

State of Rhode Island

County of Washington

In Hopkinton on the twenty-second day of January 2024 A.D. the said meeting was called to order by Town Council President Michael Geary at 6:45 P.M. in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 1 Town House Road, Hopkinton, RI 02833.

PRESENT: Michael Geary, Scott Bill Hirst, Stephen Moffitt, Jr., Robert Burns; Town Manager Brian Rosso, Town Clerk Marita Murray and Solicitor Stephen Sypole. Sharon Davis was absent.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR HIRST AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR BURNS TO RECESS TO EXECUTIVE SESSION UNDER: RIGL SEC. 42-46-5(A)(1) – INTERVIEWS: BOARDS & COMMISSIONS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION.

POLL VOTE:

IN FAVOR: Geary, Hirst, Burns, Moffitt

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR HIRST AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR BURNS TO RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION.

IN FAVOR: Geary, Hirst, Burns, Moffitt

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

Council President Geary reported that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR MOFFITT AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR BURNS TO SEAL THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION.

IN FAVOR: Geary, Hirst, Burns, Moffitt

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTE

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order with a moment of silent meditation and a salute to the Flag.

ROLL CALL

Councilors Hirst, Moffitt, Burns, and Geary announced they were present.

Councilor Davis was absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ORDER

There were no changes to the agenda order.

CONSENT AGENDA

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR MOFFITT AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR HIRST TO APPROVE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 18, 2023; APPROVE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 2, 2024; APPROVE SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 8, 2024; APPROVE MONTHLY REPORT: TOWN CLERK.

IN FAVOR: Hirst, Moffitt, Burns, Geary

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

HEARINGS

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR MOFFITT AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR HIRST TO SIT AS A LICENSING BOARD.

IN FAVOR: Hirst, Burns, Moffitt, Geary

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

COMMERCIAL HAULER LICENSE RENEWALS

The Council opened a hearing on the renewal of the following commercial haulers licenses: CWPM, LLC, 25 Norton Place, Plainville, CT; On-Time Disposal, 203 Ashaway Rd, Bradford, RI; RPKK, Inc./RPE Waste Services, 9 New King’s Factory Rd., Wood River Jct., RI; Republic Services, Inc. 1080 Airport Rd., Fall River, MA; Sanitation by Quint Perry, 7 Sweet Corn Ln., Westerly, RI; Waste

Connections-MTG Mega Disposal, 9 Industrial Way, Seekonk, MA; Waste Management, 1610 Pontiac Ave., Cranston, RI.

The Town Clerk reported all applications and filing fees were received. Notice had been posted.

No one spoke in favor of or in opposition to renewal of the commercial haulers licenses.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR HIRST AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR BURNS TO GRANT RENEWAL OF THE COMMERCIAL HAULERS LICENSES.

IN FAVOR: Geary, Hirst, Moffitt, Burns

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR MOFFITT AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR HIRST TO ADJOURN AS A LICENSING BOARD AND RECONVENE AS COUNCIL.

IN FAVOR: Hirst, Burns, Moffitt, Geary

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

VACANCIES AND APPOINTMENTS

Tree Warden

This matter was scheduled to discuss, consider, and possibly vote to reappoint Scott Ahern as Tree Warden for a one-year term to January 2025.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR HIRST AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR MOFFITT TO REAPPOINT SCOTT AHERN AS TREE WARDEN FOR A ONE-YEAR TERM TO JANUARY 2025.

IN FAVOR: Hirst, Moffitt, Burns, Geary

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

Technical Review Committee

This matter was scheduled to discuss the forming of the Technical Review Committee and the need to fill vacant positions.

Councilor Hirst asked who was in charge of putting this Committee together. He believed it could be as small as three people, some of which were staff, and they were to meet during the day. He believed this committee will fill a void regarding zoning and planning approvals. Councilor Moffitt thought the Council was to receive an advisory opinion from the Planning Board regarding this committee. Mr. Rosso believed the members of this committee were discussed by the Planning Board and would be the departments that currently reviewed these projects such as the Public Works Director and the Building Official. Solicitor Sypole noted that he had been told the Planning Board was working on a set of bylaws for how the Technical Review Committee would operate. He also thought that they would be providing a list of people to the Council of who they believed should serve on the committee so the Council could appoint them. Councilor Moffitt noted that the Planning Board wished the Council make the ultimate decision on appointments. Solicitor Sypole advised that the prior statute stated the Planning Board could appoint people, but new legislation changed this to the municipality having to appoint members. Councilor Geary was concerned with involving employees of the town, and asked if this was voluntary or mandatory, or if they were asking for volunteers. Councilor Moffitt suggested that there was a position for a resident volunteer who had a specific background and criteria that would be met. He noted that he supported a Technical Review Committee made up of employee department heads, for this will assist the Town Planner with administrative approval of larger projects. Ms. Sweet recommended this Technical Review Committee, and she has a lot of experience and knowledge regarding these matters. He noted that there would only need to be a quorum and not every member needed to be at every meeting. The Town Planner could ask certain members to attend a meeting based on whatever expertise she felt was needed when reviewing an application. He thought the Planning Board was looking for guidance from the Council in regard to things where they felt the Council was the one to make the decision. This committee is mostly made up of employees so they need not worry about filling

positions with volunteers. He felt it was in the best interest of the Town to have this committee which will assist the Town Planner with oversight. He felt the Council did not have enough information to make a decision at this point until they knew more about what the bylaws and guidelines were. Solicitor Sypole did not know where the Planning Board was regarding this but felt any action the Council should take would be after receiving some kind of recommendation from them. It was decided that they would table this discussion until they receive something more from the Planning Board.

NEW BUSINESS

Budget Workshops

This matter was scheduled to consider a Budget Timetable and Schedule Budget Workshops.

Workshops were scheduled for Monday, February 12, 2024; Thursday, February 22, 2024; Monday, February 26, 2024; and Thursday, February 29, 2024, all at 6:00 p.m.

New Proposed Legislation

This matter was scheduled to discuss, consider and possibly vote to send a letter to Representatives Kennedy, Cotter and Senator Morgan regarding new proposed legislation for accessory dwelling units, H7062 and to ask them to attend the Town Council meeting scheduled for Tuesday, February 20, 2024.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR MOFFITT AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR BURNS TO SEND A LETTER TO REPRESENTATIVE KENNEDY, REPRESENTATIVE COTTER AND SENATOR MORGAN REGARDING THE NEW PROPOSED LEGISLATION FOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS AND ASKING THEM TO ATTEND THE COUNCIL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 20, 2024.

IN FAVOR: Hirst, Moffitt, Burns, Geary

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

Solicitor Sypole advised that he had heard from a reliable source that there will be a competing version of the accessory dwelling bill that will be coming from the Senate side. He felt that now would be the time for the Council to take a position if they wished to do so. He also inquired if the letter that was to be sent should just ask the representatives to attend or be more specific. Councilor Moffitt felt the bill was painted with a broad brush and Solicitor Sypole agreed stating that the bill would treat every city or town the same. Councilor Moffitt wished to know if there had been any request to exempt towns that did not have the ability to have city water or septic. He felt there were things looked over or looked past with this bill. Solicitor Sypole stated that the way the current bill was written, anyone could build a second home in their backyard. Councilor Geary wished a letter be sent to Representatives Cotter and Kennedy and Senator Morgan asking them to come to the Town Council meeting so they can discuss this proposed bill.

Chariho School Committee Resolution

This matter was scheduled to discuss, consider and possibly vote on supporting the Chariho Regional School District Committee's Resolution in Support of Full Funding of Categorical Transportation Aid as outlined in RIGL § 16-7.2-6.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR HIRST AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR MOFFITT TO SUPPORT CHARIHO REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF FULL FUNDING OF CATEGORICAL TRANSPORTATION AID AS OUTLINED IN RIGL 16-7.2-6.

IN FAVOR: Hirst, Moffitt, Burns, Geary

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

Town Hall Expansion Project

This matter was scheduled to discuss, consider, and possibly vote to waive the Town's permit fees for the Town Hall expansion project.

Mr. Rosso felt it did not make sense to pay ourselves permit fees.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR MOFFITT AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR HIRST TO WAIVE THE TOWN’S PERMIT FEES FOR THE TOWN HALL EXPANSION PROJECT.

IN FAVOR: Hirst, Moffitt, Burns, Geary

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

Newport Appraisal Group, LLC

This matter was scheduled to discuss, consider, and possibly vote to authorize the Town Manager to enter into a contract with Newport Appraisal Group, LLC to appraise two town owned properties referred to as Map 24, Lot 5 and Map 26, Lot 47.

Mr. Rosso explained that this request had to do with the community center and to follow through with the \$1.5 Million Dollar funding that is being offered to the town, appraisals need to be done. They are working with RI DEM to do a small conversion, which would be to take the restrictions off the 1.7-acre lot and put it on a similar sized lot. There is approximately 24 acres behind the town hall, and they felt that they could parcel off a section of that to use for recreation and conservation purposes. He noted that there would be no deed changes, just an agreement with the Town and National Park Services where both parties sign a map. He suggested possibly having hiking trails behind Saugatucket Springs. He explained that Newport Appraisal Group was on the State’s Master Pricing Agreement, which alleviates the need to go out to bid; they had taken an extra step and solicited bids from all of the companies on the Master Pricing Agreement and Newport Appraisal was the lowest bid. He felt comfortable working with them because they had a lot of experience with doing similar type conversions in other municipalities. Nathan Godfrey, from Newport Appraisal Group, would be the appraiser and he was very attentive. Councilor Moffitt asked if a survey needed to be performed, and Mr. Rosso replied no, just an appraisal and Mr. Godfrey would figure out how much land would be needed for the conversion. Mr. Rosso advised that the quote was for \$7,400 and he believed they needed to obtain a second appraiser to approve the

work for a cost of \$1,100. This is covered under the grant unless they do not see the project through.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR MOFFITT AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR BURNS TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH NEWPORT APPRAISAL GROUP, LLC TO APPRAISE TWO TOWN OWNED PROPERTIES REFERRED TO AS MAP 24, LOT 5 AND MAP 26, LOT 47.

IN FAVOR: Hirst, Moffitt, Burns, Geary

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

PUBLIC COMMENT

Joe Moreau of Old Depot Road expressed how nice it was to see the Town Council getting along and getting things accomplished. He noted that he had attended the Planning Board meeting where they discussed the Technical Review Committee and one of the things they discussed was about holding the meetings during the day so that town employees could attend during work hours. There was to be a Planning Board member who sat on that committee, and it was discussed that some of them could not attend a meeting during the day so they decided that they would alternate members who were available to attend. He also noted there would be a Planning Board workshop this Saturday, January 27th to discuss training issues. Lastly, he expressed that the Department of Public Works had done a great job during the ice storm on January 6th and January 7th and then for the wind and rain storm of January 9th where they came into work at midnight. He noticed that the plow driver who came down his road was driving a Richmond truck and found out that this was because the town was down two vehicles. The town had to put a 27-year-old vehicle on the road plowing and due to being down two vehicles it took longer to plow our roads. He recalled, through the APRA funds, the town has two new pick-up trucks and was waiting on the arrival of a new dump truck. For the safety of the town, the town needed to be up to speed with its vehicles and possibly some CIP money or Clinton money could be used for this. It was embarrassing to him to see

a Richmond truck, although it was very kind of Richmond to let the town use the truck.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR HIRST AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR MOFFITT TO ADJOURN IN MEMORY OF JANICE (JEFFREY) BARBER, CHARLENE D. (MEEK) ROSA, ALAN J. BUCK, FRANK “JUNIE” CHAMPLIN, JR. AND GRACE F. KLINGER.

SO VOTED

Marita D. Murray

Town Clerk

Sydney Fernandes

Deputy Town Clerk