

**Minutes of Regular Meeting
Select Board
Tuesday, October 11, 2022
Remote Online Meeting (Zoom 859 1841 7239)
Called to Order at 6:30 p.m.**

Remotely participating were Board members, Chair Christopher Houston, Harvey Boshart and Laurie Bent. Also present were Town Manager Leon A. Gaumont, Jr., Assistant Town Manager/Human Resources Director Lisa Yanakakis, Assistant to Town Manager, Michelle LeBlanc, Finance Director/Town Accountant Susan Kelley, Chair of the Trustees of the Merriam Fund Jack Doyle, Trustees of the Merriam Fund Member Mary Shaw, Trustees of the Merriam Fund Candidate Christopher Palmer.

Mr. Houston called the remote meeting to order and read the following:
Governor Baker signed into law An Act Relative to Extending Certain State of Emergency Accommodations, which extends the expiration of the provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law to March 31, 2023. Specifically, this extension allows public bodies to continue holding meetings remotely without a quorum of the public body physically present at a physical meeting location, and to provide "adequate, alternative" access to remote meetings. When opting for remote meetings, the Town will provide access to such meetings via the Zoom platform and will record such meetings when in open session and will post such meetings as soon as possible.

Resident Comments: None

Interviews with candidate for Trustees of the Merriam Fund

Mr. Doyle gave a brief description as to what the Merriam Fund is all about. He noted that it's like an endowment fund where the funds are maintained by the Town, for the Weston Residents in dire financial need.

Ms. Bent asked how many grants were made by the Merriam Fund in the last year. Ms. Shaw stated that 3 grants all to Weston residents, which ranged from a water heater repair to a dental issue. Many applicants come from the Council on Aging. Ms. Shaw noted that the high energy costs this year may cause an issue due to many residents in need of assistance. Ms. Shaw stated the Members pay the bill directly and never release the funds to the resident directly. Mr. Doyle noted the practice is that 2 Members meet with the Resident in need prior to a decision being made.

Mr. Palmer met with the committee last month to see how their committee operates. He would like to offer support to the committee. He feels his background will help contribute to the goal of the Merriam Fund.

MOTION: Ms. Bent moved to appoint Chris Palmer and Michelle Samu to fill the vacancies on the Trustees of the Merriam Fund, term set to expire June 30, 2025. 2nd by Mr. Boshart.

Roll call vote: Ms. Bent, Mr. Boshart and Mr. Houston voted in the affirmative. **Approved unanimously.**

Consideration of Amending Water Rates.

Mr. Gaumont explained the 2022/2023 rates needed to be approved for water usage. The last time water rates have been raised was FY 2021. The current water rates are Tier 1 (0-5k cf)- \$2.20/hcf, Tier 2 (5,001

-15k cf) -\$6.60/hcf, Tier 3 (over 15k cf) - \$13.20/ hcf. Ms. Kelley had presented documents that showed the water consumption rates rising for FY22, which were average with what the surrounding cities and towns were experiencing. Mr. Houston noted that a few towns had much higher water rates than Weston. Mr. Houston stated the Town of Weston has not raised water rates in recent years which led to hardly any reserves being held for the improvement of future water projects that are much needed, especially the water tank replacements. Mr. Houston stated they will need to start getting those reserves from the raised rates. After some discussion, the new water rates were approved: Tier 1 (0-5k cf)- \$2.65/hcf, Tier 2 (5,001 -15k cf) -\$7.95/hcf, Tier 3 (over 15k cf) - \$15.90/ hcf. Mr. Houston stated that for the next fiscal year FY23 the rates may go up again.

MOTION: Mr. Houston moved to approve the new FY22 water rates. 2nd by Ms. Bent.

Roll call vote: Ms. Bent, Mr. Boshart, and Mr. Houston voted in the affirmative. **Approved unanimously.**

Consider removal of water restrictions.

Mr. Gaumond stated that on July 26th, 2022, the Select Board voted to place preliminary restriction on water usage in Weston. Mr. Cullen has recommended that these restrictions be lifted given our current usage and present levels of supply.

MOTION: Ms. Bent moved to rescind the water conservation measures voted by the Select Board on July 26, 2022. 2nd by Mr. Boshart.

Roll call vote: Mr. Boshart, Ms. Bent and Mr. Houston voted in the affirmative. **Approved unanimously.**

Set date & discuss Financial Summit on 10-31-22.

Mr. Gaumond stated they are planning on having the annual Financial Summit to be held on October 31, 2022, at 8:30a.m. At the Summit, preliminary info on capital projects such as discussion of the school needs for FY 24, Finance Committee thoughts for FY 24, Select Board thoughts for FY 24 and general discussion for FY 24 will be the main topics covered. Ms. Kelley stated they are borrowing earlier than previous years due to the rates, and if anyone comes up with a reasonable scenario, they would like her to run she can later. Mr. Houston wanted the material sent out early enough so people can review it and come prepared.

The Select Board did not vote on this, the date is already set for October 31, 2022, at 8:30am.

Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mr. Boshart moved the Consent Agenda as follows:

Approval of minutes September 27, 2022

Approve the Ice-Skating Agreement with Rivers School

Approve tree planting request from Land Sake

Accept gift of \$50.00 from the Vitiello Giving Fund to the Weston Art & Innovation Center.

Laurie Bent
Clerk

Note: A copy of all documents, explanatory material, and exhibits presented to and used by the Select Board as part of this meeting are attached to the approved minutes