



Office of
SELECTMEN
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Rehoboth, MA 02769

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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2019
MEETING MINUTES
GLADYS L. HURRELL REHOBOTH SENIOR CENTER**

Present: Selectman Frederick "Skip" Vadnais; Selectman Gerry Schwall, Selectman Dave Perry, Selectman Michael Costello, and Deborah Arruda, Assistant to the Town Administrator.

Absent: Selectman Jim Muri

At 6:00 PM it was voted to enter into Executive Session pursuant to ***MGL CHAPTER 30A, Section 21(a) (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. (3) To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares;***

Roll Call Vote: Vadnais, aye; Perry, aye; Costello, aye; Schwall, aye. Vote 4-0
S. Vadnais arrived late.

Call to Order at 7:03 p.m.: The Board and the public participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Moment of Silence for Firefighter Jason Menard, Worcester Fire Department.
-11 members from Town attended funeral.

1.0) Consent Agenda

Warrants for November 18th, 2019: G. Schwall read the weekly Warrants; 20-20A Withholdings, \$30,309.71, 20-21B Payroll, \$103,903.74; 20-20 Warrant, \$4,884,351.76, Veterans Warrant, 20-21V, \$9,763.77. S. Vadnais motioned to approve the weekly Warrants as read. Second by D. Perry. Vote 4-0

Minutes: Regular Minutes: none.
Executive Session Minutes: none.

Open Forum – Announcements:

The Municipal Building Study Committee will be holding an information session at the COA Building tomorrow evening, November 19 beginning at 7:00 PM. This is an opportunity to get the latest information and ask questions.

Richard Panofsky, Fairview Avenue
-update of progress with Committee recorded and televised later

Property valuation review period – read attached legal notice into the record.

Document:

REVISED NOTICE TO THE TAXPAYER OF REHOBOTH PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

The next regular Selectmen Meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 2nd at the COA Building, 55 Bay State Road beginning at 7:00 PM. There is no meeting planned for next week.

Happy Thanksgiving.

NEW BUSINESS:

Action Item #1: Discussion with Dighton Board of Selectmen

Dighton Board of Selectmen- (Brett Zografus, Nancy Goulart, Ken Pacheco)

Thank you for reaching out to us to begin quarterly discussion

Ken Pacheco

-Thank you for having us.

Nancy Goulart

- 1. Thank you to Dave Perry for the stormwater banner, still using it one year later.
- 2. Questioned the Reynolds Ave substation.

M. Costello responded:

- In 2011 after the storm (Hurricane Sandy) the Town of Rehoboth was out of power 7 days, National Grid committed to upgrade infrastructure.
- Will eliminate other substations and work off of one (Blanding Road)
- Will eliminate our town being out of power when neighboring towns have it

D. Perry added that will not be huge equipment, just a series of small towers, transformers, switching gear.

- 3. S. Vadnais and I both sit on the Bristol County Advisory Committee, looking at finance matters. I wanted to share this information on the retirement program:
 - The retirement program from Bristol County is “almost fully funded”, will be fully funded by 2028.
 - Explained retirement program and charges

Brett Zografus

- Dighton has been approached by a cannabis company. What has Town of Rehoboth done?
 - Have you been approached?
 - How have you handled it?

G. Schwall responded that when we passed our by-law, we limited it to 20%. We would be happy to share our by-law with you. Our Town Counsel was very helpful in the process.

S. Vadnais wanted to suggest that we draft a letter of thanks from both towns' Boards to the individual who stepped forward to moderate the tent meeting that did not take place. Both Boards agreed that this was a good idea.

N. Goulart – The last thing we heard as a follow up to the tent meeting, was a letter from DESE. Our response is we support the decision of the June Town Meeting. We are waiting to find out.

S. Vadnais – It is important that you support the decision of your Town. We are both just supporting the vote of the people. It is encumbered upon us to do the will of the people. We were not on opposite ends of the spectrum. We are both just serving our people.

G. Schwall – DESE taking over would be very beneficial, to clear up fact versus fiction. They are assuming “financial responsibility and/or oversight”, more than just setting the budget. They won’t come in and take over operational control. It’s not a failing of the School District by DESE’s definition. But, when they step in, it will be more than just to set a budget.

N. Goulart - I think what they are saying is that they expect more communication, monthly financial supports, management reports of cash flow, income, everything related to that.

G. Schwall – We feel that it will require more than just sending reports. We will need to meet again to discuss what this means.

D. Perry – It was helpful to have met with you before the tent meeting.

N. Goulart – It’s a learning process, beneficial to “both sides of New Street”.

B. Zografus – So we should know more in December?

G. Schwall – December 1st is the date the State has given us, as when they will assume financial responsibility. We know that there are some in Dighton that feel the time of a Regional District are over. Might be some in Rehoboth as well. This is something that I believe the Boards of Selectmen need to be involved in. It was the two Boards of Selectmen that negotiated the contract that put the district together. We believe that anytime a contract is executed it’s under the purview of the Board of Selectmen.

The state coming in will answer some questions “on both sides of New Street”, as Nancy said. And then we probably need to get together to talk at our level, the ones who are elected, as to what does this really mean.

The two Boards discussed where and what type of meeting.

S. Vadnais – There are certain members of the school committee that said that they believe they are the ones to draft the new regional agreement. But the agreement creates the School Committee. The school committee does not create the agreement. We, both Boards of Selectmen, on behalf of our communities, create the agreement. We can be advised by the School Committee, but they do not create it.

G. Schwall – It would be one thing if it were a few amendments, but this is a complete rewrite. This is the idea of turning DR into a Bristol Plymouth, where the SC is completely autonomous and over here, and they will make the decisions and basically build the towns. That’s not what the citizens in either town agreed upon when the districts was formed and I think we need to respect that and realize that if it’s a brand new agreement which it turns out this is turning out to be with all the changes that some members are suggesting, we need to go back to the drawing board, that should have that discussion, and bring it to Town Meeting, obviously.

K. Pacheco- Right, we are not going to have the final say. It’s going to be the townspeople. But I believe some of the changes the laws have changed and it’s 30 year old law.

G. Schwall - No problem with that. But when you start talking about “we are going to move kids from one town to another” it’s not what the people talked about. When you talk about the district owning the buildings and the Town’s not owning the buildings, and the District can go out and incur debt on behalf of the Towns then assess it to the Towns, that is not what the people in either town agreed to when they approved this. If those changes are that far reaching, I think we need to go back and realize what we’re talking about and that’s a new agreement. And again, what that ends up looking like, I don’t know. It could turn out looking like Bristol – Plymouth, or it could go back to the way it was. K through 8 each town, we share a high school.

N. Goulart – There are special rules with Bristol – Plymouth and Bristol - Aggie, because both are considered vocational schools, so that's why they are organized the way they are, where they have a representative form, but that's not the case with Dighton and Rehoboth.

G. Schwall – It was suggested by certain School Committee members that perhaps we should elect ten members, regardless of where they live, or pick a number, say seven people and have two town elections and have them come in and call the shots. So those type changes are far beyond what either town agreed to.

N. Goulart – Especially when talk of municipal indebtedness, I mean when Aggie school was being discussed the advisory board represented a weighted vote in the county. There were people who didn't understand that the vote we took, if the majority voted, was going forward. If your student wants to go to a vocational school, you will pay.

B. Zografus – When the State comes in on December 1st, are they setting the budget for the next fiscal year?

G. Schwall – They will not set the budget, they will stay responsible for the fiscal oversight through the end of FY20 or until FY21 budget is approved, whichever is later.

B. Zografus – They will serve in a mediator capacity for the next fiscal year?

G. Schwall - Well, we'll learn. They'll come in, establish the budget for FY21 but it will ____ so through the process, they have the authority to set the budget for FY20 because it is December 1st and there is no fixed budget, so they have that authority according to the statutes. They do not have the authority to set the Budget for FY21, it will still need to go through Town Meeting and then if that fails, they'll come back in.

B. Zografus – Hope to have better communication between both Town Boards and School Committee in the future.

Action Item #2: 7:30 PM Public Hearing – Classification of Land for Taxation

Present: Board of Assessors: Gene Campbell, Chuck Picopio, Susan Taylor

M. Costello motion to open the public hearing at 7:48 PM. Second by S. Vadnais.

Roll call vote: Perry, aye; Vadnais, aye, Costello, aye; Schwall, aye. Vote 4-0

Gene Campbell

- State Representative will not allow signing of the letter but Public Hearing can continue. They are behind on paperwork.
- Residential = 91.31% down from 91.81%
- Commercial = 3.99% up from 3.84%
- Industrial = 0.91% up from 0.85%
- Personal Property = 3.78% up from 3.5% (This is because of the solar and the utilities Personal Property)
- 10.5 times difference between Residential and Commercial/Industrial/personal property.
Residential = 91.32% vs. C/I/P = 8.68%
- There is no reason for or advantage of multiple rates.
- Assessors are asking for single rate.
- The way we are going, developers will move in and we will lose country feeling.
- Not enough industrial to make a substantial difference
- Assessors are restricted on what they can raise.

S. Vadnais motion to close the public hearing at 7:57 PM. Second by M. Costello.

Roll call vote: Perry, aye; Vadnais, aye; Costello, aye; Schwall, aye. Vote 4-0

M. Costello motion to take the recommendation of the Board of Assessors under consideration. Second by S. Vadnais. Vote 4-0

Document: Letter from Assessors

Action Item #3: Discussion with Green Energy Committee Chair RE: Energy Reduction Plan

D. Perry motion to approve the energy reduction plan from GE/SRPEDD as presented. Second by M. Costello. Vote 3-0.

M. Costello motion to authorize the chairman to sign letter and send to SRPEDD. Second by D. Perry. Vote 3-0.

S. Vadnais had stepped away.

Discussion:

C. Panofsky

- Found mistakes on SRPEDD's packet and they will fix them.
- Needs signed letter from BOS and lawyer
- Gave brief overview of program
- Thank you to GE committee for all your help and to BOS and Deb Arruda, Bill Pray, Planning Board, Carol Chencus.

BOS discussed with C. Panofsky ways the town is going to save money, need to know return rate over the years.

Action Item 4: Vote to Set Date for 2020 Fall STM

M. Costello motion to set Tuesday, October 27, 2020 as the date for the Fall 2020 Special Town Meeting. Second by D. Perry. Vote 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

OTHER BUSINESS:

OPEN FORUM-PUBLIC:

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Selectmen's Reports:

Vadnais: Animal Advisory Committee

- Chapter 140 has been completed. Should we continue with committee?
- Need internet service at ACO building, discussed options. -Very costly
- R. Panofsky request for laptops already in place.
- Will need further discussion with Advisory Board.

-Will be meeting with Rob Johnson, Animal Control Officer, regarding this issue.

Costello: no report

Schwall: no report

Perry: no report

Muri: Absent.

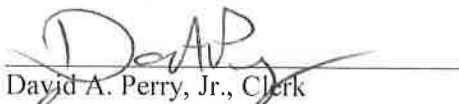
ADJOURNMENT: Selectmen M. Costello made a motion to adjourn the Regular Session Meeting at 8:40 PM. Second by Selectmen S. Vadnais.

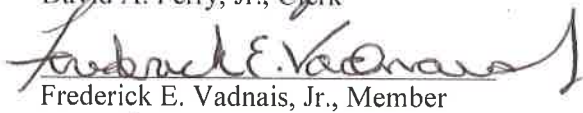
Roll call vote: Perry – aye; Costello – aye, and Schwall – aye, Vadnais – aye. Vote 4-0.

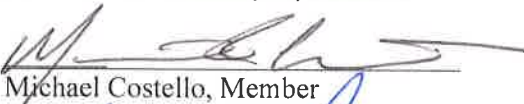

Gerald V. Schwall, Chairman

Absent

James Muri, Vice Chairman


David A. Perry, Jr., Clerk


Frederick E. Vadnais, Jr., Member


Michael Costello, Member



Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah Arruda

Assistant to the Town Administrator

Approved 4/27/20

OFFICE OF
ASSESSORS

148 PECK STREET

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Telephone 508-252-3352



REVISED NOTICE TO THE TAXPAYERS OF REHOBOTH PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

The Massachusetts Department of Revenue requires that property values be updated every five years. The Rehoboth Board of Assessors announces that our property valuations for Fiscal Year 2020 are being completed and waiting for preliminary approval from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. Though we not have received Preliminary Certification, values are still pending and subject to a change. The values are increasing from approximately 3% to approximately 8%. You may review your proposed valuation from November 20, 2019 to November 21, 2019 from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm, November 22, 2019 from 8:30 am to 11:30 am and November 25, 2019 to November 26, 2019 from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm and November 27, 2019 from 8:30 am to 11:30 am at the following location: Assessors Office at the Rehoboth Town Office Building at 148 Peck Street, Rehoboth. Contact the Assessors Office if you have any questions.

Rehoboth Board of Assessors

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November 18, 2019

The purpose for this Tax Classification hearing is we need a vote for classification and a vote for Gateway LA-5 submission.

Residential	= 91.32%	down from 91.81%
Commercial	= 3.99%	up from 3.84%
Industrial	= 0.91%	up from 0.85%
Personal Property	= 3.78%	up from 3.50%**

** This is because of the solar and the utilities Personal Property

Residential = 91.32% vs. C.I.P. = 8.68%. There is 10.5 times the difference between Residential and C.I.P.

Chapter Land – 61, 61A, 61B would be taxed at the commercial rate.

Chapter 61 - 18 Parcels

Chapter 61A – 230 Parcels

Chapter 61B - 116 Parcels

There is NO advantage with multiple rates

The Board of Assessors recommends a single rate.