



TOWN OF KINGSTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
OPEN SESSION
MINUTES
TOWN HOUSE-26 EVERGREEN ST. ROOM 200 & VIA ZOOM
March 26, 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: Donald Alcombright, 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.
- As of Monday, March 25th, you will be able to watch past recorded meetings online within 48 hours at this YouTube channel.
- Financial Assistance Applications are available on the town's website or by calling the Selectmen's Office.
- The Ah Deenah Parking Lot is closed as of March 1st and will be reopened on May 15th.
- The Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, May 4th – the date maybe moved later in this meeting.
 - 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.
 - The last day to register to vote in the Annual Town Election is May 8th
- 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.

OPEN FORUM:

There was no one in attendance for open forum.

APPOINTMENTS:

Consideration of Employment Agreement Between the Town of Kingston and Police Chief, Brian Holmes

Ms. Emberg explained that before the Board is the employment agreement between the Town of Kingston and Brian Holmes, the recommended candidate for Police Chief. Mr. Holmes has successfully completed all the required background checks and has agreed to the proposed agreement in your materials. If approved, Mr. Holmes will start on April 15, 2024, and a swearing-in ceremony is planned for Thursday, May 11th at 6pm at the Kingston Intermediate School.

Motion by Mr. Bouchard, seconded by Mr. Alcombright, and a 5-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen approve the employment agreement between the Town of Kingston and Brian Holmes as presented.

Newly appointed Police Chief Holmes spoke a few words to say he is overwhelmed by the turnout by the men and women of the Kingston Police Department, and he is excited to be here.

Discussion of Compliance with November 27, 2023, Order of the Selectmen. Discussion Regarding Possible Enforcement Action

Ms. Emberg explained that at the November 21, 2023, Board meeting, the Board voted Wren a nuisance dog and provided six conditions the owner Matthew Frazier was to comply with, within 60 days.

On February 1, 2024, Mr. Frazier contacted Animal Control to inform them that conditions 1 & 2 were complied with.

On March 11, 2024, Mr. Frazier contacted Animal Control asking for an additional 30 days to give himself time to rehome Wren.

Mr. Hickey spoke with the dog owner this afternoon and he is actively rehoming the dog and asked if this could be postponed until the next meeting to give him a bit more time. The Board was generally in favor of moving until the next meeting, but did not take a formal vote to postpone. No motion was made.

Public Hearing: Petition from Verizon New England Inc. and NSTAR Electric Company dba Eversource Energy, proposing to place new facilities on Maple Street

Ms. Emberg explained that they received a request to add a pole to Maple Street.

Ms. Emberg read the public hearing notice:

Public Hearing Notice

Notice is hereby given that the Kingston Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing on the Petition #MA2024-24 from Verizon New England Inc. and NSTAR Electric Company dba Eversource Energy, proposing to place new facilities – Pole 119/1.5 on Maple Street.

Install one (1) JO mid-span pole 119/1.5 on the northerly side of Maple Street. The new location being approximately one hundred sixty (160) feet west of the centerline of Landing Road; and is approximately sixty-four (64) feet westerly of existing pole 119/1; and is approximately sixty-four (64) feet easterly of existing pole 119/2.

This installation is being requested by Eversource to support the reconductoring project on Maple Street and to upgrade the existing services.

The hearing shall take place on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, and the meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. in Room 200 at the Town House, 26 Evergreen Street, Kingston, MA. People interested are invited to attend and be heard in this matter.

Motion by Mr. Alcombright, seconded by Mr. Bouchard, and a 5-0-0 vote,

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

Brian Dinsmore of 39R Maple Street, was in attendance and asked if they were removing a pole to add this one. After the Board reviewed the map he stated he had no further questions.

Pine duBois of Jones River Landing was on the call to also ask about the specifics and whether a new pole was being added to the existing poles or whether it was replacing one or more of the poles currently place there.

There was no one in attendance for Verizon to address Ms. duBois' question so the Board decided to continue this hearing.

Motion by Mr. Crone, seconded by Mr. Alcombright, and a 5-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen to continue the public hearing until April 9th at 6pm.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS:

Appointment to Conservation Commission and Community Preservation Commission

Ms. Emberg explained that the Conservation Commission has one vacant seat. Brian Payne applied, and after review of this application at their March 13th Conservation Commission meeting, they voted to recommend Mr. Payne to the vacant seat.

Ms. Emberg went on to explain that Mr. Payne is resigning from Open Space so he can no longer be the Open Space delegate for Community Preservation, so he is requesting appoint him to the citizen seat of Community Preservation to continue with that committee.

Motion by Ms. Vaughn, seconded by Mr. Bouchard, and a 5-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen to appoint Brian Payne to the Conservation Commission effective immediately through June 30, 2025.

Motion by Ms. Vaughn, seconded by Mr. Alcombright, and a 5-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen to appoint Brian Payne to the Community Preservation Committee effective immediately through June 30, 2026.

Annual Appointment of Animal Inspector

Ms. Emberg explained that the Town is required to appoint an Animal Inspector annually. Kingston's current Animal Inspector is Debra Mueller, is willing to serve for the upcoming year.

Motion by Ms. Vaughn, seconded by Mr. Bouchard, and a 5-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move to reappoint Debra Mueller as Animal Inspector through April 30, 2025.

Acceptance of Donation

Ms. Emberg explained that the Veteran's Department received the following donations and has asked the Board to accept:

Motion by Mr. Bouchard, seconded by Mr. Alcombright, and a 5-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen accept the following donations to the Veteran's Donation Fund:

- \$100 donation from Susan Waletkus
- \$400 donation from an anonymous donor

Consideration of Proposed Changes to Town Meeting Schedule

Mr. Hickey discussed that to provide additional time to the Kingston School Committee, he is recommending the Board reschedule the Town Meeting to May 11, 2024, from May 4, 2024.

Mr. Hickey briefly explained the revised schedule for the Board's consideration. Mr. Hickey also mentioned that the Intermediate School auditorium, Town Moderator, and Town Counsel are all available on May 11th.

Motion by Mr. Bouchard, seconded by Mr. Alcombright and a 5-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen approve the amended May 2024 Town Meeting schedule presented this evening. The new date for the Annual Town Meeting will be May 11, 2024.

Meeting Minutes

Motion by Ms. Vaughn, seconded by Mr. Bouchard and a 5-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen approve the open session meeting minutes from February 8, 2024, February 27, 2024, as amended and March 11, 2024, as presented.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Hickey read from his report:

Financial Updates

- There are no financial updates this week.

Project Updates

- The boat ramp project is underway.
- The Town has successfully completed moving paper paystubs to electronic paystubs. This has taken two years to complete. With the support of all town employees, this project will improve the payroll process, reduce paper and allow employees to access payroll information electronically. Thanks to Human Resource Manager Tina Betti, Treasurer Ken Moalli and Payroll Consultant Jenn Rose.

Personnel Update

- IT Manager Marie Grossmann has updated her retirement date to June 14, 2024. Ms. Grossmann has spoken to the company that has helped her for a quote to outsource the IT manager. The quote came in today and is less money than the current IT manager salary.

Mr. Crone added that he was a member of the Technology Advisory Committee a while back and he noted they outsourced IT services and the services provided were not up to par. At that time the committee proposed having a full-time employee. Mr. Crone wanted to note that if they sign a contract with a company, he recommends a shorter contract as there are some companies that are not great.

- Erin Benoit has resigned from her full-time Assistant Town Planner position and has agreed to work part time in the same position.

The Memorial Day cookout after the parade will be happening again this year and if anyone is interested in volunteering they would love the help.

SELECTMEN COMMENTS:

Mr. Crone asked about the Board reviewing policies on a regular basis. Mr. Hickey stated there has not been a schedule, but he would be happy to bring policies forward for the Board's review and discussion, sometime after Town Meeting.

Motion by Ms. Vaughn, seconded by Mr. Bouchard and a 5-0-0 vote,
VOTE: I move to adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:41pm

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