



Town Of Webster

Massachusetts

Est. 1832

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
Andrew Jolda, Vice-Chairman
Earl Gabor, Secretary
Lisa Kontoes
Thomas Klebart

BOARD OF SELECTMEN REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES

Monday, January 11, 2021 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 6:04 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 Andrew Jolda (via Zoom meeting), Selectman Lisa Kontoes, Selectman Earl Gabor (via Zoom meeting), Selectman Thomas Klebart (via Zoom Meeting), Rena Klebart (via Zoom meeting), Martina Koziak (via Zoom meeting), Mary Chabot (via Zoom meeting), Evelyn Pappas (via Zoom meeting), Sue Buehler (via Zoom meeting), Cynthia Nagle (via Zoom meeting), Donna Becker (via Zoom meeting), Attorney Gene Richard (via Zoom meeting), Amelia Camelo (via Zoom meeting), Board of Health Agent Jennifer Sullivan (via Zoom meeting), Town Administrator Doug Willardson, and Executive Assistant Courtney Friedland. 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. As further explained 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.

Chairman Becker announced the name of each member/attendee who attended via Zoom.

Before reviewing our minutes, I had two matters that I'd like to comment on.

First, on Christmas Eve, a dear member of our community and true supporter of our Fire Department, Wendy Hickey, unexpectedly passed away. Wendy gave of herself professionally, as a Licensed Practical Nurse dedicated to helping others, especially the elderly and those in hospice care. The Town of Webster remembers Wendy for her dedication to the Webster Fire Department and its Women's Auxiliary. Her "Wendy Strong"

attitude to tackle the problems we face will always be inspirational to those people who were fortunate to know her. I'd like to ask for a moment of silence as we pray for Wendy and offer our deepest condolences to Chief Hickey and the entire Zonia and Hickey families.

Chairman Becker read the following statement:

Five days ago, the riot and assault on our Capitol, the very symbol of our Democracy, left the vast majority of Americans shocked, horrified and breathless. My 86-year-old mother told me she had to turn the TV off out of concern she might have a heart attack.

On behalf of this Board of Selectmen, we condemn the actions of those individuals who assaulted our Democracy. We hope and expect they will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. We especially want to commend those law enforcement officers for the restraint they showed. Overwhelmed and outnumbered, in many other countries law enforcement could have turned it into a bloodbath. Our thoughts are with those who lost their lives as a result of this unlawful attack, especially Officer Sicknick and another responding officer who took his own life just today.

Along with freedom of religion and free speech, the First Amendment of our Constitution allows for the right of the people to peaceably assemble and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances. It does not give people the right to riot, attack, intimidate, abuse and kill. We've witnessed a very difficult past year with numerous peaceful protests around the country that turned into riots, ending up with the destruction of lives and property. It seemed that January 6th was the culmination of such protests gone horribly bad. We are proud of Webster, the sponsors, law enforcement and our citizens for bringing their concerns to light exactly seven months ago in the peaceful BLM protest on June 6th. I bring all this up tonight as a reminder that "words matter" – especially when they come from someone in a position of authority. Sadly, the President of these United States found this out in a way that will never be forgotten.

It's important that we all remember, especially those in leadership rolls, to watch what we say, who we say it to and how we say it. Hopefully we've reached the pinnacle regarding the rhetoric of divisiveness and polarization that plagues our country today.

I hope the events of January 6th will provide the impetus for all of us, whether Department Head, Town Administrator, Selectmen, State Rep, State Senator and so on, to think clearly before we speak - because words truly do matter!

Meeting Minutes

Motion by Selectman Kontoes, seconded by Selectman Gabor, to approve the meeting minutes of December 7, 2020. Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.

Motion by Selectman Kontoes, seconded by Selectman Klebart, to approve the meeting minutes of December 14, 2020. Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.

JOINT MEETING: APPOINTMENT OF VACANCY ON LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Chairman Becker and Selectman Klebart recused themselves.

Chairman Becker recused himself from the meeting and Selectman Jolda took over the meeting. The Board of Library Trustees opened their meeting. Ms. Klebart stated she was very delighted that two qualified people applied for the vacant position. She stated both are very active in the community. She stated this appointment would be for the interim position until the next election. Selectman Jolda asked both candidates to introduce themselves. Ms. Nagle stated she has been very active with the library. She stated her focus would be to get a Library Director in place. She stated she would like the library to be open and functioning. She stated she would support them in any needs they may have. Ms. Becker stated she is now an empty nester. She stated she grew up in town and graduated from Nicholas College. She stated she would love to serve the community. She stated she is part of the Friends of the Library and the Programming Committee. She stated her skills in IT Management would be beneficial. She stated her goal would also be hiring a Library Director and advancing technology. Selectman Kontoes asked if they planned on running in May. Both candidates answered yes. Selectman Kontoes asked each candidate what makes them stand out. Ms. Nagle stated the library has always been a special space for her. She stated the library was a reward when she was young. Ms. Becker stated she loves the town and would love to serve the community.

The Library Board of Trustees took a vote to recommend appointing Donna Becker.

Motion by Selectman Gabor, seconded by Selectman Kontoes, to appoint Donna Becker to the Library Board of Trustees. Call Vote: Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, and Selectman Jolda – yes.

PUBLIC HEARING – NATIONAL GRID – FAIRFIELD STREET:

Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Kontoes, to open the Public Hearing for National Grid's request to install 1 JO pole on Malden Drive beginning at a point approximately 60 feet north of the centerline of the intersection of Batten Street. Install new midspan pole P1-1/2 and anchor to improve system reliability and to ensure that P9 doesn't lean/fall under the weight of new conductors.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Kontoes, to close the Public Hearing for National Grid's request to install 1 JO pole on Malden Drive beginning at a point approximately 60 feet north of the centerline of the intersection of Batten Street. Install new midspan pole P1-1/2 and anchor to improve system reliability and to ensure that P9 doesn't lean/fall under the weight of new conductors. Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.

Motion by Selectman Klebart, seconded by Selectman Jolda, to approve the petition from National Grid's to install 1 JO pole on Malden Drive beginning at a point approximately 60 feet north of the centerline of the intersection of Batten Street. Install new midspan pole P1-1/2 and anchor to improve system reliability and to ensure that P9 doesn't lean/fall under the weight of new conductors. Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.

CHANGE OF MANAGER/OFFICERS/DIRECTORS/LLC MANAGER APPLICATION - PRICE CHOPPER OPERATING CO:

Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Kontoes, to approve the Change of Manager/Officers/Directors/LLC Managers Application filed by Price Chopper Operating Co. of Massachusetts Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Chairman Becker – yes.

WILLIAM KEEFE – RE-APPOINTMENT AS CONSTABLE:

Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Kontoes, to re-appoint William Keefe as Constable for the Town of Webster. Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Chairman Becker – yes.

JENNIFER SULLIVAN – COVID-19 UPDATE/DISCUSSION:

Chairman Becker thanked Ms. Sullivan for attending the meeting and for everything she is doing to combat COVID-19. Mr. Willardson stated COVID -19 cases have been increasing. He stated they have seen major increases in long term care facilities. Ms. Sullivan stated they have seen an increase in children this week. She stated Brookside Nursing Home had a large outbreak. They had an asymptomatic nurse who tested positive days later. She said it is very unfortunate. They had seven total deaths. She said another care facility in town has 33 cases and 4 deaths. Selectman Gabor asked about vaccinations. Ms. Sullivan stated long term care facilities are getting the first dose this week and should receive the second dose by the end of the month. CVS is providing the vaccine. Chairman Becker stated approximately 65% are getting the vaccine that it is offered to. He stated there should be a system in place when phase 3 is administered. Ms. Sullivan stated the State is looking at three different locations for the administration. She stated nothing is set in stone. Chairman Becker asked if there was a timeframe. Ms. Sullivan stated it all depends on how fast the phases move. She stated it is most likely to be done by April. Chairman Becker again thanked Ms. Sullivan for her time and dedication.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Closed on January 18th Martin Luther King Day
- 1. Public Health and Safety
 - a. Police Staffing:
 - i. Lateral transfer from Framingham started earlier this month
 - ii. New candidates: group of 9
 - 1. Interviewing Friday
 - 2. Academy in April
 - b. Fire new hires filling in roles well; one full-time firefighter injured during a fire incident in December
 - c. Coronavirus—separate presentation
 - d. Recreation:
 - i. Contractor starting on dog park near walking track
- 2. Financially Responsible
 - a. Bidding out general liability insurance
 - b. Free Cash certification later this week or next
 - c. 2022 Budget process underway; Governor to release state aid numbers at the end of the month
- 3. Economic Development
 - a. EDC meeting held last week.
 - b. Released developer solicitation for 0 Sutton Road
 - c. Wine Bar currently looking to open in old “Hot Costumes” location

- d. Received \$36,600 for “Winter Shared Streets” grant. To be used for more downtown lighting; crosswalks flashing signals and landscaping
 - e. KMART plaza sale likely to go through
 - f. GOYA TIF approved and finalized
 - g. Urban Agenda grant program—used to assist entrepreneurs, local business owners
4. Maintain Infrastructure
- a. Lake Parkway/Klebart Ave: binder coat down for a portion of the project. Project completion date June 2021.
 - b. Ray Street athletic field bleachers. Bleachers are down.
 - c. South Main. NGrid finished gas lines on East Main and South Main; now doing repairs on side streets. Repave trenches in the spring. Portion of Lake Street to be done.
 - d. Town Hall roof. Project cost of \$537,000. \$100,000 less than engineer’s estimate.
 - e. Sutton Road Bridge. Engineering underway. Awaiting next grant for construction funds.
 - f. Water Main Improvements. Bidding in February.
5. Effective Delivery of Services/Operations
- a. Finalized collective bargaining agreement with firefighters
 - b. Hired Highway Laborer; started this week
 - c. Senior Center clerk resigned to take another job in Millbury. Will not immediately fill the position
 - d. Library Director position has closed; trustees and I are reviewing applications. Panel interviews next week
 - e. Owners of 124 High and 168 Chase Ave are making progress
6. Transparent, Open and Friendly Government
- a. Town hall open Monday through Thursday 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM via a kiosk and the Treasurer/Collector’s Office due to COVID 19 concerns

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION: At 7:13 p.m.,

Motion by Selectman Kontoes, seconded by Selectman Klebart, to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares.

- **Moses Early v. Town of Webster et al. (Vote to release meeting minutes)**
- **Dowgiewicz v. Town of Webster et al. (Vote to release meeting minutes)**
- **Hylton v Ralph (Vote to release meeting minutes)**
- **APPROVAL OF EXECUTIVE SESSION MEETING MINUTES**
 - **December 7, 2020**
 - **December 14, 2020**

Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.

ADJOURN: At 7:28 p.m.,

Upon exiting from Executive session, Motion by Selectman Kontoes, seconded by Selectman Klebart, to reconvene the regular session and adjourn.

Call Vote: Selectman Klebart – yes, Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes - yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, and Selectman Becker – yes.

Respectfully Submitted,
Courtney Friedland, Executive Secretary to the Board of Selectmen

Next Meeting: February 8, 2021, 6:00 p.m. in the Selectmen’s Meeting Room, Webster Town Hall, 350 Main Street, Webster, MA 01570

DRAFT