

RECEIVED

Town Clerk-Dighton, MA

The following Meeting was video and audio recorded for Airing on Channel 9

JUL 13 2023

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, May 24, 2023 6:30 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting

Old Town Hall, 1111 Somerset Avenue, Dighton, MA

And via Zoom

Time: 8:55 AM

By: 

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Caron at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Chairman Peter Caron, Selectman Leonard Hull, Selectman Nicole Mello, Town Administrator Michael Mullen, Executive Assistant Karin Brady, Council on Aging Office Manager Laura Medeiros,

Also Present: Jennifer Duczowski – 2414 County Street, Jonathan Gale – 22 Waterford Circle, Kevin Smith-2461 Maple Swamp Road, William Moore, 1835 Smith Street and Robert Woods-158 Chase Street.

Present via Zoom: Patrick Higgins.

Chairman Caron stated that the meeting was being recorded and gave instructions for providing public input.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was requested by Selectman Hull for Ronald Aguiar.

Scheduled Appointments

6:30 p.m. Laura Medeiros

Ms. Medeiros gave an update on the things that are going on at the Council on Aging. She updated the board on the walking challenge and also announced that there had been a pin ball machine recently donated to the Council on Aging by a Rehoboth resident.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectmen Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to send a letter of thanks to David Barriere and his son Nathan from Rehoboth.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

Announcements

Announcements were read by Selectman Mello.

Public Input

Chairman Caron gave instructions for providing public input.

Jennifer Duczkowski, 2414 County Street, came forward to discuss appointments for the Commission on Disability. She gave details on the recent meeting held by the Commission on Disability to interview candidates. She said the board gave the impression of bias when they appointed two of the four candidates. She thought that this was not the intent of the board and the impact was that no one feels comfortable to volunteer. She said the statement made by Selectman Hull at the meeting on May 10, supported the appointment of all four of the candidates. She said she felt confident, that any questions the board had, could have been answered in advance of the May 10, meeting. She urged the board to reconsider the appointments, issue apologies, and look for ways to foster involvement by volunteers.

Jonathan Gale, 22 Waterford Circle, speaking as the Chair of the Commission on Disability felt that the applicants that were not appointed were both caring, concerned and wanted to make a difference. He said he did not know of any other town with policies and procedures where the applicants have to be present to be appointed.

Mr. Gale said he received an email from the Board of Selectmen's office asking for a recommendation from the Commission on Disability. He said they were not informed that the applicants had to be present. Mr. Gale said both candidates intended to be present tonight, but due to work they were not able to be present.

Kevin Smith, 2461 Maple Swamp Road, said if something needs to be explored, he hoped the town would do it. He said the Commission on Disability recommended all four candidates for a reason and with the support of Selectman Hull. He thought the more people you can bring to the table, the better. He encouraged the board to appoint the remaining two applicants.

William Moore, 1835 Smith Street, said he thought this was much ado about nothing. He said the appointments were not denied, they were tabled, meaning it would be considered at a future meeting. Mr. Moore said all of the committees are appointed by the Board of Selectmen. He strongly supported the board's right to choose their appointed individuals. He said nasty accusations of nepotism and sexism were uncalled for.

Patrick Higgins, via zoom, said at the beginning of the meeting you always give the zoom information. He said that was not necessary because anyone who is watching would have that information. He said it was an exercise in futility.

Mr. Higgins also advised the board not to turn down volunteers and referenced, Chapter 41, section 11.

Mr. Higgins also said the COD meeting should have been posted as a joint meeting with a quorum of the Board of Selectmen having been present.

Selectman Hull, asked Mr. Higgins "if one member attends, but does not participate, is it considered a joint meeting?" Mr. Higgins said if you are present and participated.

Mr. Robert Woods, 158 Chase Street (via Zoom), said he wanted to clarify a few things. He felt that it was up to the Chairman as to how they would like to conduct the meeting. If the chairman would like the appointees to be present, it is up to the chair.

Town Administrators' Report

Annual Town Meeting – Town Meeting Warrant Overview Presentation

Mr. Mullen went over the proposed Annual Town Meeting Warrant and gave information on each article.

Selectman's Reports

Chairman Peter Caron Solid Waste Committee

Chairman Caron said the point-of-sale system was on order for the Transfer Station and they hoped to have the system up and running by beginning of the fiscal year.

Selectman Nicole Mello – Library Building Committee

Selectman Mell said on May 13th the Library held an open house at 207 Main Street and about 70 residents attended. She said it went very well.

Selectman Leonard Hull – Dighton Water District

Selectman Hull reported that there would be a Water District Meeting tomorrow night at Dighton Elementary School. He thanked Mr. Quinn for his service to the Water District. He also announced that Mr. Derek Lach had resigned from the commission.

Selectman Hull reported that there is a water restriction from May – October, odd and even restrictions are in place and no new irrigation permits would be issued.

Main Street Project

Selectman Hull reported that the telephone poles were being moved by National Grid. He said beginning in July, three (3) mains would be repaired and negotiations with Naughton Construction for road restoration were underway. He said a smooth top coat or milling would be performed.

DDIC

Selectman Hull reported positive news. He said four (4) new businesses opened in town. He said on Saturday, One Connection presented the town with a check for \$35,000.00 and they celebrated their one-year anniversary.

Selectman Hull said that a networking event would be held in October.

Selectman Hull said the D-R Regional School Committee met last night. He said unfortunately Mrs. Gail De Cecco has resigned from the high school principal position as well as Amy Younger as principal of Dighton Middle School.

Recommendation to Appoint Leah Quinn to the Commission on Disability

Chairman Caron said he saw no problem with asking an applicant to be present for an interview. He said he was offended by the comments that it was sexist. Chairman Caron said he would not be pressured and bullied by someone who wants to be appointed.

He recommended that neither one be appointed.

Selectman Hull said it was his initial recommendation to expand the commission, however, the actions of one individual on social media, caused him to change his opinion.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to close the appointment process with the current group of five (5) Commission on Disability members.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.
Selectman Hull, aye.
Selectman Mello, aye.

New Business

Memorandum of Agreement with Dispatchers/Communication Union

Mr. Mullen said it is a one-year extension of the contract with a 2% increase. He recommended approval.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the MOA between The Town of Dighton and the Dighton Dispatcher's/Communications Union.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.
Selectman Hull, aye.
Selectman Mello, aye.

Memorandum of Understanding Between the Town of Dighton and SRPEDD

Mr. Mullen said that SRPEDD (Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District) has been administering the grant for Green Communities Grant and this was a renewal of that agreement.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the MOA between SRPEDD and the Town of Dighton for Energy Planning Assistance.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.
Selectman Hull, aye.
Selectman Mello, aye.

Facilities Request

New Leaf Energy – Community meeting to Introduce Battery Energy Storage Project

Mr. Mullen said they are proposing a Battery Energy Storage Project. This is a very extensive process. Mr. Mullen recommended that if there was interest, they should do a follow up meeting.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the facilities use request for New Leaf Energy.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.
Selectman Hull, aye.
Selectman Mello, aye.

Review and Update Town of Dighton Policy and Procedures and Board and Committee Handbook

Mr. Mullen said he thought it was healthy to look at the policies that are in place to be sure that they are in line with the board's vision. He thought we had a grasp on what policies work, what policies may need work. He was recommending that over the summer, we go through policies and review them over the next seven (7) meetings or so.

Selectman Hull asked if this would be part of the retreat. Mr. Mullen said it would.

Selectman Mello motioned, Selectman Hull seconded and it was **VOTED** to table the next two agenda items.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

Appoint Nicole Mello as a Voting Member of the Agricultural Commission

Selectman Hull, Chairman Caron stepped down to second and it was **VOTED** to appoint Nicole Mello as a Voting Member of the Agricultural Commission.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

One Day Liquor License-Bristol County Agricultural High School

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the one-day liquor license for Bristol County Agricultural High School on June 7, 2023.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

Proposed Board of Selectmen Meeting Schedule

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the Board of Selectmen's meeting schedule.

Warrants

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve Warrant #46A-23 in the amount of \$120,81.21 and Warrant #46B-23 in the amount of \$133,211.24 both dated May 18, 2023.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to approved Warrant #47A-23 in the amount of \$141,741.20 and Warrant #47B-23 in the amount of \$231,934.23, both dated May 25, 2023.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

Acknowledgements

ALA Grant Award Letter

Town Administrator Mullen said he wanted to thank Library Director Jocelyn Tavares and Mr. Ron O'Connor for their work on this very important grant.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to issue a letter of thanks to Jocelyn Tavares and Ron O'Connor.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

Resignation of Pam Tenglin-Assistant Town Clerk

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to accept the letter of retirement from Pam Tenglin with sincere thanks for her services.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

Minutes

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the meeting minutes of May 10, 2023.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

Executive Session

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to enter into Executive Session Under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3)(7)

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 a public body and the chair so declares

Chairman Caron declared.

a. Clerical Union

7. To comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law of federal grant-in-aid requirements.

Executive Session Minutes:

Approval of the Board of Selectmen's Executive Session meeting minutes of May 10, 2023.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

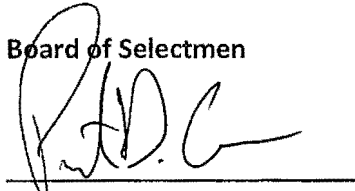
Adjournment

Regular meeting ended at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karin L. Brady
Executive Assistant

Board of Selectmen



Peter Caron, Chairman



Nicole Mello, Clerk



Leonard E. Hull, Member

Documents Reviewed:

Bulky Items Curbside Pickup Announcement

Memorial Day Ceremony Flyer

Dighton Strawberry Festival Flyer

Board of Health Member Posting

BOS Appointing Authority Question-Email from Matt Costa

Board and Committee Handbook

Committee Appointments Policy

Letter from Jonathan Gale Requesting the Appointments to the Commission on Disability

Volunteer Application – Leah Quinn

Volunteer Application – Dana Rose

MOA Between the Town of Dighton and the Dighton 911 Signal Operator's Union

MOU Between SRPEDD and the Town of Dighton – REPA Grant

Facilities Use Request – Community Meeting

Bristol County Agricultural High School One Day Liquor License Application

Proposed Board of Selectmen's Meeting Schedule

ALA Library Grant Announcement

Pamela Tenglin Retirement Letter

Meeting Minutes of the Board of Selectmen's Regular Meeting of April 26, 2023