

**MINUTES OF THE SALISBURY BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 8, 2021 – 7:00 PM
SALISBURY TOWN HALL, 5 BEACH ROAD
COLCHESTER ROOM**

PRESENT: Selectmen, Donna Abdulla, Chairman; Wilma McDonald, Chuck Takesian, Freeman J. Condon and Ronalee Ray-Parrott

ALSO PRESENT: Neil J. Harrington, Town Manager and Janet Flannery, Secretary

I. Call to Order/Salute to the Flag

Chairman Abdulla called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in the Colchester Room, Salisbury Town Hall. She then announced, per the Open Meeting Law, that this meeting is being recorded and broadcast live. Before proceeding, the Chairman requested a moment of silence to remember Mark Hatem, a member of the Conservation Commission, who had passed away over the weekend.

II. Acceptance of Minutes - none

III. Public Comment - none

IV. Old Business - none

V. New Business

a. License Renewals:

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman McDonald; unanimously voted to renew a **General** license, with the same conditions/restrictions that may have been on the original license and all subsequent renewals, for: Face to Face – 90 Main St.

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Condon; unanimously voted to renew a **Common Victualer** license, with the same conditions/restrictions that may have been on the original license and all subsequent renewals, for: Dolphin Grille – 28 Ocean Front So.

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman McDonald; unanimously voted to renew an **Entertainment** license, with the same conditions/restrictions that may have been on the original license and all subsequent renewals, for: Dolphin Grille – 28 Ocean Front So. – juke box & video game.

b. License Amendments

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Ray-Parrott; unanimously voted to approve the amendment to the Entertainment License at the Dolphin Grille to include a 1-2 piece band, magician and hypnotist on occasion.

Motion by Selectman Ray-Parrott, Second by Selectman Takesian; unanimously voted to amend the license to include karaoke, which was omitted in the reading of the original Live Entertainment license.

Motion by Selectman McDonald, Second by Selectman Ray-Parrott; unanimously voted to approve the main motion, as amended.

c. Liquor License Renewals - none

d. New Liquor Licenses - none

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e. Committee Appointments – Board of Registrars – 1 3-year term – 1 applicant: Mark Whitmore seeking re-appointment

Motion by Selectman, Second by Selectman; unanimously voted to re-appoint Mark Whitmore for a three-year term to expire March 31, 2024.

f. Update/Presentations: Finance Director/SCTV

Karen Snow, Finance Director, reported that overall General Fund revenues are at 74.5% of budget and overall General Fund expenditures are at 72% at this point in the fiscal year. The Tax Title budget is \$2.3k over through the February bill and will require a budget transfer; the Building Inspector's budget will be over \$10,000 due to wages not budgeted for a support staff person who retired, but is back working part-time. As of 2/28/21 the Enterprise Fund revenues are at 88% for Sewer at 73% for Water. Ms. Snow said she is presently working on the preliminary budget for FY22 and the first Warrant Advisory meeting of the year is scheduled for March 30th. Four applications have been filed with the COVID-19 FEMA fund – one has been approved but there is no obligation of funds to date; three quarterly reports have been submitted as required to the CARES Act fund and \$200,000 has been drawn to date. The current S&P bond rating is AA with a stable outlook and the long-term capital planning and financial forecasting projects are still in process. Finally, she noted that all FY2020 required reports have been submitted and approved by the State and the FY2020 audit is complete.

Lance Wisniewski, SCTV Director, addressed the passing of Mark Hatem and noted that he made a valuable contribution to the SCTV Board. He then gave an in-depth Power Point presentation covering technical updates of the SCTV web site, local programming, live-streaming, changes in technology, and coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic. He then informed the Board of the following accomplishments: updating of the web site, acquired a van plus internet access for live productions at the beach/boardwalk, added a camera at the beach, installed a fiber optic network in all the town buildings, upgrading all cameras in the Colchester Room as well as in the media room, upgrading control facilities so that broadcasts are now in High Definition, and the recording of two different meetings simultaneously. He also said he is working with the local churches to cover their services, and SCTV covers Triton shows, sports and meetings. He also announced that there is one opening on the Board due to the retirement of Fred Knowles. In closing he thanked the Selectmen, Town staff and viewers for their support. He then urged the Board to urge the passage of legislation relative to a streaming entertainment operator's use of public rights of way.

g. Vote Board's Intention to Lay Out Liberty Street as a Town Way

Motion by Selectman McDonald, Second by Selectman Condon; unanimously approved that the Board vote its intention to lay out Liberty Street as a town way, as shown more particularly on a plan entitled "Road Acceptance Plan of Land in Salisbury, MA," dated February 26, 2021, prepared by Hancock Associates (1 sheet) and that the Board of Selectmen forward the layout petition and plan to the Planning Board for its comments and recommendations pursuant to G.L. c. 41, §§81G and 81I. A copy of the Road Acceptance Plan is on file in the Selectmen's office.

h. Vote to Approve 1st Amendment to Host Community Agreement between the Town and Coastal Infusions, LLC.

Motion by Selectman Condon, Second by Selectman Takesian; unanimously voted to Table this item.

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VI. Sewer/Water

VII. Correspondence - none

VIII. Hearings

7:15 PM – Class II License Application for Rob Roy Auto – 49 Main St.

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman Condon; unanimously voted to open the Hearing at 7:24 PM.

Chairman Abdulla announced that due to COVID-19 this hearing was taking place via ZOOM and anyone wishing to speak relative to the license application should raise his/her hand. She then called on Mr. Roy and asked him to explain what he intended on doing. He said he will be cutting down on his repair business and start to sell used cars, and that he did not intend to have any more than six cars for sale at any one time.

The Chairman then asked if anyone wanted to speak regarding the application. Three individuals spoke: Ken Yarzitz of 170 Beach Road spoke and addressed the political sign that Mr. Roy recently displayed on his property. He said that he is of the Jewish faith and he found the sign depicting Adolph Hitler disgusting and painful for anyone who is Jewish. He said there is no place for hate in Salisbury; he has 5 grandchildren and the last thing he wants them to see when they drive into town is that type of sign. He said this type of hate speech has no place in this town, no place in the state and no place in the country. Libby Arsenault from Amesbury also addressed the sign and said she thinks the sign goes beyond political views, as it also concerns public safety concerns caused by the sign on Mr. Roy's property. She said the Town should consider the health and safety repercussions of having that sign in town. Beth Gandelman, 170 Beach Road, said she is a real estate agent and a professional property manager, and also is a member of the Jewish faith. She said having the sign on Mr. Roy's property goes beyond political speech and creates a negative image for the Town. She said she drives through many towns and this is the only one that allows anyone to have signs in such bad taste.

Motion by Selectman Condon, Second by Selectman Takesian; unanimously voted to close the public hearing at 7:35 PM.

Motion by Selectman McDonald, Second by Selectman Takesian, to approve the Class II License for Rob Roy Auto at 49 Main Street.

Discussion: Selectman Ray-Parrott stated she although she finds the sign offensive, embarrassing, and prejudicial, she understands that Mr. Roy has First Amendment rights. She noted that the Town Clerk's office has received many complaints and said she hopes that Mr. Roy considers the impression he leaves on people who drive by his business and how this may influence their thoughts about the Town.

Motion by Selectman McDonald, Second by Selectman Takesian, to amend the main motion by stipulating that no more than six cars may be sold at any one time. The amendment was approved unanimously.

Motion by Selectman Condon, Second by Selectman Takesian, to further amend the main motion to require that the applicant meet all zoning requirements. He said he believes this may include having to

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pave the area where cars for sale are parked. Mr. Condon stated that he had visited Mr. Roy's business earlier in the day and that Mr. Roy asked him what he thought of the sign. Mr. Condon told him that he thought it was offensive, but he is protected under the U.S. Constitution to have such a sign. He also said that he thought the issue of the sign was separate from the matter before the Board, and that his opinion of the sign will not affect the way he votes on the license application. A vote was then taken and Mr. Condon's amendment was approved unanimously.

A vote was then taken on the first amendment, offered by Ms. McDonald, and it was approved unanimously. A vote was then taken on the main motion, to approve the Class II license application for Rob Roy Auto, as amended, and it was approved unanimously.

IX. Town Manager's Report

Mr. Harrington gave a brief overview of his written report, a copy of which is available in the Selectmen's office.

X. Selectmen's Report

a. Ratification of Signing of Weekly Warrants:

Motion by Selectman Ray-Parrott, Second by Selectman Condon; unanimously voted to ratify the signing of the following weekly warrants: W21-66 and W21-67.

XI. Executive Session - none

XII. Adjournment

Motion by Selectman Takesian, Second by Selectman McDonald; unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:25 PM.

Documents provided at the meeting and on file in the Selectmen's Office:

Copies of licenses as listed

Appointment request letter

Info to Lay Out Liberty Street as a Town Way

Info re: 1st Amendment to Host Community Agreement

Town Manager's Report

Respectfully submitted:


Janet E. Flannery, Secretary

Approved: _____

Chuck Takesian, Clerk

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Selectmen

From: Neil J. Harrington, Town Manager 

Date: March 8, 2021

Re: March 8th Report to the Board

Outlined below is a summary of activities over the past two weeks. Please let me know if you have questions about any of these items.

1) Covid-19 Vaccination Update

On last Friday, March 5, Health Director Jack Morris supervised a very successful Covid-19 vaccination clinic at Holy Family Parish Hall in Amesbury where residents age 75 and over who received their initial dose of Covid vaccine on February 12 were all able to receive their second dose. From all reports, the clinic was well-organized, which was a credit to Mr. Morris. Liz Pettis and their team of volunteers.

Also last week, our joint effort with 8 other local communities to create an ongoing regional vaccine clinic was approved by the Governor's office and 2300 hundred vaccine doses were approved for initial distribution. The first clinic will be held this coming Saturday and Sunday, March 13 and 14, between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM at Amesbury High School, after which it has been planned for vaccines to be distributed on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the former Perley School in Georgetown, and on Wednesdays at the Town Hall Annex in West Newbury.

This plan will allow our collaborative to meet the minimum State requirement of being able to distribute at least 750 people per day, 5 days per week. Although this effort was organized by our local coalition, the State has made it clear that appointments must be booked through the State's Covid-19 vaccine sign-up system, so that any resident of the State who falls into an eligible category may sign up. In other words, it is NOT limited only to residents of our coalition. Nevertheless, this is great news for our geographic area of the State. Right now, as you know, those age 65 and older are eligible, and starting on Thursday teachers will also be eligible. Those eligible for a vaccination can visit www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine. Seniors should contact the Council on Aging at 978-462-2412 for assistance in making appointments.

2) CDBG Grant Award

I am pleased to announce that the Town has received approval of our recent CDBG grant application and been awarded \$550,000 in funding to provide housing rehabilitation assistance to eight residential units, to pay for engineering plans related to infrastructure improvements to the Meaders Lane neighborhood, to provide social service assistance to the Boys and Girls Club, and to support local homelessness and food pantry initiatives. Credit goes to Planning Director Lisa Pearson and her staff for putting together another outstanding grant proposal. We look forward to moving ahead with the initiatives outlined above as soon as the grant agreement is signed.

3) Ring's Island Resiliency Project

A public meeting was held last Thursday evening, March 4, to update the Ring's Island neighborhood about the progress of the Town's plans to submit a resiliency plan to alleviate flooding on Ferry Road and March Road, which creates significant public safety issues during high tides and storm events, and which is likely to get worse with sea level rise. Working with the Town's engineering consultants, Weston & Sampson, we are devising a plan to raise the level of each roadway, install new culverts, and improve the flow of water within the existing marsh system, to reduce the threat of flooding in the neighborhood. Our goal is to have permitting completed and the project put out to bid by the early summer.

4) Triton Budget

As you know, the Triton School Committee adopted its tentative FY2022 budget on Feb. 24. In recognition of the fact that funding next year's budget is likely to cause a greater-than-usual strain on the three towns' ability to pay for any large increases, the Committee voted to approve a tentative operating budget with a \$1.8 million increase in the operating budget, which is only about \$600,000 above the \$1.2 million in fixed charges increases facing the district. This budget would result in Salisbury's assessment increasing by \$935,503, a 6.83% increase. This compares to a \$525,419 (5.26%) increase for Newbury and a \$233,812 (2.10%) increase for Rowley. I expressed concern that this increase was at a level that Salisbury could afford, and Supt. Forget assured me that he would be working to lower the increase if possible.

Since that time, I attended the most recent District Communications meeting and we were informed that adjustments were being made on both the anticipated revenue and expenditure side of the FY2022 budget and that when the final budget is voted on March 10, the overall Triton increase will be reduced and Salisbury's assessment will not increase as much as had been originally anticipated. I received an email regarding the upcoming meeting on March 10 in which new FY2 budget figures were included, and it appears that the overall Triton increase has been reduced to about a \$1.3 million increase, with Salisbury's projected assessment set at \$749,397. This is a much more manageable number, and I am grateful to Supt. Forget and his finance team for taking Salisbury's concerns seriously and working hard to keep next year's increase at a reasonable level.