



Office of the Board of Selectmen
Webster Town Hall
350 Main Street
Webster, MA 01570

Phone: (508) 949-3800 x 1005
Fax: (508) 949-3888
selectmen@webster-ma.gov

Randall V. Becker, Chairman
Donald D. Bourque, Vice-Chairman
Andrew Jolda, Secretary
Lisa Kontoes
Earl Gabor

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
Monday May 11, 2020 6:00 P.M.**

Selectmen's Meeting Room
Webster Town Hall, 350 Main Street, Webster, MA
via conference call in accordance with Governor Baker's
emergency "Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the
Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §20
6:00 p.m.

MEETING OPENING: At 6:06 p.m., Chairman Becker called the meeting to order in the Selectmen's Meeting Room, Webster Town Hall, 350 Main Street, Webster, MA. The following individuals were present: Chairman Becker, Selectman Don Bourque (via conference call), Selectman Andrew Jolda, Selectman Lisa Kontoes (via conference call), Selectman Earl Gabor (via conference call), Attorney Nicholas Adamopoulos (via conference call), Timothy Bell, Sarah Sansom (via conference call), , Laura Backus (via conference call), Chief Michael Shaw (via conference call), Terenzio Volpicelli (via conference call), Town Administrator Doug Willardson, and Executive Assistant Courtney Friedland, (via conference call). The Board stood and took the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Becker stated on March 12, 2020, Governor Baker issued an Executive Order modifying certain requirements of the Open Meeting Law, to enable public bodies to carry out their responsibilities while adhering to public health recommendations regarding social distancing as fully stated on the agenda. The Executive Order relieves public bodies from the requirement in the Open Meeting Law that meetings be conducted in a public place that is open and physically accessible to the public, provided that the public body makes provision to ensure public access to the deliberations of the public body through adequate, alternative means.

Meeting Minutes

Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Kontoes, to approve the meeting minutes of April 21, 2020. Call Vote: Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes – yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, Selectman Bourque – yes and Chairman Becker – yes.

STAVE & STILL, INC. - LIQUOR LICENSE APPROVAL: Mr. Willardson stated the owners of Stave & Still, Inc. have withdrawn their application because they are moving locations. He said they will resubmit their application for the next Board of Selectmen's meeting.

WINE & MALT APPLICATIONS - DISCUSSION: Mr. Willardson stated the Board of Selectmen received two applications for the available All Alcohol Wine & Malt Pouring License. He said the Golden Greek didn't renew

their license during the renewal period because they were in the process of selling the business. He stated he would recommend moving forward with Little Greek's application because it is a better location, the application was received before Papa Gino's, and the liquor license was previously held by the establishment. The consensus of the Board of Selectmen was to move forward with Little Greek's Application based of Mr. Willardson's recommendation.

Mr. Willardson stated a Public Hearing will need to be posted for the next meeting.

EMPIRE WOK – LIQUOR LICENSE VIOLATION HEARING: Chairman Becker and Selectman Bourque recused themselves. Selectman Jolda took over the hearing.

Motion by Selectman Kontoes, seconded by Selectman Gabor, to open the Liquor License Violation Hearing for Empire Wok.

Call Vote: Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes – yes, Selectman Jolda – yes.

Selectman Jolda swore all parties in. Chief Shaw stated the Board of Selectmen received a copy of the police report. He stated on January 12, 2020 at 11:00 p.m. Webster Police Department was dispatched to Empire Wok for an intoxicated male and female who were arguing. Office Ela wrote in his report that the party admitted to being intoxicated and having been drinking at Empire Wok. He stated the female got a ride home and the male was subsequently taken to the Police Station. He was administered a breathalyzer test and blew a .257. The administered the test an hour later and he blew a .252. Attorney Adamopoulos stated he was representing the Empire Wok. He sated Mr. Ying takes the allegations very seriously. He stated Empire Wok has been in business for over twenty years. He stated the restaurant closes at 10:00 p.m. with last call being at 9:30 p.m. He stated that leaves an hour between the time the restaurant closed and when the police were called for the altercation. He stated the employees of the restaurant reported seeing no one in the parking lot when they left a little after 10:00 p.m. He stated all staff is TIPS certified. Selectman Kontoes stated the report indicated the pair were in the establishment for an extended period of time. She requested clarification on that. Chief Shaw stated they were watching a football game in the establishment, so his estimate would be two to three hours. Selectman Gabor asked if there was any alcohol in the vehicle. Chief Shaw stated there were no indication in the Police Report that there was alcohol in the car or any empty containers.

Motion by Selectman Kontoes, seconded by Selectman Gabor, to close the Liquor License Violation to Empire Wok.

Call Vote: Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes – yes, Selectman Jolda – yes.

In accordance with the adopted Liqueo License Violation Policy, motion by Selectman Kontoes, seconded by Selectman Gabor, to issue the Empire Wok a verbal warning.

Call Vote: Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes – yes, Selectman Jolda – yes.

Chairman Becker and Selectman Bourque returned to the meeting.

2020 WEBSTER SAILING ASSOCIATION RACING SCHEDULE:

Motion by Selectman Bourque, seconded by Selectman Jolda, to approve the previously submitted sailing schedule. Call Vote: Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes – yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, Selectman Bourque – yes and Chairman Becker – yes.

FY19 AUDIT PRESENTATION – ROSELLI, CLARK & ASSOCIATES:

Mr. Volpicelli stated he has audited the financial statements of the Town of Webster as of and for the year ended June 30, 2019. He stated management is responsible for the selection and use of appropriate accounting policies. He said there are significant accounting estimates in the financial statements in total pension liability, total other postemployment benefits (OPEB) liability, and allowance for doubtful accounts. He said there is no reportable difficulties/disagreements with management. He said the complete required communication letter was provided separately. He stated they applied certain limited procedures to the budgetary comparison, pension and OPEB schedules, which are required supplementary information (“RSI”) that supplements the basic financial statements. He stated the U.S. equities and debt markets were rocked by COVID-19 in Q1 2020. He said there was a significant rebound in markets in April 2020. He said the speed of worldwide central banks’ quantitative easing has greatly affected global debt markets. He said there has been significant COVID-19 related business closures/slowdown. He stated the oil prices and consumption have gone down. He said property tax and departmental revenues are likely to slip. He said the 2021/2022 motor vehicles excise taxes may not trend as previously expected. He said hotel/meals excise taxes in Q4 are likely to slip significantly. The Fy2021 effects are unknown. The impact of the FY21 and FY22 State Aid is unknown. He stated health insurance rates are likely to increase. The Town recently established an OPEB trust to address its future other postemployment benefit liabilities. In January 2020, the Board of Selectmen adopted an OPEB funding policy calling for annual appropriations of \$100,000 (with a 2.5% annual escalator). Additionally, any unused funds in the Town’s self-insured health program, which was terminated effective July 1, 2019, will be transferred into the OPEB trust after an appropriate run-off period. The Town entered FY20 with \$1,457,000 in general stabilization and \$1,383,000 in certified free cash at 7/1/19. The FY19 actual revenues exceeded the budget by \$369,000. The financial condition of the Town of Webster (the “Town”) at June 30, 2019 has steadily improved over the past several years. In its governmental funds’ financial statements, which most closely resembles the Town’s statutory accounting records, the fund balance in the Town’s general fund has been growing and exceeded \$5.3 million at June 30, 2019. Over the past five years, the fund balance in the general fund has grown over 10% annually. Moody’s rating for the Town is A1 (5th highest rating). The Division of Local Services has released six bulletins over the past six weeks on COVID. The CARES funds will likely be determined in the next couple of weeks. Massachusetts was allocated approximately \$2.7 billion dollars. Worcester County will receive \$145 million. The Town’s distribution will likely be made upfront and proceeds to be used for COVID-19 expenses.

Chairman Becker stated there was a lot of information within the documents that were sent out. He thanked Mr. Bell, Mr. Willardson and Department Heads for their hard work. Mr. Volpicelli stated the Town has come a long way. He said the acquisition of Mr. Bell has been an asset for the Town since he is a CPA. Mr. Bell stated they have a very good working relationship and had positive communication. He said when the COVID-19 started shutting things down he emailed Mr. Volpicelli first. Chairman Becker stated the Board received the Management Letter. Mr. Volpicelli stated he would like to point out the importance of Network Security. He said there is an increased risk of fraud. Chairman Becker stated this should be discussed with the Audit Committee. Chairman Becker stated the next comment was about payroll frequency. Mr. Bell stated they have had several conversations regarding this. He stated the Town does need to review how payroll is processed. Mr. Willardson stated this is a bargaining item. Mr. Bell stated advanced payroll is no longer allowed. Chairman Becker stated they are currently having discussion on the SWCCC payroll and amending the agreement. Mr. Willardson asked Mr. Volpicelli what other towns are doing regarding their budgets. Mr. Volpicelli stated many towns are doing a “what if” budget scenario. He said they don’t know what the State will do with Local State Aid. Chairman Becker

stated he was disappointed with Worcester County only receiving \$145 million. Mr. Volpicelli stated most of the aid will be kept by the State. He suggested contacting the Town's local Congressman and asking that the money the town received be used for things other than COVID expenses, such as decreased revenues impacted by the State's Stay at Home Advisory.

COVID-19 CONDITION AND RESPONSE UPDATE: Mr. Willardson stated the mask order went into effect on Wednesday. He said everyone in Webster is complying very well. He stated staff has been visiting major retailers periodically to ensure they are complying with the order. He said the Town will follow the Governor's phased approach. He said restaurants that have been closed will be re-inspected. He stated the Town Hall has a reopening plan. He said this includes plexiglass, masks, gloves, daily temperature readings, etc. He said they should know more later in the week. Chairman Becker thanked whomever put the "Thank You" sign in the Board of Selectmen room. Mr. Willardson stated Selectman Bourque donated the sign.

BARTLETT HIGH SCHOOL PROJECT – FEASIBILITY STUDY AGREEMENT: Mr. Willardson stated the Town approved the feasibility study for Bartlett High School at Town Meeting. He said the information was provided in the Board of Selectmen's packet.

Motion made by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Bourque to approve the Feasibility Study Agreement for the Bartlett High School Project. Call Vote: Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes – yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, Selectman Bourque – yes and Chairman Becker – yes.

FY20 BUDGET AND FY21 BUDGET OUTLOOK AND TIMING: Mr. Willardson stated he is assuming the Meals Tax for the last quarter will be \$60,000 short in revenue. He stated they are currently tracking down the IOD Police Reimbursement. He said this lack of payment was due to an insurance carrier change. He stated that the bulk of the Medicaid reimbursements are received in June. He said penalties and interest & demand fees are heavily collected in May and June but he expects negative impact due to the COVID-19 collection policy. He said a Real Estate & Personal Property Analysis is being done by Treasurer/Collector. He said unemployment has been running high this year. He said with the COVID-19 pandemic that 50% of new cases to be covered by Federal Government. He said the town hasn't received the March bill. He said they saw savings in School Transportation of \$58,000 + SPED transportation. He said there were also savings in electricity, heating fuel, gasoline, and wages. He said guidelines were released Friday that 1/12th budget must be approved by Board of Selectmen if annual budget is not approved at Town Meeting prior to July 1st. He said a 1/12th budgets must be voted by the Selectmen and approved by DOR. His preferred option is to approve budget at Town Meeting, but DOR may not accept if there is too much uncertainty in State budget. The State has not given updated state aid numbers and they probably won't know until August or September. The best-case rumors are return to FY20 State Aid Numbers—\$1 M to \$1.2 M cut. The worst-case rumors return to FY09 State Aid Numbers—\$5 M cut. He said Local Revenues will be down as well. He said the Town & Schools would split the difference 70% schools/30% town after adjusting for shared costs. He said Furlough saves approximately \$20,000 per week for all hourly employees. Employees are estimated to take home \$15,000 more in total than regular wages.

He stated the Town Moderator has created an Advisory Committee for the Special and Annual Town Meeting. He stated the Advisory Committee will help him proceed with the best options for Town Meeting. He stated they would like a representative from the Board of Selectman. Selectman Jolda volunteered to be the Board's representative.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: Mr. Willardson wished all the moms a Happy Belated Mother's Day.

1. Public Health and Safety
 - a. Police pursuit on Lower Gore over the weekend.

- b. Adequate PPE for all first responders
- 2. Financially Responsible
 - a. Webster PowerUp program bids received
 - i. Program currently in place until Nov 1st at 10.928 per kwh
 - ii. New pricing Nov 1st will be 9.509 per Kwh for add'l 36 months
- 3. Economic Development
 - a. Consultant shift from tornado area to Kmart Plaza
 - b. Developed guidelines and application for disbursement of CDBG funds when available.
 - c. Stave & Still looking at new location; applying to vacant storefront program
 - d. 41 Main Street demolition
- 4. Maintain Infrastructure
 - a. Water/Sewer Commission voted for to replace water mains on Lincoln Street, Nelson Street, Whitcomb Street at an estimated cost of \$2,164,500 for their next project. Engineering funds will be approved in June Town Meeting. Project chosen over water main upsizing on Old Worcester/Worcester/Bigelow.
 - b. Water flushing program will skip Spring 2020
 - i. Very few discolored water calls and employees are furloughed
 - c. Lake Parkway/Klebart Ave project bids should have been received. No response from the project manager.
 - d. Memorial Beach—reviewed initial concept.
 - i. Need to bid out project in June. Will hold “virtual hearing” by reviewing plans and then requesting comments
 - e. Municipal lot behind Mapfre reconstruction out to bid. Conservation approved.
 - f. East Main Street sidewalk project bids received. Lowest at \$565,000 for the whole project; more than I was hoping. Likely have to split project in half.
 - g. Water tower property proposals received. One for minimum of \$250,000. Proposed nine single-family residential lots. The Board of Selectmen will have to review this bid for the upcoming Annual Town Meeting.
- 5. Effective Delivery of Services/Operations
 - a. Opened compost facility on a by appointment basis.
 - b. Policy review. BOS to discuss. Send comments before hand and we will compile.

Chairman Becker stated the Board will hold their next meeting on Monday, June 1, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

**Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Kontoes, to approve the Town Administrator’s Report.
Call Vote: Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes – yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, Selectman Bourque – yes and Chairman Becker – yes.**

ADJOURN: At 7:47 p.m.,

**Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Gabor, to adjourn.
Call Vote: Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes – yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, Selectman Bourque – yes and Chairman Becker – yes.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Courtney M. Friedland, Executive Secretary to the Board of Selectmen