

 **Raynham Board of Selectmen**

 **Raynham, Massachusetts**

 **Regular Meeting and**

 **Executive Session**

 **March 14, 2023 @ 6:15 p.m.**

 **Donald L McKinnon Meeting Room**

**Members Present: Town Administrator:**

Mr. Richard Schiavo – Chairman Mr. Gregory Barnes

Ms. Patricia Riley– Vice Chair **Staff:**

Mr. Joseph Pacheco - Clerk Ms. Dawn Caradonna, Recording Secretary

**Called to Order:**

Mr. Schiavo called the Board of Selectmen’s meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. and asked for a motion to enter

into Executive Session. Mr. Pacheco made that motion, and Ms. Riley seconded it for the following stated reasons:

1. (M.G.L.Ch. 30A, Section 21(a) (2)) To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel: Non-Union Employees
2. (M.G.L.Ch. 30A, Section 21(a) (3)) 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: OPEIU Open Position

 **On a Roll Call Vote:** Ms. Riley - Aye; Mr. Pacheco - Aye; Mr. Schiavo - Aye. Vote: 3-0-0

 6:57 p.m. – The Board returned to Open Session, and Mr. Schiavo asked for a motion to recess the meeting.

 **Motion:** Moved by Mr. Pacheco and seconded by Ms. Riley to recess the meeting. Vote: 3-0-0

7:00 p.m. – Mr. Schiavo reconvened the Board of Selectmen’s meeting and informed the public that the Board is returning from an Executive Session with nothing to report at this time. The meeting is being both

broadcasted live on Comcast Channel 98 and Verizon Channel 34 and recorded by RayCAM.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Pacheco and seconded by Ms. Riley to reconvene the Board of Selectmen’s meeting. Vote: 3-0-0

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Schiavo led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Acceptance of Minutes – March 7, 2023**

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Pacheco and seconded by Ms. Riley to accept the Board of Selectmen’s meeting minutes of March 7, 2023, as printed. Discussion: None. Vote: 3-0-0

**Department Head Reports**

 Bryan LaCivita, Fire Chief-monthly report

Chief LaCivita reported that the total unforeseen overtime expenditures for firefighter coverage for the current fiscal year now stands at $169,875.08. The February activity report included: Fire incidents-124 calls; Ambulance–195 calls; and Inspectional Services–64 calls. The number of incidents for calendar year 2023, as of February 28th, is 598, which is the same number of incidents the Department responded to for the same time period last year.

The Fire Chief thanked Police Chief James Donovan and his officers for assisting at the house fire last week on Hall Street. He also thanked all other departments who responded to provide mutual aide. Chief LaCivita

 said the Raynham Firefighters were able to hold the fire from spreading until additional help arrived. The

 Chief said he was grateful for all their efforts.

 Ms. Riley thanked the Chief and his Department for all that they do.

 Jim Donovan, Police Chief-monthly report

During the month of February, there was a total of 1,578 calls for service, with 406 of them received through 911, and there were 25 bookings.

During the month, the Police Department conducted the annual alcohol compliance checks or “Sting Operations”, where the Department sends under-age individuals into establishments attempting to purchase alcohol. The Chief was happy to report that there were no failures. All establishments checked ID’s.

Ms. Riley asked the Chief to remind his officers to keep a watch on Gushee Pond. Since she last spoke to the Chief, a full-size sofa and chairs have been dumped at the pond. She noted that obviously, it is not just young kids trashing the area. Ms. Riley said an Earth Day Clean Up project is being planned, but a little enforcement before the event would be appreciated. Chief Donovan replied that Sergeant Frank Pacheco and his K-9 have been doing just that.

**Public Hearing**

No public hearing was scheduled.

**Completion Old/Continuing Business**

There was no discussion.

**New Business**

 *Recognition Plaques*

 Mr. Schiavo read and presented a plaque to Chief Donovan for the many years of service and devotion to

 duty of Bear, the Raynham K-9 handled by the Chief. Bear, who had retired and was living with the Chief’s family, recently passed away.

Mr. Schiavo then read and presented a plaque to Sgt. Pacheco to recognize Kyro, the Raynham K-9 handled by Sergeant Pacheco. Kyro was deployed over 300 times and supported SE Massachusetts Law Enforcement Council and Search and Rescue Team for several years. Kyro was also retired and living with Sgt. Pacheco’s family, when he passed away last year,

Mr. Schiavo thanked both Deb Dooney, Selectmen’s Executive Assistant, and Heather Correia, Raynham Police Department Executive Assistant, for their help with the plaques.

Chief Donovan commented on all of the K-9 Officers the Department has had including retired Chief Lou Pacheco, who was in attendance and who started the program in 1978. Chief Donovan said Raynham is committed to K-9 officers and the dogs who partner with them. He said the K-9’s are excellent trackers, and they save lives. He commented that the dogs go beyond being a member of the team, they become a part of the K-9 officer’s family.

 *Tag Day Request-Mass Rough Riders*

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Pacheco and seconded by Ms. Riley to approve the Tag Day for Mass Rough Riders on April 23, 2023. Discussion: None. Vote: 3-0-0

 *Approval of Letter of Intent for Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program*

Mr. Barnes informed that there is a grant available that provides construction funds for libraries. For the Town to be considered for the program, a Letter of Intent is required from the Board, and April 28, 2023 is the submittal deadline for the letter.

Present was Karen O’Brien, Library Director. She informed that she is present with the full support of the Library’s Board of Trustees and Library staff to apply for the grant for a new library building. Ms. O’Brien

understands well the burdens with the Town, but the Library has a very unique opportunity to have a new building constructed and the grant would cover approximately half of the cost. The grant is state-funded by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). This is a one grant, one application process, and the grants are administered in two phases within a five-year process. Planning and design is four years with one year for construction. The last time the grant was offered was in 2017, and moving forward, MBLC would like to offer grants every four years, but if the Town chooses not to apply for this grant, there is no guarantee there will be one available in four years. The grant funds will cover the cost of the building, but not the cost of landscaping, paving or moving of the collection. Additional library staff and maintenance for the building will also need to be considered. The grant does allow for a shared building, and ideally, the library could be attached to the Senior Center. There would be room for the Veteran’s Office and Parks Department to be in a shared building. There is an option for a stand-alone building too, but she said they would prefer to be attached to the Senior Center. She asked for the Town’s approval to submit the letter of intent, which does not obligate the Town financially. During the first step, a Feasibility Study would be conducted at a cost of approximately $150,000. MLBC is committed to 50% of the cost and the Board of Trustees have already committed to $50,000-$60,000 for the remaining funds needed. Once the study is complete, it would be followed by a Town Meeting vote to move forward with a new building.

Ms. Riley said she would love to support the project. She would love to see a new library and the idea of connecting it to the Senior Center is wonderful. There is definitely a need, but she would have a really hard time supporting the project at this time for financial reasons. She explained, “There are two large projects that the Town is committed to at this point, the Town’s Public Safety Building and the Town’s $39M commitment for a new Bristol-Plymouth Regional High School, and we don’t even know where we’re going to get the funding for that yet.” She pointed out that the Town has gone to the voters three times in the last year for debt exclusion votes and they have all failed: one for the Bristol-Plymouth project and just recently for the Senior Center addition and the King’s Pond dam and bridge project.

Mr. Pacheco echoed the comments by Ms. Riley and informed that he, too, served on the Library Board of Trustees. He said, “As Ms. Riley said there has been three debt exclusions in the past year that failed. It is unfortunate, but to move forward with a project that I don’t see getting a two-third’s vote at Town Meeting and spending Town resources on design is something I cannot support.” Mr. Pacheco also commented that the Town’s financial obligations could result in layoffs if adjustments are not made. He added, “I would rather take care of personnel than taking on a new debt right now.”

Mr. Schiavo questioned the actions of MBLC if the Town submits a letter of interest, is awarded the grant, but cannot come up with its share of the funding within the current grant cycle. He asked if submitting a letter and going through the process now would put the Town in a better position for the next grant cycle if the Town either does not receive the grant funding during this cycle or receives the grant award but cannot meet the financial obligations. He asked if taking that action would result in the MBLC looking more favorably on future funding for the Town.

Ms. O’Brien informed that there have been libraries trying for many years. She said, “It may simply put us in a better position if we apply now.”

Mr. Pacheco said, “Before going to Town meeting, schematics would be needed along with cost estimates. This means that we will be spending money.”

Ms. O’Brien concurred with that, and she stated that the financial obligation being referenced is the financial obligation that the Trustees have agreed to take on.

Mr. Pacheco discussed the situation whereby the Library has been taken over by the Town and its assets were transferred to the Town. He said that, accordingly the Board of Selectmen would need to vote to expend any of those funds.

Ms. O’Brien informed that the former Library Board of Trustees is still in control of over $100,000 in cash that has not been turned over to the Town yet.

Mr. Pacheco suggested the Town Administrator look into the assets of the Library for clarification.

Present was Board of Trustees President Dr. Leigh Kozak. Dr. Kozak informed that if there was a final transfer, then this would have been all decided on, but that has not taken place.

Mr. Barnes informed that the funds from the Library would go into a special Revenue Fund specifically for library purposes.

**Motion:** Moved by Ms. Riley to table discussion until the next Board of Selectmen’s meeting on March 21, 2023. Mr. Schiavo asked the Board to take the time during the week to seriously consider approving the letter of intent. He said it will cost the Town nothing. Mr. Barnes commented on the Town of Dartmouth and the process of applying for the grant along with the length of time it took them to finally receive funding. He feels that Dartmouth’s consistency in applying may have played a role in giving them higher consideration. Mr. Pacheco seconded the motion to table. Vote: 3-0-0

**Town Administrator’s Report**

*Mr. Gregory Barnes*

Grant Update

The Town submitted an Action Plan for the MHP Grant, which is a technical assistance grant. The grant is through the MassHousing Partnership and will look at zoning to see if the Town is in compliance with the MBTA Act.

The Town is working with SRPEDD on a grant for Rt. 138 zoning. A letter of interest was submitted to the State. The Grant would give recommendations as to what could be done in terms of a by-law along with the Town’s Master Plan.

A letter of interest is being submitted to the State for a Brown Field Grant, which would involve potential businesses on Rt. 138.

Mr. Barnes has been working with the Economic Development Commission on a GTI Grant in conjunction with the MassWorks Infrastructure Program for possible help with upgrading the infrastructure on Paramount Drive. The funds would allow certain businesses to repurpose and others to perhaps expand.

Paperwork has been submitted for the King’s Dam/Pond project regarding possible funding through an earmark from the Federal Government. The estimate would be approximately $2M that would be received from the Federal Government.

**Selectmen’s Report**

*Ms. Riley*

Ms. Riley attended the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School Committee’s public hearing last week on their presentation of the proposed budget for the next fiscal year. The School Committee is looking for an overall $9M increase in their budget, and that is an 8.59% increase requested from the Townn of Raynham and a 9% increase from the Town of Bridgewater. When combining the operating budget, the capital requests, and the debt, that is a total request of $23,720,000 from the Town of Raynham, which is almost half of the Town’s entire budget. Ms, Riley said she believes the Committee realizes the Town cannot possibly fund that amount. She exoplained, “The Town has commitments that we don’t have the funds to pay for as it is. We really need to be tight on the budget. Budgets coming in at a 9% or 10% increase are not doable.”

Upcoming special events at the Senior Center include local musician Mike Higgins on Wednesday, March 22, at 2:30 p.m. and “Knock on Wood”, an acoustic folk-rock duo, on Wednesday, March 29, at 1:00 p.m.

The Raynham Channel is planning a Candidates’ Night for Thursday, April 13th,. It will be broadcast live from Town Hall. Town Moderator John Donohue will host the forum for the candidates for Selectman, and Ms. Riley will host the forum for the candidates for Park & Recreation Commission and Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School Committee.

Mr. Barnes informed that he, along with the Finance Director, has been meeting with the administration at the Bridgewater-Raynham School District and jointly with their counterparts in Bridgewater. He has made it very clear that a 9% increase is not a realistic number for the Town. The Town does not have resources to fund a 9% increase or possibly even a 5% increase.

*Mr. Pacheco*

Mr. Pacheco echoed Ms. Riley’s comments regarding the Bridgewater-Raynham budget.

As a follow-up to their earlier conversation, WIN Waste Innovations contacted Mr. Pacheco regarding customer feedback. He said he has received a lot less complaints. They also reminded him that they offer veteran and senior discounts at 10% to residents. Unfortunately, only six residents have taken advantage of the discount. If residents continue with WIN Waste and are eligible for either discount, Mr. Pacheco encouraged them to contact the company so that they can take advantage of the discount.

*Mr. Schiavo*

Mr. Schiavo urged the board to reconsider the vote taken last week on posting for a second part-time Animal Control Officer. He said it seems inappropriate to rush the posting for a part-time position without the benefit of waiting for the new Health Director. He pointed out that the Health Director is responsible for all ACO activities and should be a key part of the decision for staffing and managing animal control in Raynham.

Ms. Riley said that the new Health Director will serve on the Animal Control/Animal Shelter Study Committee and her input will be valuable. The Committee will be bringing back recommendations to the Board. She also pointed out that posting the position does not necessarily mean you have to fill the position.

Mr. Schiavo said the Board should hold back on the posting and actively involve the Health Director.

Mr. Pacheco informed that the motion last week was for a temporary part-time position, not permanent. The Town’s Interim Health Director suggested the posting for coverage because it will take time for the process to play out. He said, “This serves as a place holder for the Health Department while we work through the process Ms. Riley spoke about with the Study Committee.”

Mr. Schiavo disagreed because he said it sets in play a decision. He commented on the length of time it took last time to find a full time Animal Control Officer. He asked to table until the Health Director comes on board.

Mr. Pacheco will not move to dismiss his motion from last week.

Ms. Riley had no comment. When Mr. Schaivo asked what that means, she pointed out again that the key players serve on the Animal Control/Animal Shelter Study Committee and they will be working toward recommendations to the Board. Responding to the comment that no one will apply for the part-time position anyway, she replied, “There could be someone out there who could help the Town on a temporary basis until

a final decision is made.” She explained that the Study Committee’s charge, as voted on, is to make recommendations regarding Animal Control issues and Animal Shelter issues.

**Correspondence**

 *Letter of Resignation – Riley Menconi, Board of Registrars*

Mr. Schiavo read the Letter of Resignation from Mr. Menconi as a member of the Board of Registrars. Mr. Menconi stated that he is resigning due to a conflict with his current position on the Raynham Town Committtee.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Pacheco and seconded by Ms. Riley to accept with regret the Letter of Resignation from Riley Menconi, who is resigning his position on the Board of Registrars. Discussion: None. Vote: 3-0-0

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Pacheco and seconded by Ms. Riley to post for seven days the vacancy on the Board of Registrars. Discussion: None. Vote: 3-0-0

 *American Mobile Homes –Temporary Mobile Homes for 102 Finch Road and 295 Hall Street*

Mr. Schiavo read the requests from American Mobile Homes.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Pacheco and seconded by Ms. Riley to approve a temporary mobile home for

102 Finch Road and 295 Hall Street. Discussion: None. Vote: 3-0-0

***Performance of Administrative Duties***

Mr. Schiavo asked for a motion to approve the Town of Raynham Invoice and Payroll Warrants.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Pacheco and seconded by Ms. Riley to approve the Town of Raynham Invoice and Payroll Warrants dated March 14, 2023. Discussion: None. Vote: 3-0-0

Mr. Schiavo asked for a motion to approve the Town of Raynham Police Invoice and Payroll Warrants.

**Motion:** Moved by Ms. Riley and seconded by Mr. Schiavo to approve the Town of Raynham Police Invoice and Payroll Warrants dated March 14, 2023. Discussion: None.

**On a Roll Call Vote:** Ms. Riley – Aye; Mr. Schiavo – Aye; Mr. Pacheco – Abstain. Vote: 2-0-1

Mr. Schiavo asked for a motion to adjourn.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Pacheco and seconded by Ms. Riley to adjourn the Board of Selectmen’s regular meeting of March 14, 2023, at 7:45 p.m. with no additional business to be conducted. Vote: 3-0-0

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Dawn Caradonna*

*Recording Secretary*

 List of Meeting Documents:

         • Minutes – March 7, 2023

 • Recognition Plaques

 • Tag Day Request – Mass Rough Riders

 • Letter of Intent for Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program

 • Letter of Resignation from Riley Menconi, Board of Registrars

 • American Mobile Homes –Temporary Mobile Homes for 102 Finch Road and 295 Hall Street

 • March 14, 2023, Town of Raynham Invoice and Payroll Warrants

         • March 14, 2023, Town of Raynham Police Invoice and Payroll Warrants