

**TOWN OF LAKEVILLE
Select Board Meeting Minutes
December 18, 2023 – 5:30 PM**

**Lakeville Police Station Meeting Room
323 Bedford Street, Lakeville, MA**

On December 18, 2023, the Select Board held a meeting at 5:30 PM at the Lakeville Police Station Meeting Room. The meeting was called to order at 5:31 PM by Chairman Day. Members present were Chairman Day, Member Fabian and Member Carboni. Also present were Ari Sky, Town Administrator and Tracie Craig-McGee, Executive Assistant to the Select Board and Town Administrator. LakeCAM was recording the meeting for broadcast.

Select Board announcements

Chairman Day thanked the Department of Public Works for the work they did today with the storm. He also spoke of the Fire Department and Police Department accompanying Santa around the Town yesterday.

Town Administrator announcements

Mr. Sky said the Town Offices will be closed on December 22nd, December 25th and January 1 for the holidays.

Discuss and possible vote to award Loon Pond Lodge Management contract to 58 East Grove Street, Inc., dba Cranberry Catering/Boston Tavern

Melisa Turcotte, Chair of the Park Commission, was present for the discussion. Chairman Day said the contract for the Loon Pond Lodge Management had been sent out to the members and asked for any comments or questions. He then opened the floor to Park Commission Chair Turcotte for questions/comments. Park Commission Chair Turcotte said under 4.1 on Page 3, the manager shall make available the areas designated for event function space for parties upon request. Town Elected or Appointed Boards or Committees, (including use for Federal, State and Local Elections and Town-sponsored events) shall be permitted to use the event/function space for no fee, with approval of the Select Board. She suggested changing that to the Park Commission or the Town. Prior to that under 1.2 it says the Property shall remain under the custody and control of the Town, acting by and through the Park Commission. Why would the Board want to take over that? Member Fabian said originally it was done that way because the Select Board and the Town Administrator knows who deposits the funds with the Town. Chairman Day asked how many requests were there to use the building with waived fees. Member Fabian said the Arts Council. Park Commission Chair Turcotte said other entities get the fees waived due to the day/time that they want to hold their functions. Member Fabian said she didn't know others were getting waived fees. Chairman Day said we also rule on things like insurance waivers for events. All buildings are under the control of the Select Board. Park Commission Chair Turcotte asked would the Board make the fee waiver decision or would you speak to the Park Commission first. Member Carboni said the way it currently is that the entity would come in front of the Park Commission and request a fee waiver. Park Commission Chair Turcotte said they would submit a letter. The Arts Council paid up to three (3) years ago and when Boston Tavern took over, they stopped paying. They did not come before the

Park Commission on that; they just told Boston Tavern they were not paying. The Arts Council last year took four (4) weekend days without paying. This year it was only two (2) days. Due to the season, we lost money for Christmas parties. Chairman Day said the only difference would be the room fee as we are going to a monthly fee, not percentage. Park Commission Chair Turcotte said the room fee goes to the Park Department. Member Carboni said if anyone is going to waive a fee, they should not be coming before the Select Board; they should go to the Park Commission. We could adjust the wording to have the Park Commission confirm with the Select Board if it is a Town entity. Member Fabian said originally Boston Tavern would sell food and then the Park Commission would get those funds. The Arts Council provides community interaction that you cannot put a price tag on. The Town has been generous to the Park Commission over the past four (4) years. If the Park Commission feels that they would be better off with the \$4,000 from the Lakeville Arts Council, she disagrees. We have given a lot of ARPA funding, have given the Department of Public Works to the Parks for care of the parks and have paved parking lots. Prior to 2019 the Select Board felt that it was an enterprise fund and would not provide money. Because it's a Town entity, they shouldn't pay so they can put on another event. Park Commission Chair Turcotte said on the events that they held at Ted Williams Camp they broke even. The Town has been very generous over the past years, but now it says it goes through the Select Board. Chairman Day said we are generally the Board that hears requests for waivers and discounts; the precedent is that this is the Board that handles this. Park Commission Chair Turcotte asked if the Board was going to do the league fees. Where is the line? Chairman Day said we are signing the contract. Member Fabian said the leagues are not an actual Town entity. We are asking for elections and the Art Council events. Park Commission Chair Turcotte said we see the value of the Arts Council and asked them to try to move it off of a Friday and Saturday. Chairman Day said the new structure helps us not lose money for an event. We could consider the Park Commission's suggestions on waivers. Member Fabian said she would like to see the Arts Council work with the Park Commission to put on some of these events. Member Carboni said we should keep an eye on how it works out.

Mr. Sky said he received an email from Mr. Moniz estimating the trash usage. The Park uses a shared dumpster, so we did a 60/40 split. Mr. Moniz thinks it may be 30% depending on the time of year that the Town uses the dumpster. Park Commission Chair Turcotte said we have not had to get an extra dumpster.

Upon a motion made by Member Carboni and seconded by Member Fabian, it was:

VOTED: To award the Loon Pond Lodge Management Contract to 58 East Grove Street, Inc., dba Cranberry Catering/Boston Tavern as reviewed by Counsel. This contract is from March 29, 2024 through March 29, 2027.
Unanimous in favor.

Discuss and possible vote to approve the request of the Board of Health to appoint Keven Desmarais as a Special Assistant Health Agent

Chairman Day said the Board received a request from the Board of Health to appoint Keven Desmarais as a Special Assistant Health Agent.

Upon a motion made by Member Carboni and seconded by Member Fabian, it was:

VOTED: To appoint Keven Desmarais as Special Assistant Health Agent for a term to expire July 31, 2024.
Unanimous in favor.

Discuss and possible vote on request from Town Clerk to approve April 1, 2024 Election Warrant

Chairman Day said the Board received a request from the Town Clerk to approve the April 1, 2024 Election Warrant. He read the positions available for the election.

Upon a motion made by Member Carboni and seconded by Member Fabian, it was:

VOTED: To approve the April 1, 2024 Election Warrant to be held at Ted Williams Camp, 28 Precinct Street, Lakeville, MA from 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM.
Unanimous in favor.

Discuss and possible vote to renew Common Victualler License for Aramark Educational Services, LLC for: Apponequet High School, 100 Howland Road; F/L Middle School, 96 Howland Road; George R. Austin Intermediate School, 112 Howland Road, and; Assawompset Elementary School, 232 Main Street

Chairman Day said we received a request for the renewal of the Common Victualler Licenses for Aramark Educational Services, LLC. Aramark needs to do a better job on the renewal timing of these licenses.

Upon a motion made by Member Carboni and seconded by Member Fabian, it was:

VOTED: To approve the Common Victualler Licenses for Aramark Educational Services, LLC for Apponequet High School, 100 Howland Road; F/L Middle School, 96 Howland Road; George R. Austin Intermediate School, 112 Howland Road, and; Assawompset Elementary School, 232 Main Street to expire December 31, 2024.
Unanimous in favor.

Building Committee Updates:

Senior Center Feasibility

Member Fabian said we had a meeting this week and the last in person with the project managers before our final meeting where the contract should be fulfilled. We would do that before the Select Board perhaps in January. Chairman Day asked did they have the updated pricing. Member Fabian said yes. We have had five senior citizens who have participated in the process and are concerned about the proposed development from Rhino that would bring more seniors into Town.

Fire Station Building Committee

Member Carboni said the group meeting for the space needs was today. She will update the Board once she is updated about the meeting outcome.

Old Colony Feasibility Study

Chairman Day said there are no new updates. They will be bringing the Owner Project Manager to the School Committee on December 20th.

Interview Interim Town Administrator candidates:

Chairman Day said Mr. Sky is leaving the Town. The Town Administrator states that any vacancy over 30 days we need to appoint an Interim Town Administrator. We reached out to some people to see if they had any interest in being appointed. We have two (2) candidates that are very qualified.

Robert Nunes

Chairman Day said we are not sure how long the interim term will be. We are probably looking for someone to get us through the budget cycle and Town Meeting. Mr. Nunes said he had 40 years of service in both Local and State Government. He served as Mayor of Taunton for 11 years; Deputy Commissioner of Revenue overseeing the Division of Local Services; was Fiscal Overseer of the City of Lawrence and for eight (8) years Town Manager in Middleborough retiring in October of 2022. He is aware of the duties of the Town Administrator. He understands that the Board will be increasing to five (5) members. It is critical that you have someone experienced in working with a five (5) member Board to help guide the Town through that process. It is the role of the Town Administrator to develop a budget and present it to the Board. He has a lot of experience in developing budgets and the necessary requirements that need to be submitted to the Department of Revenue. He will have an open dialogue and communicate with Department Heads and citizens and have an open-door policy. He will keep the Board up to date on issues and have day to day contact with the Select Board Members.

Member Fabian said we have had to make a couple of requests to our Regional School District for financial and budget information. How would you approach a situation like that? Mr. Nunes said he would work with the Superintendent and do his best working with the local officials to convince the stakeholders on what an adequate budget is for Lakeville. Member Carboni said you said you worked with the economic development in Middleborough. We have an Economic Development Committee that we need to get back to the table with direction. We might be challenged as far as commercial entities coming into Town due to zoning. What did you do to help Middleboro? Mr. Nunes said he has many years of experiences in economic development. What is important that all Departments communicate and also with stakeholders in the community. He created Project Review Committee and found many of the Departments were working in vacuums. When a project came to express interest, he would get the Departments together with the developer to address anything that would affect the project. Many of the projects came to fruition due to the communication. There were a number of projects, including recreational marijuana, and Middleborough now has a number of cannabis establishments. It is good to be proactive, but the community needs to have a voice. Everyone needs to be at the table and the developer needs to know what the requirements of the Town are. He would do some outreach on some of the big projects.

Chairman Day asked what are some of the things that are challenging for the next budget cycle and what could catch us by surprise. Mr. Nunes said Local Aid is challenging; the Town has ARPA

money, but that will be drying up. It is important to expand the tax base. As an Interim position, it will be a challenge to get something in during the next month. He would start the process on potential projects to create new growth. It is important that municipalities have a good relationship with the Legislators and work with Massachusetts Municipal Association. Departments will be lobbying for their slice of the pie; he always encouraged the Department Heads to present their wish list. Staffing could be beefed up, especially public safety, and that is challenging. If you have open communication with the Department Heads working together with the Select Board and Finance Committee, it can be done even with some resources lacking.

Richard LaCamera

Mr. LaCamera said he has lived in Lakeville almost 50 years and has been very involved in the community with coaching Little League, basketball, softball, the Apponequet Boosters, and is a long-time member of the Lakeville Lions Club. He has been involved in municipal government for 40 years: 12 years on the Select Board; 16 years on the Finance Committee and was a Library Trustee. He was the Town Administrator in Rochester for seven (7) years and was an Interim Town Administrator in Hanson with a 5-member Board. He has served on a number of building committees for the F/L Middle School; the Senior Center and the Library. He served on the Lakeville Development Corporation, which developed the industrial park. He served on the F/L Regional Finance Committee; the Assawompset School Study Committee; SRPEDD, Capital Expenditures Committee and the Feasibility Study Committee for the Fire Station. He has had a positive working relationship with the Departments Heads, which is very important and he knows how to work with them. There would not be a learning curve and he is familiar with all the Boards and Committees and has long term relationships with the Town's State Senator and Representative. He was the Board's union representative for the negotiation for the last contracts and also for the three (3) previous budget cycles. He was involved in the current eight (8) to ten (10) projects that are currently going on and need completion. He obtained a commitment from a developer to swap previous mitigation for a new office building at the DPW, saving \$600,000. He proposed a financial solution for the F/L School Committee which prevented layoffs and was approved by Town Meeting in both Towns. Those relationships are very important. He has team-oriented leadership skills and ability to analyze and issue and propose a solution and present to the Town Boards and town Meeting are important to the successful tenure of an Interim Town Administrator. In addition to extensive financial knowledge, the important tools in the potentially challenging budget cycle ahead of us. The Town Administrator reports to the Select Board and is the facilitator for the day to day operation of the Town and provides input to the Select Board to make all the decisions. The Select Board must analyze and vote on all important issues for the Town.

Member Fabian said the Board is not getting enough information from the Region. How would you handle that? Mr. LaCamera said he hopes that the Regional School Committee is able to get the information. They have not been providing that information on a timely basis and should be called out it saying we need the information now. A lot of School Districts have already met with their Select Boards. This coming budget is going to be a serious situation. You don't want to have to file a Freedom of Information Act request. There should be monthly budget reports or at least a six (6) month snapshot of the budget. There are some problems with that budget. At the meeting we had last year, we told them that this budget is not sustainable. We don't receive a lot of State Aid to subsidize our budget. The State already said they have a deficit. The District received \$60 per student which is \$300,000 on a 45 million budget. The Town is going to have to pick up the

difference. The salary increases alone are \$1.2 million, which it is a difficult situation. We need to make sure our State Representative and Senator are aware of how difficult it is. We aren't the only School District that is having this problem. It is going to be a challenge. Member Carboni said the Economic Development Committee has just been around, but has not met. What would you do to get it up and running and help drive some economic development. Mr. LaCamera said we do not have commercial development like Middleborough. We don't have any additional zoned areas to create any commercial development. The industrial park is full; the one at the train station is completely full with 60% of it being housing. The industrial park on Route 44 is completely full. We need to look at if the Town wants commercial development and where will it go. If they don't, that is okay, but the taxpayers will pick up most of the burden for services. He would meet with the Planning Board and look at the Master Plan. The key thing is protecting the rural character of the Town and that is okay if that is what they want to do. Then you can look at the commercial development. We can't sustain our budget. The new growth number was discussed at a previous meeting and that will be a challenge. Chairman Day asked what are the challenges for the Town that we know about and may surprise us. Mr. LaCamera said the Town's budgets are okay; we can make some adjustments. You still have COLA increases by contract. We have to look at what we can do to protect the Town services we already have. We can start looking at the current budget; do we have anything that can be reduced now for the following year. Hopefully we won't have to talk about positions, but we may have to. We can try to invite in our Legislators. The Town has been very good at maintaining Stabilization Accounts and Free Cash. You shouldn't use Free Cash for employees. He would look at the budget as a 2-year thing, especially with the Region. Building has pretty much stopped. We do have some developments, LeBaron has 150 units left and 250 units on Freetown Street and the Lakeville Hospital site with a substantial amount of housing that will have effects on the School System. This will be probably take three (3) to five (5) years that can give us some breathing room. We need to try to increase our new growth. Member Carboni said because you served on this Board, how do you see yourself taking direction from the Board. Mr. LaCamera said the responsibilities of the Interim Town Administrator will be to facilitate the day to day operations of the Town and provide the information to the Board so they can make decisions. He doesn't make the decisions; the Board does.

Discuss and possible vote to appoint Interim Town Administrator

Chairman Day thanked the candidates. Member Carboni said we have a challenge ahead of us looking for a new Town Administrator. You both have the experience to be here this evening. You both know the challenges we will be facing. Member Carboni made a motion to appoint Robert Nunes as Interim Town Administrator. Chairman Day asked Member Carboni if Member Fabian could speak to this. Member Fabian said one of the issues with the Town staff is consistency. Right now, they are feeling insecure. Having two (2) great candidates is great, but we need to provide some consistency which would be the candidate that has worked with the Department Heads. She didn't know the Board was making motions or she would have made a motion for Mr. LaCamera. Member Carboni said she can respect the consistency with the Department Heads. For our community because we are moving into a new arena with a 5-member Board, things are changing. She is ready to start with the change and move Lakeville forward. Member Fabian said with all the changes going on, it is really important to provide a familiar face. We have an issue right now with the Joint Labor Management Committee (JLMC) and one (1) of the candidates has had a good relationship with the Police. She thinks it would be beneficial to have a friendly face there if one of us is not participating.

Chairman Day said the two (2) outstanding candidates and both have the chops to do this. He had spoken to Department Heads that think both can do the job well. The Interim would be a part time job and we are looking to get through the budget, the election and JLMC. He thinks that the Interim Town Administrator position would somehow hamstring Mr. LaCamera's talents. We can use your talents in other places. Perhaps we can keep both candidates engaged with moving the Town forward. Chairman Day said we have many appointments that could utilize Mr. LaCamera's strengths. He asked if Mr. LaCamera would be interested in helping with some of the appointments that Mr. Sky holds. Mr. LaCamera said that would be complicated. The next three (3) months are critical for the budget process and he knows the inside and out on the existing budget and the Regional School budget better than anyone else. He is not sure how you put two (2) people in the position to do that. Chairman Day said we have members that we appoint to different committees that your talents would be prime. Mr. Sky's leaving will open a lot of seats. Mr. LaCamera said he assumes that the Interim Town Administrator would be appointed to some of those committees. Chairman Day said not necessarily. Mr. LaCamera said he is not sure what the relationship would be that meet monthly and the day to day operation of the Town. Discussion occurred about positions within the Town.

Nancy Yeatts asked if the Board was taking comments tonight. Chairman Day said not this evening, but the Board will upon the appointment of the next Town Administrator. We need to appoint someone to come up with a contract. Member Carboni said we need at least a week's transition to work with Mr. Sky. Mr. Sky said you relieve him of his position earlier or appoint an Interim Administrator later with the understanding that there is transition. It was decided that Chairman Day will work on a contract.

Upon a motion made by Member Carboni and seconded by Chairman Day, it was:

VOTED: To appoint Robert Nunes as Interim Town Administrator, upon successful contract negotiations, effective January 19, 2024.

Member Carboni – aye; Chairman Day – aye and Member Fabian – nay.

New Business

There was no New Business discussed.

Old Business

Chairman Day said that Town Counsel reached out to him about the JLMC meeting at the end of January and they asked with Mr. Sky's departure, who would like to attend. This will be discussed at the January 8th Select Board Meeting.

Lacey Marshall, Human Resources Director, was present for the discussion. Member Fabian said we had two (2) meetings regarding the Class and Compensation study and the Human Resources Director is working to make sure all positions are included in the study. We have found one (1) position that was not in the study. We forgot to send a few others. Ms. Marshall said there were approximately 74 positions with different job titles. Ms. Marshall said if you filter out elected officials, it brings us down to 67; there are 11 that are just firefighters. She excluded some seasonal workers. They had 40 positions originally and she has added 7 positions. A few are showing as a full-time salary were part time workers and some of them are minimal part time positions. Member

Fabian said we will probably still finish on time in January. We spoke with the Town Accountant about part time salaries that were annualized. There are some concerns because our comparable Towns while we may overlap in median income and population, we were compared to Wrentham with a 50 million budget and Wareham with a 70 million budget. In the final report, some of our concerns will be brought up. We spoke about some policy recommendations. We will probably have this for the last meeting in January.

Ms. Marshall said in the contract there was talk about looking at regulatory guidance of having the Select Board members being the Wage and Personnel Board. There is no room for a grievance. Who does she speak to if she is going to the same people that made the rules? She would like to know who are other Towns Wage and Personnel Board. What is the moving forward on a grievance who do we go to. Member Fabian said that has been a sticking point with her for a while. The same Board is not the same one that hires and creates a job description. Should we be deciding that or wait for two (2) more people to decide that. Chairman Day said he doesn't want us to be frozen until April. Did they indicate when they might be done? Member Fabian said it depends on what she is going to do and whether we want to submit them. Mr. Sky said the new Town Administrator will have to grab hold of this. Ms. Marshall said the added positions shouldn't take a lot of time to add those in. Member Fabian said she doesn't expect a change order for the fact that we added more positions. Member Carboni said she is interested in getting information seeing what other communities are doing for Wage & Personnel. Member Fabian said they are suited to do the information gathering our day to day and will be providing information on the longer narrative.

Member Fabian said Ms. Marshall found all of Ms. Dunphy's notes from the other search for a Town Administrator. Ms. Marshall said she has one (1) company that responded back with a proposal.

Adjournment

Upon a motion made by Member Carboni and seconded by Member Fabian, it was:

VOTED: To adjourn the Select Board Meeting at 6:57 PM.
Unanimous in favor.

List of documents provided at the Select Board Meeting of December 18, 2023

1. Agenda page
2. Agenda page; Town Administrator announcements
3. Agenda page; copy of Event Management Agreement – Loon Pond Lodge
4. Agenda page; legal ad; memo from the Board of Health Agent
5. Agenda page; memo from Town Clerk
6. Agenda page; Common Victualler License applications
7. Agenda page
8. Agenda page; resumes from candidates for Interim Town Administrator
9. Agenda page
10. Agenda page
11. Agenda page