

Board of Selectmen

May 18, 2021

Remote meeting via telephone conference call

Present:

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

6:15 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 asked if any participants were recording the meeting. There were no responses.

Ms. Power also noted that the Board of Selectmen members who were participating remotely were herself, Mary Power, Chair and Joe Fisher. She reported that Selectman Bill Ramsey was on reserve duty and would not be participating.

Ms. Power announced that the Board just received word that one of the candidates to be interviewed for the position on the Trustees of the Bathing Beach had withdrawn from consideration and the Board would conduct some of their business prior to the interviews.

Approval of minutes

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to approve the minutes dated April 1, 2021. Ms. Power seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Ms. Power: yes

Vote: Ms. Power made a motion to approve the minutes dated April 6, 2021. Mr. Fisher seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Ms. Power: yes

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to approve the minutes dated April 8, 2021. Ms. Power seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Ms. Power: yes

Vote: Ms. Power made a motion to approve the minutes dated April 13, 2021. Mr. Fisher seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Ms. Power: yes

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to approve the minutes dated April 27, 2021. Ms. Power seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Ms. Power: yes

Vote: Ms. Power made a motion to approve the minutes dated May 2, 2021. Mr. Fisher seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Ms. Power: yes

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to approve the minutes dated May 4, 2021. Ms. Power seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Ms. Power: yes

Vote: Ms. Power made a motion to approve the minutes dated May 8, 2021. Mr. Fisher seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Ms. Power: yes

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to approve the minutes dated May 11, 2021. Ms. Power seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Ms. Power: yes

To approve the issuance of a Common Victualler license to Jersey Mike's Subs

COVID-19 Update

Mr. Al Graziano, one of the owners of Jersey Mike's Hingham location said that they are located in the Stop N Shop Plaza on Lincoln Street and plan to open on Wednesday, May 26, 2021. Ms. Monsegur noted that Jersey Mike's has received all the necessary permits from Town departments and no Police review was necessary.

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to approve the issuance of a Common Victualler license to GQ Subs Hingham, LLC d/b/a Jersey Mike's Subs, 400 Lincoln Street. Ms. Power seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Ms. Power: yes

Ms. Power welcomed Jersey Mike's to Hingham and thanked them for choosing Hingham for their business. Mr. Graziano announced that they plan to donate 100% of their proceeds on May 26, 2021, their opening day, to the Hingham High School Athletic Department. The Board thanked him for the kind gesture.

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 657,119. The 7-day average of new COVID-19 cases in the state has been trending downward since early April. The statewide positivity rate is also down to 1.02% and the 7-day average of confirmed deaths from COVID-19 has dropped to 8.3 from a peak of around 175. According to public health data from the MA Department of Public Health (DPH) released last week, the Town's designation is now “green,” indicating a “lower risk” of spread in the community. There have been 24 new cases of COVID-19 in Hingham over the past 14 days, and a total of 1,953 cases in Hingham since the start of the pandemic. The average daily incidence rate for the Town of Hingham dropped to 14.1 per 100,000 residents, and our percent positivity rate was 1.16% for the previous 14 days.

Vaccine Rollout

According to DPH's [daily COVID-19 vaccine report](#), over 3.2 million people in Massachusetts have been fully vaccinated as of today. Connecticut and Massachusetts are leading the way nationwide in terms of percent of the population that is fully vaccinated, [according to Johns Hopkins University](#). CT is at 44.8% and MA is at 44.2%. As of May 11th, approximately 51% of Hingham residents have been fully vaccinated. We are proud of everyone and want to thank you for taking vaccination seriously and we hope to see that number continue to rise.

COVID-19 Testing Center

Back in December, the Town partnered with mPathy LLC to open a COVID-19 testing center at 308 Cushing Street. The mPathy testing center has administered more than 19,000 tests for Hingham residents and our neighbors from nearby communities through the month of April. We are very grateful to Hingham resident Jackson Stone and his entire mPathy team as well as to the Town staff and officials who worked diligently to make this service possible. As usage of the site has decreased significantly in recent weeks we will be closing the site and the last day for testing will be this Saturday, May 22, 2021. If you still need a COVID-19 test after this Saturday, tests are available at CVS locations in Hingham, Weymouth, and Norwell; Walgreens locations in Weymouth and Rockland; and the CareWell Urgent Care Center in Norwell, among other places.

State Reopening Guidance

As most people have heard, Governor Baker made a significant announcement about COVID-19 and reopening plans for Massachusetts yesterday. The Baker-Polito Administration announced that the Commonwealth is on track to meet the goal of vaccinating 4.1 million residents by the first week of June and that all remaining COVID-19 restrictions will be lifted effective May 29th. This means that effective May 29th, all industries will be permitted to open, all industry restrictions will be lifted, and capacity will increase to 100% for all industries. The gathering limit will be rescinded. The state encourages industries to continue to follow CDC guidance for cleaning and hygiene protocols. The Commonwealth's Face Covering Order will also be rescinded on May 29th. However, face coverings will still be mandatory for all individuals on public and private transportation systems (including rideshares, livery, taxi, ferries, MBTA, Commuter Rail and transportation stations), in healthcare facilities, and in other settings hosting vulnerable populations, such as congregate care settings. Non-vaccinated individuals are advised to continue wearing face masks and to continue distancing in most settings. In making his announcement, the Governor reported that new COVID-19 cases have dropped by 89% since January 8th, COVID hospitalizations are down 88% since January 1st, and the positive test rate is down by 88% from its peak of 8.7% on January 1st. Governor Baker also plans to end the State of Emergency on June 15th. The state has pledged to work with legislative and municipal partners during this period to manage an orderly transition from emergency measures adopted by executive order and special legislation during the period of the State of Emergency. This change has many implications for Town operations, so we are working with counsel to understand and prepare for this transition. For more information regarding the Governor's reopening plan, please visit [mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov)."

Mr. Mayo also announced that, after a review by the Town's Command Group, the Fourth of July Parade would take place in Hingham this summer. He encouraged unvaccinated people who attend the parade to wear face coverings.

6:30 PM: Joint Session with the Trustees of the Bathing Beach to fill a vacancy.

Candidates:

- **6:30 PM - Bruce MacAloney**
- **6:45 PM - Adrienne Ramsey**

Ms. Power welcomed Chair of the Trustees, Alan Perrault, and Trustees member, Ed Johnson. She also thanked Christopher Daley for serving on the Trustees of the Bathing Beach for his service to the Town. Ms. Power explained that the Board of Selectmen, Mr. Perrault and Mr. Johnson would be interviewing two candidates for the position left open by Mr. Daley's exit. She noted that they would not be taking questions or comments from the public during the interview process.

Questions for the candidates including the following:

- Their thoughts on the untapped potential at the Bathing Beach
- Their background in Recreation
- Their recommendations for a better integration between the harbor, particularly the beach, and downtown Hingham
- Their thoughts on the holding of craft fairs on the Bathing Beach property
- What sorts of things would they advocate for within the footprint of the Bathing Beach?

Both candidates were invited to introduce themselves and to talk a bit about their background and their interest in serving on the Trustees of the Bathing Beach.

After hearing from the candidates, Ms. Power asked Mr. Perault and Mr. Johnson for their recommendation for an appointment. Each responded that while both candidates are strong, Ms. Ramsey would be the candidate at the top of the list to serve as the next Trustee. Mr. Fisher and Ms. Power concurred.

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion that the Board of Selectmen and the Trustees of the Bathing Beach appoint Adrienne Ramsey as a Trustee of the Bathing Beach to serve until a permanent Trustee is appointed at the 2022 Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Power seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Perrault: yes

Ms. Johnson: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Ms. Power: yes

Ms. Power expressed her sincere appreciation to both candidates.

Legislative Update with State Officials

State Officials participating were Senator Patrick O'Connor, Representative Joan Meschino, and Representative James Murphy. Ms. Power explained that the Board typically has a legislative update once a year and welcomed all three officials.

Highlights from Senator O'Conner's remarks are as follows:

- He praised Hingham's response to the Covid-19 pandemic
- He reported that the Governor would soon be lifting the State of Emergency as well as a vast majority of the Covid restrictions currently in place.
- He reported that this year's MA budget is strong, if not stronger than the pandemic began, with very little use of stabilization funds.
- He cited a study by the MA High Technology Council that reported the major impact on job loss and housing and food insecurity was amongst those who make less than \$50,000/year.
- He felt that the American Rescue Plan would be a huge asset for both the State and local municipalities.
- He was pleased that Foster School has been accepted into the MSBA.
- He was happy that ferry service has been restored.

Ms. Joan Meschino had the following remarks:

- She congratulated Hingham on a very successful Town Meeting and was pleased she could attend.
- She is very proud of the budget that the MA House of Representative has put forth and feels that it really invests in people and municipal aid.

- Ms. Meschino noted that she is seeing an unprecedented amount of grant opportunities at this time and congratulated Hingham for identifying and obtaining applicable grants.
- She reported that MA is moving forward with the building of a Veteran's Home in Chelsea and she is looking into other regional facilities that the State might provide to its Veterans.
- She is also looking into additional relief for small business owners.
- While her office is still remote, it is fully functional and she encouraged the Town to reach out if help is needed.
- She announced that ferry service would reopen on May 22, including direct service from Hingham to Boston, some service to the airport and weekend service from Hingham/Hull to Boston. Ms. Meschino reminded everyone that masks are still required while commuting on either public or private transportation.

Representative Murphy provided the following update:

- He reiterated Ms. Meschino's comment that all three legislative officials work as a team and are available to help residents, businesses, and municipalities.
- The Massachusetts economy is bouncing back from the pandemic quicker than anybody could have imagined and this is reflected in the House budget.
- The proposed budget of \$47 billion does not include raising any taxes and does not cut any services. The budget is now in the Senate awaiting approval.
- He also reported that Federal money would also be dispersed to municipalities.
- While he was pleased with the way the MA economy has rebounded, he noted that many people who are suffering due to economic effects of the pandemic and said his office is happy to help constituents any way they can.
- He was pleased that tele-medicine became a reality during the pandemic.
- Mr. Murphy also commended Hingham for doing a great job during the pandemic.
- He reported that the MA budget passed unanimously in the House of Representatives, with Republican and Democrats coming together in a bipartisan manner.

Ms. Power thanked the State Officials for their help in passing the Senior Means Tested Circuit Breaker Special Legislation. She felt that it would provide meaningful tax relief to 400-500 of Hingham's most vulnerable citizens. Mr. Fisher thanked the MA delegation for their help during the pandemic. He asked if they expect increased support for schools. Mr. O'Connor said that he anticipates some help, particularly in remedial education. He also reported that a grant program has been established to help with vocational programs and remedial classes in Community Colleges. Mr. O'Connor reported that Hingham has received \$1,491,000 in ESSR and American Rescue Plan funds, with an opportunity for more as well. He also said that the State of MA would receive \$4.5 billion in additional financial resources from the Federal Government. Mr. Fisher inquired to what extent municipalities would be able to hold remote meetings on an ongoing basis after the end of the State of Emergency. Mr. Murphy reported that State Officials are looking into this and hope to have more information soon. Ms. Power asked if there were any plans to extend the outdoor dining opportunities beyond the 60 after the end of the Governor's State of Emergency declaration, as in effect now. Mr. O'Connor reported that the MA Senate would be holding discussion next week regarding an amendment to the outdoor dining regulations, which is already showing strong support.

Ms. Meschino acknowledged that Ms. Power was participating in her last BOS meeting and would be stepping down after two successful terms as a Selectman for the Town of Hingham. She thanked Ms. Power for her public service and said “it has been a pleasure to work with a professional of your caliber. Your public service has been marked by leadership, dedication and such a wonderful community spirit. It is really inspiring to watch you work. Hingham should count themselves blessed to benefit from your knowledge, your expertise, your steady hand, your wonderful warm way and it is always with the community’s best interest at heart. I know that Hingham is very lucky and they will benefit from the fruits of your public service for many generations to come.” She presented a Citation to Ms. Power from the House of Representatives, signed by herself and Rep. Murphy. Rep. Murphy made some additional remarks and thanked her for everything she has done for the community and for helping Ms. Meschino and himself be better Representative by staying in touch.

Senator O’Connor also provided some remarks about Ms. Power’s term as Selectman and said, “The way in which you go about tackling an issue is one of the most fair and thorough ways that a local elected official can do it.” He added, “I think of Hingham as a shining example for a community of your size for anyone across the entire United States of America. Hingham just does it right. You take your time. You’re deliberate and you get things done. It is because of leaders like you that Hingham is in that position and Hingham has been incredible lucky to have you and your talents for the past six years.” Senator O’Connor also provided Ms. Power with a citation from the Senate for her six years of dedicated service and her outstanding leadership. Ms. Power thanked all three officials for their kind words.

Public Safety Facility Contracts

Town Engineer J.R. Frey reported that the Town and the Public Safety Building Committee has been busy identifying how the contract for design development should be structured and determining a fair price for the services being rendered. The Committee is taking serious note of comments provided during Town Meeting. They have arrived at a good contract with KBA and Hill. With regard to the KBA contract, the current appropriation provides for funding for KBA through design services only. The remainder of the fee is negotiated and agreed upon, subject to future appropriation at another Town Meeting.

With respect to the Hill contract, Mr. Frey reported that the actual funding appropriated for this contract would carry the Town through construction documents and bidding. He noted that they would only use the services through design documents unless they receive approval for more at a future Town Meeting for future services.

Mr. Fisher reported that the Board would be making sure that the Town is looking at energy efficiency issues and the carbon footprint of the project. In response to further questions from Mr. Fisher, Mr. Frey clarified that both contracts have been reviewed by Town Counsel and are consistent with actions taken at Town Meeting. Mr. Frey said that the Public Safety Building Committee has been very satisfied with the work of Kaestle Boos thus far.

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the contract with Kaestle Boos Associates for the completion of schematic design and design development documents phases for the Public Safety Facility project in an amount not to exceed \$1,169,000. Ms. Power seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Ms. Power: yes

Vote: Ms. Power made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the contract with Hill International for Owner's Project Manager Services for the schematic design and design development phases of the Public Safety Facility project in an amount not to exceed \$219,660. Mr. Fisher seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Ms. Power: yes

Complete Streets Policy

Ms. Power explained that the Complete Streets Policy had been presented at the Board of Selectmen's meeting on May 4, 2021. There was some discussion by the Board. Counsel had an opportunity to look at the policy and circulated an updated policy to the Board. Ms. Monsegur reported that she has spoken to Selectman Ramsey and he is in support of the policy as presented. Mr. Fisher said that changes that have been made specifically addressed previous questions he had asked.

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to adopt the Complete Streets Policy, as presented. Ms. Power seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Ms. Power: yes

Selectmen/Town Administrator Reports

Ms. Monsegur reported, on behalf of Water Superintendent Russel Tierney, that the Weir River Water System has received a 2021 Public Water System Award from the DEP for outstanding performance and achievement in the medium and large systems category.

She also reminded everyone that Hingham's Town Election will be held on Saturday, May 22 and polls will be open from 8 am to 8 pm. While today was the last day to vote by mail, and mail-in ballots are due by 8pm on Saturday, people are welcome to drop them off in the mailbox at the end of the Town Hall driveway. The Clerk's office will be checking that box all day on Saturday to make sure that those votes are counted.

Ms. Monsegur also reported that the video tribute to the Battle of Grape Island recently premiered on Harbor Media's public channels, Verizon HD 2130 and Comcast 97. She said that this was a collaboration between Harbor Media, the Department of Veterans Services, the Hingham Historical Commission, the Hingham Historical Society and many other Town staff and citizens, including Mr. Paul Healy. The video commemorates the events of May 21, 1775 when a British force landed on Grape Island and began loading their boats with hay and livestock obtained from the farm of Hingham loyalist Elijah Leavitt. The Hingham militia exchanged fire with the British and drove them from Grape Island.

The video will air again at 10 am on May 19 and can be viewed on Harbor Media's YouTube channel. A link to it will also be placed on the Town website.

Mr. Mayo announced that some people would like to express their thanks to Ms. Power for her leadership and her public service to the Town. Many volunteers and staff made remarks in honor of Ms. Power's tenure on the Board of Selectmen and other Town Committees, including:

- Selectman Fisher on behalf of himself and on behalf of Mr. Ramsey who could not be present
- Ms. Michelle Monsegur, Assistant Town Administrator
- Mr. Tom Mayo, Town Administrator
- Mr. Bob Curley, Chair of the Advisory Committee
- Mr. Paul Healy, former Chair of the Board of Selectmen
- Ms. Karen Johnson, former Chair of the Board of Selectmen
- Mr. Jonathan Asher
- Ms. Christine Smith, Chair of the South Shore Country Club Management Committee
- Mr. Conor Power

Ms. Power provided some final remarks regarding her time as a Town volunteer and as Select Board member including, challenges, accomplishments, thanks to colleagues, and fond memories of her time as a Town volunteer.

Announcement

The Chair stated: "As the current Chair of the Select Board, I designate Joe Fisher to participate and vote on school collective bargaining matters to the extent that such action may be required pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, chapter 150e."

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

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Ms. Power: yes

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

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