

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES – Final
Public Health Emergency Response Update Virtual Meeting
Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order
Suspending Certain Provisions of
Open Meeting Law.
Zoom Meeting ID# 918 3237 5325
Monday January 11, 2021
6:30 P.M.**

PARTICIPANTS: James Craig, Selectmen Chair
(Virtually) Jennifer Glass, Selectman
Jonathan Dwyer, Selectman
Tim Higgins – Town Administrator
Peggy Elder – Administrative Assistant

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS:

- Mr. Craig opened the meeting at 6:30 pm and noted that this meeting is being held remotely in a way that is consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020 in order to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 virus. The order suspends the requirement to hold meetings in a publicly accessible physical location and it allows bodies to meet entirely remotely so long as there is reasonable public access. Mr. Craig noted that this evening a public comment portion has been built into the meeting that will take place after they have gone through the discussion items on the agenda. He respectfully asked that the public participants keep their video and microphones off until that time. Mr. Craig reported that in addition to Zoom, this meeting is being broadcast on Comcast channel 8, Verizon channel 33, and is available through the Town website at www.lincolntown.org. He noted that this meeting is being recorded and that attendees are participating via video conference.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Ms. Glass noted the unprecedented events of the past week at the US Capital and said she was grateful to be in a Town where people can talk to one another rather than shout.

APPOINTMENTS:

- ZBA Candidates – John Dorr joined the meeting. He is interested in filling one of two vacancies. He has attended a ZBA meeting, has relevant skills and a high degree of interest. David Henken (ZBA Chair) shared his thoughts on Mr. Dorr. The Board asked Mr. Dorr questions concerning his background and interest in joining the ZBA.
- Conservation Director Appointment – Mr. Craig welcomed Michele Grzenda to the meeting. He asked Mr. Higgins to give an overview of the search process.

Mr. Higgins reported that the search committee was comprised of three members of the Conservation Commission and Assistant Town Administrator Dan Pereira. The committee did

the initial screening of resumes and conducted first round interviews. Ms. Grzenda and two other candidates were invited for a second round during which they spent several hours in Lincoln meeting separately with Mr. Higgins, Paula Vaughn McKenzie (Director of Planning & Land Use), Geoff McGean (Rural Land Foundation), and Conservation Department staff. Again, Ms. Grzenda emerged as the unanimous preferred candidate. Mr. Pereira was primarily responsible for checking references. He spoke with Michele's previous Town Manager in Weston, a Weston board member and a member of the Sudbury Valley Trustees, all of whom confirmed Michele's personal and professional suitability for the job. Several members of Lincoln's Conservation Commission, along with Tom Gumbart and Geoff McGean, worked with Ms. Grzenda on the previously mentioned Open Space & Recreation Plans – all are confident that she will be a terrific fit. Mr. Higgins reported that the work of the search committee resulted in a unanimous decision to recommend Ms. Grzenda. He noted that both he and the committee are truly excited to be able to recommend her for appointment as our next Conservation Director. Ms. Grzenda, who currently serves as Weston's Director, is a highly experienced Conservation professional with a demonstrated track record. She understands wetlands laws and regulations and has been effective in providing public education and enforcement. She has experience supporting agriculture and farming and has managed farm leases. She understands the importance of acknowledging competing demands on public land and is skilled at helping boards and committees work through the inherent tradeoffs. Mr. Higgins reported that he spent some time with Ms. Grzenda in a one-on-one interview and was particularly impressed with the thought she has given to the future of conservation and land stewardship, and how land use decisions can be grounded in thinking about climate and resiliency. There is every indication that Ms. Grzenda also has the right temperament for the job. He asked her how she responds in circumstances where there are strong differing opinions about land use policy. She responded that her role is to help create a comfortable environment for informed debate. She stated that she works hard at listening and respecting viewpoints. She tries to make sure that decision makers understand the law and best practices so that they can use their judgment and knowledge of the community to make the best decisions. Of additional benefit, Ms. Grzenda was previously a Lincoln resident and member of the volunteer committee that was organized to develop the 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan; she also worked on the update in 2017. All involved in the search believe Ms. Grzenda will be effective working with the boards, staff and the public. Mr. Dwyer made a motion to appoint Michele Grzenda to the position of Conservation Director. Ms. Glass seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously with a roll call vote: Craig: Aye; Dwyer: Aye; Glass: Aye.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

- Acknowledging Town Staff – Mr. Higgins took a moment to acknowledge the excellent work that the Town Staff has done during 2020. During the COVID pandemic, whether they were deemed essential or non-essential, full or part time, staff worked creatively and collaboratively which he so appreciated. There was outstanding support from staff and they demonstrated their dedication by working evenings and weekends if necessary. They made special efforts to ensure that the Town's most vulnerable residents were cared for. Whether working remotely,

in the office, or a hybrid of both, Mr. Higgins noted that during this past year he received no complaints that staff was unavailable or unwilling to help. He added that it is a testament to the type of people we have working for the Town and he felt it was appropriate on behalf of the Board of Selectmen and himself to acknowledge it. The Board agreed and members added their thanks to Town staff for their dedication throughout the pandemic.

- Town Meeting Milestone Changes - Mr. Higgins reported that with the change in Town Meeting to Saturday, May 15th, all of the milestone dates have been changed accordingly and are now pushed out 6 weeks. This will help the Board in the writing of the Annual Report. The new deadline is on March 15th.
- Town Offices Closing – Mr. Higgins reported that the Public Health Team has been closely monitoring the conditions and trends of COVID infections. There are public health officials in that group who are very helpful when assessing our staffing model. They believe that it is appropriate at this time to add further restrictions to Town services. Mr. Higgins added that the Town has flexed its model over time, noting that in March Town Office employees were 100% remote, in June with the relaxation of the rules from the Governor they were back in the office, and in September they went to a hybrid model where with alternating staff cohorts. Effective today, Mr. Higgins has decided to go back to the 100% remote model. The only thing changing is that the building will be closed to the public again except by appointment. Essentially, they are going back to the staffing model used in March in response to the trends and data that they are seeing. The number of cases and hospitalizations statewide is skyrocketing again. Lincoln has not been immune from this and the number of cases in town have really gone up recently. He added that there have been some near misses in a number of departments, and it was a reminder that all it takes is one illness and a bunch of close contacts and it would be difficult for the Town Offices to operate. Much thought was given to this move. Town Office staff will still be available to the public through online services and by appointment when needed. Mr. Higgins noted that there have been limited numbers of residents visiting the building. Mr. Craig asked how often he be reassessing the situation. Mr. Higgins said that with the surge after the holidays and college students returning home, public health officials are not expecting the numbers to recede in the coming weeks, but rather the opposite. Mr. Higgins stated that he will continue to check with local and state public health officials and if things improve, they will reassess the model. If March 2020 is any indication, the public should not be inconvenienced in any way. Notices and contact lists have been sent out, but if anyone has any difficulty contacting a department, they should feel free to contact our office and speak with a member of the Select Board, Mr. Higgins, or Peggy Elder for assistance.
- FY 22 Proposed Budget – Mr. Higgins reported that he presented the initial draft of the budget to the Finance Committee on December 9th. It was understood by all that this was the Town's preliminary budget and that BOS had not yet had the opportunity to review. A bulleted summary of the key elements of the Base Budget and our preferred budget is summarized here:
 - Base:
 - Complies with the FinCom's guidance of a 2.5% growth limit.
 - Allows Town to maintain current level of services.
 - Includes two staff increases:

- Increased hours in Town Clerk’s Office (increasing the part-time position to full-time +\$12,714). This is a reflection of three factors: 1) increased election administration (early voting, along with vote by mail); 2) increased death certification administration associated with the hospice facility, and; 3) our Town Clerk’s Office also provides cemetery administration. Mr. Higgins was able to make room for this within the Base budget.
- COA Social Worker – A part time position was established through a grant from the Codman Trust. The grant will expire 6 months into the new fiscal year. Mr. Higgins suggests adding \$12,000 to the FY 22 budget to offset the loss of the grant
- Includes a budgeted Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase of 2% for all employees, subject to collective bargaining as all three contracts expire at the end of the current fiscal year.
- Fairly routine in other respects.

- Preferred Budget:

- Two items totaling \$70,000.
- \$10,000 (a plug figure) to create a new line-item in the budget for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism (DEIA) efforts – whether they be led by a Town or private group.
- A one-time \$60,000 supplement to the consulting & engineering budget in anticipation of a comprehensive South Lincoln Septic Study. About \$20-\$30K is available from currently budgeted levels. However, the South Lincoln Planning Advisory Committee and the Planning Board assume that a comprehensive study could cost in the vicinity of \$75-\$90K. Mr. Higgins has discussed budget constraints and opportunities with Paula Robinson-Vaugh and with Gary Taylor so that they are aware. There is about \$20-\$30K in the FY 21 consulting budget that could be used to get the first phase of study started.

- Update:

- Mr. Higgins was advised that the usual Zoning Board of Appeals line-item was somehow omitted from the initial request. The budget for the part-time support position and modest expenses totals \$33,000.
- Adding this salary back to the Base Budget requires that an equal sum be removed from the Base. Mr. Higgins is recommending the following changes to rebalance the Base Budget:
 - 1) Move the additional funding for Town Clerk staff hours (now estimated at \$24,000) from the Base to the Preferred Budget
 - 2) Decrease the legal budget by \$8,000 (historically returns a balance of +/- \$20,000).

- If agreeable, the revised preferred budget would be comprised of three items:

South Lincoln Septic Study	\$60,000
DEIA Line-item	\$10,000
Town Clerk Staff Hours	<u>\$24,000</u>
	<u>\$94,000</u>

- Codman Farm 5-Year Plan - Mr. Higgins reported that, as the Board is aware, it serves as landlord of Codman Farm under the license agreement between the Town and Codman

Community Farm (CCF). When the license was put in place about 7 years ago, it included a requirement for CCF to provide a Five-Year Plan and to keep the plan updated. The goal was to ensure that the Board of Selectmen and the Town were always updated on programs, infrastructure, plans for changes in use of land and buildings, finances, etc. CCF recently provided their updated plan. He added that it would be a good idea to invite them to a meeting in the near future for an update on their on-going capital improvements.

- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Anti-Racism – Mr. Craig thanked Ms. Glass and Mr. Dwyer for all of their hard work preparing materials for the upcoming public discussion.. Ms. Glass has developed a draft Charge for the committee. Mr. Dwyer has developed a decision matrix to use as well. Mr. Dwyer added that one item of importance is getting the demographic data into a useable format. Mr. Dwyer also felt it was important to have a listening post to share current challenges and to understand what other kinds of support may be needed in the future. Ms. Glass noted that the community group, WIDE, is offering training that would be useful for all involved in the proposed task force. There was discussion about task force size. Mr. Dwyer said that it would be a good idea to let residents know that there are existing resources for people to access.
- FY 22 Town Meeting Planning – Mr. Higgins confirmed the revised dates for Annual Town Meeting (May 15th), Town elections (March 29th), and a Special Town Election (May 17th). He reviewed the key milestone planning dates leading up to these events. He added that the revised schedule was developed in consultation with FinCom, The Town Finance Director, and the Town Clerk. He confirmed the Board's support and vote to proceed with the two elections as recommended. Since we appear to be committed to including finances, bylaws and petitions on the warrant, Mr. Higgins wondered if we need to think about whether two Town Meeting sessions will be necessary. If boards do significant outreach in advance and tightly limit presentations, one may be enough. However, the Board should discuss options for a second session (e.g., back-to-back Saturdays; one Saturday in May and one in June; May 15th, or a fall Saturday session).
- Sudbury BOS Meeting – Mr. Craig reported on his discussion with the Sudbury Select Board Chair, Janie Dretler, regarding Sudbury's desire for a joint meeting to discuss the Lincoln-Sudbury Regional Agreement. Carole Kasper, LS School Committee, joined the meeting and noted that the School Committee discussed this at their December 8th meeting. The consensus of the LSSC was that any modification to the agreement should come up through the School Committee.

DISCUSSION:

- Public Health Update – Ms. McGean reported that as of tonight, Lincoln has had a total of 128 COVID cases. This includes 16 new cases since January 1st. Currently, there are 14 active cases under isolation. Residents and staff at skilled nursing facility at The Commons have had their first round of COVID vaccines and in February the rest of the facility will be vaccinated through CVS Health. The Commons has had 31 total cases over the past year with half of them coming in the month of December. Last week, Lincoln-Sudbury had 26 students and 5 faculty members test positive. Ms. McGean added that the new dashboard would be uploaded onto the website tomorrow. Mr. Higgins reported that town planning to provide vaccination clinics has become a significant priority. The vaccine rollout plan is, not surprisingly, experiencing significant challenges and delays. State and local health officials initially

assumed that the private health care system (PCPs and pharmacies) would be in the lead. There are increasing concerns that these delivery systems will be overwhelmed and that local health teams may need to play a more significant role in expediting the process. The Town health team has been developing a concept plan to try to determine our capacities.

- Newsletter - Mr. Dwyer made a motion to approve the publication of the newsletter with final edits. Ms. Glass seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously with a roll call vote: Craig: Aye; Dwyer: Aye; Glass: Aye.
- Liaison Reports:

School Building Committee (SBC) – Ms. Glass reported that the SBC meets this week. She thanked Mr. Higgins for participating in the emergency School Committee meeting that took place last week. The meeting was a conversation with parents to share what they were seeing in cases, protocols, and to sort through everything to find the balance of looking at the data while keeping in mind the emotional toll it takes on parents, family, students, and faculty.

Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC) – Ms. Glass reported that she attended the last MAGIC meeting and that there is a new coordinator for MAGIC, Julie Curti, who comes from Metropolitan Area Planning Council's (MAPC) clean energy and climate team.

Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) – Ms. Glass reported that she attended the MMA's business meeting where they voted in the new board. There was also a panel discussion that provided an overview of the review process for Town Administrators and Managers.

South Lincoln Planning Advisory Committee (SLPAC) – Mr. Craig reported that SLPAC had a meeting last Friday morning. He noted that there is some zoning legislation pending that if/when signed by the Governor will impact the South Lincoln Planning effort and that the committee will have to take some time to review and will likely need Town Counsel's input as well. One of the key points of the legislation is that MBTA communities, such as Lincoln, are required to have a good-sized, "by-right" zoning area within a half mile of a public transportation stop. The minimum density must be 15 units per acre. He added that there are some exclusions to this requirement, but it needs to be reviewed and well understood as it could impact the planning and development of the South Lincoln area. Ms. Glass suggested that it would be useful to have legal analysis from Town Counsel and to then have a multi-board meeting with all the relevant committees (Planning, Zoning, Conservation, Housing, Green Energy, etc.).

OPEN FORUM:

- None

ACTION ITEMS:

- Cultural Council Appointment – Ms. Glass made a motion to appoint Philana Mia Gnatowski to the Lincoln Cultural Council. Mr. Dwyer seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously with a roll call vote: Craig: Aye; Dwyer: Aye; Glass: Aye.

- Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) Appointments –

Reanna Wu - Ms. Glass made a motion to appoint Reanna Wu as an associate member of the Zoning Board of Appeals. Mr. Dwyer seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously with a roll call vote: Craig: Aye; Dwyer: Aye; Glass: Aye.

Julian Huartes - Mr. Dwyer made a motion to appoint Julian Huartes as an associate member of the Zoning Board of Appeals. Ms. Glass seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously with a roll call vote: Craig: Aye; Dwyer: Aye; Glass: Aye.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- None

WARRANTS:

- December 28, 2020 & January 11, 2021 - Ms. Glass made a motion to approve the warrants dated December 28, 2020 and January 11, 2021. Mr. Dwyer seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously with a roll call vote: Craig: Aye; Dwyer: Aye; Glass: Aye.

MINUTES:

- November 23, 2020 - Ms. Glass made a motion to approve the minutes dated November 23, 2020. Mr. Dwyer seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously with a roll call vote: Craig: Aye; Dwyer: Aye; Glass: Aye.
- Ms. Glass made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Dwyer seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously with a roll call vote: Craig: Aye; Dwyer: Aye; Glass: Aye.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30 P.M.

Submitted by Peggy Elder
Approved 02/08/21