

The following Meeting was video and audio recorded for Airing on Channel 9

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, April 12, 2023 6:30 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting

Old Town Hall, 1111 Somerset Avenue, Dighton, MA

And via Zoom

RECEIVED

Town Clerk-Dighton, MA

MAY 25 2023

Time: 12:31 pm

By: 

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

Roll Call:

Peter Caron, present.

Nicole Mello, present.

Leonard Hull, present.

Present: Chairman Leonard Hull, Selectman Caron, Selectman Mello, Town Administrator Mullen, Executive Assistant Karin Brady, Police Chief Shawn Cronin Council on Aging Director Anabela Powell, Council on Aging Office Manager Laura Medeiros, Prime Time Program Manager Trista Tate, Sewer Commissioners Robert Woods and Tom Ferry, Board of Assessor's member William Moore and Town Accountant Sirena Amaral via Zoom.

Also Present: Mark Nicora-Appointee for Sewer Commission. Nancy Goulart – Gray Terrace.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Chairman Hull congratulated Nicole Mello and welcomed her as a selectman.

Reorganization of the Board of Selectmen

Selectman Caron motioned, Chairman Hull stepped down and it was **VOTED** to nominate Nicole Mello as Clerk to the Board of Selectmen

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.

Selectman Caron, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

Nicole Mello motioned, Chairman Hull stepped down to seconded and it was **VOTED** to appoint Peter Caron as chairman.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Hull, aye.

Selectman Caron aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

Scheduled Appointments

6:30 p.m. - Anabela Powell-Director, Laura Medeiros Office Manager -Council on Aging

Ms. Powell, Council on Aging director, presented a walking challenge program sponsored by the Massachusetts Council on Aging.

Ms. Laura Medeiros presented a Power Point presentation about the challenge, how to register and information about how the challenge works.

The board had questions regarding accommodations for disabled persons, and cost.

6:35 p.m. Sewer Commission

Request to appoint Mark Nicora as Sewer Commissioner

Robert Woods motioned, Tom Ferry stepped down as acting chairman and it was **VOTED** to open the Sewer Commissioners meeting.

Roll Call Vote:

Robert Woods, aye.

Tom Ferry, aye.

Chairman Ferry said at the last Sewer Commissioner's meeting, the Sewer Commissioners interviewed two candidates. He said they were asked a series of questions and the Sewer commissioners recommend to appoint Mark Nicora as a sewer commissioner.

Robert Woods motioned, Tom Ferry stepped down to second and it was **VOTED** to appoint Mark Nicora as a Sewer Commissioner through the Annual Town Election of 2024.

Roll Call Vote:

Robert Woods, aye.

Tom Ferry, aye.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to appoint Mark Nicora as Sewer Commissioner through the 2024 Annual Town Election.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Announcements

Announcements were read by Selectman Hull.

Public Input

Bill Moore 1835 Smith Street, congratulated new Selectman Nicole Mello. Mr. Moore said he wanted to discuss "bathroom gate," which occurred at the Annual Town Meeting where no bathroom facilities were provided for the public, particularly the individuals who were campaigning on site all day. He said he had a conversation with Town Clerk Mark Pacheco who said that he was entirely in charge of the event. Mr. Moore asked the board to add a couple of hundred dollars to the Elections budget to provide a porta potty for use at the Annual Election.

Mr. Moore said he also wanted to talk about the police presence at the election. He requested that there be no police presence in the future as it was not necessary.

Mr. Moore, as a member of the Board of Assessors, also gave additional information regarding the Senior Tax Exemption and encouraged everyone to apply.

Selectman Hull thanked Mr. Moore for his work on this and Mr. Moore thanked Town Assessor, Stephanie Schecter.

Selectman Hull said the issue with the porta potty would never happen again and he assured Mr. Moore that there would be a vote taken by the selectmen at a future meeting on the issue of the police presence.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Mullen said the packet had been updated to include a letter from the Department of Conservation and Recreation regarding seepage at the Muddy Cove Pond Dam.

Mr. Mullen said the firm Geosyntac had the opportunity to survey all of the infrastructure. He said at this point they indicated that they will keep the depth of Muddy Cove Pond where it is now, so that any higher level of water doesn't interfere with the dam. On page two, Mr. Mullen said they mention that there is no risk to public safety and what they have identified was part of a routine inspection.

Highway Superintendent Tom Ferry said a lot of things were addressed today and he would refer all questions to DCR. He asked that a contact be shared at future meetings and posted to the website.

Nancy Goulart, Gray Terrace, said the dam and the land around it had been offered to the town in the past. She asked if there was any way to get information. She said because it had been rated fair for many years. She said if they would be working on it now, it might be beneficial for the town to get that land.

Chairman Caron said if we owned it, we would be on the hook for the maintenance.

Nancy Goulart said they had asked if Astra Zeneca would consider putting money into an account for maintenance or post a bond so that, in the future, work could be done with the money set aside.

Selectman's Reports

Selectman Hull congratulated Donna Berdos and Eliza Couture. He said the School Committee reorganized last night and last night was awards night. Selectman Hull mentioned that six students had perfect MCAS scores.

Selectman Hull said one of the big programs that Dighton-Rehoboth was promoting was the CTE Program. He said the leadership team from Dighton-Rehoboth was working diligently to get 8th graders to come to D-R.

Selectman Hull said the regional schools has a member of the Board of Selectmen who serves on their negotiating team. Selectman Hull said he was appointed to that position and would like to continue.

Resignation of Nicole Mello from the Board of Health

The letter of resignation was read by Selectman Hull

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Caron stepped down to second and it was **VOTED** to accept the resignation of Nicole Mello from the Board of Health

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron aye.
Selectman Hull, aye.
Selectman Mello, aye.

Resignation of Darlene Araujo from the Dighton Development and Industrial Commission

The letter of resignation was read by Chairman Peter Caron.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to accept the resignation of Darlene Araujo from the Dighton Development and Industrial Commission Effective April 1, 2023.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.
Selectman Mello, aye.
Selectman Hull, aye.

Close Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Mr. Mullen recommended that the board vote to officially close the warrant.

Mr. Mullen motioned, Selectman Hull seconded and it was **VOTED** to close the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.
Selectman Mello, aye.
Selectman Hull, aye.

Active Threat Response Training/Town Hall Hours

Mr. Mullen said the Police Chief, Detective Richards and the Town Administrator Mullen were proposing to close Town Hall on April 27, at 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. to provide Active Threat Response Training to Town Hall Employees.

Police Chief Shawn Cronin said it was becoming a priority in towns lately.

Chairman Caron asked where we would advertise this. Mr. Mullen said as part of the advertising we would highlight that there would be a police presence as well.

Use of Restroom Facilities During Elections

Selectman Hull highlighted some issues with the recent Annual Town Election and not opening the restrooms. He stated that he witnessed some things that were disturbing for people that needed use of the restrooms.

Mr. Mullen said prior to tonight's meeting, he had a conversation with the Dighton-Rehoboth School Superintendent and he thought this was an opportunity to have discussion with the school regarding what does and does not happen in the school and what facilities are made available.

Mr. Mullen said we have some time to figure this out, but the next may be a presidential primary.

Request from Dighton Trails Committee to Appoint William Frenette

The letter from Jeff Carvalho and the Dighton Trails Committee was read by Chairman Caron.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to appoint William Frenette as a member the Dighton Trails Committee.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Library Building Committee Board of Selectmen Appointment

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to table the Library Building Committee appointment until the next meeting.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Town Clerk's Office Surplus Request

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the request by the Town Clerk to declare surplus items.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Budget Recommendations

#295-Harbormaster Budget

Police Chief Shawn Cronin said, in looking at the budget, there was nothing that was concerning.

Chairman Caron questioned whether we needed two harbormaster assistants.

Chief Cronin said they discussed more time on the water, and scheduling set times to be out there. He said they also discussed four-hour blocks of time in the morning and in the afternoon.

Selectman Hull asked if there were budgetary limits on the Harbormaster.

The Chief said it was a stipend position, so there were no set hours on the water and that could go both ways.

Chief Cronin said there would be some discussion, but he would have to defer to someone with 27 years of experience. They will know when their busy times are.

Chairman Cronin asked for the reason for the increase in the stipend for the Harbormaster. Chief Cronin said he thought the expectations would dictate a lot of things, but he was comfortable with the stipend amounts.

Chairman Caron asked about the budget line for additional equipment. Chief Cronin said he thought that was a contingency for a motor if needed.

Selectman Hull said he did not see anything for boat storage.

Chief Cronin said the boat would stay where it is for FY24. He said they checked with marinas in town and we could not afford them. Chief Cronin said the best scenario would be a town dock. He said we don't have the money to have it on a private slip.

Chief Cronin said we would work together to figure that out, but he felt more comfortable with where it is right now.

#210 - Police

Selectman Hull said he had a question regarding the lieutenant's salary in the Police Department budget. Chief said the line is a place holder there is no money being carried.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to accept the Town Administrators recommendations for the Police Budget in the amount of \$1,703,384.68.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

There was discussion of budgets as presented tonight.

#162 – Elections

There was discussion regarding line #5301 Off Duty Police Details and whether three police officers were needed and police details for early voting. MM said we have an ability to back out \$2,365.00. He would back out another 1535.00. MM said that would bring that line to BOS recommendation of \$3070.00.

Vote by Mail was discussed.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to amend line item #5301 to \$3,070.00

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to remove the Vote by Mail Line item by \$2,133.00.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.
Selectman Mello, aye.
Selectman Hull, aye.

There was discussion about Electrical Inspection budget and the \$750.00 in education.

Chairman Caron asked about Town Accountant and the increase in Office Supplies. Town Accountant Sirena Amaral said that was for toner expenses.

There was discussion regarding office supplies for the Council on Aging and the increase.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the budgets presented this evening based on the Town Administrators recommendations this evening.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.
Selectman Mello, aye.
Selectman Hull, aye.

Warrants

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve Warrants 41A-23 in the amount of \$123,497.96 and Warrant #41B-23 in the amount of \$89,263.27, both dated April 13, 2023.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.
Selectman Mello, aye.
Selectman Hull, aye.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the minutes of the Board of Selectmen's regular meeting of March 22 2023.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.
Selectman Mello, aye.
Selectman Hull, aye.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the minutes of the Board of Selectmen's regular meeting of April 5, 2023.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.
Selectman Mello, aye.
Selectman Hull, aye.

Executive Session

Chairman Caron said the board would be entering into Executive Session under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A, Section 21A(2)(7)

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

a. Fire Chief

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

a. Executive Session Minutes

Planning Board Joint Meeting Minutes of March 1, 2023.

Board of Selectmen's Executive Session of March 22, 2023

Board of Selectmen's Executive Session of April 5, 2023

Roll Call Vote

Selectman Hull, aye.

Selectman Caron, aye

Selectman Mello, aye.

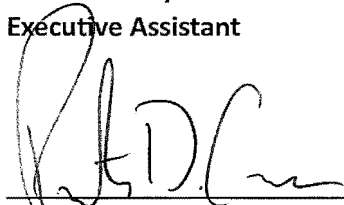
Chairman Caron said the board would not be returning to open session.

Regular meeting ended at 8:29 p.m.


Respectfully submitted,

Karin L. Brady

Executive Assistant



Peter D. Caron, Chairman



Nicole Mello, Clerk



Leonard E. Hull, Jr., Member

Documents Reviewed:

Walking Challenge PowerPoint Presentation

Sewer Commissioners Request to Appoint Mark Nicora

Volunteer Application Mark Nicora

MassDOT Municipality Work Notification Form

Drug Take Back Day Information

Touch a Truck Event Information

"Touch a Truck" Flyer

Minuteman Camp Flyer

Department of Conservation and Recreation Notice Regarding Seepage Conditions at Muddy Cove Dam

Nicole Mello Notice of Resignation from Board of Health and Solid Waste Committee

Resignation of Darlene Araujo from the Dighton Development and Industrial Commission

Recommendation from Dighton Trails Committee to Appoint Mr. William Frenette

Library Building Committee Memo to Appoint Board of Selectmen Member

Town Clerk's List of Surplus Items

Budget Documents

Minutes of the Board of Selectmen's meeting of March 22, 2023

Minutes of the Board of Selectmen's meeting of April 5, 2023