

**TOWN OF WALES, MA
SELECT BOARD MEETING**

Senior Center
85 Main Street, Wales, MA

Meeting of Monday, March 22, 2021
Regular Session

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

"Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Wales Board of Selectmen is being conducted in-person and via remote participation. No inperson attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the Town of Wales website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting."

Members Present: Vice Chairman Michael Valanzola; Clerk John Grasso

Others Present: Pamela Leduc, Executive Secretary; Leis Phinney, Town Clerk; and members of the Finance Committee.

OPEN & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Vice Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. leading the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

FY2022 BUDGET – JOINT MEETING WITH FINANCE COMMITTEE

Ms. Leduc indicated further updates would be added upon submissions from the Highway Department, Tax Collector and School for teacher's COLA per their contracts. Ms. Leduc is keeping a master record of budgets from all Departments. For initial review purposes, some departments have level funding placeholders.

The Finance Committee indicated they were still meeting with departments and do not have employee salary adjustments nor the final health insurance impacts until the review process is finalized.

Schools - Tantasqua's assessments are: \$875,884 and \$33,284 (Transportation). Mr. Valanzola indicated the Tantasqua assessment reflected an 11% increase based on student enrollment shift. The Elementary School's budget went to Public Hearing and was voted upon at \$1,926,389.

Timeline: Documents sent to printer by April 4th.

Public hearing on the budget to bring to town meeting: April 8th

NEW BUSINESS

• **Inspector of Animals Nomination**

Motion:

Mr. Grasso moved, seconded by Mr. Valanzola, to nominate Gary Wilson as Inspector of Animals for the Town of Wales for the year ending April 30, 2022, in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 129, § 15, as amended.

VOTE: All in Favor

• **Non-Partisan Caucus**

Mr. Valanzola questioned why a caucus would be canceled. He indicated candidates would be able to secure their required signatures at a caucus rather than going door to door as was done last year because of Covid concerns. With just 10 signatures required on nomination forms, the Town Clerk felt it was not an undo retractor for candidates. The Town Clerk plans to contact incumbents and will distribute nomination papers

as requested by the public. For space and safety (health) concerns, the Town Clerk recommended that the 2021 Annual Town Non-Partisan Caucus be eliminated.

Motion:

Mr. Grasso moved, seconded by Mr. Valanzola, to eliminate the April 14, 2021 Annual Town Non-Partisan Caucus pursuant to Section 3 of Chapter 5 of the Acts of 2021 and to direct the Town Clerk to provide nomination papers to anyone seeking office at the May 26, 2021 Town Election.

VOTE: All in Favor

- Hampden County Regional Retirement Board

The Board discussed the recent audit for the Hampden County Regional Retirement System (HCRR). The audit reflected a negative review and reports of inappropriate financial actions.

Action: Mr. Valanzola recommended the Board review the HCRR audit (on-line) before taking any action.

- Update – Public Employees Committee (PEC)

Ms. Leduc indicated all PEC members were advised the 30 day negotiation period ends April 21st. She asked that the Board provide some available dates to meet and negotiate with the PEC.

- Minutes

Motion:

Mr. Grasso moved, seconded by Mr. Valanzola, to approve the following Regular Session Meeting

Minutes:

- April 15, 2020
- April 30, 2020
- May 11, 2020

VOTE: All in Favor

- Changes to Office

Ms. Leduc thanked Bruce Shacheau to helping to move the furniture in the Selectmen's office and Mike Millani for helping to repair the furniture.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion:

Mr. Grasso moved, seconded by Mr. Valanzola, to enter into Executive Session at 6:40 pm, as allowed under MGL Chap 39, §20D(2) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with non-union personnel.

Fire Chief John Croke

Executive Secretary Pamela Leduc

A roll call vote was taken.

YES – Grasso, Valanzola

The meeting reconvened at 6:54 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS (CONT)

- Employment Agreements - There was unanimous consent to table the issue and discuss at a future meeting when all members are present.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

Mr. Grasso moved, seconded by Mr. Valanzola, to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 pm.

VOTE: All in Favor

Minutes transcribed by Pat Gauthier via GoToMeeting video

NOTE: This meeting was broadcast live on Wales Cable Access Channel 192

GoToMeeting Video and Phone Conferencing information was provided on the Wales Selectmen's webpage.

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