



Office of the Board of Selectmen
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Randall V. Becker Chairman
Donald D. Bourque, Vice-Chairman
Andrew Jolda, Secretary
Lisa Kontoes
Earl Gabor

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
Monday, June 3, 2019, 6:00 P.M.**

Gladys E. Kelly Public Library, Meeting Room
2 Lake Street, Webster, MA 01570

MEETING OPENING: At 6:02 p.m., Selectman Becker called the meeting to order. The following individuals were present: Chairman Randall Becker, Selectman Don Bourque, Selectman Andrew Jolda, Selectman Lisa Kontoes, Selectman Earl Gabor, Town Administrator Douglas Willardson, and Executive Secretary Courtney Friedland. The Board stood and took the Pledge of Allegiance.

COLLABORATION/TEAM BUILDING: Chairman Becker stated the Board received a list of consolidated goals/ideas which were then reviewed. The Board consensus that stated conducting 1 to 2 meetings per year with state legislators to align/inform them of the goals. It was agreed. He stated this would be very beneficial to the Board and the Town Administrator so that we can express our needs as a town. Mr. Willardson agreed, stating meeting in February and late August-early September would be beneficial.

Holding a combined meeting with the Finance Committee and School Committee would also be beneficial to the Board during budget season and late fall. Chairman Becker stated they can also meet with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of each Board on an "as needed" basis.

Holding joint meetings with other boards to increase collaboration and alignment of goals/direction/guiding principles would also be beneficial. Mr. Willardson stated this is also tied with Department Head updates. He said one Department used to come into the Board of Selectmen's meeting and give an update. He said this was on a rotating basis. He said it would be good to include any Board, Committee or Commission that go along with that Department Head. Selectman Kontoes stated it would be good to highlight that Department for the month and focus on getting as much information out to residents. She said they can be designated "Department of the Month" on the Town's website or Facebook page.

COMMUNICATION PLAN/PUBLIC RELATIONS/TRANSPARENCY: Selectman Gabor stated there are a lot of conflicting meetings and that a lot of the meeting minutes for the Boards, Commissions, and Committees are missing from the website. Chairman Becker stated the Board of Selectmen needs to lead by example. He proposed that draft meeting minutes get posted within seven days to the website after being approved by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman and Town Administrator. He stated he would like to have a draft Policy written so that it can be approved and then distributed to all Boards, Commission, and Committees. He suggested sending a memo to Boards, Commissions, and Committees to try to coordinate meetings better. He agreed that

meetings do conflict a lot and that meeting schedules should be shared amongst Boards, Commissions, and Committees to avoid overlapping when possible. Mr. Willardson stated he would like to encourage all boards to have as many meetings in the Selectmen's Room so that they can be recorded. Chairman Becker stated it would be easier if there was an on/off button to record so that Greg Robert didn't have to stay or be available remotely for all of these meetings. Selectman Gabor stated he has contacted the Webster Housing Authority because their meeting minutes have not been posted. Mr. Willardson stated he will contact Paula from the Webster Housing Authority to ensure minutes are posted. . He stated the Town also has funds in the Cable Account that can be used for video and audio upgrades. He stated he will ask to get a price quote for outfitting the Library Meeting Room to record meetings.

Mr. Willardson stated the Board of Selectmen will discuss Committee's vacancies and do re-appointments next meeting. Selectman Bourque stated in the past all new members needed to attend the meeting in order to get residents acquainted to who they were. He stated this should be common practice again. Chairman Becker stated the Board also needs to know from the Committee's Chairman if there are any issues from the with the re-appointment. He stated they should also receive a letter of recommendation from the Chairman of the Committee of the Department Head overseeing that Board, Commission or Committee. He mentioned a Policy has been approved dealing with appointments and reappointments.

Selectman Kontoes stated she asked to have "identify and consistently reporting on key metrics and data" on the goals. She stated more data needs to be available to the public. She stated relevant data should be available on our website. Selectman Bourque stated when Department Heads come into their monthly report, it needs to have all of this data available. He stated it would also be beneficial to know staffing levels. Mr. Willardson stated Carol Marchand is coming on as the Communication Director in addition to her duties as Recreation Director. She will be putting out more information and will be hosting "Ask the Town Administrator" Show. Chairman Becker stated the Town Administrator's Report could be provided on the Town's website or Facebook page.

Mr. Willardson stated he finds meeting once a month is beneficial. Chairman Becker stated the once a month formal meetings have worked. He stated last year the Board met over twenty times. He stated besides the monthly meetings they also meet before Town Meeting and other dates that were included in their monthly meeting schedule. He suggested making a master list of meetings will be helpful. Selectman Bourque stated he would like to know the dates the Board met last year. Mr. Willardson stated he proposed holding a monthly, less formal, Selectmen's meeting to have a discussion before the May elections. Chairman Becker stated he wants to be open and transparent as possible. He thought that having an open agenda and a less formal conversation would be more informative.

Mr. Willardson stated he hasn't seen public/citizens comments done in other communities. He stated he has some concerns with opening it up as a free for all at a Selectmen's Meeting. He stated sometimes there are larger problems then what is put out to the media outlets. Chairman Becker agreed that it is not always a good idea to allow residents to speak regarding an issue publically without knowing the background. It was agreed not to have a citizen's open session as part of the agenda.

Selectman Kontoes stated she likes the idea of informal Selectmen's Office. She stated a log or tracking system needs to be in place to track all of the concerns/ideas/complaints to be given to the Town Administrator for follow-up. Selectman Bourque stated he thinks this is a good idea and should be put in place. He said nobody might show up but at least they tried. Selectman Kontoes stated Selectmen are elected to serve the residents and they should be available to voice their concerns to if they want. Chairman Becker stated he would like to know if other towns hold office hours and if they have a policy. Selectman Kontoes stated this should be done on a rotating basis by the Board members during an off-meeting night. She stated they should have a standardized intake form. Chairman Becker noted one concern was making sure Selectmen always forwarded citizens' concerns through the Town Administrator.

Selectman Kontoes stated the information provided on the website is somewhat repetitive. She stated information is difficult to find and is not consistent. She stated important information is on the website but is not being promoted. She stated she didn't know anything about the Water Filtration Loan Program until someone mentioned it. She said this information is not readily available on the website. She stated we need to bring awareness to things that are important and available to residents. Mr. Willardson stated they try to do a rotation of service announcements but sometimes things fall off the radar. He stated the new website is user-friendly and he will review what is on there for information. Selectman Bourque stated The Lake 940 is a great informational asset and you can add to their Master Calendar for events. He said it would be great to have a link between the website and The Lake 940 to provide information to residents. Selectman Kontoes stated Policies are all over the place. She is would be helpful if they were in one central location. Selectman Jolda stated he likes the idea of having the Selectmen's packet available for residents but they need to be screened before they are uploaded for personal information.

Mr. Willardson stated they used to use SomerStats in Somerset which involved the reporting of key metrics for each Department. Selectman Kontoes stated she loved that idea because things that surface should have metrics available. Mr. Willardson stated getting data is time-consuming. Selectman Kontoes stated the State has a great self-service reporting tool. Chairman Becker asked about the debt exclusions and tax rate information. He said each Department could also have a top 1 or 2 questions that are frequently asked on their webpage. Selectman Kontoes stated they needed to start simple and not go overboard.

Mr. Willardson stated the Town does have a Social media Policy for their employees. He stated they can't talk as a representative of the town. Chairman Becker stated he liked how Selectmen Jolda handled things when he was Chairman. He stated the Board members wouldn't comment and the Chairman only responded with facts when necessary. Mr. Willardson stated this policy was incorporated in the Personnel Policies.

Selectman Kontoes stated she put service oriented on the list. She stated it starts with the Board of Selectmen and the employees. She stated transparency and co-locating departments has helped get information out and has simplified the process. Mr. Willardson stated he has thought about putting a survey box in every department to get feedback. Chairman Becker stated this can be done electronically, with asking what we can do better. He stated a survey can be put out before the Department's update.

MASTER PLAN – STATUS REPORT & UPDATE FOR FUTURE: Mr. Willardson stated the town has done the vast majority of the list of items in the Master Plan. He stated the Master Plan was done in 2014 and is updated every ten years. He stated there are 16 pages of recommendations. He stated one of the major items that should be addressed is updating the Zoning By-laws. He stated even towns that are fully staffed hire consultants to do this, which is very costly. He stated the zoning isn't ideal but is working. Selectman Bourque stated the town is in good shape and the Master Plan process was very long and was very generic. Chairman Becker stated we did not have Ann Morgan at the time that this was produced. Selectman Kontoes stated the town should report on what it has accomplished. She stated the town should have a summarized sheet with things we have accomplished and the top ten focus areas. Selectman Gabor stated things have changed and things need to be reprioritized.

CONTROLS: Selectman Kontoes stated the 2017 Management Letter is the last one available online. She stated this should be updated if a more recent one has been released. Mr. Willardson stated everything in the Management Letter has been addressed.

Selectman Kontoes stated she would like additional information of what the Board of Selectmen approves. She stated she was concerned about blindly signing items she didn't have any backup information on. She stated as an example, Carol Cyr submits payroll warrants but is not signed off by anyone. She stated they should have a

recommendation and a certification amount attached to it. It was suggested a “Requester” line could be added to require a signature.

OVERALL INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING: Mr. Willardson stated the Board does have a five year Capital Improvement Plan in place. Chairman Becker stated there should be something available that shows the debt coming on and off. Mr. Willardson stated the town does have a Water Sewer Infrastructure timeline. Chairman Becker stated this needs a dedicated timeline because we need to know which water lines need to be replaced and the cost. Selectman Gabor stated the Water Sewer Commission is looking at the municipality should be charged for the water usage. This would allow more money for water improvements. Chairman Becker stated making the town pay for water is going to put an additional expense for departments. Selectman Gabor stated individual buildings are already metered. Mr. Willardson stated he will look at other communities and see how they address this issue. Chairman Becker stated this needs to be explored and they need to keep the options open. Selectman Bourque stated the two major things people complain about is taxes and water.

Selectman Gabor stated he would like to know what Capital Planning projects are coming up. He stated the bid process for these projects also needs to be more transparent. Mr. Willardson stated for large items they purchase off of the State Bid List. He stated they are following the laws for all bids.

Mr. Willardson stated he had the privilege to go to Hudson to see how they revitalized their Main Street. He stated a determined businessman was the driving force for turning things around in the community. Selectman Bourque stated they should establish a Downtown Business Alliance for Webster. He stated everyone should be involved from Friendly's to the railroad tracks. Chairman Becker stated this topic alone needs its own meeting. Chairman Becker stated he will call a meeting for this when everyone is available. Mr. Willardson stated representatives from Hudson will come to the meeting and share their story.

Selectman Bourque stated the Board passed a Selectmen Code of Conduct a couple of years ago that should be distributed to new members. He stated he is looking forward to working together to make things right. He stated having a cohesive Board will allow them to have a very successful year. Selectman Becker added they needed to respect each other and work together. Selectman Kontoes stated they also need to focus on promoting a professional business environment. Chairman Becker stated they all need to look at the point of view from the town resident's perspective and not an individual perspective.

CONSENT ITEMS:

Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Kontoes, to approve the meeting minutes of May 20, 2019. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURN: At 7.56 p.m.:

Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Gabor, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

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