

Board of Selectmen

April 6, 2021

Remote meeting via telephone conference call

Present:

- Board of Selectmen: Ms. Mary Power (Chair), Mr. Joseph Fisher and Mr. Bill Ramsey
- Mr. Tom Mayo, Town Administrator
- Ms. Michelle Monsegur, Assistant Town Administrator

6:00 PM: Call to order

Ms. Power called the meeting to order and read the following statement:

“This meeting is being held remotely as an alternate means of public access pursuant to an Order issued by the Governor of Massachusetts dated March 12, 2020 Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law. You are hereby advised that this meeting and all communications during this meeting may be recorded by the Town of Hingham in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. If any participant wishes to record this meeting, please notify the chair at the start of the meeting in accordance with M.G.L. c. 30A, § 20(f) so that the chair may inform all other participants of said recording.

Ms. Power announced that the meeting was being broadcast live by Harbor Media and asked if anyone else was recording or taking photographs. There were no responses.

Board of Selectmen members who were participating remotely were Mary Power, Chair, Joe Fisher, and Bill Ramsey

Approval of minutes

The approval of the minutes was postponed until Thursday, April 8, 2021.

Discussion and Vote regarding appointment of two permanent Police Sergeant positions and one provisional Police Sergeant position (candidates being considered are: James Brady, Brian Fernandes, Katelin McGillicuddy, Ryan Ross, Jeremiah Sullivan, and Philip Tracey)

Ms. Power welcomed Chief Jones who provided the following recommendation for the Board’s consideration:

“I am extremely proud of all the candidates who put themselves forward for consideration for the open Sergeant positions. They all represented the Police Department and the Town of Hingham in a professional and thoughtful manner. Prior to the public interviews by this Board last week, the Police Department held a Police Chief Interview Panel for all of the candidates, which consisted of Police Chief William Quigley from Cohasset, Deputy Chief Carol Brusick from Norwell, and Chief Mark Thompson from Scituate. Deputy Chief Ryan O’Shea, Administrative Lieutenant David Petite, and Chief Jones and I were also present, but did not participate in the interview or the scoring process. The position of Police Sergeant is often referred to as the most important role in the organization. They are the front-line supervisors who directly oversee and support the men and women who dedicate themselves to protecting and serving our community. They are almost always the first supervisor to take command of a critical incident and they must possess a knowledge, self-confidence and command presence necessary to successfully manage these often chaotic events, especially during their critical initial

phases. In making my recommendation, I not only took into account their two interviews, but also the overall work history and job performance demonstrated by the candidates. This was not an easy decision with so many qualified individuals willing to take on the added responsibility and liability of a leadership position. Amongst the candidates before you, three individuals stood out and I submit the following personnel to you for your consideration for promotion. I recommend that Detective Philip Tracey be appointed as a full-time permanent Police Sergeant. Detective Tracey brings over 20 years of professional law enforcement experience and a proven willingness to mentor and assist other officers. The Chief's Interview Panel stated that he delivered an impressive interview and displayed a level of maturity and composure while being able to address issues thoughtfully and concisely. His on-the-job performance has shown him to be a dedicated and seasoned employee who possesses a wealth of knowledge and a strong desire to take on a leadership role. He has proven himself to be skilled in handling critical incidents in his role as detective and as an investigator with the Metropolitan Law Enforcement Council. I also recommend that Officer Brian Fernandez be appointed as a full-time permanent Police Sergeant. The Chief's Panel found that Officer Fernandez was goal-oriented, had a solid command presence and was aware of the substantial increase in responsibility that comes with advancement. His on-the-job performance is consistent with the panel's findings. He does not shy away from increased responsibilities and seeks out challenging roles within the Department, such as Field Training Officer and Firearms Licensing Officer. His confidence and critical thinking skills have allowed him to take control of serious incidents and lends to his promise as a leader. Further, I recommend that Officer James Brady be appointed as a full-time temporary Police Sergeant. The Chief's Panel described his interview as outstanding as he displayed a high level of confidence and command presence, along with a strong knowledge of law enforcement and leadership issues. Officer Brady's on-the-job performance mirrors the panel's findings. He has demonstrated himself to be an extremely competent leader and role model. His responsibilities as a Field Training Officer, a Firearms Instructor, and a member of the Metropolitan Law Enforcement Council's SWAT Team have positioned himself to be a mentor and a successful supervisor. I would like to thank the Board for their thoughtful insights and questions during the interviews held last week and for their careful consideration of tonight's appointments. Thank you."

Mr. Fisher reported that he was very impressed with the skills and dedication of each candidate. He added that the decision was a very hard one. He praised Officer Caitlin McGillicuddy's work on mental health issues. He added that each officer had such good training and a real caring for the Hingham community. He supported the Chief's recommendation. Mr. Ramsey echoed Mr. Fisher's comments. He applauded the candidates for stepping forward and felt that future of the Department is strong. He also supported the Chief's recommendations. Ms. Power also found the decision very difficult. She encouraged the three candidates not selected this evening to seek opportunities to further enhance their already strong records.

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to appoint Detective Philip Tracey and Officer Brian Fernandez as Permanent Police Sergeants for the Town of Hingham. Mr. Ramsey seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

Ms. Power: yes

Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion to appoint Officer James Brady as a Provisional Police Sergeant for the Town of Hingham. Mr. Fisher seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

Ms. Power: yes

Ms. Power congratulated the three candidates who were offered Sergeant positions and told the candidates not offered positions that the Board looks forward to working with them in the future. She noted that the hiring of the Lieutenants and Sergeants has been a very rigorous process and she thanked Chief Jones and Deputy Chief O'Shea for their help, guidance, and for a job well done.

Discussion of proposed traffic improvements at the intersection of Chief Justice Cushing Highway (Rt. 3A) and Kilby Street

Ms. Power announced that the Board had been joined by Town Engineer J.R. Frey and Sergeant Jeffrey Kilroy of the Traffic Committee. Mr. Frey explained that MassDOT has declared the intersection of Route 3A and Kilby Street to be a sufficient hazard to warrant immediate action. He said that MassDOT has had an engineering consulting firm review the intersection and has arrived at a proposed solution that would be paid for by MassDOT during this construction season. Mr. Frey said that the work primarily includes the installation of two new traffic islands, with sloped granite edging, that would allow for a right-turn egress from Kilby Street and a right-turn ingress to Kilby Street in either direction, but it will no longer allow for typical cross traffic access and will deny left-turn access. He added that the work would also include the addition of sidewalk access in the right of way on the west side of Kilby Street. He said that there would be a new rectangular rapid-flash beacon to aid those using the crosswalk to cross Route 3A. Mr. Frey felt that this would significantly improve pedestrian safety and access. He said that the neighborhood would benefit because the enhancements would eliminate cut-through traffic in the Kilby Street neighborhood. He suggested that it would be in the best interest of the Town to endorse these improvements. Sgt. Kilroy noted that this intersection has been an issue for a long time. Problems have included over 50 crashes since 2016, including one that was fatal. He said that there have been numerous concerns from residents, especially regarding Kilby Street as a cut-through for vehicles, including large trucks. Mr. Frey explained that, because Route 3A is a State Road, limited jurisdiction has been one of the biggest challenges for the Traffic Committee. Mr. Frey said that the State contemplated several different scenarios at the intersection, including an additional traffic light and a slow-speed rotary. Ultimately, the State was able to obtain funding for the proposed enhancements and was unable to obtain additional funding for the installation of new stop lights, which would be a bigger project.

Mr. Ramsey asked about the limits of Hingham's jurisdiction at this intersection. Mr. Frey explained that MassDOT made this recommendation to the Town of Hingham after a review of all of the different options that were available. He further explained that MassDOT reached out to the Traffic Committee and asked for their support. Because of the safety issue, the Traffic Committee felt that it would be important to support the project. He also said that MassDOT could implement the proposed changes even without the support of the Town. There was some additional discussion regarding the number of

accidents at the intersection. Sgt. Kilroy said that the largest percentage of the crashes at the intersection happen when vehicles cross Route 3A and noted that the speed limit is 45 mph at that area.

Mr. Fisher asked if there would be any cost to the Town, if these changes are put in place. Mr. Frey said that there was no cost to the Town. Mr. Fisher also asked if he anticipated any unintentional consequences of the enhancements, such as illegal left-hand turns. Mr. Frey noted that there are laws in place to control illegal movements, but cannot control every action. He felt that the changes to the intersection would aim to reduce the amount of traffic within the intersection. There was some additional discussion about the existing crosswalk and its dangers. Sgt. Kilroy also said that GPS would automatically update with the changes. Mr. Frey advised that the work could start in the early summer and could be expected to last one month. Mr. Frey also said that neighbors and abutters have been made aware of the proposed changes.

Mr. Daniel Miller-Dempsey, 88 Kilby Street, member of the Traffic Committee, said that neighbors feel that the crosswalk is very unsafe so neighborhood kids have been crossing through the train station parking lot. He also cited solar glare as a safety factor as well.

Mr. Tim Dempsey, 88 Kilby Street, noted that East Elementary School is very close, requiring children walking to school to cross Route 3A at this intersection. He supported the proposed changes.

Mr. Peter Dumphy, 108 Kilby Street, asked for more information on the crosswalk signals. Mr. Frey explained that there would be rectangular rapid flash beacons that would be activated by pedestrians, alerting traffic that a pedestrian is waiting to cross. Mr. Dumphy fully supported the enhancements. He thanked Sgt. Kilroy for his advocacy of the project.

Sgt. Kilroy added that emergency vehicles, including fire trucks, would still be able to access Kilby Street in the event of an emergency.

Mr. Sean Geary, 128 Kilby Street, said that he was in favor of eliminating the cut-through traffic. His main concern was the use of flexi-posts at the traffic island and felt that their look was not in keeping with the look of the neighborhood. He asked if there would be an opportunity to enhance the look of the islands with planters or greenery. Mr. Frey said that the flexi-posts are intended to be a temporary solution. He suggested following up later with an answer regarding planters on the islands. Ms. Power suggested that the Garden Club might be able to help with this.

Mr. Keith Jermyn, 102 Kilby Street, expressed his support for the enhancements to the intersection and felt that this intersection is one of the Town's biggest safety concerns.

Mr. Sean and Lynn Moynihan, 72 Kilby Street, were happy to hear of the changes, but had some concerns about the speed of the traffic at the intersection. He encouraged increased signage to alert vehicles to the upcoming crosswalk. Mr. Frey suggested that additional signage is a simple addition to the plan. There was additional discussion of traffic implications to the intersection where Victoria's Sub Shop is located.

Mr. Joe Siriani, 120 Kilby Street, in favor of the project but voiced some concerns regarding the changing traffic path due to the elimination of a left turn at the intersection. Mr. Frey said that they could make

changes to the intersection if they see issues in the future. He also said that he would prefer a traffic light at the intersection.

Ms. Tina Bibby, 122 Kilby, Street voiced her support for the changes and asked if a road diet is still being considered at the Summer Street rotary. Mr. Frey said that it is still being considered at that location. He did not think that a road diet on Summer Street would significantly impact the amount of traffic at the Route 3A /Kilby Street intersection.

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion that the Board endorse the traffic improvements at the intersection of Chief Justice Cushing Highway (Route 3A) and Kilby Street as proposed by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and presented in the Nitsch Engineering plan “Short-Term Improvement Concept Plan” dated February 6, 2020. Mr. Ramsey seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

Ms. Power: yes

To sign a contract with Govconnection, Inc. for Data Storage and Support

Mr. Steve Becker, IT Director, explained that the Town has outgrown the current back-up data storage plan and the current contract is coming due in May. He reported that the FY20 cost for the service was \$21,415. Because he has been very happy with the current device, he has looked at an upgraded device from the same company and has compared it to another vendor. If he decided to use a new vendor, the Town would have to purchase a new appliance as well as the service. Because using another vendor would be more costly, he decided to renew the contract with Govconnection for an additional 3 years. Govconnection would upgrade the hardware device every 4 years at no additional charge, thus no Capital would be used. He said that the device would be stored at Town Hall and backed-up to the cloud by the vendor. He noted that the new device would have triple the storage of the Town’s current system. Mr. Fisher asked about any additional energy use. Mr. Becker said the energy use would be minimal.

Vote: Ms. Power made a motion to sign the contract with Govconnection, Inc. for Data Storage and Support in an amount not to exceed \$68,882.00. Mr. Fisher seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

Ms. Power: yes

Ms. Em Jay, 331 Elm Street, Cohasset, asked the Chair to repeat who had been appointed as Police Sergeants. Ms. Power stated that the Board had voted to appoint Philip Tracey and Brian Fernandes as permanent Police Sergeants and James Brady as a provisional Police Sergeant for the Town of Hingham.

Inside Town Finances: Volume 12 – Long-Term Liabilities

Ms. Power presented the twelfth in a series of presentations on Town Finances: Long-Term Liabilities. The entire presentation can be found online at www.hingham-ma.gov.

COVID-19 Update

Mr. Mayo gave the following update on the COVID-19 pandemic:

“COVID-19 Data

As of yesterday, confirmed COVID-19 cases in Massachusetts totaled 607,967. According to [public health data](#) from the MA Department of Public Health (DPH) released last week, the Town’s designation remains “yellow,” indicating a “medium risk” of spread in the community. There have been 82 new cases of COVID-19 in Hingham over the past 14 days, and a total of 1,785 cases in Hingham since the start of the pandemic. The number of new cases has plateaued in recent weeks. The average daily incidence rate for the Town of Hingham was 24.4 per 100,000 residents, and our percent positivity rate was 2.74% for the previous 14 days.

Vaccine Rollout

According to DPH’s [daily COVID-19 vaccine report](#), over 1.49 million people in Massachusetts have been fully vaccinated as of yesterday. As of April 1st, approximately 23.0% of Hingham residents have been fully vaccinated, up from 19.2% last week. As of yesterday, April 5th, residents age 55+ and residents with [one certain medical condition](#) became eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine in Massachusetts. The Baker-Polito Administration has adopted the CDC’s updated list of medical conditions. The full list now includes the following conditions:

1. Cancer
2. Chronic kidney disease
3. Chronic lung diseases, including COPD, asthma (moderate-to-severe), interstitial lung disease, cystic fibrosis, and pulmonary hypertension
4. Dementia or other neurological conditions
5. Diabetes (type 1 or type 2)
6. Down syndrome
7. Heart conditions (such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathies or hypertension)
8. HIV infection
9. Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system)
10. Liver disease
11. Overweight and obesity
12. Pregnancy
13. Sickle cell disease or thalassemia
14. Smoking, current or former
15. Solid organ or blood stem cell transplant
16. Stroke or cerebrovascular disease, which affects blood flow to the brain
17. Substance use disorders

The last phase of the vaccine rollout plan will begin on Monday, April 19th, when the general public ages 16+ become eligible for the vaccine in Massachusetts. Learn more about nearby vaccination sites and pre-registration by visiting vaxfinder.mass.gov.

Reopening Plans

We will be meeting with department heads on Thursday to discuss municipal reopening plans and will report out to the Board next Tuesday night.”

Mr. Mayo also reported that the Town of Marshfield has offered 100 vaccinations to Hingham teachers and the mass vaccination site in Marshfield. At the time of the meeting, approximately 40 teachers had taken advantage of the opportunity.

Mr. Fisher asked of the Town was currently helping assist seniors who are not able to get to a vaccination site. Mr. Mayo said that the Town would be receiving a number of Johnson & Johnson vaccines, which they plan to make available to homebound seniors the following week. Anyone interested could contact the Senior Center for more details.

Public Comment

The Board of Selectmen has set aside up to 15 minutes for public comment for items not on the Board’s agenda, but within the purview of the Board of Selectmen, during which time we typically follow the guidelines of open meeting. We encourage speakers to present remarks in a respectful manner and not to indulge in personalities. The Public Comment time is not a period of debate for the Board of Selectmen and the Board is neither adopting nor endorsing any of the comments made during the Public Comment period.

Mr. Greg Doble, 14 Village Lane, asked for an update on the Field Study and the consolidation of the field scheduling. Ms. Power noted that the Field Study results as compiled by Weston and Sampson is available on the Town’s website. She also explained that Weston & Sampson recommended a Field Maintenance Plan as a first step. Ms. Power said that a plan has been recommended, as part of the Town’s budget, at a cost of \$241,000, including centralized permitting. She suggested that he could get more information by contacting Assitant Town Administrator, Michelle Monsegur.

Mr. Shaun Galvin, 143 Fort Hill Street, asked about the signing of the Town Meeting Warrant and quorum requirements. Ms. Power reported that the Board would addressing both items at their next meeting.

Selectmen and Town Administrator Reports

Ms. Monsegur reported that the Massachusetts Department of Fire Safety has awarded Hingham a Health and Safety grant of \$14,762, which will be used to purchase additional fitness equipment for Hingham’s fire stations in an effort to combat cardiac disease. Cardiac disease is the leading cause of death among firefighters nationwide.

Mr. Mayo reported that, thanks to the work of Town Engineer J.R. Frey and the Traffic Committee, Hingham has been awarded \$150,837 by MassDOT to add flashing safety beacons to four existing pedestrian crossings, providing safe routes to several schools and Wompatuck State Park.

Mr. Ramsey reported that the filming of the reenactment of the Battle of Grape Island took place last weekend and will be available for public viewing in the next few weeks. He thanked Veteran Services Officer Keith Jermyn for doing a great job coordinating the reenactment.

Ms. Power announced that she had recently had the privilege of participating in a Civics event coordinated by the 8th grade History teachers, specifically Jennifer Driscoll. She said that she, along with some Town Administration and School staff, had an opportunity to engage with some of the 8th grade students who have been working on a variety of Civics projects. She said that the students have been researching issues (traffic issues in Hingham, managing litter in town, etc.) and finding ways to make a difference in their community. She thanked the eighth graders who she met with and was impressed with how engaged they were with issues facing Hingham.

Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Fisher seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

Ms. Power: yes

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 PM.

Documents: A complete meeting packet of supporting documentation is on file and available for public review in the Board of Selectmen's office