**SPECIAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES**

**WARRANT SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**

**November 16, 2020**

ESSEX, ss. To the Constables of the Town of Georgetown, in the County of Essex, Greetings.

In the Name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of said Town, qualified to vote in the elections and in Town affairs, to meet at the Georgetown Middle/High School, 11 Winter Street, Georgetown, Massachusetts, on Monday, November 16th at 7 o’clock in the evening then and there to act on the following articles:

The town meeting was called to order by the Town Moderator, David Surface at 7:06 PM once a quorum was met. He called upon David J. Twiss, the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen to lead the Special Town Meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance. Next, Selectman, Douglas W. Dawes was called on to offer an invocation. David Surface referenced the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 39 Section 15 that it was his responsibility to preside and regulate the proceedings, decide all questions of order and that under section 17 he had the authority to remove anyone due to disorderly behavior.

David Surface said he would entertain a 5-minute time limit for discussion of warrant articles.

*Sheila Phillips-Ruth made the motion and it was seconded by Steve Epstein*.

The following non-residents of the Town of Georgetown were present at the Special Town Meeting:

Jonathan Eichman, Town Counsel

Michael Farrell, Town Administrator

Lt. Scott Hatch, Police Department

Carol Jacobs, Superintendent

Bryan McGonigle, Georgetown Reporter

Mary McMenemy, Town Accountant

**Article 1:**  **Adjustments to the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget *(STM21-01)***

To see if the Town will vote to amend the vote taken under Article 2 of the 2020 Annual Town Meeting warrant for the purpose of adjusting line items in the FY 2021 budget, and as necessary, to transfer from available funds a sum of money for the purpose of supplementing departmental expenses, or take any other action in relation thereto.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Fund Name** | **Account** | **Increase** | **Decrease** | **Explanation** |
| State Charges | 01820570 |  | (408,271) | State Charges were over-appropriated |
| Dispatch -Communications Center | 01212510 | 11,792 |  | Recent Contract Negotiations |
| Police Salaries | 01210510 | 7,188 |  | Recent Contract Negotiations |
| Treasurer Expenses | 01145570 | 28,884 |  | Outside Payroll Service |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Amount to be raised and appropriated |  |  | (360,407) | Reduced as a result of reduction in State Charges |
|  |  |  |  |  |

*Finance Committee, Sheila Ruth made a motion, which was seconded by to Steve Epstein to vote to amend the vote taken under Article 2 of the 2020 Annual Town Meeting warrant and adjust the line items in the FY2021 budget as printed in the warrant, including a reduction to the amount to be raised and appropriated by $360,407 from $31,806,695 to $31,446,288.*

*Fin Com VOTE 6-0*

**VOTED: The Town Voted YES MAJORITY VOTE**

**Article 2:** **Retirement Payout *(STM21-02) $31,586.81***

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum of money to fund the retirement payout of two long-term employees, or take any other action in relation thereto.

*Steve Epstein, of the Finance committee makes a motion, which is seconded by Thomas Berube, the Assessor to vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of $31,586.81 to fund the retirement payout of two long-term employees.*

**VOTED: The Town Voted YES MAJORITY VOTE**

**Article 3:** **Stormwater Management Policy Update *(STM21-03) $16,000***

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum of money to update the Town’s Stormwater Management Permit suitable for submittal to the US EPA and MassDEP, or take any other action in relation thereto.

*The Finance Committee, Eric Burton makes the motion that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of $16,000.00 to update the Town’s Stormwater Management Permit suitable for submittal to the US EPA and MassDEP. Thomas Berube, seconds the motion.*

*Fin Com VOTE 6-0*

**VOTED: The Town Voted YES MAJORITY VOTE**

**Article 4:** **Police Department Garage *(STM21-04) $9,200 CIP***

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum of money to fund the design and construction of repairs to the Police Department garage, including all incidental and related costs, or take any other action in relation thereto.

*David Twiss, the chair of the Board of Selectmen makes the motion is seconded by resident, Richard Kopacznski of 5 Spaulding Road, that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of $9,200.00 to fund the design and construction of repairs to the Police Department garage, including all incidental and related costs.*

*Fin Com VOTE 6-0*

**VOTED: The Town Voted YES MAJORITY VOTE**

**Article 5:** **Fire Department Radios *(STM21-05) $40,000 CIP***

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum of money to fund the purchase of portable radios for the Fire Department, or take any other action in relation thereto.

*Selectman, David Twiss makes the motion that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of $40,000.00 to purchase portable radios for the Fire Department. Thomas Berube seconds the motion.*

*Fin Com VOTE 6-0*

**VOTED: The Town Voted YES MAJORITY VOTE**

**Article 6:** **Police Department Radios *(STM21-12) $40,000 CIP***

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum of money to fund the purchase of mobile radios for the Police Department, or take any other action in relation thereto.

*David Twiss makes the motion, which is seconded by Thomas Berube that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of $40,000.00 to purchase mobile radios for the Police Department.*

*Fin Com VOTE 6-0*

**VOTED: The Town Voted YES MAJORITY VOTE**

**Article 7:** **Public Safety Building Preliminary Feasibility Study *(STM21-06) $15,000 CIP***

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum of money to fund a preliminary feasibility study for the Public Safety Building, including all incidental and related costs, or take any other action in relation thereto.

*Selectman, David Twiss makes the motion, which was seconded by Thomas Berube that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of $15,000.00 to fund a preliminary feasibility study for the Public Safety Building, including all incidental and related costs.*

*Fin Com VOTE 6-0*

**VOTED: The Town Voted YES MAJORITY VOTE**

**Article 8:** **Transfer to Tax Stabilization Fund *(STM21-08) 100,000***

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum of money to the Tax Stabilization Fund, or take any other action in relation thereto.

*Steve Epstein of the Finance Committee makes the motion that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of $100,000.00 to the Tax Stabilization Fund. Thomas Berube seconds the motion.*

*Fin Com VOTE 6-0*

**VOTED: The Town Voted YES MAJORITY VOTE**

**Article 9:** **Transfer to Capital Stabilization *(STM21-09) $100,000***

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum of money to the Capital Fund, or take any other action in relation thereto**.**

*Finance Committee member Eric Burton makes the motion to that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of $100,000.00 to the Capital Stabilization Fund. The motion is seconded by Thomas Berube.*

*Fin Com VOTE 6-0*

*Discussion:*

*\*Resident asks, “What will that transfer do?”*

*Town Assessor, Thomas Berube states, “The reserve account makes funds available for future appropriations”.*

**VOTED: The Town Voted YES MAJORITY VOTE**

**Article 10:** **Transfer to OPEB Fund *(STM21-10) $50,000***

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum of money to the OPEB Fund, or take any other action in relation thereto**.**

*Sheila Ruth makes the motion that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of $50,000.00 to the OPEB Fund. Thomas Berube seconds the motion.*

*Fin Com VOTE 5-1*

*Discussion:*

*\*Resident asks, “What does OPEB stand for?”*

*Selectman, Gary Fowler states, “Other Post-Employment Benefits.*

**VOTED: The Town Voted YES MAJORITY VOTE**

**Article 11:** **CVS Easement *(STM21-07)***

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire, by donation, upon such terms and conditions as the Selectmen shall determine, an easement or other real property interest in a portion of the land located at 55-65 Central Street, and identified as Assessors Map 10B, Lot 3,  for the purpose of providing improved vehicular and pedestrian access to the Town’s public safety building on adjoining property, and to enter into all agreements and take all related actions necessary or appropriate to carry out this acquisition, or take any other action in relation thereto.

*Steve Epstein makes the motion that the Town vote to approve Article 11 as printed in the Warrant and is seconded by Thomas Berube.*

*Fin Com VOTE 6-0*

*Discussion:*

*Moderator, Davis Surface asks Police Chief Donald Cudmore to provide an explanation.*

*Chief Cudmore explains, “It speaks to straighten the line of the building”.*

*Selectman, David Twiss, further explains, “The septic system with the apartments around the back makes it difficult for fire trucks, ambulances and police cruisers to exit in case of an emergency”.*

**VOTED: The Town Voted YES MAJORITY VOTE**

**Article 12: Citizens Petition (*STM21-11*)**

The Maximum daily capacity of any transfer station or waste facility located within the Town of Georgetown, or the sum of all such facilities, cannot exceed 50 tons.

*Resident, Amy Smith makes the motion that the Town vote to approve an amendment to the Code of the Town of Georgetown, Part I, Town Bylaws to add a new Chapter 142, Transfer Stations, as follows:*

*Section 142* ***Transfer Stations: The maximum daily capacity of any transfer station or waste facility located within the Town of Georgetown, or the sum of all such facilities, cannot exceed 50 tons.***

*Selectman, David Twiss recuses himself from the meeting and has a seat in the audience. Kathy Birmingham of 12 True Lane seconds the motion.*

*Amy Smith shares her three points as to why the Town should limit to 50 tons. In summary, 1. Protect the character of the town, 2. Reduce trash, 3. Belief that Georgetown doesn’t have an infrastructure or capacity for such a structure.*

*Discussion ensues. Moderator, David Surface redirects several residents to stay on the topic at hand or to raise those questions to the Planning Board. He also, reminds voters that this bylaw change must be further approved by the Attorney General’s office.*

**VOTED: The Town Voted YES MAJORITY VOTE**

David Surface makes a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion is seconded and the town meeting dissolved at 7:54 PM.

*David Surface makes the motion to dissolve the 2020 Special Town Meeting.*

**VOTED: The town voted YES UNANIMOUS VOTE**

The Special Town Meeting dissolved at 7:54 PM.

It should be noted that this Special Town Meeting took place during the COVID-19 global pandemic. To ensure the safety of the attendees the meeting was held outside underneath, a well-ventilated heated tent. Everyone in attendance were mandated to wear a face mask.

Police Chief Donald Cudmore and several of his officers, along with Fire Chief Fred Mitchell and his fire fighters helped to keep people socially distanced and safe. Tellers were equipped with extra PPE (Personal Protective Equipment), which included face masks, hand sanitizer and gloves to hand out to townspeople, if needed. Seats were appropriately spaced for social distancing, as well. Michael Anderson and his staff from the school department, along with Peter Durkee of the highway department helped set up the meeting. Even with a reduced quorum of twenty-five, 206 voters were in attendance. We thank all town officials and of course our voters for making Special Town Meeting safe and successful.

A True Copy Attest

Kerri A. McManus

Town Clerk

\*Face masks did make it hard to hear residents’ names and addresses.

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