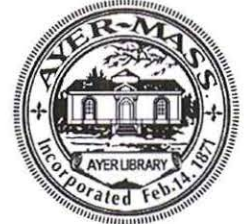


Town of Ayer  
Ayer Select Board  
Ayer Town Hall – 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Meeting Room  
Ayer, MA 01432



*Broadcast and Recorded by APAC*

**Monday November 2, 2020**  
**Open Session Meeting Minutes**

**SB Present:** Shaun C. Copeland, Chair; Scott A. Houde, Vice-Chair; Jannice L. Livingston, Clerk  
*All Via Remote Participation*

**Also Present:** Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager  
Carly M. Antonellis, Assistant Town Manager  
*Both Via Remote Participation*

**Call to Order:** S. Copeland called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

**Remote Access:** S. Copeland stated that pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, MGL Chapter 30A, Section 18 and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Ayer Board of Selectmen is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort has been made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided in the Order. All votes will be taken by Roll Call.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Select Board members and meeting attendees stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Meeting Agenda:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by S. Houde and seconded by J. Livingston to approve the meeting agenda. **Roll**

**Call:** S. Copeland, aye; S. Houde, aye; J. Livingston, aye. **Motion passed by Roll Call Vote 3-0.**

**Announcements:** None

**Public Input:** Ms. Sara Withee, 11 Groton Shirley Road stated that she wanted her name added to the meeting minutes because she had concerns.

**Ms. Alicia Hersey, Community Development Office:** *Lien Subordination Request Case #15-395 (16 Pond Street)* – A. Hersey explained that the borrower is seeking to obtain a better interest rate and therefore needed approval from the SB. There were no questions from the SB.

**Motion:** A motion was made by J. Livingston and seconded by S. Houde to approve Lien Subordination #15-395. **Roll Call:** S. Copeland, aye; S. Houde, aye; J. Livingston, aye. **Motion passed by Roll Call Vote 3-0.**

**Town Manager's Report:** *Administrative Update/Review of Town Warrant(s)* - R. Pontbriand provided the Select Board with an update on the various activities, initiatives, and projects of the Administration since the Select Board last met. He also provided a list of signed Town Warrants in the meeting packet. R. Pontbriand stated that Capital Planning requests have come in and that they are scaled down from previous years. He reported that Transfer Station stickers are being sold at the Transfer Station on Wednesdays and Saturdays. R.

Pontbriand thanked the Town Clerk's office and all election workers in preparing for the Presidential Election tomorrow. He also reported that the new fire truck, Engine 2 has been delivered and is in service.

*COVID-19 Update* – R. Pontbriand stated that there has been a recent uptick in cases, which prompted the Governor to issue 3 new orders. The Town, at this time, has an adequate supply of PPE. Chief Johnston is working on updating the Town's Shelter Plan.

*Review/Discussion of the Annual Special Fall Town Meeting from 10/26/20* – J. Livingston stated that it's been mentioned on social media that the SB is trying to sneak the Senior Center property in. R. Pontbriand stated, of course that any property acquisition cannot be down without Town Meeting approval. S. Houde stated that there is some concern with the current economic environment, and he wouldn't be looking to bring this back up until the economy improves.

J. Livingston stated that related to Article 9 there was concern that the Town of Harvard had not approached the Town of Ayer. J. Livingston stated that the proposed project was not a Town sponsored project, but rather a private developer. S. Copeland stated that he would have liked to see the developer attend Town Meeting to answer questions. SB members discussed working on developing an application that would go to different departments for review prior to a Town Meeting.

Ms. Sara Withee stated that the SB does not have to put the item on the warrant if they are presented with it. SB members stated that pursuant to the relevant Town bylaw, it needs to go to Town meeting for consideration.

J. Livingston asked for an update on the Devens Wastewater Agreement for the next meeting.

S. Copeland asked for clarification on Article 4 regarding the 21E environmental testing. He then suggested we could explore partnering with another town to provide services.

R. Pontbriand stated that he would be meeting with the internal team to debrief and to discuss the next steps.

*Review/Discussion Regarding License Renewals and Fees* – R. Pontbriand referenced the spreadsheet prepared by the Assistant Town Manager and stated that it is within the SB's purview to adjust the fees due to the COVID-19 pandemic. R. Pontbriand has vetted reducing the license fees with the Town Accountant and they are both confident that the Town could absorb the reduction. R. Pontbriand stated that reducing the fees by 50% would allow for relief to the business owners while, at the same time, maintaining the value of the license.

J. Livingston stated that reducing the 2021 renewal fees by 50% was reasonable. S. Houde and S. Copeland stated that they would like to see the reduction up to 75%.

**Motion:** A motion was made by J. Livingston and seconded by S. Houde to reduce the 2021 Select Board license fees by 75%. **Roll Call:** S. Copeland, aye; S. Houde, aye; J. Livingston, aye. **Motion passed by Roll Call Vote 3-0.**

*FY 2022 Budget Directive and Discussion* –R. Pontbriand stated that the FY '22 Budget Directive would be going out this week. The directive seeks level funded/level services and is also asking departments for efficiencies. R. Pontbriand had discussed asking Departments for reduction scenarios but, as of right now revenue is still coming in on target. S. Houde stated that he would like to mitigate the impact on the tax rate and minimize raise and appropriate articles at future Town Meetings.

*Declaration of Board of Health Vacancy and Joint Appointment Process*- The SB was joined by Board of Health Chair Pam Papineau. R. Pontbriand discussed with the SB the process of filling the current vacancy on the



Board of Health created by Mary Spinner's resignation. The process for filling the vacancy on an elected board is set forth by MGL Chapter 41, Section 11. He is recommending that the SB vote to declare the vacancy on the Ayer Board of Health with all applications of interested candidates due to the Town Manager's Office by no later than Friday, November 20, 2020. The Joint Appointment meeting could then be scheduled to take place as part of the regular Select Board Meeting on December 1, 2020 and/or a special meeting could be called. P. Papineau thanked Mary Spinner for all her years of service to the Town of Ayer.

**Motion:** A motion was made by S. Houde and seconded by J. Livingston to declare a vacancy on the Board of Health and to have all interested applicants submit a letter of interest/resume by Friday November 20, 2020.

**Roll Call:** S. Copeland, aye; S. Houde, aye; J. Livingston, aye. **Motion passed by Roll Call Vote 3-0.**

**New Business/Selectmen's Questions:** *Initial Discussion on Future Dialogue on Race and Diversity Issues (S. Copeland)* – S. Copeland stated he wanted to start a discussion about race and diversity and thinks that bringing in an 3<sup>rd</sup> party facilitator may help guide the discussion. He'd like to reach out to different community groups for suggestions on conducting the forum.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by S. Houde and seconded by J. Livingston to approve the Meeting Minutes from October 20, 2020 Part 1. **Roll Call:** S. Copeland, aye; S. Houde, aye; J. Livingston, aye. **Motion passed by Roll Call Vote 3-0.**

**Motion:** A motion was made by J. Livingston and seconded by S. Houde to approve the Meeting Minutes from October 20, 2020 Part 2. **Roll Call:** S. Copeland, aye; S. Houde, aye; J. Livingston, aye. **Motion passed by Roll Call Vote 3-0.**

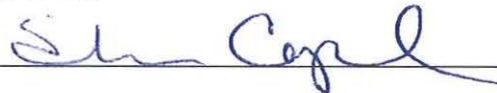
**Adjournment:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by J. Livingston and seconded by S. Houde to adjourn at 7:11 PM. **Roll Call:** S. Copeland, aye; S. Houde, aye; J. Livingston, aye. **Motion passed by Roll Call Vote 3-0.**

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Carly M. Antonellis, Assistant Town Manager

**Date Minutes Approved by BOS: 12-1-20**

**Signature Indicating Approval:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. Copeland", is written over a horizontal line.