

**SELECTBOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY, FEB. 19, 2019  
MEETING MINUTES  
SELECTBOARD MEETING ROOM – 7 P.M.**

*Present were Vice Chair Andrea Miles, Clerk Jeff Cyr, member Sarah Etelman, member Bruce Forcier, and Town Administrator Michael J. Sullivan. Chair Ira Brezinsky was absent.*

**CALL TO ORDER**

Miles called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

**MINUTES**

Forcier motioned to approve the minutes of the Feb. 5, 2019 meeting. Cyr seconded. All in favor.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Forcier noted the Bike Walk Committee is holding a maple syrup trek on Feb. 24 at 355 Main St.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Forcier motioned to approve the consent agenda, which included a request for a one-day all alcohol license for the Leprechaun plunge on March 10 and a request for a one-day beer and wine license for the Friends of Gaylord Library on March 1. Etelman seconded. All in favor.

**TOWN MEETING SCHEDULE**

Sullivan highlighted the schedule for the upcoming annual and special town meetings.

March 8 is the deadline for citizen petitions for the Annual Town Meeting. These petitions require 10 signatures of registered voters.

April 2 is the deadline for letting the town administrator know if a department or board is considering an article.

April 10 is the deadline for citizen petitions for the Special Town Meeting. These require 100 signatures of registered voters.

April 16 is the date the warrant will close.

May 1 will be the town administrator's public review of the articles, held in the town hall auditorium at 6 p.m.

May 8 is the date for both the annual and special town meetings, held at 6 p.m. in the town hall auditorium.

Citizen petition signature forms must be submitted to the town clerk's office for certification of registered voters.

**MOSIER SCHOOL STATEMENT OF INTEREST**

The Massachusetts School Building Authority did not select the 2018 Statement of Interest that was submitted by the School Committee for consideration of a renovation/building project for Mosier Elementary School. In order to be considered for the next cycle, the School Committee is asking the Selectboard to submit the same request to the MSBA. The Selectboard agreed to proceed with a Statement of Interest for 2019.

## **BOARD OF HEALTH PETITION**

Forcier motioned to accept a citizen petition certified by the town clerk requesting to add an article to the May Annual Town Meeting warrant about expanding the Board of Health from three elected members to five with three-year staggered terms. Etelman seconded. All in favor.

## **RESIGNATION**

Forcier motioned to accept the resignation of Bob Berwick from the Sustainability and Energy Commission with thanks for his hard work. Etelman seconded. All in favor.

## **FY2020 BUDGET UPDATE**

Sullivan said reductions have been made to the budget. He said the town estimated the increase in health care costs was going to be between \$350,000-\$400,000. This has since been reduced given the acceptance of Chapters 21 and 22. Sullivan said The Hampshire County Health Insurance Trust announced there will be a zero percent increase in premiums for next year, saving money for the town and employees.

Sullivan also highlighted a change in the DPW budget design which will allow TOSH to have greater flexibility. The change doesn't take funds away from the department but does allow for a better ability to pay employees out of the proper accounts.

He also noted a substantial increase in retirement costs – 13 percent – largely due to additional staff and increases in salaries.

## **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Cyr applauded the Bylaw Review Committee for taking on the sign issue. Sullivan said TOSH needs to consider what is enforceable relating to signs. The most effective bylaws are those that stay within the guidelines.

Sullivan reminded residents that in relation to Comcast the town cannot negotiate content, the price charged to customers, or anything to do with phone or internet service. What the FCC says the town can negotiate is the length of the Comcast contract and the surcharge. Sullivan said an important factor to understand is the town has to offer the same agreement to any other provider that wants to come into South Hadley. Additionally, he said in communities that didn't renew or agree to any plan the FCC has said the community needs to buy the residual plan and all infrastructure from Comcast.

Most recently, the town negotiated a 10-year contract with Comcast in which the town will receive \$300,000 over 10 years as a commitment to improve public television and access to public television.

For the full town administrator's report, please see the Feb. 19, 2019 Selectboard packet.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

While still in open session, Etelman motioned to move to executive session under MGL Ch 39 subsection 23b for the purposes of discussing bargaining and to discuss pending legal settlements. Forcier seconded.

**Members voted affirmatively by roll call vote as follows:**

**SB Member Forcier**                      **Aye**

**SB Member Etelman**                      **Aye**

**Vice Chair Miles**                      **Aye**

**Clerk Cyr**                      **Aye**

Miles said the board will not return to open session. The meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED**  
**Kristin Maher**  
**Executive Assistant to Administration**