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TOWN OF AYER  
TOWN CLERK



**Town of Ayer**  
**Community Preservation Committee**

Town Hall \* One Main Street \* Ayer, MA 01432  
Minutes for 4/6/2022

Location: Remote Meeting via Zoom, accessible to public, due to ongoing pandemic

Members present: Janet Providakes (JP) [Housing Authority]- Chair, Julie Murray (JUM) [Planning Board] – Vice-Chair, Beth Suedmeyer (BAS) [At Large], Barry Schwarzel (BES) [Historical Commission], Jason Mayo (JAM) [Parks & Recreation], Jess Gugino (JG) [Conservation Commission]- Clerk, Colleen Krieser (CK)[At Large]

APAC taped: Yes

**7:03 PM – Open Meeting**

- **Confirmation of Agenda**

- CK moved to confirm the agenda as posted; BES 2<sup>nd</sup>.
  - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 6-0 (BAS not yet present).

- **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- BES moved to approve the minutes for 3/2/2022 as written; CK 2<sup>nd</sup>.
  - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 6-0 (BAS not yet present).
- CK moved to approve the minutes for 3/30/2022 as written; JUM 2<sup>nd</sup>.
  - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 6-0 (BAS not yet present).

- **Announcements / Correspondence**

- Sandy Pond Schoolhouse Association (SPSA) Phase II Restoration and Preservation Work, Grant (FTM 2020, \$187,340)
  - SPSA now has a docket entry with Land Court to resolve the recording of the 1956 transfer of ownership title of the schoolhouse from the 'volunteer' SPSA to the 'incorporated' SPSA, Inc.
  - Land Court is considering this as a potential default judgment and SPSA is awaiting the final decision.
- CPA Revenue
  - If additional CPA funds are received from the State, more than is accounted for in the Spring Town Meeting Warrant Article, these monies will be distributed 10% to each of the 3 CPA categories (Housing, Historical, Open Space) and the remainder will go into the Undesignated Reserve.
    - According to the Coalition, the Dept. of Revenue is working on proper wording.
- Spring Town Meeting 2022 Warrant



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- Town Counsel is removing from warrant articles the phrase “not to exceed” in reference to the amount of CPA grant monies voted on.
- JP also conferred with Lisa Gabree, former Town Accountant (now retired), to provide figures for a slide that will show the difference in State money received by Ayer since the CPA surcharge in Ayer was raised from 1% to 3%.
  - In the last fiscal year, the first since the property tax surcharge changed, 65.35% of Ayer’s CPA money came from State matching funds whereas the year before, at the 1% surcharge, the State matching funds amounted to only 10% of Ayer’s total.
- Town of Shirley
  - On 3/17, JP and JG met for 2 hours with Paul Pryzbyla and other members of a Shirley advisory committee that is considering whether Shirley should seek to become a CPA community.
- Municipal Meetings
  - The State is allowing municipal boards to meet remotely, due to the pandemic, until July 15.
  - The Select Board is leaving it up to individual boards to decide whether, between April 1 and July 15, they want to continue to meet remotely via Zoom or return to in-person meetings in Town Hall.
  - It looks as though even if meetings return to in-person format, Zoom capability will still be maintained for members of the public.
  - At this point, CPC will continue to meet remotely through at least its next meeting in May.
- **Bills / Invoices**
  - Historical Resources Inventory Project (\$20,000, STM 2020)
    - JP authorized Town Manager Robert Pontbriand to approve payment of \$4,375 to Stacy Spies, the consultant working on phase II of the historical sites resource survey.
  - Community Preservation Plan Update (\$21,000, FTM 2021)
    - A 3/8 invoice for \$5225.00 was paid to JM Goldson, the consultant doing the CPP update, for preparing draft CPA resources profiles, GIS mapping analysis, and meeting attendance.
    - A 4/6 invoice for \$4500.00 was paid to JM Goldson for preparation of the community survey, attendance at CPC’s March meeting, running the 4 focus group meetings, and preparation of outreach materials.



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- Community Preservation Coalition
  - A 3/24 invoice for \$875.00, for CPC annual membership dues, was authorized for payment.

**CURRENT BUSINESS**

- **The Community Preservation Plan (CPP) (\$21,000, FTM 2021)**
  - Jen Goldson and Delaney Almond, of JM Goldson, were present via Zoom to provide an update.
  - Ms. Goldson gave an overview of where the project is in terms of the projected timeline.
    - The community online survey is running, and a public forum will be held, via Zoom, at CPC's next meeting on May 4, at 7 p.m.
    - At CPC's June meeting, the results of the survey and the forum will be reviewed along with a draft outline of new 'goals and priorities'.
    - A draft of the new CPP will be ready by the end of June.
    - CPC should consider whether to schedule its Public Hearing on the draft in August or whether it might be more beneficial, given summer vacationing, to hold the Hearing in September instead.
  - Ms. Almond provided an overview of key findings from the four focus group sessions that were held in early March:
    - limited unpolluted land left in Ayer that is suitable for development, recreation, or open space;
    - several historic resources and buildings in Ayer that would benefit from CPA funding, but there is no historical society/group advocating for these types of projects;
    - Ayer cares about housing affordability, but there is concern that newer residents don't care as much as longer term residents, and that existing new zoning measures that could help have not been used yet;
    - while there are some opportunities for smaller recreational amenities, there is limited space for larger projects like athletic fields;
    - landowners might not realize the Town is interested or able to purchase larger parcels for open space protection.
  - It was noted that if there were findings from the focus groups that seem inaccurate, CPC members should reach out to Ms. Goldson and Ms. Almond, so that appropriate footnotes can be added into the CPP to correct misunderstandings.
    - BES said the Historical Commission is interested in preserving buildings in Ayer and advocating for more preservation work but it is a very small group.



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- Historical societies tend to focus more on the preservation of artifacts whereas a Commission as a rule does not collect or house artifacts.
  - In Ayer, the Nutting Room at the Library is currently the only place where artifacts are displayed.
  - He also noted that the Historical Commission has done things like preserve the Camp Stevens memorial as well as the fountain in front of Town Hall.
- Regarding the ongoing community survey, which will be open for another month, Ms. Almond said they have received 93 responses so far.
  - Preliminary results indicate that the largest group of respondents are in the 35-44 age range, are largely white, tend to be from higher income brackets, and tend to own their homes.
- Regarding the Community Forum, to be held on 5/4, at 7 p.m. (with CPC's business meeting taking place earlier, at 6 p.m.), the Forum will take place via Zoom webinar and will include:
  - CPA basics;
  - CPA history and projects in Ayer;
  - a summary of eligibility, available resources, and expressed needs in each CPA category;
  - interactive polling questions throughout;
  - chat features;
  - an open question-and-answer and comment time at the end.
- Ms. Goldson said they will want CPC members to introduce themselves and be available throughout the webinar to answer questions or talk about Ayer CPA projects.
  - She expects the forum to run between an hour to an hour-and-a-half, depending on how many people are interested in attending.
  - JP said she would like CPC members to present short summaries of the latest 4 CPA projects in Ayer – which will have been decided by vote the previous week at Spring Town Meeting on April 25.
- In terms of outreach, JM Goldson provided CPC with a checklist of possibilities, including press releases, letters to the editor, cable tv announcements, and social media notices.
  - CPC members were asked to reach out to their own networks of Ayer residents – friends, neighbors, fellow board members, etc.
  - Ms. Almond is providing JP with some sample flyers that could be made available: – at Town Meeting, the Candidate forum on April 26, the Library, Town Hall, and the Fire and Police stations.



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- Ms. Goldson said they would be sending out special links to CPC members as 'panelists' for the May 4 forum.
  - These links will be unique for each CPC member, and will not be the same as members of the public who register for the forum – so cannot be shared.
- **8:04 PM Executive Session**
  - There being no new business nor time for Committee Reports, JP asked for a motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L. c 30A, Section 21A, Exemption 6, for consideration of the purchase of real property.
    - JUM moved to go into Executive Session, and to return to Open Session for the sole purpose of adjourning the meeting; BES 2<sup>nd</sup>.
      - Motion approved by Roll Call Vote 6-0 (BAS not yet present).
- **8:27 PM – Adjourn Meeting**
  - CPC's Next Meeting: May 4, 2022, 6 p.m., to be followed by the Public Forum at 7 p.m.
  - Having adjourned from Executive Session into Open Session at 8:27 p.m., JG moved to adjourn from Open Session; BAS 2<sup>nd</sup>.
    - Motion approved unanimously 7-0 (BAS having joined the meeting for the Executive Session).

**Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Jessica G. Gugino, Clerk**

**Date / Signature Indicating Approval:** 5/4/2022 *Jessica G. Gugino*