

**Town of Petersham Massachusetts
SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
Town Hall Lower Level, 1 South Main Street**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2023
4:30PM**

Selectboard Members

Nancy Allen, Chair; Becky Legare, Vice Chair; Annette Ermini, Clerk

Public Present

Doreen Hartigan, Roy Nilson, Stephanie Selden

Meeting Called to Order

Chair Nancy Allen called the meeting to order at 4:30pm at the Town Hall Lower Level.

New Business

Review Full Opening of Town Office on March 1st.

The Board reviewed the status of public access to the Town Office building which is partially closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Town Office has been functioning with a “hybrid” system, when some days the building is open; other days town staff provides service via telephone, email, and drop-box. Nancy noted that all the building staff are part-time employees. She added that if a staff member is not available to work, their positions cannot easily be staffed by temporary support. The Selectboard is sensitive to staff members’ personal health needs as well as the community’s needs and has been working to find the right balance for all. Upon discussion, it was determined that it is appropriate to fully open the building to public access. It was noted the new status reflects and is consistent with the CDC’s guidelines.

Becky motioned for the town to fully open the Town Office building on Wednesday, March 1, for regular public use. Annette seconded. All in favor, 3-0 votes.

Review Renewal of Quabbin Retreat Community Advisory Board.

The Selectboard discussed the renewal of the Quabbin Retreat Community Advisory Board in partnership with Heywood Healthcare. A list of community members from the previous and now dormant advisory board was reviewed as well as a possible board composition for new members to include the Police Chief or his representative, the Fire Chief or his representative, a Selectboard member, and two residents. The Selectboard will think about possible names.

Additionally, the Selectboard reviewed log reports the Board had requested from the Police and Fire Departments for responses to Quabbin Retreat from January 1, 2021—February 5, 2023. It was noted the Police and Fire Departments made 92 responses and 21 responses respectively in this timeframe. A meeting will be set up with PD, FD, and Heywood Healthcare.

Nancy reported she met with Heywood Healthcare VP of External Affairs Dawn Casavant to review both topics and arrangements to take next steps. Ms. Casavant will prepare HH staff for the advisory board renewal process and await for the town to set up an emergency dept. meeting. Nancy also noted the Board of Assessors is in the process of updating their Quabbin Retreat property data and property records now that it has been sold by Heywood Healthcare to Waterstone Properties.

Resident Doreen Hartigan asked whether the new building owner should have a representative on the advisory board. Resident Roy Nilson asked to be placed on the community advisory board. Resident Stephanie Selden suggested the Selectboard review the cost of community services study within the Nichewaug Inn and Academy committee's work which outlined costs for Fire, Police, School, etc.

Begin Review of Fiscal Year 2024 Selectboard Budgets; Review General Budget Planning Schedule.

The Selectboard began their FY2024 budget review. Nancy distributed materials including the budget review joint meeting schedule with the Advisory Finance Committee which begins on March 2; the overall schedule to get to Town Meeting on June 5; and the first batch of budget sheets for Selectboard expenses. The Board is working to keep as many of their budgets flat funded as possible. Some increases need to occur due to increased cost of fuel, electricity, postage, and hearing notices. MIIA, the town's insurance provider, has relayed notice of a 7.5% increase for active town employee health insurance. Other insurance figures are still pending as is typical. Additional Selectboard budgets will next be reviewed at the February 23 meeting. March 2 will be the first joint meeting to review the initial Petersham Center School and Mahar Regional School District budgets. Nancy noted the schools' review is occurring later than usual this year due to the transition in the Governor's Office and all are awaiting release of the new Governor's FY24 state budget.

Review and Approve Local Business Permit Applications and Renewals.

No business applications were available for renewal.

Other

The Selectboard received the Treasurer's Cash Book, January 2023. The Board received a Citizens' Petition Article for the 2023 Town Meeting to see if the town will provide the sum of \$2000 to support musical performances at the Petersham Friday Market.

Questions from the Public

No questions were asked.

Correspondence

Nancy summarized aloud the following items in the Selectboard correspondence folder:

- Selectboard's review of their material for renewal of Quabbin Retreat Community Advisory Board.
- Selectboard's report of data sheet of information collected from the Police and Fire Departments for responses to Quabbin Retreat.
- Notice of a grant award from Alliance for Green Heat to the Petersham Wood Bank in the amount of \$14,933.
- Letter from Bart Wendell, Town Moderator, with notice he appointed resident Rachel Shea to fill an open seat on the Advisory Finance Committee.
- Email from MA Dept. of Agriculture Animal Fund Program stating ACO Deb Bachrach completed her 2023 ACO Training Compliance.
- Documentation and signature forms for the Town of Petersham to participate in the “New National Opioid Settlements” with Teva, Allergan, CVS, Walgreens, and Walmart. Nancy has submitted the materials.
- Correspondence with the Selectboard, Highway Supt. Greg Waid, and staff from Tighe & Bond regarding the Quaker Drive Bridge award memo, letter, contract, and pre-construction meeting.
- Certificate of Analysis prepared by Housatonic Basic Sampling and Testing for Town Hall drinking water, dated February 2, 2023.
- Article published in the *Sentinel and Enterprise*, “Monty Tech Named in Federal Civil Rights Complaint,” regarding their student admissions policies.
- Citizens Petition for the 2023 Town Meeting to see if the town will vote to provide funds in the amount of \$2000 to support the Petersham Friday Market and its 2023 musical performances and free food.
- Email from Compass regarding a webinar to provide information on FEMA’s Millers River Watershed Work Map on Wednesday, February 15.
- Email from United Way of North Central Massachusetts regarding a DESE Summer grant opportunity to serve kids from Pre-K-Grade 12 for after-school and summer programs.
- Email from Sen. Joanne Comerford with a request to schedule an introduction meeting with the Selectboard.
- Email from Office of Sen. Joanne Comerford regarding updates to restart passenger rail service along the Northern Tier/Route 2 Corridor.

- Memo from Montachusett Regional Planning Commission with information regarding District Local Technical Assistance Call for Proposals.
- Email from MA Municipal Association (MMA) regarding a webinar, “Resident Engagement: Best Practices for Municipalities,” on Tuesday, February 21.
- Email from MA Dept. of Revenue, Division of Local Services (DLS) regarding FY2024 Municipal Budget Issues and Other Related Matters.
- Email from DLS Alerts with February 2, 2023 edition of *City & Town* newsletter.
- Copy of the February 2023 edition of *The Beacon* newsletter from Mass Municipal Association.
- Email from MIIA with guidance on how to prevent falls using the ARECC strategy—Anticipate, Recognize, Evaluate, Control, and Confirm.

Meeting Minutes

Review meeting minutes, as available.

Becky motioned for the Selectboard to review the minutes from the Selectboard meeting of Thursday, February 2, 2023. Annette seconded. Becky motioned to accept the minutes of Thursday, February 2, 2023, as written. Annette seconded. All in favor, 3-0 votes.

Next Meeting

The next regular Selectboard meeting date Thursday, February 23, 2023, 5:30 PM; and at the call of the Chair as needed.

Adjourn

Annette motioned to adjourn. Nancy seconded. All in favor, 2-0 votes (1 abstention due to Becky’s early departure). The meeting adjourned at 6:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Ermini
Petersham Selectboard Clerk

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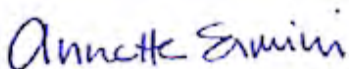
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Annette Ermini
Petersham Selectboard Clerk

AGENDA
Petersham Selectboard Meeting
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2023
4:30 PM

Petersham Town Hall, lower level
1 South Main Street

1. 4:30 PM Call to order.

2. New Business

RE: Review approve full opening of Town Office building on March 1st.

RE: Review renewal of Quabbin Retreat Community Advisory Board.

RE: Begin review of Fiscal Year 2024 Selectboard budgets; review general budget planning schedule.

RE: Review approve local Business Permit applications and renewals, as available.

3. Correspondence

4. Questions from the public

5. Meeting Minutes

Review prior Meeting Minutes, as available.

6. Next Meeting

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and at the call of the Chair as needed.

7. Adjourn