

Town of Auburn, Massachusetts  
Board of Selectmen Minutes  
Remote Participation Meeting  
February 22, 2021– 6:00 P.M.

Participating remotely: Doreen M. Goodrich, Tristan Laliberte, Daniel Carpenter, Lionel Berthiaume, Scott C. Wrenn  
Also: Town Manager Julie A. Jacobson and Asst. Town Manager/CFO Ed Kazanovicz

The Chair Doreen Goodrich stated that this Open Meeting of the Town of Auburn Board of Selectmen is being conducted remotely, consistent with Governor Baker’s Executive Order of March 12, 2020, which suspends the requirement of the Open Meeting Law to have all meetings in a publicly accessible *physical* location. Further, all members of public bodies are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely as long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting.

Ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law. For the public to join the meeting remotely by telephone, call 1-408-650-3123 and enter Access Code 235-235-861. Or, the public can join via computer at <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/235235861>.

All supporting materials that have been provided to the members of this body are available on the Town’s website. The public is encouraged to follow along using the posted agenda.

As a preliminary matter, the Chair confirmed that all members and employees participating in the agenda were present and could hear her:

- Tristan Laliberte - Yes
- Lionel Berthiaume - Yes
- Daniel Carpenter - Yes
- Scott Wrenn -Yes

Also,

- Town Manager Julie Jacobson - Yes
- CFO/Asst. Town Manager Ed Kazanovicz - Yes
- Administrative Assistant Sharon Kwiatkowski – Yes

The Chair also noted that the meeting was being recorded by Auburn Cable Television and she stated that all votes to be taken in this meeting will be conducted by roll call vote.

The Chair, Doreen Goodrich, called the meeting order at 6:02 P.M

### Public Hearings/Presentations

#### Presentation of Financial Audit Report - Scanlon Associates

Tom Scanlon Jr. of Scanlon and Associates, LLC, who was participating remotely, presented the Management Letter for the Year Ended June 30, 2020 and the Audit Report on the Examination of Basic Financial Statements for the Year Ended June 30, 2020. Mr. Scanlon stated that it was challenging this year to do the remote audit. He discussed the Town's strong financial position and sound grant management. He credited the Town for the fiscal controls that are in place.

Mr. Scanlon also reviewed the Balance Sheets and Statement of Revenues and Expenditures on a budgetary basis. He discussed the status of the OPEB Trust and the good job the Town has done with reserves built to 31% and thinking outside the box for the long-term.

Mr. Berthiaume commented that he appreciated Mr. Scanlon's report and recommendations and he thanked him for his work. He said that the CFO and the Town Manager have done a great job on funds in reserve.

Mrs. Goodrich also thanked Mr. Scanlon and noted that even with COVID the Town and the administration has done a great job in the financial management of the Town as shown by the outstanding audit.

Town Manager Jacobson spoke to keeping budget requests to what is needed. She credited that budgetary method with keeping the level of taxation down, with result that the Town has not taxed to the full 2.5% over the past 11 years.

Mr. Kazanovicz pointed to the 7.2 million in Excess Levy that shows that the Town is not spending everything it could be and is serious about holding the line.

### Communications

There were no items.

### Board of Selectmen General Items

#### Vote to Transmit Town Manager/CFO FY2022 Budget to the Finance Committee in accordance with Town Charter and Bylaws

CFO Ed Kazanovicz gave an overview of the budget process for FY2022. The budget as presented uses about 2.31 out of a possible 2.5% right now. He highlighted certain factors driving the budget costs:

- Solid waste and recycling costs
- Unexpected SPED costs
- Reductions in Meals Taxes and Hotel/Motel Taxes due to COVID
- EPA Stormwater mandates
- Aging Sewer infrastructure

The CFO advised that the unobligated amount is \$92,080.96. Excess Levy is 7.2 Million. CFO Ed Kazanovicz reviewed projected FY2022 revenues vs. expenditures.

Mr. Kazanovicz provided information on some budget priorities/objectives:

- Replenish OPEB Trust funding \$500,000.00
- Replenish Roadway Reconstruction funding \$100,000.00
- Additional Funding for Senior Center Programs and Activities Coordinator
- Request for a shared clerical position for the Fire Department and the Department of Development and Inspectional Services
- Request for a part-time clerk for Treasury/Collection Division in the Finance Department

After replenishing the accounts that were reduced last year the budget increase is 2.82% for the Town and 2.85% for the School Department.

Ed Kazanovicz commented on concerns about:

- Chapter 70 – The Governor’s proposed budget is for only a \$72,000.00 increase in Chapter 70 School aid over the prior fiscal year that is significantly down from the last five years. There has been a loss in enrollment numbers of about 100 that is COVID-driven and has resulted in a loss of state aid. Bay Path has added 10 students to enrollment thereby increasing our assessment.
- Health Insurance – projected up 11.2% (COVID-related) and budgeted 5-6%. Mr. Kazanovicz advised that the Town has a healthy Self-Insured Trust that may be able to offset some of the increase.

Mr. Kazanovicz said that other concerns were COVID-related costs and impacts on operations, pending litigation cases, and other blanket insurance policy renewals

The Board of Selectmen then voted to transmit the Town Manager/CFO FY2022 Budget to the Finance Committee in accordance with the Town Charter and Bylaws (Motion made by Mr. Wrenn; motion seconded by Mr. Laliberte) roll call vote: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Berthiaume, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes – passed 5 to 0.

#### Gift Acceptances in Accordance with MGL Chapter 44, Section 53A

The Board of Selectmen voted to approve with gratitude a gift acceptance to the Police Department from the Auburn Masonic Building Association of goods of 75-foot Throw Bags and Training Video for Ice & Water Rescue, one for each of 25 police cruisers (Approximate market value \$904.35) – motion made by Mr. Laliberte; motion seconded by Mr. Berthiaume and voted by roll call: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Berthiaume, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes – passed 5 to 0.

#### Annual Town Meeting May 4, 2021

The Board of Selectmen voted to open the warrant tonight for the May 4, 2021 Annual Town Meeting (Motion made by Mr. Carpenter; motion seconded by Mr. Wrenn) roll call vote: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Berthiaume, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes – passed 5 to 0.

The Board of Selectmen voted to close the May 4, 2021 Annual Town Meeting Warrant on Monday March 15, 2021 at noon time (Motion made by Mr. Carpenter; motion seconded by Mr. Laliberte) roll call vote: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Berthiaume, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes – passed 5 to 0.

#### Proclamations and Recognitions

There were no items.

#### Town Manager Evaluation Process Timeline

Chair Doreen Goodrich reminded the board members about the timeline for the process of the Town Manager's Evaluation.

#### Town Manager Items

Vote to Authorize Grant Application, Accept and Expend Funds for Rehabilitation at Leesville Dam. The Board reviewed the letter from the DPW Senior Engineer Eilish Corey regarding grant funding under the Dam and Seawall Repair or Removal Grant and Funds Program. This program is administered by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and provides grants that support the completion of designs and permit applications to repair or remove dams, seawalls and other coastal infrastructure.

The DPW is requesting approximately \$158k in this grant application, which would fund all design and permitting of the project. A match of 25% is required. It is anticipated that match funds will come from a combination of available funds designated for dam and drainage work. The total project cost is approximately \$210k.

The Board of Selectmen voted to authorize the grant application, accept and expend funds for the rehabilitation of Leesville Dam as outlined in Ms. Corey's letter (Motion made by Mr. Carpenter; motion seconded by Mr. Berthiaume) roll call vote: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Berthiaume, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes – passed 5 to 0.

#### Discussion and Vote on Town Manager Goals

Town Manager Julie Jacobson discussed several areas she will be needing to work on this year: dealing with COVID issues, preparation for the next collective bargaining negotiations, Auburn Street Reconstruction Project, continued pursuit of Public Safety Facility, proceeding with the Library/Goddard Park/Pedestrian Bridge Project and setting up a Disability Commission.

Following discussion, Mr. Berthiaume made a motion to set two goals for the Town Manager: 1) Continue to work on the pursuit and process for the Public Safety Facility (without completion date) and 2) Continue to work on the Library/Goddard Park/Pedestrian Bridge Project (without completion date). Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion and the Board voted by a roll call vote: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Berthiaume, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes – passed 5 to 0.

The Town Manager then announced that the State will no longer be providing first shot vaccine doses to municipalities. Therefore there will be no more vaccine clinics at the Auburn Lorraine Gleick Nordgren Senior Center.

Tabled Items

There were no items.

Board of Selectmen Member Items

There were no items.

Minutes

There were no items.

At 7:33 P.M. the Board voted to adjourn the meeting (Motion made by Mr. Carpenter; motion seconded by Mr. Laliberte) roll call vote: Mr. Laliberte, Yes; Mr. Berthiaume, Yes; Mr. Carpenter, Yes; Mr. Wrenn, Yes; Mrs. Goodrich, Yes – passed 5 to 0.

Submitted: Sharon A. Kwiatkowski  
Adm. Assistant to the Town Manager

The following documents were part of the Board of Selectmen’s Meeting of February 22, 2021 and are retained in the Executive Office of the Town Manager:

- February 22, 2021 Agenda
- Scanlon Associates – Presentation of Financial Audit Report for the Year Ended June 30, 2020
- Presentation on Town Manager/CFO FY2022 Budget February 22, 2021
- Gift Acceptance Form – Police Department from Auburn Masonic Building Association of goods of 75-foot Throw Bags and Training Video for Ice & Water Rescue, one for each of 25 cruisers (approximate market value of \$904.35)
- Letter from the DPW Senior Engineer Eilish Corey regarding grant funding under the Dam and Seawall Repair or Removal Grant and Funds Program