

Selectmen's Minutes
Town Hall, 3rd Floor Auditorium, 30 Martin Street

November 2, 2020

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the town's website, at www.essexma.org. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to listen to and/or view the meeting may do so via Video Call (with the option to show yourself on video or not and with the option to use a phone to call in, for audio-only). No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so using the tools discussed below, despite best efforts, we will post on the town's website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

The link to the video conference is: <https://join.freeconferencecall.com/bzubricki>, and, if prompted, the on-line meeting ID is bzubricki. Depending on your device and software installed, you may be able to join directly, by web browser, or, you may have to download the application directly (you will be shown that choice when you go to the above link). You should be joined in mute mode. However, if that is not the case, please click on the audio icon to mute your microphone. You can choose to activate your camera to show yourself, or not. The camera should be off, by default, when you join.

If you do not have a digital device to join via the link above, you can also dial a telephone number and be directly connected to the meeting, via audio only. The call-in-only number is: (425) 436-6352 and the access code is 1729820.

Present: Chairman Ruth R. Pereen, Selectman Peter D. Phippen, Selectman Guy D. Bradford, Town Administrator Brendhan Zubricki, and Selectmen's Assistant Pamela J. Witham.

Also Present via Telephone Conferencing: Tina Lane and Antonella Muniz.

Chairman Pereen called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. in the 3rd floor Auditorium of the Town Hall at 30 Martin Street and asked anyone wishing to make a Public Comment, to email their comment to Town Administrator Brendhan Zubricki: bzubricki@essexma.org. Comments will be read from time to time throughout the meeting.

In other business, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the weekly warrant in the amount of \$151,193.20.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to exempt from Section 20 of Chapter 268A of the General Laws, the contracts and amounts for the individuals listed below contained within the 10/22/2020 warrant pursuant to subsection (d) of said Section.

NAME	VENDOR	DATE	AMOUNT	DEPT'S BILL
James McNeilly	McNeilly EMS	10/09/2020	\$ 155.00	Fire
Ernest Nieberle	Nieberle's	09/24/2020	\$ 508.00	Snow Removal

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the minutes for the Selectmen's October 19, 2020, Open Meeting.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to renew the 2021 MIIA Retiree Health Insurance Benefits.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to extend the Town's policy regarding the use of outdoor space for food and alcohol service from November 1, 2020 to December 1, 2020 as per the Governor's recent decree.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to agree to an increase of \$4.00 per trap by the Northeast Massachusetts Mosquito Control and Wetlands Management District and to lock in that price for a three year period (2021-2024).

Chairman Pereen reported that the construction team that is working on the new public safety building had inspected the police/fire station at 24 Martin Street to consider the possibility of repurposing the building once the current occupants move into their new facility. Their conclusion was that the building has too many issues, like the need for seismic reinforcing and the presence of asbestos, making it extremely expensive to repurpose and/or lease. It would be much cheaper to demolish the building and rebuild in the future, if desired. In the near term, the site could be leveled and grass could be installed. Following the discussion, the Board was in agreement and a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to demolish the building after the police and fire departments have moved into the new building. The Board acknowledged that a separate bid will be necessary for the demolition of the old building, since, while part of the project budget, this work is not part of the current construction contract with G&R Construction.

The Board discussed the need to find a suitable place to house the historic pumper, since there is no room for it at the new public safety building site, and agreed to take the matter under advisement for future discussion. One idea is to purchase a pre-fabricated shed-type building with large windows for viewing that could be placed on the site of the old fire station. This approach was taken in nearby Wenham and could be accomplished using Community Preservation Act funding.

The Board was reminded that their next regular Board of Selectmen's meeting will take place on Monday, November 16, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. in the 2nd Floor Stage Conference Area of the Town Hall, 30 Martin Street.

Mr. Zubricki began the presentation of his Town Administrator's Report for the period October 17, 2020 through October 30, 2020, regarding the following:

Economic Development Committee (EDC) Meeting Summary: Mr. Zubricki reported that the EDC had met recently to again review their draft Economic Development Plan for the Town, which includes many suggestions from the public and the business community, the Town Planner, and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council. The EDC voted to approve the plan and release it, and it is now posted on the Town's website. The plan includes an extensive foreword relative to how businesses may best be able to manage and eventually recover from the ongoing COVID-19 crisis.

On a related matter, the Board reviewed a letter drafted by Selectman Bradford to the business community seeking input from the community on ways the Town might work with individual businesses. Based on the Board's discussion, Mr. Zubricki will make a few adjustments to the letter and distribute it to the Essex Merchants Group and the Chamber of Commerce tomorrow.

Employee of the Year and Employee Service Awards Ceremony: The Board was in agreement that they would like to wait until the May 3, 2021 Annual Town Meeting to present these awards in order to ensure the most publicity for these people and their accomplishments.

Public Safety Building Construction Project Update: Work continues to progress on the project. The exterior is still on target for a late-November completion and interior work is continuing in earnest.

Change Order: Public Safety Building Lighting: Several lighting fixtures will not work in the specified space and have been replaced with ones that will work at an additional cost of \$721.

Change Order: Public Safety Building Cell Door Shutter: The State Department of Health has asked that a shutter be added to one of the cell doors in the jail area for an additional cost of \$606.

Change Order: Public Safety Building Clothes Dryer Wiring: Due to a design oversight, no gas service was provided to the gas clothes dryers. The cheapest remedy is to provide electrical service to that area and use different dryers for an additional cost of \$2,548.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve Change Order 8, which includes the replacement lighting, the shutter, and electric dryer service for a total additional cost of \$3,875.

Public Safety Project Design Change Order (Geotechnical Work): The Board had previously agreed to extra geotechnical work and the designer is just now submitting the official change order in the amount of \$7,000. This item can be funded from the environmental planning budget, which would not increase the overall project budget. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the change order for this item.

School Budget Group Meeting Summary: Items that were discussed at the recent school budget meeting included construction of a new playground for the Essex Elementary School, the possibility of sharing the Town's unused funding under the Cares Act with the School District, and including language to provide building equity provisions in a future revision of the Regional Agreement. It is anticipated that construction on the playground will begin in March. With respect to equity language, Finance Committee Chairman Buttrick has reached out to a former State Commissioner of Education for ideas on draft wording.

Selectman Bradford agreed to replace Selectman Phippen as the Board's representative on the School Budget Committee.

Continued Discussion of Possible Annual Town Meeting Topics: Those present discussed the recent changes to the list of annual Town Meeting topics and suggested additional revisions. The list will continue to be updated at each meeting until being finalized in early March.

COVID Economic Recovery Planning Grant: Mr. Zubricki said that there is another grant available for COVID Economic Recovery and asked the Board whether they preferred to collaborate on a regional application or submit their own application. The Board was in favor of collaborating and Mr. Zubricki will suggest that arrangement to the three other Cape Ann communities when the application period opens.

Mr. Zubricki said that he had not received any comments during the meeting.

There being no further business before the Board, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

Documents used during this meeting include the following: None.

Prepared by: _____
Pamela J. Witham

Attested by: _____
Peter D. Phippen