

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

Meeting Minutes 01/23/2023

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Memorial Town Hall

7:00PM-General Meeting

Verizon Channel 42/Comcast channel 9

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

Others Present: *Orlando Pacheco, Town Administrator.
Selectman Amy Smith & Administrative Assistant, Maureen Shultz
participating on Zoom.*

Absent: *Selectman Daryle Lamonica*

7:00PM CALL TO ORDER

Invocation-Douglas W. Dawes

Pledge of Allegiance-Douglas W. Dawes

Correspondence & Vote by the Board:

Certificate of Announcement pursuant to 301 CMR 51.08(2) DCR #P-001022 & P-001029, Town of Georgetown.

D. Dawes read aloud the 120-day waiver statement -DCR-#P-000986, Town of Georgetown- Pursuant 301 CMR 51.08 (1) (b) , I Douglas Dawes, Chairman , Board of Selectman of the Town of Georgetown, on behalf of the Board , hereby agree to waive the 120 day notice period as required by said section as to a parcel of land of approximately nine acres in the Town of Georgetown , Shown on Exhibit A attached hereto, in which the Department of Conservation and Recreation is considering acquiring an interest. Georgetown Assessor's Map 10 Parcels 36, 36A, 36B, 36C.

G. Fowler voted to approve and agree to the 120-day waiver statement / 301 CMR 51.08(2) DCR #P-001022 & P-001029, seconded by P. Kershaw. The Board took a roll call vote all in favor.

P. Kershaw, Clerk of the Board of Selectman of the Town of Georgetown, Massachusetts, hereby certifies that on January 23, 2023, it was announced at a public meeting of the Board of Selectman that: The Department of Conservation and Recreation may acquire an interest in a parcel of land located in Georgetown as shown on the attached locus map marked as "Exhibit A" for conservation and or/ recreation purposes.

G. Fowler asked for a description of the waiver and stated the State maintains the rode going in there currently.

D. Dawes gave a history of the property -Old Pingree road, formally owned by Mr. Tolman, property has four (4) lots, nine acres (9) lots, new owners are allowing it to be part of the Rowley State Forest, bordered by about 160K Sq Feet of property in total, was sold to new owners.

New Business

KP Law / Representative of Whittier Regional High School –rules of professional conduct—The Board received a letter notifying the Town that Kopelman & Paige/Law has sought to be retained by Whittier Regional High School to represent them for legal services.

G. Fowler motioned the Board to accept the letter from Kopelman & Paige Law Offices for them to represent Whittier Regional High School, seconded by P. Kershaw. The Board took a roll call vote all in favor.

Vote of the Board:

G. Fowler motioned the Board to accept the list of Poll Workers as requested by Kerri McManus, Town Clerk, the following were appointed, Margaret Anderson, Jill Benas, Chris Candia, Susan Clay, Marie Collins, Jenna Connors, Julie Coolidge, Joanne Desilets, Elizabeth DeVeer, Paula Durkee, Amberley Edmunds, Julie Genese, Arthur MacDonald, Lucille Manning, Linda Metcalf, Janice Murphy, Susan Pitts, Kathleen Sachs, Glen Silva, Regina Tracy, Diane Vatalero, Mindy Fowler and Margaret Weaver seconded by P. Kershaw. The Board took a roll call vote all in favor.

Fire Chief Contract: *P. Kershaw motioned the Board to approve the Fire Chief Contract that continues through December 30, 2025, with Fire Chef Matt McKay and the Town of Georgetown as presented, seconded by G. Fowler. The Board took a roll call vote all in favor.*

Old Cart Way: *O. Pacheco, Town Administrator spoke on Old Cart Way -pending past legal matters that has now been resolved. Will need to release the executive session meeting minutes at a certain point.*

G. Fowler asked if this agreement needed to be approved at Town Meeting.

P. Kershaw motioned the Board to accept the settlement agreement between Old Cart Way LLC and Christopher Johnson, Trustee of the Faith A. Johnson Testamentary as presented, seconded by G. Fowler. The Board took a roll call vote all in favor.

Comcast Cable License Renewal: New Business

A. Smith & Attorney William Hewig, III of Kopelman & Paige, P.C. gave an update on the Comcast Cable License for the Town of Georgetown.

The Board was sent copies of the contract prior to the meeting by A. Smith.

Attorney William Hewig III, gave a brief overview informed the Board of items that were agreed upon as part of the new Comcast Contract.

New renewal cable license is for ten years commencing on January 31, 2033

Cable services available to residential (20) dwelling units per aerial mile and fifty (50) dwelling units per underground.

- *Capital Support- .95cents per subscriber per month -payable annually on May 15th each year of the term contract.*
- *Verizon contract -met financial goal.*
- *4.5% gross annual revenues -yearly*
- *.95cents per subscriber licensing per year*
- *Goal was to get \$15K in Capital –compared to Verizon ---verizon will pay us 4.5% instead of the 2.5 %*
- *Town will receive \$800-900K over ten years -met with our goals.*
- *Get more that we normally get on an annual basis.*
- *3 more channels and 1 high-definition channel*

G. Fowler asked what was the gross annual license was before the current 4.5% - before with subscribers going down and the change of percentage is what must have brought you up again was asked.

G. Fowler asked if the Town gets anything for internet service / percentage. Attorney William Hewig III answered G. Fowlers question which would be that the Town does not receive anything for internet.

G. Fowler thanked Attorney William Hewig III and A. Smith for their work on this contract

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator stated that it is not the role of the municipalities to regulate the cost of cable.

G. Fowler motioned the Board to approve the new cable contract with Comcast from February 1, 2023 through January 31, 2033 seconded by P. Kershaw. The Board took a roll call vote all in favor.

Old Business: O National Avenue Extension:

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator stated this was previously approved at a former meeting of the Board of Selectman for an extension of up to two years ending January 21, 2025-The Board had no discussion at this point.

G. Fowler Motioned the Board to agree to the National Avenue extension, up to a two-year due diligent extension, seconded by P. Kershaw. The Board took a roll call vote all in favor.

G. Fowler motioned the Board to authorize O. Pacheco, Town Administrator to sign on behalf of the Board/ Town the extension for O National Avenue, seconded by P. Kershaw. The Board took a roll call vote all in favor.

Town Administrator's Report: O. Pacheco, Town Administrator spoke on the following:

Police Chief Posting -Process has started for the internal posting for the New Chief of Police in Georgetown, Mass. Internal resumes are due back by February 13, 2023 at which time they will be forwarded to the Board for review, interviewing and appointment or any consulting if the Board feels it may need for additional services if needed.

Transportation Improvement Program Update –Merrimack Planning Group-The Town of Georgetown currently has three plans on the plan. 1.) Reconstruction of West Main Street from Moulton Street to the Groveland Town Line-2.) Border to Boston Rail Trail (Boxford-South Portion)-should go out to bid by mid-spring 3) Border to Boston Trail (Byfield-Newbury North section) -25% design completed -start the right of way process has been started-fewer easement on the north side that the Town would need-feels comfortable with this percentage of design to go forward-a lot of light at the end of the tunnel

D. Dawes asked if the Water or Electric Departments has any work to do there regarding Reconstruction of West Main.

G. Fowler asked about the Town being at 25% design are we near where we should be knowing we are tied with three other Towns

P. Kershaw asked about a completion on the Border to Boston Trail (Byfield-Newbury North section).

G. Fowler asked O. Pacheco, Town Administrator if his presence on this project has made a difference since it has been out there for years.

Veterans Heritage Grant -Massachusetts State Historical Records Advisory Board awarded the Town of Georgetown \$5,000.00/ Preservation of War Memorials, Monument restoration, needs replacing flags -use the money to illuminate the flag pole so the Town is compliance with state and federal policy, clean up the memorial, removing moss growing on the monument, enhance the landscaping.

Free Cash Certification -Massachusetts Department of Revenue has notified the Town of Georgetown its free cash certification -General Fund \$2,003,6432.00-Enterprise Fund-Water-\$1, 695,655.00, Enterprise Fund -Ambulance-\$318,221.00. Audit has been completed. Free cash policy was given to the Board

D. Dawes spoke on the dollar amount the Town has currently in free cash - a lot more money than we have experience in prior years, has been requesting for a couple of years to have some of the cannabis revenue be put in the stabilization and capital funds and possibly some back in OPEB, over the last two and half year we have collected over \$2 million, excise tax money has been going to Capitalization and Stabilization funds, questioned where is the rest of it going , the State legislation has removed Town's receiving money back to the community except local excise tax , cannabis revenue has been spent on budgeted items not a good thing -consider moving half to free cash and the remaining to Capitalization and Stabilization funds, can be further discuss when the Board discusses the Town Warrants.

G. Fowler did mention that \$50K has been put back in OPEB last year.

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator spoke on D. Dawes suggestion of \$500K in each account, the Board can approve an article for Town Meeting and have it voted on at Town Meeting and have it discussed at the next Board of Selectman meeting.

G. Fowler spoke about a certain amount over in free cash, stated the amount over \$300K in the free cash policy to be added to the capital and stabilization accounts currently in the policy.

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator stated the Board might want to revisit the free cash policy.

G. Fowler stated the free cash policy is only a few years old and stated that the money in the free cash comes from many sources and stated the schools get roughly about 50% of the tax revenue and asked how much of the free cash money comes from the schools.

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator replied to G. Fowler question and stated that maybe less than \$100K in total from the schools of unspent funding in total. starting to put some money in the Special Education Stabilization funding -seems to be the most volatile component the schools deal with.

G. Fowler stated that the Stabilization Fund is probably where it is recommended it to be, question was asked about a join meeting with the Finance Committee which has been scheduled for the next meeting.

Massachusetts Projects Preservation Fund (MPPF) Signage -As a condition of the Towns Massachusetts Project Preservation Fund Award (Town Hall Windows) the Town is required to design signage notifying the public of the award -which must remain up on the exterior of the building for at least 6-month post completion -The grant portion of the project prior to March in hopes the Town will be able to complete the entire building with CPC funds.

Community Compact Grant Updates-The Human Resources study is on-going, as requested all copies of all of the Town's policy have been sent in for review-questionnaire among a number of The Town's Departments is now being reviewed by the consultants at the Collins Center-possibly come and speak with staff, Board members, legal counsel, will come and talk to staff place holder in budget for HR Director

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator spoke on a place holder in the budget for a HR Director and suggested maybe the conversation about a HR Director might be better fitted with the discussion of a Town Charter before we appropriate dollars for this, many discussions about many items/things.

D. Dawes would like to see a HR function sooner than later.

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator informed the Board that the IT study is currently on hold for a short time.

P. Kershaw spoke briefly on his own experience with a home break in and cautioned residents to keep in mind about recent break-ins in the areas of homes at Ballpate, Chaplain Hills and Little Hills seem to be getting into from Garages, garages video footage has come to surface. Break ins recently also in Boxford.

G. Fowler spoke of having public comment discussion on an agenda in February and possibly keeping it under old business.

O. Pacheco, Town Administrator informed the Board and the Community that Steve Przyjemski, Conservation Agent has given his notice and is leaving his position with the Town of Georgetown after year 17 years of service and wished him well.

Board members thanked him for his years of service to the Community.

Adjournment:

G. Fowler moved to adjourn at 8:10 P.M. with P. Kershaw seconded. A roll call vote was taken all in favor.

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 the meeting:

Certificate of Announcement pursuant to 301 CMR 51.08 (2)

Fire Chief Contract

Police Chief Posting

List of Poll Workers / Appointment

Free Cash Policy