

**TOWN OF WASHINGTON**  
**Board of Selectmen**  
**Minutes**  
**August 20, 2020**

**Minutes are subject to the approval of the Board of Selectmen.**

**Meeting held via Video Conferencing.**

**Present:** First Selectman James I. Brinton, Selectmen Jay Hubelbank and Michelle Gorra.  
**Public:** Tony Bedini, Joan Lodsini, Todd Peterson, Chris Charles, Leslie Anderson, Alan Levande.  
**Press:** Linda Zukauskas.

**Call to Order:** First Selectman James Brinton called the meeting to order at 5:31p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:**

- **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the July 23, 2020 Meeting of the Board of Selectmen and the July 29, 2020 Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen. By Michelle Gorra, seconded by Jay Hubelbank and unanimously approved.

**Communications:**

- **Email from Ray Underwood:** Ray had sent an email to the Selectmen regarding the Pickett property on New Preston Hill Road in which he requested a discussion with the Selectmen regarding the possibility of the Town purchasing the property. Since receipt of the email, Jim Brinton learned the property was under contract and therefore a discussion was not appropriate at this time.

**Appointments/Resignations:**

- **Resignation of Michelle Gorra from the Board of Selectmen: Motion:** To reluctantly, and with thanks, accept the resignation of Michelle Gorra from the Board of Selectmen effective August 31, 2020, to assume the newly created position of Economic Development Coordinator. By Jim Brinton, seconded by Jay Hubelbank. Michelle Gorra abstained. Michelle thanked the Selectmen for their support and expressed her enthusiasm to continue to work with the Selectmen.
- **Appointment of Daniel Kenney as Tax Assessor: Motion:** To appoint Daniel Kenney as Tax Assessor until 6/30/2024. By Jim Brinton, seconded by Jay Hubelbank. Discussion: Daniel was one of several applicants interviewed for the position following the retirement of Delisse Locher. He comes with 35 years' experience, has been in several times to meet staff and is looking to assume the position August 25, 2020. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Appointment of Shane Mongar as an alternate to the Planning Commission until 12/31/2020, Ryan Conroy as a full member of the Conservation Commission until 1/1/2022; and Christian MacDonald as an alternate to the Conservation Commission until 1/1/2021.** By Jim Brinton, seconded by Jay Hubelbank and unanimously approved.

**First Selectman's Report:** Jim Brinton reported the following:

- **Economic Development Coordinator:** Interviews were conducted for the newly created position of Economic Development Coordinator. The committee recommended the hiring of

Michelle Gorra (therefore her resignation from the Board of Selectmen.). Michelle will assume this position, September 1, 2020. The Selectmen are looking forward to working closely with Michelle who expressed her enthusiasm for the position.

- **Storm ISAIAS cleanup:** The Highway Department is nearly finished with the extensive cleanup that was needed following the storm and did an incredible job! Going forward, First Selectmen and Mayors are looking to the future and putting together a narrative on how to deal with the problems encountered with Eversource. This will go to the NW COG and Department of Emergency Services. Wood and woodchips from the cleanup are presently at the Washington Primary School parking lot. Residents and contractors are invited to help themselves!
- **Town Beach** has been closed for the remainder of the season as one of the lifeguards tested positive for COVID-19. Given the fact that the other guards who were in close proximity to him were required to quarantine and there being only one week left in the season, the decision was made.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

- **Region #12 Building Project:** Jay Hubelbank reported that the Building Committee has a scheduled walk-thru to review the punch list. There are a few issues needing to be resolved but the project is still coming in slightly under budget.
- **WiFi in the Depot:** Jay Hubelbank reported that a few more hookups need to be done in the Depot. A test run will be conducted next week. Once it is up and running, businesses will have signs with information for signing in. Michelle Gorra inquired if the system would be operational in the event of another power failure. Jay offered to look into the possibility of hooking into the School District's or Town Hall's generator.
- **Road work:** Paving continues on several town roads.
- **Tow Hall Front Sidewalk:** This project has been postponed pending more discussion.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

- **Community Center:** Jay Hubelbank reported that a draft proposal prepared by SLAM has been brought before the various land use commissions. **Motion:** To approve a contract with SLAM in the amount of \$10,000 to prepare a cost analysis of the project. By Jay Hubelbank, seconded by Jim Brinton. Discussion: This will allow the project to move forward. Once there is a cost estimate, there will be an informational meeting for the public.
- **Use of the Main Hall for Senior Activities:** Jim Brinton has been contacted by the Altorelli Medical Group regarding use of the Town Hall's Main Hall for senior health activities that cannot be performed at the Senior Center because of lack of space for social distancing. Michelle Gorra and Jay Hubelbank inquired if participants would be charged and would it be comparable to what our seniors were accustomed to paying if held at the Senior Center. Jim will be meeting with a representative of the Medical Group tomorrow and will then be able to provide more information.

#### Visitors:

- **Alan Levande** voiced his concern about the lack of cell service in various parts of Town. He feels that having better service is a matter of public safety – particularly when we experience a power outage. Jim Brinton explained that when the AT&T cell tower was approved and constructed in the Depot, it was hoped that other carriers would install antennas. Verizon, which has been contacted several times, is saying it would not be a good investment for them. Following

discussion, Alan offered to work with the Selectmen and to contact other carriers, speak with the Town of Warren, etc.

- **Leslie Anderson** expressed gratitude for the removal of the “rumble strip” on Nettleton Hollow
- **Joan Lods** congratulated Michelle Gorra on her new position and asked her to “remember the dog park”.

**Adjournment:**

- **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 6:12p.m. as there was no further business for discussion. By Jim Brinton, seconded by Jay Hubelbank and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Anne Greene  
Selectmen’s Assistant