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Town Clerk-Dighton, MA

APR 03 2023

Time: 9:59am

By: [Signature]

The following meeting was videotaped and audio recorded.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Regular Meeting

Wednesday March 8, 2023

Old Town Hall, 1111 Somerset Avenue, Dighton, MA 02715

And via Zoom

The meeting was called to by Chairman Hull at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call:

Chairman Hull, present.

Selectman Caron, present.

Selectman Pacheco, present.

Present: Chairman Leonard Hull, Selectman Pacheco, Selectman Caron, Town Administrator Michael Mullen, Executive Assistant Karin Brady, Police Chief Shawn Cronin, Oakie the Comfort Dog, SRO Officer Stephen Hathaway, Officer James Duddy, members of the Dighton Police Department, William Moore-Board of Assessors, Reserve Police Officer Kenneth Almeida, Highway Superintendent Tom Ferry, Library Trustee-Ronald O'Connor, CPC Chairman Kevin Smith, Library Director Jocelyn Tavares,

Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Executive Session

Selectman Pacheco Motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to enter into Executive Session under MGL Chapter 30A, Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(2)(3).

2. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.

- a. Town Administrator
- b. Library Director

3. To conduct strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares.

Chairman Hull declared.

- a. Dighton Town Clerical Union

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.

Selectman Pacheco, aye.

Selectman Caron, aye.

Return to Open Session

Chairman Hull called the meeting back to order at 7:21 p.m.

Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was requested for Edmund Braga by Chairman Hull.

James Duddy Certificate of Recognition for Retirement

Chief Shawn Cronin said Mr. Duddy gave us 27 years before his retirement. He will be missed. A lot of officers went to him for guidance. We all wish him the best.

Chairman Hull read the Certificate of Recognition for Mr. James Duddy.

Oakie the Comfort Dog and Handler, Student Resource Officer Stephen Hathaway

Police Chief said Oakie has been with us for 8 months. He said he has completed his training.

Officer Hathaway thanked everyone for supporting Oakie and himself. He has gotten to the point, where he sees kids in the hall and he will lay down to be petted. We do story time. We have made a connection that I not humanly possible.

Further training we will do a friendly find, where he will be able to locate people who wander.

Officer Hathaway thanked the board for their support.

Chairman Hull said he appreciated the way the relationship between the town of Dighton and the Town of Rehoboth have been strengthened.

Chief Cronin said being a School Resource Officer is a big ask, and Officer Hathaway has been great at it. He also noted that Officer Bennett has also been a great addition.

Reserve Police Officer Kenneth Almeida

Chief Cronin said Mr. Duddy is headed out and Mr Almeida is coming in. He stated that Mr. Almeida's demeanor is on par with what we need. Chief Cronin said he has many certifications and is a master instructor in many areas. He said we are extremely fortunate to be getting Mr. Almeida and everything that comes with him.

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to appoint Kenneth R. Almeida as a full time Police officer

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.

Selectman Pacheco, aye.

Selectman Caron, aye.

William Moore, Board of Assessors

Senior Tax Abatement Discussion

Mr. Moore said we are currently discussing Section 41C and he recently found out that Dighton has already accepted Section 41D. He said right now we only have 32 people who take advantage of this. Mr. Moore said we have advertised in the Strawberry Vine and since then, the Assessing Department has gotten a lot of phone calls on this.

Mr. Moore said based on 2605 unique addresses, 1/3 of households in Dighton have someone over 65 and ¼ have someone over 70. He recommended that the town leave 41C as it is, and consider lowering the age requirement from 70 to 65. Mr. Moore said his recommendation would be to stick with 70 for a year and to put this on the Town Meeting Warrant for a vote. He said although we have adopted it for income, we have not adopted it for assets. Mr. Moore said he would like to move forward with giving the annual cost of living adjustment for income as well as assets.

There was discussion about getting the word out.

Selectman Pacheco said he would be interested in increasing the assets.

Mr. Moore said he would do some additional research.

Chairman Hull asked Mr. Moore to prepare a proposed warrant article for review by the Board of Selectmen and Mr. Moore said he would.

Selectman Pacheco wanted to know what the numbers would be. Selectman Caron agreed.

Laura Medeiros, 1645 Maple Street, said that Mr. Moore met with her to promote the fact that, in July, the numbers would change and we would partner with the Assessors office to do a lunch and learn program to further increase the word.

Tom Ferry – Highway Superintendent

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to take the 7:25 P.M. appointment with Highway Superintendent Tom Ferry out of order.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.
Selectman Pacheco, aye.
Selectman Caron, aye

Appoint Nicholas Reynolds as Highway Foreman Assistant

Mr. Ferry said Mr. Reynolds is the next senior employee and he would like to recommend Mr. Reynolds as the Assistant Highway Foreman.

Mr. Ferry said it is important, and in his absence, the foreman and assistant foreman would take on his responsibilities.

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to appoint Nicholas Reynolds as Assistant Foreman.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.
Selectman Pacheco, aye.
Selectman Caron, aye.

Resignation of Jonathan Lawrence as Transfer Station Attendant

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to accept letter of resignation with thanks and appreciation

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.
Selectman Pacheco, aye.
Selectman Caron, aye.

**Kevin Smith, Jr.-Community Preservation Commission
Community Preservation Commission Update**

Mr. Smith presented a funding analysis that he felt was easier to read. He went over the revised funding analysis report. Mr. Smith also went over the funding of Open Space Projects and how that is achieved.

Chairman Hull asked about funding projects over multiple years. Mr. Smith said a project could be done in phases.

**Library Board of Trustees
Contract of Employment – Library Director Jocelyn Tavares**

Chairman Hull said earlier in Executive Session, the Board of Selectmen reviewed the contract for Library Director.

There was no additional discussion.

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the contract for Jocelyn Tavares as Library Director.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.
Selectman Pacheco, aye.
Selectman Caron, aye.

Announcements

Announcements were read by Selectman Pacheco.

Town Administrator Report

Town Administrator Mullen said meetings with Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen would be beginning on March 21. He said the budget process was moving along.

Selectmen’s Report

Selectman Pacheco said The Commission on Disability met and discussed an application for a rural grant to apply for. He said this grant will help us with the new library, by providing assistance with ramps, and electric doors. Selectman Pacheco said it is in the amount of \$20,000.00 and they would have an answer in May.

Selectman Caron said the Solid Waste Committee was scheduled for Monday, but the meeting did not happen due to the resignation of Jonathan Lawrence. He said the next meeting would be on Monday.

Chairman Hull said the School Department would be returning \$500,000.00 in E&D funds.

Chairman Hull said the Water District will be holding an upcoming election and anyone wishing to get on the ballot should do so by April 10.

Chairman Hull said there has been a great deal of discussion on social media where elected officials have been accused of advocating for a ban on books. He said no one is calling for a ban on books and the Library Trustees have made it clear that this is not going to happen.

Chairman Hull said the employees of the Town of Dighton have a right to work in a hostile free environment. He asked that everyone continue to exemplify the spirit of the town "A small town with a Big Heart."

Old Business:

None.

New Business:

Open Warrant for Annual Town Meeting

Mr. Mullen went over the schedule that would take us to the Annual Town Meeting.

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to open the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.

Selectman Pacheco, aye.

Selectman Caron, aye

Proposed Annual Town Meeting Timeline

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to accept the proposed Annual Town Meeting timeline as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.

Selectman Pacheco, aye.

Selectman Caron, aye

Contract of Employment - Town Administrator

Chairman Hull said the Board of Selectmen met in executive Session this evening to approve a contract for Michael P. Mullen, Jr., to begin on July 1, 2023 and end on June 30, 2026.

Selectman Pacheco said Mr. Mullen started two years ago today and he was very proud of the work that he has done.

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the contract between Michael P. Mullen Jr. and the Town of Dighton

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.

Selectman Pacheco, aye.

Selectman Caron, aye

Memorandum of Understanding with Clerical, Library and COA Union

Chairman Hull said the Assessor’s office has someone on medical leave. The Board of Selectmen met this evening in Executive Session to discuss the terms of allowing Ms. Tetreault to assume the duties of Assistant Assessor when that person is absent.

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the MOU between Ms. Lisa Tetreault and the Town of Dighton.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.
Selectman Pacheco, aye.
Selectman Caron, aye

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the updated MOU between Rebecca Mello and the Town of Dighton

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.
Selectman Pacheco, aye.
Selectman Caron, aye

Donation of \$3,360.00 to the Affordable Housing Fund

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the donation of \$3,360.00 to the Affordable Housing Fund.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.
Selectman Pacheco, aye.
Selectman Caron, aye

Junk Dealer’s Licensing Fees

Mr. Mullen said last fall the Board of Selectmen adopted Junk Dealers Licensing Guidelines and the fee for the license was listed at \$250.00. He said we have since gone back and re-looked at the license fee to be sure that we were quantifying the costs that go into the licensing procedure.

Mr. Mullen said if the board would be willing to change and reduce the fee from \$250 to \$175, that amount more reflect the costs to the town.

There was discussion of the parameters of the license and Chairman Hull asked if there was a provision for hardship.

There was discussion on whether to reduce the fee for this year only.

Mr. Mullen suggested adding a comma, after the sentence and abutter notifications, to add “unless waived by The Board of Selectmen”

There was discussion about whether the Board should add in language to “waive the fee” for hardships.

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to reduce the fee for Junk Dealer’s Licenses from \$250,00 to \$175.00.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.
Selectman Pacheco, aye.
Selectman Caron, aye.

SERSG DPW Services Contract Awards

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to award the Contract for DPW Services for a period of one year as procured by the SERSG DPW Services IFB through 2024.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.
Selectman Pacheco, aye.
Selectman Caron, aye.

Annual FP2 Permit Renewal-Taunton Yacht Club

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve THE FP2 Permit Application for Taunton Yacht Club.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.
Selectman Pacheco, aye.
Selectman Caron, aye.

Disposal of Surplus Equipment – Highway Department

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the request for Disposal of Surplus Equipment as presented by the Highway Department.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.
Selectman Pacheco, aye.
Selectman Caron, aye.

Public Input

Ron O'Connor 594 School Street, said the contract for Jocelyn and the Town Administrator are well deserved and needed. He thought tonight was a great experience with the entire Police Department and Oakie and he was humbled by their presence. Mr. O'Connor also said the Community Preservation Committee Chairman, Kevin Smith did a very good job tonight.

He said it was a great meeting and he stayed to thank Selectman Ken Pacheco for his service to the town.

Warrants

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve Warrant #35A-23 in the amount of \$117,754.60 and Warrant #35B-23 in the amount of \$224,553.30, both dated March 2, 2023.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.
Selectman Pacheco, aye.

Selectman Caron, aye

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve Warrant #36A-23 in the amount of \$166,233.79 and Warrant #36B-23 in the amount of \$107,954.54.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.

Selectman Pacheco, aye.

Selectman Caron, aye

Acknowledgements

None.

Correspondence

A letter from the Board of Sewer Commissioners was read by Chairman Hull requesting to post the notice of vacancy on the Sewer Commission due to the unexpected passing of Paul Joly.

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to post the vacancy for the Board of Sewer Commissioners opening March 9, and closing on March 23, at 4:00 p.m.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.

Selectman Pacheco, aye.

Selectman Caron, aye

Minutes

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the minutes of the Board of Selectmen's regular meeting minutes of February 8, 2023.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.

Selectman Pacheco, aye.

Selectman Caron, aye

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the minutes of the Board of Selectmen's regular meeting minutes of February 22, 2023.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.

Selectman Pacheco, aye.

Selectman Caron, aye

Executive Session:

Selectman Pacheco motioned, Selectman Caron seconded and it was **VOTED** to enter into Executive Session under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 30A, Section 21a (2)(3)(7).

3. To conduct strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares.

Chairman Hull declared.

- a. Dighton Town Clerical Union
- b. Dighton Town Highway Union

2. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.

- a. Fire Chief

7. To comply with or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements.

Executive Session Minutes:

Approval of the Board of Selectmen’s Executive Session meeting minutes of February 8, 2023.

Approval of the Board of Selectmen’s Executive Session meeting minutes of February 22, 2023.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.

Selectman Pacheco, aye.

Selectman Caron, aye

Adjourn

Regular meeting ended at 9:40 p.m.

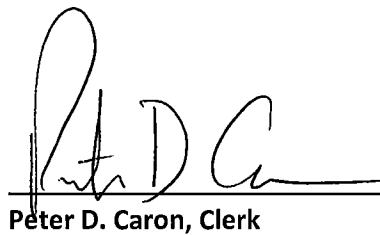
Respectfully Submitted,

Karin L. Brady
Executive Assistant

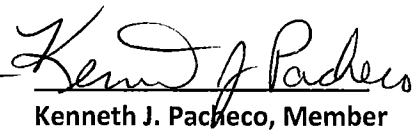
Board of Selectmen



Leonard E. Hull, Chairman



Peter D. Caron, Clerk



Kenneth J. Pacheco, Member

Documents Reviewed:

Certificate of Recognition – James Duddy

Letter from Police Chief Shawn Cronin regarding Oakie the Comfort Dog

Certificate of Recognition – Oakie the Comfort Dog

Letter from Police Chief Cronin recommending the Appointment of Kenneth R. Almeida
Appointment Letter Kenneth R. Almeida
Community Preservation Committee Funding Analysis
CPA: Community Preservation Act Document
Letter from Highway Superintendent recommending Appointment of Assistant Foreman
Resignation Email from Jonathan Lawrence from the Solid Waste Committee
Parking Ban Notice
"Believe in Forever" Flyer
Absentee Ballot Notice
Board of Sewer Commissioner's Vacancy
2023 Annual Town Meeting Proposed Timeline
Memorandum from Planning Department accepting the Donation to the Affordable Housing Fund
Public Hearing Notice – Zoning Board of Appeals
Junk Dealer Licensing Notification
Junk Dealers Guidelines
DPW Services Awards
FP2 Permit Renewal – Taunton Yacht Club
Highway Department-Surplus Equipment for Disposal
Minutes of Board of Selectmen's Regular Meeting of February 8, 2023
Minutes of the Board of Selectmen's Regular Meeting of February 22, 2023