

**TOWN OF BELCHERTOWN  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, APRIL 22, 2019  
Selectmen's Meeting Room, Lawrence Memorial Hall**



**Present:** Nicholas O'Connor, George D. Archible, Gail Gramarossa, Brenda Q. Aldrich, Ed Boscher

**Call to Order:** Chairman O'Connor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2) Sign Documents:**

- a) Warrant #1943 was signed for \$1,453,351.43.
- b) Routine documents
- c) Approval of Minutes:

**3) Additions to the Agenda:**

- **Solarize Massachusetts:** Ms. Gramarossa updated the Board on the program. There have been a number of community meetings, they've held an informational meeting, and have a team of people that are willing to volunteer for the core team along with a volunteer willing to be the solar coach. Doug Albertson, town planner has agreed to be the municipal representative. The group feels they can move forward with an application to the State for the funding at no cost to the town to do the outreach and education to let residents know about this program. The deadline to submit the application is April 30, 2019. She is asking the Board to sign a letter outlining the resources that they have pulled together in the application process. She questioned if the Board would authorize the Chairman of the Board to sign the letter as the application needs to be submitted prior to the next meeting. Mr. O'Connor will not be available to sign the letter. Ms. Aldrich moved the Board authorize Mr. Archible to sign the letter to go along with the application. Motion seconded by Mr. O'Connor. Motion passes 5 - 0.
- **Electric Vehicle Charging Stations:** Ms. Gramarossa presented the details to the Board. We have been notified by National Grid and Jim Barry about funds that are available from both National Grid and endorsed by the States Green Community Program about electric vehicle charging stations. There is a time limited, really quick turnaround to apply for funding for these charging stations. The deadline is the 27<sup>th</sup> of April with a short application and the installation has to be done by May 31<sup>st</sup>. With such a short timeline the Board agreed that no action would be taken at this time.

**4) Appearances Before the Board:**

- 7:03 p.m. Pole Hearing #2019-09, Ware Road: Ms. Gramarossa read the public hearing notice and opened the pole hearing. This is to install one jointly owned pole between existing poles to allow for proposed overhead conductor replacement.

Lisa Jaskinski from National Grid was present for the hearing. They are upgrading the wires and when that is done they have to shorten the span.

Mr. Archible spoke with Steve Williams, Director of Public Works who has no concerns regarding this change. He just wants everyone to be aware of the fact that

Ware Road/Route 9 is under massDOT jurisdiction and the State should be notified in case there are problems.

Mr. Archible moved to close pole hearing #2019-09. Motion seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0. Mr. Archible moved to approve petition #2019-09. Motion seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.

- 7:10 p.m. Steve Reilly – Kalyx, LLC, Marijuana Host Agreement: Steve Reilly, an attorney for Kalyx, LLC as well as an owner was present for the appearance before the Board. He has a private law practice in Springfield as well as being one of the owners of INSA. INSA currently has dispensaries in Easthampton and Springfield. He previously was the attorney for Springfield that did all of their licensing and worked closely with the Alcohol Beverages Control Commission (ABCC). His background is really in licensing matters. Pat the COO was also present. He oversees all the various operations from cultivation to retail to processing. Alexa Gallagher, part owner of Kalyx was also present. She has a background in public health specifically epidemiology and has been working as a consultant for the past seven years in that field.

The proposal that they have for their place of business is 125 North Main Street here in town. It is for a proposed retail only dispensary. It is a site that is welcoming for the use from what they have seen from their other locations. There is more than adequate parking there in a high volume retail site. It is an ideal spot for this type of business. The majority of the product that will be sold from there will come from INSA. There would be a consulting and product supply relationship which is important for a dispensary because at this point it is difficult to identify where your sourcing is going to come for cannabis products so through that relationship they can ensure this dispensary can open and operate which in turn generates revenue for the town. They are excited about the spot.

They have met with the police chief and the fire chief and don't believe there are any issues with those departments and opening the dispensary. There are a few things they are trying to tweak after speaking with Chief Pronovost. Their plans have generally been vetted by the CCC (Cannabis Control Commission) as well as having been approved by them and are in current use at the INSA locations.

Mr. Reilly did speak to Chief Pronovost about an opening plan. He developed the opening plan in Easthampton which went very smoothly. He feels he can put something together very similar in town. He anticipates that this facility could be open within four to six months and if the need for an opening plan is still needed he is more than happy to come up with one.

Some of the security items they discussed with Chief Pronovost is the entrance vestibule which is referred to as a "man trap". Essentially the customer will have to go through many locked doors to get to any product. The doors all have key card access and certain employees have access while other employees don't have access. It also logs who has come in and who leaves the facility. There will be multiple points checked for id's so they verify over 21 at the door, it is also verified at the

point of sale and they utilize a scanning system that verifies the authenticity of the id and although the id might be authentic it does require the visible check because it could be somebody's brother that looks like them. Those systems will be implemented here to make sure that no-one under 21 is buying their product. Security systems are not shown on the plan they're showing the Board tonight but both the chief of police and fire chief have seen them. They include the camera locations, the key cards, motion sensors, glass breaks. In addition they will be constructing a secure vault facility to make sure all product that is stored there is stored safely. They don't expect there to be any odor issues with this facility as it is similar to the INSA facility in Springfield which is retail only and there are no issues there with odor. They invest into air pressure systems and charcoal filters to make sure there are no smells in their facilities. They anticipate that all the product they will be selling will be prepackaged and sealed which also prevents odors. The odor is something that is seen more with a cultivation facility.

They feel they can go before the planning board probably within a month. They have the special permit application completed and ready to go. They will have to do a Host Community Outreach meeting. They anticipate doing that within the next three to four weeks. They hope to have the decision for the special permit sometime in July which will allow them to get to the CCC and hopefully expedite the process. The biggest wildcard for this facility is how long the State will take to approve it.

They have reviewed the host agreement with the town administrator. It is for five years with 3% growth sales and an additional \$20,000 to contribute. They feel it is a good agreement, it complies with the statute and they are very happy to agree to those terms.

Mr. Archible questioned if they would be open by August or September of this year. They are hoping to but it will all depend on the CCC. According to the host agreement there is a preference for hiring Belchertown residents. It's better for them as the residents know the people in the community so as they hear things they can report back.

Ms. Aldrich is concerned about the traffic as that is a bad area with multiple driveways. She manages the shop at 115 North Main Street and they have the PVTA busses / vans bring disabled workers to the store. She is concerned about how their business will impact her business for parking and getting the vans in and out. She feels she needs to work with them to feel her area is safe for her workers. Mr. Reilly indicated that they did do a pretty extensive traffic study with the results showing no significant impact on traffic. He indicated if she has concerns or problems she should speak with him directly.

Ms. Gramarossa thanked them for being willing to do the charitable contributions. She also mentioned that there is a second retailer who has a host agreement in place and that they are not too far away from each other. She is glad to hear that they have experience in public health as she works in substance use prevention. Her biggest concern is that this is an adult only product and that they don't have any issues with underage sales. In terms of the community outreach program she was a little disappointed from the other vendor who did not do nearly as much publicity and

outreach as she hoped they would do. She urged them to think about improving upon that and doing something with our local media. She believes the community outreach meeting is important. She also mentioned that behind where their shop is going to be is a very large housing complex with a lot of young people and a lot of young families. She wants them to be conscious that there a lot of young people in that area.

Mr. Boscher thanked them for reviewing the security steps they were taking as it is very important. He questioned what some of the last security issues were that they spoke with the police chief about. They have a 24 hour security turnaround. State law requires that they notify local authorities within 24 hours of an incident. The chief recommended notifying sooner. They have wireless panic buttons and the chief had talked about developing a policy so they are not hitting it for reasons that aren't really an emergency.

Ms. Gramarossa questioned if they were thinking about doing online ordering of their products. She was told that they will do an express pickup to help move people along.

Mr. O'Connor asked Chief Pronovost if he had any concerns. He did not. He felt their meeting had been very productive. He did speak with the Chief of Police in Easthampton who said everything is going well. There have been no problems.

Mr. O'Connor likes that the product will be coming into the store already pre-packaged. He asked how Kalyx arrived at this location as some residents feel that the town is dictating the locations for these shops. Mr. Reilly commented that they look for communities that want these stores. They look at what communities are ahead on zoning and legal issues. At the time they were speaking with the building owner, Frank Colaccino, about some other locations and he mentioned the Belchertown property. Mr. Reilly felt that Belchertown was the right place – it's similar in size to the Easthampton location and he liked the location.

Mr. O'Connor mentioned the host agreement and that some things are voluntary. He thanked them for that as it's a 3% tax back to the town on gross sales as well as contributing \$8,000 to DART, \$6,000 to BOAT and \$6,000 to SOAAR.

Mr. Boscher moved the Board endorse the Marijuana Host Agreement with Kalyx, LLC. Motion seconded by Ms. Aldrich Motion passes 5 – 0.

**5) Discussion/Action Items:**

- a. Review Preliminary Subdivision Plan – Ferenz, off Ware Road: Mr. O'Connor questioned if there was a solar application for this same area. Mr. Brougham, Town Administrator indicated that this is what this is. The plan was submitted at town meeting in 2018 after which the applicants withdrew the plan. Now with the possibility of another solar by-law change they have resubmitted it. The plan is very vague with no detail on it. Mr. O'Connor commented that whatever zoning change takes place at town meeting will not apply to this project as it was done prior to any change. The Board will remand this back to the Planning Board for their review.
- b. Surplus/Transfer Fire Department GMT400 Pickup Truck: Ms. Aldrich presented the details to the Board. The Belchertown Fire Department has a surplus truck that has

no value. It is a 1990 Chevrolet pickup that we will be gifting it to the Brookfield Fire Department. Mr. Archible commented that the town has no choice. It was a gifted truck to us from the Department of Re-Utilization Management Office of the Federal Government. We either have to re-gift it or give it back. Ms. Aldrich moved the Board re-gift the Fire Department GMT400 Pickup Truck to the Brookfield Fire Department. Motion seconded by Mr. Boscher. Motion passes 5 – 0.

- c. Appointment of Seasonal Laborer(s): Mr. Archible presented the details to the Board. Per the recommendation of Steve Williams, Director of Public Works, Mr. Archible moved the Board appoint David Ortiz as a seasonal laborer, effective immediately. Motion seconded by Ms. Gramarossa. Motion passes 5 – 0.
- d. Appointment of Animal Control Officer and Assistants: Mr. O'Connor moved to re-appoint Anna Fenton, Animal Control Officer; Janet Lipscomb, Wendella LeSage and Jessica LaBonte as animal control assistants, all terms to expire April 30, 2020. Motion seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.
- e. Appointment of Veterans' Agent: Mr. Archible moved to re-appoint Ray Janke as the Veterans' Agent, term to expire April 30, 2020. Motion seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.
- f. Award Bid #2019-07 – Sale of Town Owned Vehicles/Equipment: Mr. Archible presented the details to the Board. There were a total of town owned surplus vehicles/equipment that were put out to bid. Mr. Archible moved the Board accept the high bids for each vehicle/equipment as presented. Motion seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 -0.
- g. Relocate May 13, 2019, Selectmen's Meeting to Belchertown High School: Mr. O'Connor moved the Board relocate the May 13, 2019 Selectmen's meeting to the Belchertown High School. Motion seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 -0.
- h. Review/Endorse Special Town Meeting Warrant; Review Draft Motions: Ms. Gramarossa read the four warrant articles and motions for the special town meeting. There were no objections to the warrant and motions for the special town meeting. Mr. O'Connor moved to approve all four warrant articles and motions. Motion seconded by Mr. Archible. Motion passes 5 – 0.
- i. Review Draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant and Draft Motions: The Board reviewed all warrant articles and motions for the annual town meeting. Mr. O'Connor moved the Board had no objections for articles 1 – 45 on the annual town meeting warrant. Mr. Brougham explained the article regarding the town forgiving the back taxes at Sportshaven. If we do not do this the town will be on the line for condemning the park, relocating all those residents and the cleanup of the park. It will cost the town way more than forgiving this \$300,000. If the town approves this then there is a grant through DHCD that will cover the cost of fixing the infrastructure at the park. Motion seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.

Ms. Aldrich questioned how it would work if a second night is needed for the annual town meeting. Mr. Brougham explained the process. Mr. O'Connor wants to know if it would be better to plan for a second night. Mr. Brougham explained the process of calling a second meeting for the town meeting. The Board agreed instead to move the Patrick Center article up the list instead of having it at the end of the meeting. Mr. O'Connor moved the Board move the Patrick Center article up to #12. Motion seconded by Mr. Boscher. Motion passes 5 – 0.

- j. Executive Session, MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21, Subsections 2 and 3: Ms. Gramarossa moved the Board enter executive session at the conclusion of their

regular session pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21, Subsections 2, and 3 and not to reconvene in open meeting. Motion seconded by Mr. Archible. Roll call vote: O'Connor – yes, Archible – yes, Gramarossa – yes, Aldrich – yes, Boscher - yes.

- k. **Miscellaneous Matters – Skate Park:** Mr. O'Connor presented details to the Board. There were video's being posted to the Skate Park's Instagram account which is not managed by the Belchertown Skate Park Committee. The video's showed guys and kids doing some really cool stuff but no-one was wearing a helmet. There is always the argument as to whether helmets should be worn or not worn. The Board won't debate helmet/no helmet as the rule is a helmet is to be worn. He spoke with the chairman of the Skate Park Committee this weekend. She has been in favor of moving it over to more rigorous oversight with the Recreation Committee but it wasn't endorsed by previous administration. It's time to have that conversation again with them. There has been a lot of CP money put into fixing it. The Skate Park Committee can't police it as it is a very small committee with no authority to enforce the rules. The park is closed and he is not taking a vote to re-open it at this time until this issue can be addressed of how the rules are going to be followed. He thinks that someone needs to be there monitoring it and that the funding that's available for that will dictate the hours that it will be open. The funding will come from user fees. The person monitoring it should be trained in first aid and CPR like the lifeguards are. Mr. Archible thought maybe camera's that could be monitored from the recreation department and the police department would be appropriate.

Ms. Gramarossa feels it is time for a group discussion with the Recreation Department and all interested parties to regroup and decide how to proceed. Ms. Aldrich will coordinate a meeting with the recreation committee, Kyle Thibeault – Recreation Director, skate park committee, and the Board of Selectmen.

- 6) **Town Administrator's Report:** He attended the Dispatcher's event on Friday. It was eye opening and sober to hear some of the stories from the Gatesman family and the family from Tucker Lane. We are fortunate to have dedicated public servants.

- 7) **Review of Weekly Mail:** Reviewed, no discussion held.

- 8) **Individual Board Members' Reports:**

Mr. O'Connor: There was a meeting last week of the Patrick Center Committee. They have come up with a master plan for the whole area. There is an option that will go before town meeting so he wants to get the info out to the public so they are prepared to vote at town meeting. It is for a splash park, multiple basketball courts, a shade structure, bathrooms, a concession stand, a significant increase in parking that are all a part of this plan.

Mentioned the Cultural Council Art Week – everyone should check it out.

He spoke with Erica Cross, Conservation Administrator regarding the Disc Golf and also spoke with Kyle Thibeault, Recreation Director, about it. They discovered the documentation on some of the wetlands that need to be protected at the site is not accurate. Erica and David Haines, Chairman of the Conservation Commission committed to having the marking done by the end of April.

He heard from ARC Point and they are planning on doing another 5K event but in another section of town. There are no formal plans for one yet.

Mr. Archible: He has a MPO meeting tomorrow morning. Route 202 is on track. The base coat for Carriage Drive is down.

Ms. Gramarossa: A reminder that April 26<sup>th</sup> – May 4<sup>th</sup> is Cultural Council Art Week. There is an enormous schedule of events – check out the Sentinel and Facebook to find the schedules.

She attended the Dispatcher event. She found it an incredibly moving event. She knew one of the couples where the husband had the cardiac arrest and the dispatchers helped his partner to go through CPR and saved his life. It was an amazing event. She is very appreciative of their work.

Mr. Boscher: Last week he was contacted by the Cold Spring Golf Course. They ran into some opening day hiccups. He contacted Mr. Brougham who helped them.

Ms. Aldrich: She is taking the cupcake decorating class through the Cultural Council event.

Mr. Archible: In the back of the packet was a request from Steve Williams to add Mary Skowronek as a DPW Laborer, effective immediately. Per the request of Mr. Williams, Mr. Archible moved to appoint Mary Skowronek to the position of DPW Laborer, effective immediately. Motion seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.

9) **Questions from the Press:** None.

10) **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Gary L. Brougham, Town Administrator

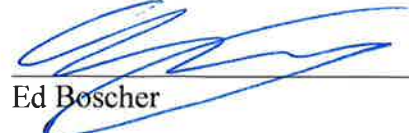
Board approved/endorsed: May 28, 2019

Board of Selectmen - Town of Belchertown

Endorsed by a majority:

  
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Nicholas O'Connor, Chairman

  
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Gail Gramarossa

  
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Ed Boscher

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George D. Archible

  
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Brenda Q. Aldrich