

Approved: April 27, 2020

Board of Selectmen Meeting: April 13, 2020

Present: Freiman, Ulfelder, Olney, Sullivan Woods, Morgan

Also Present: Jop, Frigulietti

Warrants approved: none

Meeting Documents:

1. Agenda
2. Draft BOS Letter re: Tax Bill Payment Extension, Exceptions & Deferrals
3. Correspondence from Chief Assessor
4. Memo from Joe McDonough
5. Draft Lease Agreement – 888 Worcester Street
6. Ground Lease 442 Washington Street
7. Draft BOS Minutes: 3/30/20
8. Legislation for Remote Representative Town Meetings
9. Monthly Animal Control Report
10. Correspondence: MassBay CC
11. MLP Mailer on COVID-19

1. Call to Order

Ms. Freiman, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm online.

Ms. Freiman announced the meeting was being streamed live on Comcast channel 8 and Verizon channel 40 and by Wellesley Media and recorded for subsequent viewing on the cable channels or at wellesleymedia.org. She stated residents wishing to speak in Citizen Speak or another agenda item should email sel@wellesleyma.gov to be assigned a number and call 781-489-7525 and wait for their number to be called.

2. Citizen Speak

Ms. Jop confirmed there were no callers on the line.

3. Annual Town Meeting Preparation

Ms. Strother, Town Finance Director and Mr. Waldman, Town Treasurer, joined the Board.

Ms. Jop stated that the Town was continuing to review the budget conservatively for the remainder of FY20 and for the outlook of FY21. She added that projects were continuing to be reevaluated and stated that the updated proposal had been presented to the Department Heads. Ms. Strother stated that the balanced budget was approved in March however significant changes due to the COVID-19 outbreak would result in less revenue and increased costs for the Town. She added that all Boards were asked to review their budgets and report what was necessary to keep department objectives met and what could be held off. Ms. Strother reviewed some of the unanticipated additional costs including increased applications for unemployment claims and PPE supplies. She added that the Finance Department had been tracking all costs associated with the outbreak and would eventually file for FEMA reimbursements in the future when guidance on those reimbursements was issued. She noted that real estate and personal property tax extensions would delay funds and building department permits were down, impacting revenue as well. Ms. Strother added that payroll and vendor payments were being processed on time. She

asked that the Board issue a spending freeze for non-COVID related costs and non-essential costs for the remainder of FY20. She noted that the FY21 budget continued to be reviewed for additional cuts. The Board discussed Ms. Strother's request and the financial impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak for both FY20 and FY21. Ms. Strother proposed significant changes to the FY21 budget projections for revenue estimates. She reviewed the original proposals and suggested changes noting a reduction of \$1.7million in revenue and \$1.7million increase in spending assumptions. She discussed projects that were potentially deferrable such as the Town Hall Annex and realigning street projects. She added that the departments would be involved in the decision making process. The Board discussed the projects that may be reprioritized from the FY21 budget and the changes in revenue and expense projections for FY21. The Board expressed general support for the changes, analysis, and reprioritization of the FY21 budget presented by Ms. Jop and Ms. Strother.

Upon a motion by Mr. Morgan and seconded by Mr. Ulfelder, the Board was polled and voted (5-0) to request all departments defer hiring non-essential staff and defer purchase of items not necessary due to the current reduction in building use and services as well as avoiding unnecessary expenditures.

Morgan - Aye

Sullivan Woods - Aye

Olney - Aye

Ulfelder - Aye

Freiman - Aye

4. Discuss and Vote Unforeseen Measures of COVID-19 Outbreak

Ms. Freiman stated that the Town had seen the largest increase in COVID-19 cases over the weekend. Ms. Jop stated that the National Guard was performing COVID-19 testing at the skilled nursing homes in Wellesley and reviewed the Health Department's response to the testing and tracking of cases.

Ms. Jop reviewed the tax bill extension provisions within the State's Governance Bill eligible for the Board to approve. She noted that the option to defer interest was not presented to the Board but may come before the Board in the coming weeks. The Board expressed support for the adoption of the provisions for extending property tax bills and applications for extension. Mr. Waldman stated that Wellesley would begin accruing interest on unpaid bills as of June 2nd.

Upon a motion by Mr. Morgan and seconded by Mr. Ulfelder, the Board was polled and voted (5-0) to approve the local option as outlined in An Act to Address Challenges Faced by Municipalities and State Authorities Resulting From COVID-19 to extend the due dates of property tax bills under G.L.c. 59, §§ 57 and 57C from May 1, 2020 to June 1, 2020.

Morgan - Aye

Sullivan Woods - Aye

Olney - Aye

Ulfelder - Aye

Freiman - Aye

Upon a motion by Mr. Morgan and seconded by Mr. Ulfelder, the Board was polled and voted (5-0) to approve the local option as outlined in An Act to Address Challenges Faced by Municipalities and State Authorities Resulting From COVID-19 to extend the due date under G.L. c. 59, § 59 for applications for exemptions from April 1, 2020 to a date not later than June 1, 2020.

Morgan - Aye

Sullivan Woods - Aye

Olney - Aye

Ulfelder - Aye
Freiman - Aye

Ms. Freiman stated that the Town Clerk had been promoting how residents can request and cast a mail-in ballot for the yet to be rescheduled 2020 Town Election. She added that ballots could be downloaded and printed from the Clerk's website and be dropped off in the outdoor drop box at Town Hall or mailed in. She added that ballots already cast would be counted and those residents would not need to vote again as the ballot had not changed. Ms. Sullivan Woods stated that the Merchants Association members were offering e-commerce on various web applications and responding to phone messages and appreciated the continued support from the community. The Board continued to discuss the impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak including requesting all residents to wear masks when outside their homes and reminded residents additional information will continue to be released in the daily COVID-19 communications. Ms. Freiman read the drafted Non Essential Construction Order to be issued on behalf of the Board. Ms. Jop stated that the Order would be released to the public after the meeting. The Board briefly discussed the project types considered essential or non-essential.

5. Discuss and Vote 888 Worcester Street Lease

Mr. McDonough joined the meeting. He briefly reviewed the RFP submission and selection process for the office space for FMD. He stated that the only submission was from Haynes Management for Wayne Office Park, the same space where FMD is currently housed. He provided a review of the five-year lease and added that FMD had been pleased with the space and believed the lease was very advantageous for the Town. He stated that Town Counsel had reviewed and approved of the negotiated lease agreement.

Upon a motion by Mr. Morgan and seconded by Mr. Ulfelder, the Board was polled and voted (5-0) to approve the lease with Wayne Office Park, LLC for the Facilities Management Department offices to be located at 888 Worcester Street.

Morgan - Aye
Sullivan Woods - Aye
Olney - Aye
Ulfelder - Aye
Freiman - Aye

6. Discuss and Vote Consent to Assignment of Lease 442 Washington Street (Cochituate Aqueduct)

Ms. Jop stated that Gravestar was refining their mortgage loan with Eastern Bank for Wellesley Plaza at 442 Washington Street, the Whole Foods location, and the Bank required closing documents necessitated approval from the Board due to the Aqueduct lease at that location. She provided a brief review of the Cochituate Aqueduct lease process noting that at the Whole Foods site the aqueduct runs through a significant portion of the parking lot. She stated that Town Counsel and reviewed the documents. The Board briefly discussed the consent for the assignment of the lease.

Upon a motion by Mr. Morgan and seconded by Mr. Ulfelder, the Board was polled and voted (5-0) to approve the Consent to Assignment of Lease for 442 Washington Street.

Morgan - Aye
Sullivan Woods - Aye
Olney - Aye
Ulfelder - Aye
Freiman - Aye

7. Executive Director's Update

Ms. Jop thanked Ms. Freiman for her team of residents for sewing homemade masks for many departments and other town locations. Ms. Jop noted the drafted minutes before the Board.

Upon a motion by Mr. Morgan and seconded by Mr. Ulfelder, the Board was polled and voted (5-0) to approve the minutes of March 30, 2020.

Morgan - Aye

Sullivan Woods - Aye

Olney - Aye

Ulfelder - Aye

Freiman - Aye

8. Liaison Updates

None

9. New Business and Correspondence

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20pm.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 20 at a time to be determined -online.