



TOWN OF KINGSTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
OPEN SESSION
MINUTES
TOWN HOUSE-26 EVERGREEN ST. ROOM 200 & VIA ZOOM
February 27, 2024

6:00 p.m. – CALL TO ORDER – ROOM 200

Chairman Kimberley Emberg called to order the meeting of the Board of Selectmen at 6:00 p.m.—selectmen in attendance: Sheila Vaughn, Tyler Bouchard, and Eric Crone.

Staff Present: Keith Hickey, Town Administrator; and Patricia Tucker, Assistant to Town Administrator.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- This meeting is being recorded by The Local Seen. Anyone intending to make an audio or video recording of this meeting should notify the Chair at this time.
- Financial Assistance Applications are available on the town's website or by calling the Selectmen's Office.
- Starting last month there is a new online portal for public records requests. Please see the Town's website for more information.
- Dog licenses are available in the Clerk's office. Please keep in mind that there is a \$20 late fee if your dog is not registered by March 15th.
- On March 19th the Agricultural Commission is sponsoring a program hosted by Mike Porter Catskill Forest Association on the health benefits of Maple Syrup
- The Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, May 4th
 - The last day to register to vote in the Annual Town Election is May 8th
- The Annual Town Election is scheduled for Saturday May 18th.
- Nomination Papers are now available, and need to be returned by March 29th at 11:30am
- For anyone interested in volunteering, we have a number of vacancies on various committees and boards. To see a complete list of the openings, please visit our website at kingstonma.gov. One of those vacancies is on the Zoning Board of Appeals for an Associate member, please reach out to the Selectmen's office if you are interested.

Ms. Emberg provided an update from the last meeting. The discussion of the nuisance dog the owner has met the insurance requirement that was set forth by the Board.

OPEN FORUM:

Howard Levine and Camilo Varela of Second Horizon Capital, the new owners of Kingston Collection, were in attendance to introduce themselves to the Board. They stated that they are looking forward to engaging and working with the Town for a long-time partnership.

Mr. Hickey added that he has met Mr. Levine and Mr. Varela along with their team multiples times and they are open to revitalizing the community and it is a pleasure to have met the team and they are confident they will be great partners with the Town.

APPOINTMENTS:

Recommendation from Board of Registrars regarding and Early Voting by Mail for the Annual Town Election in May
Ms. Emberg introduced the Town Clerk, Paul Gallagher.

Mr. Gallagher began by saying that early voting is currently underway as well as voting by mail.

Mr. Gallagher explained the vote by mail process with the State, allows you to choose which ballot you would like by mail. He continued to state that local towns could offer early voting or vote by mail for the towns if they choose. At their February 22nd meeting, the Board of Registrars voted to recommend the Board of Selectmen vote to opt out of the early voting by mail process for the annual Town election in May. The decision is just for this year, this can be revisited next year. Mr. Gallagher stated this is a busy year with the State elections and they have decided this year would not be a good fit. It was noted that absentee ballots are always available.

Ms. Emberg asked the Board if they had any questions, Ms. Vaughn stated since this is not a school vacation week, she does not see any issues with not offering this.

Motion by Mr. Crone, seconded by Mr. Bouchard and a 4-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen approve the Board of Registrars request to opt out of early voting and by mail for the May 2024 local election

Request from Town Clerk to Approve and Post the Warrant for the March 5, 2024, Presidential Primary Election

The Town Clerk is seeking the Board's approval to post the federal primary warrant for the March 5, 2024, election. The Board is required to approve the posting prior to the warrant being posted.

Motion by Mr. Bouchard, seconded by Ms. Vaughn and a 4-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen authorize the Town Clerk to post the March 5, 2024, Presidential Primary Election Warrant

Update from Fire Chief on Fire Department Activities

Fire Chief Douglass was in attendance to discuss providing an update to the Board which in part is below:

Call Volume

Calls for Service 3,057 First time the Department has responded to over 3,000 calls.
253 calls over 2022.

Rescue / Medical 2,295
Fire and other emergencies 762

Average Response time is about 6 minutes 9 seconds.

The number of simultaneous calls,

- 2 or more 1,453
- 3 or more 485
- 4 or more 165

Mutual Aid:

Provided 52 times

Received 93 times Growth of this number largely relates to simultaneous calls

Personnel

4 Additional members began on February 12 bringing shift staffing to 6.

- David DeCenzo
- Michael Falter
- Mark Leary
- Daniel Shannon

In addition, we have 3 Call Firefighters, we hired one last month and plan to hire 2 more.

Injuries last year were unusually high at 7 injured members.

2 were very significant requiring surgery and long out of work time while 5 others were less severe.

Stations

Both Stations are in generally good condition but will require continued maintenance and improvements.

Station 1 will require roof replacement and the replacement of some windows in the next couple of years. We hope to do these projects in conjunction with the addition.

Station 2 will require the replacement of some of the components of the vehicle exhaust capture system vintage 1988 along with other small maintenance items within the next year or so.

Planning

We continue to work with MassDOT and Eversource to secure land for the Police Station with more to come on that soon.

Along with that we have started the preliminary planning process for the addition to Fire Station 1.

We continue to work on Capital Equipment Plans (primarily apparatus) and adjust those plans to accommodate the long delivery times for apparatus. While I know leasing is not always a favored tool to acquire equipment it is extremely helpful in beating the challenges of extended delivery times.

Fire Prevention

Fire Prevention has become a year-round activity not just restricted to one month per year. We try to participate in as many events we can along with our annual school visits.

Grants 2024

Firefighter Equipment Grant

\$18,999.95 for an SCBA fit Test Machine and Battery Tools and Saws to replace some of the old gas units.

Will be requesting \$4,667 from equipment article as matching funds to complete the project.

EMPG, Emergency Management Planning Grant

\$3,500 Mobile Data Terminal

Safe and Senior Safe Grant

\$7,500 Supports Fire Prevention activities for both schools and senior citizens.

Goals for the coming year

Training with new staff and equipment there will be plenty of that to do, to get everyone up to speed.

On the Administrative side:

- We will continue the process of updating and revising our Mutual Aid Response Procedures (Run Cards).
- Add an Active Shooter Card to better respond to that threat.
- Continue updating the Departments SOP's
- Try some new processes and procedures to maximize the efficiency of the 6 person shifts.

In closing, Chief Douglas took a moment to thank all the staff, ours, and others, as well as the Boards and Committees that we work closely with throughout the year.

6:15 P.M. Public Hearing for Amendment of A3 Liquor License

Ms. Emberg explained that the requestor has requested that this be continued, and stated the request is for 3 Dogs LLC dba A3 is requesting an amendment to their alcohol license.

- The applicant has requested this be continued until March 12th.

Ms. Emberg read the Public Hearing Notice:

In accordance with M.G.L., Chapter 138, a public hearing will be held on February 27, 2024, at 6:15 p.m. in Room 200 at the Town House, 26 Evergreen St, Kingston MA., on the application of 3 Dogs LLC dba A3 Pizza, John Cataldi, Owner/Manager for an amendment to his retail beverage license. Request is for an Amendment - Change of Category to serve All Alcohol, current license is for Wine and Malt. Said license located at 65 Summer Street, Kingston, MA. A copy of the application is available for viewing in the Selectmen's Office.

Motion by Mr. Bouchard, seconded by Ms. Vaughn, and a 4-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen open the public hearing.

Motion by Mr. Bouchard, seconded by Mr. Crone, and a 4-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen to continue the public hearing for the amendment of Change of Category to All Alcohol for 3 Dogs LLC dba A3 to March 12, 2024, at 6:05pm.

Approval of One Day Liquor Licenses

Ms. Emberg explained that The Bartending Service of New England LLC is requesting a One Day Beer and Wine Liquor License for Sip and Stroll events that are occurring on March 16, 2024, November 2, 2024, and December 7, 2024, at Kingston Collection. This was reviewed by Police and Fire with no objections.

Motion by Ms. Vaughn, seconded by Mr. Crone and a 4-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move to approve the request from The Bartending Service of New England LLC for a One Day Beer and Wine Liquor License for the Sip and Stroll events taking place on March 16, 2024, November 2, 2024, and December 7, 2024, at Kingston Collection from 12pm-5pm.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS:

Appointment to Kingston 300th Committee

The Kingston 300th Committee has multiple vacancies, one of the vacancies is from the Recreation Commission. At the Recreation Commissions February 5th meeting they voted to recommend Joseph Cunningham to the Kingston 300th Committee.

Motion by Ms. Vaughn, seconded by Mr. Bouchard and a 4-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen appoint Joseph Cunningham to the Kingston 300th Committee effective immediately through duration of events.

Appointment of CDL Driver/ Laborer with Streets, Trees & Parks

Ms. Emberg explained that there is currently a vacant position of CDL Driver/Laborer with Streets, Trees & Parks is vacant. After the recruitment process, Paul Basler, Superintendent of Streets, Trees & Parks, requests the hiring of Patrick Murphy Jr. to the position.

Motion by Ms. Vaughn, seconded by Mr. Crone and a 4-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen appoint Patrick Murphy, to the position of CDL Driver/Laborer, a Grade 3, Step 4 nonexempt full-time position as part of the Kingston Town Employee Union – Labor, with the Streets, Trees, & Parks Department with an anticipated start date of March 4, 2024, consistent with the terms of the offer letter.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Hickey read from his report:

MBTA working group will present their recommendations to comply with the MBTA zoning at the March 12th Board of Selectmen meeting.

Ms. Vaughn asked about funding and to provide a list of grants that they have received or may receive moving forward and the potential risk of losing funding and the impacts to public safety and the schools.

It was mentioned that the discussion of the MBTA zoning is a very tough topic to discuss. Mr. Bouchard thinks the strategic standpoint is to see the other communities go to the spring town meeting and Kingston can discuss it at the fall town meeting.

Ms. Emberg asked about reviewing potential articles for the Town Meeting, Mr. Hickey stated that he will add a draft list to the next meeting's agenda.

Ms. Hickey discussed the water main break on Smith's Lane and mentioned the Water Department and Highway Department worked well together to make the repairs. Smith's lane was closed for the evening and the following day they backfilled and fixed the roads. Pavement will be done next week. Mr. Hickey apologized for any inconvenience to any residents that were impacted.

Ms. Emberg mentioned that the Recreation Commission discussed the food truck events at their February meeting and voted to allow the Hilltop Club to reserve the front fields of the Opachinski field complex to utilize the parking closer to the Hilltop at no charge and thought the Board might be interested in watching that discussion.

SELECTMEN COMMENTS:

Mr. Bouchard discussed the parking lot at the Ah-dee-nah will be closed for 2 months beginning on March 1st for the construction of the new ramp.

Motion by Ms. Emberg, seconded by Mr. Bouchard and a 4-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move to adjourn to executive session, to not return to open session, for the purpose to Conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with non-union personnel.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:09pm

NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

March 12, 2024

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Tucker
Assistant to the Town Administrator/Board of Selectmen

Documents used at the meeting:

Agenda

Agenda Addendum

Liquor License Information

Board of Registrar memo
Election Information
Town Administrator Report

Approved: March 26, 2024