



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

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Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

Select Board

Date: 2022-10-11

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: Reading Town Hall

Location: Select Board Meeting Room

Address: 16 Lowell Street

Session: Open Session

Purpose: General Business

Version: Final

Attendees: **Members - Present:**

Mark Dockser, Carlo Bacci, Chris Haley, Jackie McCarthy, Karen Herrick

Members - Not Present:

Others Present:

Town Manager Fidel Maltez, E.A. Caitlin Nocella, Town Clerk Laura Gemme

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Executive Assistant Caitlin Nocella

Topics of Discussion:

This meeting was held in person and remote via Zoom.

Mark Dockser called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Public Comment

Rosemary DiBenedetto feels the town should buy the Walgreens building and then tear it down and build a parking garage. She also noted a long list of things that need updating at the Pleasant Street Center.

John Parsons noted that the Pleasant Street Center hasn't been fully staffed in a long time and it would be nice to get a full staff for the seniors.

Liaisons

Bacci attended the Board of Health last week; they are issuing a RFP for a community needs assessment survey to help with needs regarding covid. The MWRA waste water numbers are up. They also discussed a rodent issue up at the water tower.

Haley noted he attended the Economic Development Summit last week which was well attended by the residents of the area. Lots of ideas were discussed and it was filmed by RCTV for anyone who wishes to watch. He also attended the RMLD Open House which was fantastic. He held office hours earlier today where most of the comments were in regards to a later agenda item, Walgreens.

Herrick noted she met with Lisa Egan from the Chamber of Commerce about the proposed Polystyrene Bylaw and listened to Ms. Egan's concerns. She attended the Remembrance and Recovery event. She participated in the Council on Aging meeting where the main topic was planning for a new Senior Center and the need for inclusive design, not just ADA compliance. She also attended the financial forum.

Dockser noted RECALC voted 7-0 in support of moving forward with further investigation of the Walgreens Building. They also did a community survey and will receive an update sooner than December to report back.

Town Managers Report

Maltez noted that our trash contractor JRM was bought out by Republic Services. They assured us a smooth transition, but it has not been going well. He assured the board they are speaking with Republic and doing everything they can to rectify the situation.

We received a complete streets grant. The last beer garden of the season will be October 22, 2022.

State Warrant

Town Clerk Laura Gemme was present and noted this warrant is for the November 8th State Election and was provided in the packet for the board.

Haley moved to close the State Election Warrant as presented to be held on November 8th, 2022.

Herrick seconded the motion and the motion passed with the following roll call vote:

Bacci – yes; Haley – yes Herrick – yes; McCarthy – yes; Dockser – yes.

Green Communities

Maltez noted there was legislation signed last week that potentially impacts Article 22 on the warrant for Town Meeting. The Article may not be necessary anymore and it is Town Counsels recommendation to table it and wait until next year.

Herrick would like to hear more of Town Counsels reasoning for tabling this. She feels the Article still may be needed so it would be best to let it move forward at this Town Meeting.

Future Agendas

The board discussed future agenda items.

Minutes

The board edited the previous meeting minutes.

Haley moved to approve the meeting minutes from September 13th, 2022 as amended. The motion was seconded by McCarthy and approved with a 5-0 vote.

Haley moved to approve the meeting minutes from September 20th, 2022 as amended. The motion was seconded by Herrick and approved with a 5-0 vote.

17 Harnden Street Proposal

The board discussed the current proposal from the Walgreen building that is on the table. They specifically discussed the timing of the article for town meeting and potentially holding a special election in January or February. The board feels that maybe this town meeting is too soon since there are still so many unknown answers.

Dockser noted he felt ReCalc was interested in the Walgreens building but it needs more discussion before a final answer which is why they voted to move forward with discussions at this time. The board agrees as well that while this building could potentially meet a lot of their needs, there are still many questions as to whether it is the right building for this.

Haley shared some concerns from residents that they feel the Walgreens/Senior Center proposal is skipping the line ahead of the Killam Building. It was noted by Dockser and Herrick that the Senior Center is not taking priority over Killam, it is just happening at the same time and are both high priorities.

Maltez gave the board a presentation about some other options for a senior center. Maltez gave this presentation at the Senior Center Lunch N Learn last week. The presentation can be found in the Select Board packet on the town website.

The board discussed the different costs associated with each option and then decided to proceed in Executive Session for further discussion.

At 9:01 PM, Haley moved to go into Executive Session, including staff members Fidel Maltez, Caitlin Nocella and Ivria Fried and Jennie Merrill from Town Counsel's office, under Executive Session Purpose 6 to discuss the acquisition and value of 17 Harnden Street, as the Chair declares that an open meeting could have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the body; and under Purpose 7, to comply with Section 22 of the Open Meeting Law and that the board will reconvene in open session to continue discussion on the 17 Harnden Road topic. The motion was seconded by Herrick and approved with a unanimous roll call vote.

The board returned to open session at 9:54 PM.

The board discussed which member would be the point person on this going forward.

Herrick nominated Dockser while Bacci noted he would be willing to do it. Haley deferred to Bacci while McCarthy felt Dockser would be a good choice because of his background with the seniors.

Haley moved to authorize the Town Manager to send Notice to Award the Contract to BH Waltham II LLC, c/o Partel Management LLC, for the acquisition of 17 Harnden Street, subject to successful negotiations, as discussed during tonight's meeting, and authorize Select Board Member Dockser to engage in such negotiations on behalf of the Board. The motion was seconded by Herrick and approved with a 5-0 vote.

Haley moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:58 PM. The motion was seconded by Herrick and approved with a 5-0 vote.

Documents Used:

2022-10-11 Select Board Packet

