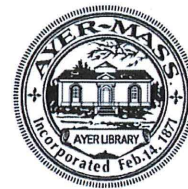


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TOWN OF AYER  
TOWN CLERK

*Shaun C. Copeland*

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



*Broadcast and Recorded by APAC*

**Tuesday January 7, 2020**  
**Open Session Meeting Minutes**

**BOS Present:** Scott A. Houde, Chair; Jannice L. Livingston, Vice-Chair; Shaun C. Copeland, Clerk

**Also Present:** Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager  
Carly M. Antonellis, Assistant Town Manager

**Call to Order:** S. Houde called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

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

**Approval of Agenda:** R. Pontbriand asked to amend the agenda by removing the 6:15 PM Agenda item "Public Hearing CDBG – Historic Ayer Fire Station Building, 14 Washington Street." This matter will be taken up at the next BOS meeting on January 21, 2020.

**Motion:** A motion was made by J. Livingston and seconded by S. Copeland to approve the agenda, as amended. **Motion passed 3-0.**

**Announcements:** S. Houde made the following announcements:

- There will be a Public Meeting on Monday January 13, 2020 at 6:00 PM relating to the FY '21 omnibus budget.
- The Ayer Rail Trail Commuter Parking Facility, located at 3 Groton Street, will open on Monday January 20, 2020 at 5:00 AM.
- The Winter Parking Ban is in effect through April 15.

S. Houde recognized Ms. Anna Simmons and Mr. Alex Hertz, student reporters from Ayer-Shirley Regional High School.

**Public Input:** None

**Supt. Mark Wetzel, Dept. of Public Works:** *Contract for Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade* – M. Wetzel was in attendance and presented the contract for the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the Wastewater Treatment Plan Upgrade. The Town received two bids for the project. Winston Builders Corp. was the lower bidder at \$1,438,889 bids Winston builders was low bidder. The contract is for modifications to the existing Process Building for the future sludge dewatering system, structural improvements, relocation of doors and windows, new walls, and HVAC, plumbing and electrical improvements.

**Motion:** A motion was made by J. Livingston and seconded by S. Copeland to approve the contract between the Town of Ayer and Winston Builders Corp. in the amount of \$1,438,889 with signature by the Chair. **Motion passed 3-0.**

**Update on East Main Street Reconstruction Project Right of Way Process** – M. Wetzel gave an update on the East Main Street Reconstruction Project. He is now in the process of acquiring temporary easements from homeowners, so the Town can be on the property to conduct the improvement project. This is a \$3.8 million dollar project that is funded by the State's TIP program. He stated that the project will be advertised at the end of March and believes that construction will start mid-summer and will last a year. MassDOT will be overseeing the project.

**Payment of Prior Year Bill – Casella Waste – UDAG Fund** – M. Wetzel reported that the Town received a late invoice from Casella Waste. He submitted the invoice on the 2019 Fall Special Town Meeting warrant. There was an error in the warrant article because it referenced Free Cash as the funding source. Free Cash at that time was not certified, therefore

the vote was deemed invalid. He is recommending payment from the UDAG account with a replenishment at the 2020 Spring Annual Town Meeting.

**Motion:** A motion was made by J. Livingston and seconded by S. Houde to approve the FY'19 invoice from Casella Waste in the amount of \$4,972.31 to be replenished by Free Cash at the 2020 Annual Town Meeting. **Motion passed 3-0.**

**Conservation Restriction – Kohler Place:** Conservation Commission Chair John Schmalenberger and Conservation Administrator Jo-Anne Crystoff joined the BOS for approval of a Conservation Restriction ("CR") located at Kohler Place granted by John and Stephanie Burns. The CR is being placed on 3 parcels containing 19.9 acres. J. Crystoff stated that it has taken a long time to get to this point and the process started in 2012. S. Houde asked if the public had access to the land with the granting of the CR. J. Crystoff stated no and that CR prohibits development of the parcels and protects the shared public conservations values present on the land.

**Motion:** A motion was made by J. Livingston and seconded by S. Copeland to approve the Conservation Restriction for Kohler Place. **Motion passed 3-0.**

**Vote to Open the 2020 Annual Town Election 3-0:** Town Clerk Susan Copeland was in attendance. She presented the BOS with all terms expiring on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020 for the Annual Town Election; she also stated that there will be one ballot question relating to the CPC increase from 1% to 3%, pursuant to the 2019 Fall Special Town Meeting. She also informed the Board that with the recent resignation of State Representative Jen Benson, a primary and general election have been called for March 3, 2020 and March 31, 2020 respectively. She cautioned that the primary and general election will be for residents of Precinct 2 only.

**Motion:** A motion was made by S. Copeland and seconded by J. Livingston to open the Annual Election on Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup> 2020, in the Great Hall at 1 Main Street Ayer MA from 7am – 8pm to vote on the following offices up for election and to consider 1 ballot question (CPA 3% increase): Assessor (1) 3 year term; Board of Health (1) 3 year term; Commissioner of Trust Funds (1) 3 year term; Constable (1) 3 year term; Housing Authority (1) 5 year term; Library Trustee (2) 3 year terms and (2) 2 year terms; Park Commissioner (2) 3 year terms and (1) 1 year term; Planning Board (2) 3 year terms; Regional School District Committee (1) 3 year term and (1) 1 year term; Selectman (1) 3 year term. **Motion passed 3-0.**

**Town Manager's Report:** *Administrative Update/Review of Warrant(s) and FY '21 Budget Update* - R. Pontbriand provided an administrative update of the various activities, initiatives, and projects of the Administration since the BOS last met. He also referenced the Meeting Packet for a list of Payroll and Accounts Payable Warrants that have been signed since the last meeting. R. Pontbriand stated that initial FY '21 omnibus budget has been sent to both the BOS and the Finance Committee and cautioned that there are several outstanding items such as the school assessments and health insurance needing to be factored in when the information is available. R. Pontbriand thanked C. Antonellis for another year of successful license renewals. He stated that he and the Town Planner have met to discuss strategy and organizing of 2020 zoning matters. He also announced that the Commuter Rail Trail Parking Facility will open at 5:00 AM on Monday January 20, 2020.

*Health Benefits Buyout Program* – Benefits and Payroll Manager Kevin Johnston was in attendance for the BOS renew the Health Benefits Buyout Program for FY '21 – '23. K. Johnston reported that renewing the program through FY '23, is projected to save approximately \$686,000. Currently, there are 14 participants.

**Motion:** A motion was made by S. Copeland and seconded by J. Livingston to renew the Health Benefits Buyout Program through FY '23. **Motion passed 3-0.**

**New Business/Selectmen's Questions:** S. Copeland would like to discuss changing the name from Board of Selectmen to the Select Board. He stated that over 70 towns in Massachusetts have made the same change. S. Copeland stated that by changing to Select Board it promotes gender neutrality and inclusiveness. Both S. Houde and J. Livingston stated they were in favor of the change. R. Pontbriand stated that procedurally this would require a bylaw amendment at Town Meeting.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by S. Houde and seconded by S. Copeland to approve the meeting minutes from December 17, 2019. **Motion passed 3-0.**

**Adjournment:** A motion was made by J. Livingston and seconded by S. Copeland to adjourn at 6:54 PM. **Motion passed 3-0.**

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

Date Minutes Approved by BOS: 21 January 2020

Signature Indicating Approval: 