

**The following Meeting was video recorded for cable broadcast.1**

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Tuesday, September 29, 2015, 9:00 o'clock a.m.

**Special Meeting**

Selectmen's Meeting Room, 979 Somerset Ave, Dighton, MA

TOWN CLERK  
DIGHTON, MA  
BY \_\_\_\_\_

2015 NOV -5 AM 9:42

RECEIVED

Meeting called to order at 9:00 am

Chairman Cronin welcomed Nancy Goulart to the board  
Nancy thanked the board

Chairman Cronin said today is more of an informational meeting to catch Nancy up on stuff that is currently on our plate so she is aware of some of the situations and issues that have come up.

Selectman Menges said congratulations and welcome to the board of selectmen. He added that it is good to have a woman on the board, woman's issues are unique - having a woman on the board is much more representative of the town's population.

**Policy Manual**

Selectman Menges stated that on the first Wednesday of October we will meet with department heads and let them know it is the deadline to add/change. Lucas Fagundes will be coming back at the end of October to do the final draft. He added that there are two critical changes to the current draft that we need to make. First, when a town meeting warrant is finished and signed by the Board of Selectman it needs to go to the Finance Committee first, and then to the Town Clerk for posting, so that we have it with the Finance Committee recommendations on it. That's one change that we are looking to make. He added, another thing that we would like to put in, is something about the Board of Health and the Animal Control Officer's procedure. How Board of health rules and regulations are codified and a procedure for the Animal Control Officer to act on. The highway superintendent has given us an insert for the manual as well. He finished by saying that the Town Accountant has made it clear there are additional policies that she will want to put in after October.

Nancy asked when the deadline is for submission. She would like to go over it again.

Selectman Menges said he would like to give them another week.

**Police Appointments**

Selectman Menges said the police department had come up with a recommendation for two full time officers, one of which will be paid out of the money for the School Resource Officer, the other out of an appropriation made at town meeting. The Chief sat with the board, and the three sergeants also endorse the recommendations. He added that we are hopeful that the Chief and Sergeant Dutra will come to the meeting Wednesday night to have their appointments voted on by the board.

### **Police Station Construction**

Chairman Cronin said we are being very patient. Besides all the delays - it was a waste of a year and a half and starting over again. The Police Station Committee have been to the planning board twice. Their concerns were not met, so they were referred to the zoning board of appeals. Last week, I met with the chairman of the zoning board of appeals and he said they did not have some of the information they needed; all of which was inside the walls of town hall. All of the easements, that some of the boards needed, are there. All of the permits have been applied for. There is a six week time frame to get bids. They are still hoping to get a shovel in the ground before winter. We should have concrete answers by Friday and then it will go back to the planning board for approval of site plan. Selectman Menges said this meeting is for the benefit of Nancy - and I want her to know that the delays were strictly local. In October the Fed will raise the borrowing rate, and the cost of borrowing money will go through the roof. We've got to get this underway.

### **Broad Cove Nature Trail**

Selectman Menges said we have lost part of Broad Cove Nature Trail due to a decision by a judge. It's a matter of working out some issues with the landowner now. Right now his fence is inside the town's boundary, therefore, we have made it clear that we will remove the fence tomorrow. If pressed in court to mark the boundaries, we will have to decide quickly on whether to give Mr. Mello a letter of permission to maintain his fence on town land, where it is. If we give permission it is no longer adverse. The fence would remain where it is until we come to some sort of rational conclusion about what will become of the nature trail. The other possibility is that Dighton has a fine piece of land on Broad Cove that is now accessible from route 138. This will take a long time - and one of the people that should be involved is Johnathan Grey. Selectman Menges added that he and Mr. Mello will be getting together soon to talk again. Nancy asked why he put the fence on our land. Selectman Menges says if you look at the lay of the land, there was no other place to put it where it would effectively keep out vehicles.

### **Clerical Union Wage Study**

Chairman Cronin said they are at the end of the clerical union wage study. The last one done was in 2010. The department heads have given the forms to their people and they were asked to jot down any additional tasks that they have now that makes their jobs harder to complete on a daily basis. Selectman Menges said the next step is that we will meet and vote on whether to raise the grade and pay or not. There are two positions in particular, in which there has been some question as to whether they meet the criteria for a grade increase. We will have to look at this very closely.

### **Animal Shelter Upgrades**

Selectman Menges said we had a situation last week, where we had to move some dogs to the animal shelter. Our weekend Animal Control Officer, Delfim Diosomito and I met and looked at the shelter. The location of the shelter is second to how the animals are being treated. The superintendent of the streets said that in order to put an outside run, it would cost about \$5,000.00. If we proceed, we will be making three stalls outside on the East side, on a concrete pad so that they cannot tunnel out of it. It will give them a place to do their business outdoors and stretch their legs. We have been blessed to have Greg Logan, who has volunteered to do whatever is needed at the shelter and it will come out of the public building maintenance fund. Meanwhile, Stacey Ferry is attending meetings at SRPEDD to regionalize the animal shelter. There is no way that any one town in the region could meet all of the requirements of a shelter. Selectman Menges said finally that Ross Perry is beating the bushes for any possible grant money available for that purpose.

### **Director of Public Health**

Chairman Cronin said there has been talk about splitting the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Health. That will take a long time. In the meantime we will be looking into a supervisor. We are not certified and cannot handle some of the issues.

Selectman Menges added that we have a huge problem in the health department. We have great personnel, but they don't have a leader. We need to have one superintendent that everyone can answer to. Someone capable of streamlining the process, obtaining an administrative warrant, administering quarantines and responding to public emergencies. We have reached out to one of the area universities which will result in a capable person to administer the health department. If we put the proposition on the warrant for the annual town meeting June of 2016 we could vote to separate them. Then it would have to be voted on by ballot in April of 2017.

Selectman Goulart said it is not a Board of Health issue, it is an issue with the entire spectrum, because so many departments are involved. She would also like to see a committee formed to work with the intern and look at the whole thing to specifically see how this will work out, and how long it will take to split this. As this person works toward completing this internship, he or she could report back to the board and to the people. Then everyone could understand what is involved. She went on to say, a committee is needed to look at the present setup and be able to come back to the board and tell us this is where you are and this is a plan of action. Then we can go to the people with a plan and the amount of money that will be needed. Splitting the board will take two years but we can be working on it. In the course of studying this, they may find some other things that maybe we haven't thought of.

Selectman Menges said I think the committee needs to be carefully chosen. People with knowledge of the field and also people who are willing to learn it.

Chairman Cronin said committees are always formed to write things on paper. We are in a mess right now.

Selectman Goulart said that is exactly why we need this committee. We deal with the nitty gritty and they will be asked to do the stuff that we don't have time to do. We have to deal with the operational part of it. In the meantime we will not be overburdened trying to figure this out.

Selectman Menges said the Committee on Structure and Functions of the Board of Health should be put on the agenda for tomorrow night's Board of Health meeting.

### **Van Gyzen Hall**

Selectman Menges said Van Gyzen Hall is dormant at the moment and that a study committee has been formed to determine its future functions or whether or not to sell it. The finance committee has appropriated a transfer of \$20,000.00 to remediate the mold in the building. We have approached Bristol Plymouth and while it would be 2 years before we could have some structural work done, we can have the plumbing students sooner. The electrical system needs upgrading. There will need to be some structural work done to the ramps, exits and the egress. He added that we are moving in a positive direction. If committee decides to sell it, it will need some remediation. There are some very good and some very original ideas that have come from the meetings. The committee has said they will do a bulk mailing or have a public meeting. The minutes of the last study committee meeting are online.

Selectman Goulart liked the public meeting idea because the cost is extremely minimal.

### **Boat Ramp Improvements**

Selectman Menges said we signed a contract with the State authorizing them to make the improvements which are; canoe access at the boat ramp and eventually a fishing pier that will not damage the marsh grass. The parks and recreation board coordinates with the State for this. The responsibility will be the towns' after these improvements are done. The state likes our harbor and feel it has great potential for recreational activities.

### **Solar Projects**

Chairman Cronin said Williams Street land is being prepared as we speak. There is one on Elm Street that is still in the application process. Selectman Menges said those are private. In the municipal aspect we have signed a contract to have a company find us entrepreneurs to come in and put a solar farm on the former landfill and to look for other public buildings and properties. We are at the end of Federal and State incentives for solar energy, but we can get on the grid. This is entirely in the hands of the Planning Board. Dighton has a solar zoning bylaw. The company will be obtaining, through the planning board, all the necessary permits they will need.

### **Energy Aggregation**

Chairman Cronin said we have given the okay to the SRPEDD group to go out and get prices and quotes per kilowatt hour for electricity. They are looking at a target date to finalize the contract in early December. We will be patient and see what they come up with.

### **Town Meeting Communications Committee**

Chairman Cronin said they are off to a great start. It is a group of three individuals who are doing a great job providing information to our administrative assistant and getting the word out to people about meetings. Chairman Cronin said our communication in this town is very diverse. Most of the elderly do not have the internet. Newspapers have gone by the wayside. It is very difficult to get the word out. Selectman Menges asked administrative assistant to put the expansion of the committee's mandate to give them the added responsibility of publicity for all public affairs, on the next meeting agenda. Selectman Goulart would like to see all minutes published on the website.

### **Master Plan Implementation Checklist**

Selectman Menges said the planning board has put out a comprehensive checklist of what each department has been tasked with in regards to the master plan. We have gone through and determined what the Board of Selectmen are responsible for. We are on our way and have done a number of the important things. We have a Development and Industrial Commission and we have adopted mixed use zoning and at the last meeting, we adopted the expedited permitting process. Now that the bridge is open we may see a spurt in commerce in the town.

### **Schools**

#### **A. Dighton Rehoboth Regional Agreement**

Chairman Cronin said we have groups of people from both towns trying to re-write the Dighton Rehoboth Regional Agreement. The state has had a lot of input. The holdup is that Rehoboth refuses to sit back and accept what the State mandates as using the statutory method. They want to write into that agreement, that on any given year they can submit a new method of assessments which will suit them financially. The contingency from Dighton has made it clear that this cannot continue any longer

with the breakdown the way it is. We have school committee people, finance committee people. The only ones that are making out are the lawyers and the State consultants. Selectman Menges said we are at the point of the last of the meetings. What is needed is within the language of the current agreement is for a superintendent to say it costs "x" amount of money to educate a student in each region. Why have 5 grammar schools. The future lies in doing away with town lines. They need to make sure that schools are all up to standards and equally treated.

#### **B. ALICE/SINK Training - Disaster Committee**

Selectman Menges said one of the very important initiatives is that we have an ALICE program in place. We have been blessed that our school personnel have gotten the training and have trained their respective school staffs on how to respond in the event of an emergency. They know how to react and where to take children in the event of an emergency, and also know the procedure for lock down. The SINK feature will allow first responders to actually see what is going on in the building and plan accordingly before they enter. We are waiting for the regional school committee to authorize the initial expenditure to get it up and running, and the disaster committee will fund the rest.

**C. Third Wednesday of the Month, DR Superintendent's Office.** Chairman Cronin said the superintendent has asked the Board of Selectmen to meet with him and his business manager on the third Wednesday of each month to keep up on what is going on in the school.

**D. Quarterly meeting with Rehoboth Board of Selectmen.** Chairman Cronin said this will be the second year that we have been doing this with them. We alternate locations and go over objectives. Selectman Menges added the next one will be the first Wednesday of November.

#### **Subdivision Issues**

Chairman Cronin said we have decided to become a little more involved with this due to complaints from residents that their roads have not been accepted by the town and they have been paying taxes. Selectman Menges said the developers put up a bond or have a 53G account to finish whatever is not done. The initiative to see if they have been finished lies with the planning board. Not sure if they have a mechanism in place to follow up on these. He added that on Cameron Drive the road has not been accepted, the developer pulled out and is not coming back. The roadway needs to be top coated and the overgrown brush on the sides of the road is becoming a hazard for traffic. We need to give the contractor a deadline to finish.

Nancy asked if we plow these Streets.

Selectman Menges answered yes when they are inhabited and people start to pay taxes on them.

#### **Recycling (Transfer Station)**

Chairman Cronin said this has been brought up that maybe recycling should be done weekly. We have not looked into the cost for weekly pickup. There has also been an issue as to why people have to pay to go to the transfer station with recyclables. For a total of \$10.00/per year for a sticker, you can bring recycling to the bins at the transfer station. So it is a \$10.00 sticker for the time being.

Selectman Menges said we have put the brakes on the pickup of trash that is not in town bags and we have informed Mr. Borges not to pick it up.

Selectman Menges added that we need to discuss a hazardous waste collection day.

### **Telephone (T1) System Status**

Chairman Cronin said we are updating the telephone system in town hall. This is the original system. The testing is being done as we speak to test the internet setup. This is a T1 system. No more telephone lines. Within two weeks they will be physically putting in the phones. Calls will come into a main number and you will get a menu of departments. You will be given right to the person that you want to talk to.

### **Security System Status**

Chairman Cronin said we have had numerous bids - there will be no more key entry. There are thousands of keys out there and we can no longer keep track of them. Access will be to verified personnel only. If you are authorized you will get in. Everyone who works here will be put in groups of 24 hour access, only during working hours, committees, etc. Any offenders will be taken off the list.

### **Land Purchase for Grammar Schools "21E" Investigation.**

Selectman Menges said the purchase of the property was approved adjacent to the elementary and middle school. We will be conducting a 21E investigation. We are ready to set a date to have the inspection done.

Chairman Cronin said we will try to have them pay for the inspection

Selectman Menges said if we demolish we will pay \$160,000.00 if they demolish, we pay \$175,000.00.

We have signed the purchase and sale agreement.

Selectman Goulart asked if the house is in good condition.

Selectman Menges said it is not, but there is a good stove that will be used at the highway department.

### **Animal Control**

Selectman Menges said it is a matter of having a procedure in place where the Animal Control Officer will ask for an appointment when a complaint comes in, if they refuse, she will cite the violation and give a copy to the board of health so that we are prepared in case they appeal to the Board of Health. We need to make sure that the Animal Control Officer is armed with the proper citation to issue and also make sure that this policy goes into the policy manual when it is published.

### **Dormant Initiatives**

#### **Green Community**

Requires a vote at the town meeting to approve the Stretch Energy Code for which Dighton voted no.

#### **911 Regionalization**

We found it not to be cost effective.

#### **Town Administrator**

The town voted no. On the back burner for now.

Selectman Menges motioned to recess the meeting until 12:15 pm.

Selectman Goulart said this is okay with her and seconded the motion.

Melissa St. Laurent asked if the plans for the police station are complete. Chairman Cronin said 95% and Selectman Goulart asked if the ZBA and Planning are out of it now.

Chairman Cronin said ZBA just needs to put in writing, that they do not need a variance.

Selectman Goulart said so now it is just the planning board that's got to approve the site plan.  
Chairman Cronin said they will approve the site plan.

Chairman Cronin said the motion has been made and seconded.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Meeting adjourned at 11:05 am.**

(Executive Session to follow at 12:15pm).

Respectfully submitted,

**Karin L. Brady  
Administrative Assistant  
Board of Selectmen**

  
Dean V. Cronin-Chairman

  
Patrick W. Menges-Clerk

  
Nancy J. Goulart - Member