractors.*

*Contractor / Developer John Colantoni was present and asked how long does the Board think this will take to be approved and signed.*

*D. Dawes stated that the Town of Newbury had already voted on the opening of this bridge in 2016.*

*Town needs to approve two documents, MOU & Intermunicipal Agreement for watermain and electrical services / Larkin Road.*

*Attorney Nancy McCann had texted Developer John Colantoni and stated that the peer review has been reviewed and will reflect this on new documents.*

*O. Pacheco, Town Administrator inquired about making sure water & hydrants exhibits are ok.*

*M. Ladderbush, Water Department Director will not will not sign off on work until its satisfied and will have supervision.*

*Legal language in document needs to be worked on between attorneys from Newbury & Georgetown.*

*NO Vote taken -Will take a vote on this at the next meeting on January 24, 2022*

**ARPA REQUEST/ COVID RAPID TEST/ UPDATE:**

*Orlando Pacheco, Town Administrator gave an update on behalf of William Holt, Board of Health Director (Not present).*

*Orlando Pacheco, Town Administrator COVID update in regards to current number of cases of Covid 19 cases currently in the Town. Omicron Variant, isolation and quarantine protocols, vaccination status update, contact tracing, and home self-testing were all discussed, number of cases in Town was provided, rapid escalation in cases, taking extra precaution in the building.*

*Covid test for employees & contact tracing was discussed.*

*The Board questioned the two different requests.*

*O. Pacheco, Town Administrator spoke on increase exposure to Town employees -we have the ability to test ourselves so we are not giving it to one another, cost would be approximately \$11,000.00 from ARPA Funds for rapid testing kits, two per each employee in high-risk areas.*

*D. Dawes asked if this request for funding is it over and above what the Board of Health has already been given from ARPA funds-\$47K.*

*O. Pacheco, Town Administrator stated if the grant that the Board of Health has applied for does not cover monies then the Board of Health and the Town would have to phase out contract tracing immediately and or reevaluate the ARPA funds.*

*D. Dawes asked what would happen if they stopped contact tracing, is it a mandate from the state since we are not under a state of emergency at the current time.*

*P. Kershaw asked about the validity of contact tracing and inquired about what other Towns are still doing this.*

*O. Pacheco stated Police & Fire Departments would receive more kits due to their exposure and their public safety positions.*

*A. Smith stated that our front lines are our Police & Fire Departments and we need to keep them safe.*

*G. Fowler believes contact tracing is not going to stop the Covid virus, spoke on a past meeting with the Finance Committee relating to funding for contact tracing that was approved. G. Fowler was not in favor of this vote and voted no and will again regarding contact tracing.*

*G. Fowler stated there are other ways to fund contact tracing.*

*D. Dawes asked what are the other ways of funding contact tracing.*

*G. Fowler suggested a grant.*

*O. Pacheco, Town Administrator spoke on overall overtime cost regarding COVID and the protocol we have to follow.*

*P. Kershaw spoke on ARPA funds, loss revenue, and other ARPA request for projects, has to take priority regarding COVID that is what the funds are for, spoke on disbursement of the ARPA funds and doesn't want to exhaust the funds.*

*D. Dawes stated the Town keeps hitting the piggy bank (ARPA). Spoke on list of requests that have been submitted for ARPA funding.*

*A. Smith spoke on social media and how everyone is getting tired of this and feels the Board and Town needs to get ahead of this.*

*D. Dawes would be inclined to have test kits than contact tracing data.*

*P. Kershaw asked about working remotely.*

*O. Pacheco, Town Administrator stated there is currently two employees who are working from home and if the need to work remotely happens it can be looked at.*

*D. Dawes asked if any price was put in for the request for funding.*

*G. Fowler stated it is very frustrating to try and get in front of this COVID, no treatments, not making anyone healthy.*

*G. Fowler motioned the Board to take a five-minute recess to find out the exact funding that has been requested seconded by A. Smith.*

*William Holt, Board of Health Director (not present) was contacted and gave an update on the phone stated he has enough funding for contact tracing until February-March.*

**CONTACT TRACING: No Vote Taken.**

*No contact tracing funding was requested at this meeting/ Prior ARPA monies for contact tracing should be sufficient until the end of February -Health Department will advise on any changes if needed. Has been tabled until information from a possible grant.*

**HOME RAPID SELF-TESTING KITS FOR EMPLOYEES: VOTE BY THE BOARD:**

*G. Fowler motioned the Board to approve ARPA funds for test kits in the amount of \$10, 944.00, for the safety of our staff seconded by A. Smith. the Board voted 3-0 in favor. G. Fowler abstained from vote.*

**VOTES BY THE BOARD:**

*G. Fowler motioned the Board to approve the amended meeting minutes from November 15, 2021 seconded by P. Kershaw. Roll call vote was taken all in favor.*

*G. Fowler motioned the Board to approve the amended meeting minutes from December 20, 2021, seconded by P. Kershaw. Roll call vote was taken all in favor.*

**BOARD OF SELECTMAN REPORT:**

*D. Dawes asked A. Smith about the cable agreements. A. Smith commented that the Verizon contract is completed and moving ahead with Comcast renewal in February 2022.*

*P. Kershaw will be meeting again on National Avenue.*

*G. Fowler asked who on the Board was working with Finance and ARPA Funds Advisory Group. A. Smith spoke on this committee and stated they have not met to date, had sent some communication out but will continue to get the group together.*

*P. Kershaw asked if Mr. Pacheco if he could give some information on the (ODP's) Overview of Americans Rescue Plan would be very helpful.*

**ORLANDO PACHECO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

- *Meeting with Departments Heads*
- *Spoke on his role as the ADA Officer /will follow up on a transitional plan that was started in 1993 but never completed, spoke on volunteers for the ADA Commission who have experience possibly from the School Department or experience working with the elderly, physically or visually impaired, five volunteers are needed, one being elected, one being appointed and two with a disability.*
- *Working on the Capital Plan.*

*D. Dawes asked the community for volunteers for the ADA Commission.*

*D. Dawes spoke on a system that helps with wheelchair ramp / roll with the park and Recreation Committee at the American Legion Park.*

**APPOINTMENTS:**

*G. Fowler motioned the Board to appoint Orlando Pacheco, Town Administrator as the ADA Coordinator for the Town of Georgetown, Mass, seconded by P. Kershaw.*

*A. Smith motioned the Board to appoint Suzanne Cusa to the Cultural Council to a term to expire on June 30, 2022, seconded by G. Fowler.*

*G. Fowler motioned the Board to appoint a list of poll workers given to the Board by Town Clerk, Kerri McManus seconded by P. Kershaw.*

*G. Fowler motioned the Board to appoint Orlando Pacheco, Town Administrator as the Town's ADA Coordinator with a term to expire December 31, 2024, seconded by P. Kershaw.*

**SELECTMAN TIME continued:**

*D. Dawes spoke on the passing of Mr. Tom McGrain, former Town Clerk, Jan McGrain's husband and sending condolences to their family.*

*D, Dawes asked the public for volunteers on various Boards and Committees.*

**ADJOURNMENT:**

*P. Kershaw motioned the Board to adjourn meeting at 8:48PM seconded by G. Fowler. A roll call vote was taken all in favor.*

*Minutes transcribed by Maureen Shultz*

*All Board of Selectman Meetings can be viewed on our Town Website at <https://www.georgetownma.gov> Under the Community TV tab on the left side.*

**Documents used in Meeting:**

*Board of Health Covid update from William Holt, Board of Health Director relating to Covid update.*

*MOU-Larkin Road.*

*Fire Department Safer Grant-List of Poll workers.*

*Thom Berube, Town Assessor handout*

*Cultural Council memo- new member.*