**Meeting of the Board of Selectmen April 13, 2021**

**Phone: 669-224-3318**

**Access Code: 220-595-605**

**6:15 p.m. Executive Session**

Chairman Patricia Riley called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. in the Donald McKinnon Meeting Room at Veterans Memorial Town Hall, located at 558 South Main Street. In addition to Chairman Riley, Selectmen Joseph Pacheco and Richard Schiavo were in attendance, along with Town Administrator Graham Waters. Selectman Pacheco made a motion, seconded by Selectman Schiavo, to enter into Executive Session in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, Section 21, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel. On a roll call vote, Mr. Pacheco, Mr. Schiavo, and Ms. Riley each voted “I” to go into Executive Session.

**7:00 p.m. Regular Meeting – with Remote Public Access**

Chairman Riley called the open meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. in the Donald McKinnon Meeting Room at Town Hall. In addition to Chairman Riley, Selectmen Joseph Pacheco and Richard Schiavo were in attendance. Ms. Riley announced, “Pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L.C.30A, §18, and the Governor’s 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people who may gather in one place, this meeting of the Raynham Board of Selectmen is being conducted with the Public Body members in person at Veterans Memorial Town Hall and with the general public following the proceedings remotely. Every effort has been made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. For real time access, residents can join the live broadcast on the Raynham Channel, use the “gotomeeting” online feature, and/or call in using their phone. The Town will post a record of this meeting on the Town’s website as soon as we are able. Also in accordance with the Executive Order, other town officials and staff participating in the meeting and in attendance include: Town Administrator Graham Waters, Police Chief James Donovan, and Fire Chief Bryan LaCivita. This meeting is being recorded and, for the record, we are returning from Executive Session with nothing to report at this time.”

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Ms. Riley led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Acceptance of the Minutes**

Ms. Riley asked for a motion to approve, as printed, the minutes of the Selectmen’s meeting held on April 6, 2021. Mr. Pacheco made a motion to approve, Mr. Schiavo seconded, and Ms. Riley made it unanimous.

**Department Heads**

1. Police Chief Jim Donovan – Monthly Report

Chief Donovan said the department logged 1,671 calls for service, 487 calls came in via 911, and 42 people were booked. He also updated the Board on the situation that he previously reported with hotel bookings and noted that mitigation efforts seemed to have some effect as the month progressed and the groups paying for the rentals have now moved on as have the individuals involved. He also commented on the letter the Board received regarding the officers who responded to a resident in distress when her dog was attacked by a coyote, and he praised the officers for their compassionate response. Ms. Riley asked the Chief to provide the names of the officers to Mr. Waters, so that the Board could send them a letter acknowledging their efforts. The Board thanked Chief Donovan and the members of his department for their service.

1. Fire Chief Bryan LaCivita – Monthly Report

Chief LaCivita reported that his department responded to 94 calls for fire incidents including fires, motor vehicle accident investigations, and public assists in March, 179 ambulance calls for medical emergencies, motor vehicle accidents, and public assists, and 110 miscellaneous calls for inspections, fire alarm work, and other items of note. He also reported on unforeseen overtime due to those firefighters out on injury and/or sick leave. He added, “We are up to 740 calls for the year and that is up by 26 compared to last year at this time. We continue to help Matt Tanis with the homebound vaccinations. The department was also able to get a grant through the Governor’s Office for $10,900, and we will be using that to purchase an air dryer machine.” He explained that when returning from an incident, the firefighters need a complete change of uniform. Those uniforms are very heavy and take a long time to dry, so that purchase will be a great help. The Board congratulated Chief LaCivita on the grant and thanked him and his department for their service.

1. Veterans Service Officer Micaila Britto called in to discuss the COVID vaccine clinic that was held on Saturday at American Legion Post 405 on Mill Street for veterans and their family members and caregivers. She reported that the event was a success and 105 veterans, spouses and caregivers were vaccinated. The Board thanked Ms. Britto for her efforts and American Legion Post 405 for hosting the event.
2. Town Clerk Marsha Silva called in to join the meeting and give an update on the Annual Town Election on Saturday, April 24th. She said the pools will be open from 10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. at the Raynham Middle School. Early voting and absentee ballots will be available, and the last date to apply is April 20th at 4:30 p.m. There is a sign in front of the Police Department to remind everyone. Anyone who wants an absentee ballot can call the office at 508-824-2700 to get an application or apply online through the Town’s website. Ms. Silvia explained, “For an absentee ballot, you will need to state a reason why you will not be able to vote on election day.” The Board thanked Ms. Silva for the information and for her efforts..

**Completion of Old/Continuing Business**

1. **Discussion and Action: Closing the May 17th Special Town Meeting Warrant**

Mr. Waters reported, “The Finance Committee met and made recommendations on all the capital items and the Warrant needs to be closed. There are no major changes. Just a couple of small grammatical changes were made since last week. Once the Warrant is closed, it will be sent to the printer and then sent out to residents.” Ms. Riley noted that the cover will include the names of both the Finance Committee members and the Capital Planning Committee members this time because the Capital Planning Committee’s recommendations for capital items are included as well as the Annual Town Meeting articles. Mr. Pacheco made a motion to close the Warrant, Mr. Schiavo seconded, and Ms. Riley made it unanimous.

1. **Discussion and Action: Location of Animal Control Facility**

Ms. Riley said, “I believe we voted for the location of the Animal Control Facility last week.” Mr. Schiavo said, “I think it’s just helpful to confirm that we did approve the location last week. Ms. Riley pointed out, “We are just waiting for Town Counsel’s opinion and justification that it is allowed.” She noted that a letter was received from Park and Recreation Director Tim McRae concerning use of the Gymkhana Building.

1. **Discussion and Action: Finance Director-Town Accountant**

Ms. Riley said, “We are still deliberating on this.” Mr. Pacheco made a motion to table the matter, Mr. Schiavo seconded, and Ms. Riley made it unanimous.

**New Business**

1. **Public Safety Building Committee Promotional Video**

Building Commissioner Robert Iafrate, who chairs the Public Safety Building Committee, called in to join the meeting. He explained, “The videos are ready and are on the Town’s website and social media. If you have any questions, I can answer them or direct you to someone who can answer them. The video shows where the deficiencies are and where the current standards lie, and it shows renderings and floor plans of the new facility that’s proposed. At the end there are conversations with the Police and Fire Chiefs.” The Board viewed the portion of the promotional video involving the discussions with the Chiefs. Chief Donovan and Chief LaCivita then discussed the deficiencies with the current facility and the difficulties their departments face as a result.

1. **Discussion and Action: Town Financial Policies**

Mr. Waters said, “The Assessors, the Town Accountant, the Treasurer/Collector and I have discussed the policies that we’re putting forth tonight and that were recommended to the Town by the DLS report. We also put the policies before the Finance Committee for discussion, and, after their recommendations, we have brought them here. I believe the Treasurer/Collector is on the line if there are any questions.” Mr. Waters explained, “The first policy is to promote structurally balanced budgets by ensuring that operational expenses are supported by recurring revenue sources. This policy sets guidelines for the use of one-time revenues. It is fiscally prudent to avoid using any one-time revenue source to finance any ongoing operations since that funding source cannot be expected to reoccur. Doing this without identifying future available offsets effectively postpones difficult decisions necessary to achieve structurally sound and sustainable spending plans.”

Mr. Waters further explained that the second proposed policy was recommended by staff, by DLS, and by the Finance Committee. He stated, “This policy before the Board is the Financial Policy and the purpose is to help the Town stabilize finances and maintain operations during slow economic periods. This policy establishes prudent practices for appropriating and expending reserve funds. With well-planned sustainability, the Town can use its reserves to finance emergencies and other unforeseen needs or hold money for specific future purposes or, in limited instances, to serve as revenue sources for the annual budget. Reserve balances and policies can also positively impact the Town’s credit rating and consequently its long-term borrowing costs. This policy addresses financial reserves, free cash, stabilization fund, retained earnings and overlay surplus.”

Mr. Pacheco said, “These policies have been in place as long as I have been in town government. I think it’s just a matter of formalizing them. I have no issue and I motion to approve.” Mr. Schiavo seconded and Ms. Riley made it unanimous.

**Town Administrator’s Report**

Mr. Waters reviewed his report. He stated, “Once the Board closes the Special Town Meeting Warrant, the Warrants will be sent to the printer for printing and distribution to the residents. The goal is to get them delivered to homes the week before the Town Meeting.”

Mr. Waters also reported on the matter brought up at the Selectmen’s previous meeting regarding residents’ reports of gun shots in the vicinity of Oak Street. He explained, “I checked with the Building/Planning Department and the 85-acre property was purchased by the Taunton Gun Club and is zoned residential. Commissioner Iafrate conferred with Lt. David LaPlante in the Police Department and reported back the following: It is both our understanding that gun usage is allowed on private property if there is at least a 500’ separation to any occupied structure. In the case of the Oak Street cranberry farm, it is my understanding that the new owners are the members of the Taunton Gun Club. If the club owners all have a share in the ownership of this large parcel, then they would have the right to individually fire their guns on that property in a safe and controlled manner.”

On another matter also raised at the previous meeting, Mr. Waters reported that he contacted the Police Chief regarding reports of speeding along South Main Street and a speed monitoring sign has now been placed on the street in accordance with the Selectmen’s request.

Regarding upcoming business, Mr. Waters reported, “The Selectmen’s next regularly-scheduled meeting will be on Tuesday, April 20, 2021, at 7:00 PM, in the Don McKinnon Meeting Room of Town Hall. The public will be able to participate via the GoToMeeting platform or by watching the RayCAM channel on Verizon, Comcast, or a recording posted later on YouTube. The Annual Town Meeting: will be held on Monday, May 17th with the Special Town Meeting starting at 6:00 p.m. and the Annual Town Meeting starting at 7:00 p.m.”

**Selectmen’s Report**

Mr. Pacheco said, “I want to remind high school seniors of the scholarship opportunities out there. The TACC will be awarding two $1,000 scholarships and both B-R and B-P students will have to meet eligibility requirements.” Ms. Riley added that the Raynham Association of Volunteers for Education and the Raynham Lions Club also offer scholarships to graduating high school seniors.

Ms. Riley reported, “Last night we held Candidates Night on the Raynham Channel for the candidates for the Raynham seats on the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School Committee and tomorrow night we will have Candidates Night for the candidates for the Bridgewater seats on the Committee.”

Mr. Schiavo said, “On the residents’ complaints on Oak Street, I think we need to dig a little deeper as we are responsible to our residents. This is a residential zone, and we need to know if those people have a share of ownership because if they don’t, I question whether or not this is a conflict with the zoning that exists there. I would ask that we confirm that those people taking advantage of that property with firearms are, in fact, residents because if they are not, it’s beginning to sound a little commercial to me.” Ms. Riley asked, “Do you want to refer this to Town Counsel?” Mr. Schiavo replied, “Absolutely.” Mr. Pacheco made that motion, Mr. Schiavo seconded and Ms. Riley made it unanimous.

**Correspondence**

1. **Raynham Lions Club – One Day Beer & Wine – Clam Boil**

Mr. Pacheco made a motion to approve, Mr. Schiavo seconded, and Ms. Riley made it unanimous.

1. **National Grid – Tree Pruning**

Ms. Riley explained, “We have notice that National Grid will be doing tree pruning within our community, so if you are an abutter, you will receive a notice.”

**Performance of Administrative Duties**

Mr. Pacheco motioned to approve the Town of Raynham Payroll and Invoice Warrants dated April 13, 2021, as submitted. Mr. Schiavo seconded and Ms. Riley made it unanimous.

Mr. Schiavo then made a motion to approve the Police Department Payroll and Invoice Warrants dated April 13, 2021, as submitted. Ms. Riley seconded the motion and Mr. Pacheco abstained. Ms. Riley asked for a roll call vote: Mr. Schiavo said, “I”, Mr. Pacheco abstained, and Ms. Riley said, “I”, and it was so voted.

**Adjournment**

At 7:39 p.m**.,** Mr. Pacheco made the motion to adjourn the meeting, sign the bills and warrants, with no additional business to be conducted. Mr. Schiavo seconded the motion and Ms. Riley made it unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Janet Murphy, Recording Secretary