

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

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**Regular Meeting**

Wednesday, August 9, 2023 6:30 p.m.

**Hybrid Meeting**

Old Town Hall, 1111 Somerset Avenue, Dighton, MA

And via Zoom

**RECEIVED**

Town Clerk-Dighton, MA

SEP 12 2023

Time: 3:55 PM

By: SC

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Caron. He stated that it was a hybrid meeting and gave instructions to the public for providing input and logging in, via Zoom.

**Present:** Chairman Caron, Selectman Mello, Selectman Hull, Town Administrator Mullen, Town Accountant Sirena Amaral and Executive Assistant Karin Brady.

**Also Present:** Historical Commission Chair Patricia Gales, Town Moderator William Moore and Stephanie Buzzell.

**Present via Zoom:** Parks and Recreation Chairman, Kevin Smith.

**Roll Call:**

Chairman Caron, present.

Selectman Mello, present.

Selectman Hull, present.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

The pledge of allegiance was recited

**Moment of Silence**

A moment of silence was requested for Brian Boutin-Gammon by Selectman Hull.

**Scheduled Appointments:**

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to take agenda item 7a. out of order.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

**Scheduled Appointments**

**6:30 p.m. - Pat Gales, Chairman – Historical Commission**

**America's 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Patricia Gales gave some background on America's 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. She asked if the town would consider the appointment of an anniversary committee consisting of representatives from Dighton

Historical Commission, Dighton Historical Society, Veteran's agent, representatives from the school district, possibly members of the Minutemen and others. Ms. Gales said the events and programs could be varied, but could include a re-enactment plus much more. She thought maybe nine (9) people should be on the committee and report back to their respective boards.

Town Administrator Mullen said he and Ms. Gales could discuss this and come back to the board with a recommendation on the number of members for the committee.

Chairman Caron asked Ms. Gales to give an update on the Historical Commission meeting.

Ms. Gales said the Historical Commission talked about capturing oral history from our oldest residents. She said some are over 100 years old. Ms. Gales said they also talked about how to get this history out to the public.

Ms. Gales said the second thing the Historical Commission talked about, was an application to the Massachusetts Historical Commission to request the registration of historic districts in town. She said the Historical Commission found their request was not eligible, but a couple of individual buildings did qualify. She said once you get the national designation, there are no guidelines that the resident has to follow. Ms. Gales said they discussed this question and talked about submitting that question to the national register.

Ms. Gales said they also talked about the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the time capsule. She said the idea for the capsule was to make a plexiglass box. She said they would present this to the library trustees to make sure that they are on board with placement of the time capsule.

Ms. Gales said the Historical Commission has one opening left.

#### **6:35 p.m. Mr. William Moore, Moderator**

Mr. Moore said he was presenting a bylaw to the Board of Selectmen for support and inclusion on the Special Town Meeting Warrant. He said prior to the Annual Town Meeting, Town Counsel prepares a list of how the votes should be taken and whether they will require a 2/3 or a majority vote.

Mr. Moore said according to Town Counsel, any bylaw changes require 50% vote. He said he did not think it should be that easy to change the bylaws. Mr. Moore said he was here to request that a warrant article be placed on the warrant which states that a 2/3 majority vote would be needed to change a bylaw in town.

The board agreed and asked Mr. Moore to compile a warrant article for review.

#### **Announcements**

Announcements were read by Selectman Mello.

#### **Town Administrators Report**

Mr. Mullen reported that the town has put out a bid request for one dedicated company to provide on-call engineering peer review services. He said we are meeting to review the bids, and based on that meeting, we may want to interview companies. Mr. Mullen said we are hoping to come before the board with a recommendation for award of the bid in the near future.

Mr. Mullen said that if you have traveled through the village in town, you will notice that the sidewalks have been blocked off. He said there are some issues with the façade of the building at 620 Spring

Street. Mr. Mullen said we reached out to the business owner and we hope that the sidewalk closure will be temporary.

Chairman Caron asked about Main Street.

Mr. Mullen said last week the Dighton Water District did the overlay paving. He said this is a temporary fix. Mr. Mullen said the infrastructure work has to settle for a full winter and because it hasn't been able to, we have not been able to do the whole road as of yet. He said the funding for the first part of the work was approved at the annual town meeting and we are looking into the possibility of requesting more funding at the Special Town Meeting. Mr. Mullen said we will continue to make this a priority.

### **Selectman's Report**

Selectman Mello said the Dighton Trails Committee met with Department of Conservation and Recreation. She said there were representatives from Bristol County Agricultural High School, the Building Commissioner and Town Administrator Mullen. She said Bristol Aggie had some concerns. Selectman Mello said she also had some concerns with the Somerset Avenue trailhead and asked DCR to think of alternatives to a trailhead with no parking. She said there were talks about the easement and not doing that. Selectman Mello said taking away the easement would make the town liable to maintain a parking lot.

Mr. Mullen said we made it clear that we cannot incur any costs for this project. He said we were very honest with our concerns. Mr. Mullen said the process is evolving and they are very much still in the design phase.

Chairman Caron asked about use projections. Selectman Mello said she was not sure that they have that kind of data yet.

Selectman Hull asked about using the Sweets Knoll parking lot. Selectman Mello said that the parking lot would be expanded and made to look less like a house and more like a park. She said the DCR want to have a way to get off the trail every quarter mile.

Mr. Mullen said this is a big project with a lot of complexities. He said they have gone back to the drawing board to reconfigure the construction schedule. Mr. Mullen said any part of the first wave of construction would happen in the area of Sweets Knoll, where they have an ability to overcome a lot of the hurdles. He said they are talking about phasing the construction in. Mr. Mullen said our concerns about Center Street are real, but we could be talking 6-8 years out.

Selectman Mello said the Trails Committee initialized a rapid response to the pet waste problem at one of the trails. She said there was confusion and people were putting pet waste into the bag receptacle. She said this was corrected very quickly with new signage thanks to the Highway Department.

### **Library Building**

Selectman Mello said they discussed reapplying for the grant that was not awarded to the town last year. They are now ready to re-apply.

Selectman Mello said there was a bid put out for on-call engineering services that will close on the 24<sup>th</sup> of August.

Mr. Mullen said the Building Commissioner has received plans for the ramp outside the library building and the town has the ability to engage the students at Bristol Plymouth Regional Technical High School for that. He said a lot of the electrical and lighting on the outside of the building can also be moved on. Mr. Mullen said we received word from Representative Haddad and Senator Pacheco that they secured \$175,000.00 in the state budget for furnishings and this was very exciting news.

### **Selectman Hull**

#### **School Committee Meeting**

Selectman Hull reported that the Dighton PTO raised \$17,000.00 to be donated to School Department for the purchase of 6 smart books, three for Dighton Elementary School and three for Dighton Middle School.

Selectman Hull also reported that Brianne Kelliher will be the new principal at Dighton Middle School.

Selectman Hull also voted on new contract for custodians, which contains a 2.5% increase over three years. He said they did not negotiate the whole contract, they split it into pieces and made a MOU for the pieces that they did agree on.

Selectman Hull said the MSBA contacted Dighton Rehoboth and approved request for funding consideration. He said they also approved the district hardship request. Selectman Hull said we are in the top 32 requests and the MSBA will be coming down to do a site visit.

Selectman Hull said DESE will continue the free lunch program this year. He said the outside lighting upgrades at the stadium and tennis court repairs would be complete by end of August. Selectman Hull said repairs to the auditorium are coming along, but did not include repairs to the chairs.

Selectman Hull reported that the Dighton Rehoboth Regional High School Business Manager gave a 60-day notice and that he would be going into the private sector.

Selectman Hull said mediation between the Town of Rehoboth and the Town of Dighton School District broke down and they would be going to court. He said unfortunately this will impact the town's legal budget.

Selectman Hull said David Katseff from Rehoboth passed away suddenly last week. He said that Mr. Katseff was a huge part of forming the district that we have today. Selectman Hull said he will be deeply missed.

#### **Old Business:**

There was discussion about the time capsule, the donated map and locations for each. Requests by the Historical Commission.

#### **New Business:**

##### **Open STM Warrant**

Town Administrator Mullen went over the proposed schedule with the board for a Special Town meeting to be held on October 30, 2023.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to open the Special Town Meeting warrant and set the timeline as presented this evening.

#### **Roll Call Vote:**

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

**Recommendation to Appoint Stephanie Buzzell as Assistant Town Accountant**

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to appoint Stephanie Buzzell as Assistant Town Accountant.

**Roll Call Vote:**

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

**Cleaning Contract for Town Office Buildings**

Mr. Mullen recommended that the board award the contract to M&S Cleaning. He said they were the low bidder and he asked the board to allow him to execute the contract.

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve the contract between the Town of Dighton and Aaron Weremay of M&S Cleaning for the period of one year and allow Town Administrator to execute the contract.

**Roll Call Vote:**

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

**Appoint Shara Costa, Town Clerk, as Public Records Access Officer**

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to appoint Shara Costa as the Public Records Access Officer for the Town of Dighton.

**Roll Call Vote:**

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

**Appoint Rebecca Mello, Assistant Town Clerk as Public Records Access Officer Assistant**

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to appoint Rebecca Mello as the Public Records Access Officer Assistant for the Town of Dighton.

**Appoint Shara Costa, Town Clerk, as Parking Clerk**

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to appoint Shara Costa as the Parking Clerk.

**Roll Call Vote:**

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

**Appoint Shara Costa, Town Clerk, as State Ethics Liaison**

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to appoint Shara Costa as the State Ethics Liaison.

**Roll Call Vote:**

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

**Warrants**

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve Warrant #6A-24 in the amount of \$116,771.05 and Warrant #6B-24 in the amount of \$140,604.27, both dated August 3, 2023.

**Roll Call Vote:**

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

Selectman Hull motioned, Selectman Mello seconded and it was **VOTED** to approve Warrant #7A-24 in the amount of \$112,926.60, Warrant #7B-24 in the amount of \$284,716.83 and Warrant #7C-24 in the amount of \$1,472,375.00, all dated August 10, 2023.

**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 regular meeting minutes of July 26, 2023.

**Roll Call Vote:**

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

**Public Input**

None.

**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.

a. Clerical Union.

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

**Executive Session Minutes**

Approval of the Board of selectmen's Executive Session Meeting Minutes of June 20, 2023.

Approval of the Board of Selectmen's Executive Session Meeting Minutes of July 12, 2023.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Chairman Caron, aye.

Selectman Hull, aye.

Selectman Mello, aye.

The regular portion of the meeting ended at 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Karin L. Brady**  
**Executive Assistant**

**Board of Selectmen**



Peter Caron, Chairman



Nicole Mello, Clerk



Leonard E. Hull, Member

**Documents Reviewed:**

Flyer for Firecracker Festival

Friends of the Dighton Public Library Golf Tournament Flyer

Proposed Schedule for Special Town Meeting

Letter from Town Accountant, Sirena Amaral, requesting the appointment of Stephanie Buzzell as the Assistant Town Accountant

Contract between the Town of Dighton and M&S Cleaning for Cleaning Services

Resignation of Patricia Barlow from the Dighton Development and Industrial Commission  
(done at a prior meeting)

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

