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LANCASTER SELECT BOARD
Special Meeting Minutes
of Friday, April 7, 2023
9:30 AM

Via ZOOM | <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83472544148> | Meeting ID: 834 7254 4148

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Stephen J. Kerrigan called the meeting to order at 9:30AM via ZOOM. He advised that the meeting was being recorded via ZOOM, and will be broadcast by Sterling Lancaster Community Television.

Roll call vote taken, Jason A. Allison, present, Alexandra W. Turner, present, Stephen J. Kerrigan, present. Also present, Kate Hodges, Town Administrator.

II. ADMINISTRATION & BUDGET

Review and act relative to Sections 285-287 of the Commonwealth's Session Law Acts of 2004 relative to Lancaster Special Election Ballot Question #1: "Proposition 2-1/2 Override" and vote to:

(Here, Town Administrator Hodges explained that the Board needs to ensure that the Fair and Concise Summary is acceptable, and that TA Hodges and Finance Director Cheryl Gariepy will write the pro and con statements and the Board needs to determine the date that this must be done by Friday, April 21. Finally, the Board needs to authorize TA Hodges to send official notices to herself and to Ms. Gariepy and to file such notices with the Town Clerk. Ms. Turner questioned how a 'yes' or a 'no' vote would be impacted by the School District Agreement which requires payment if two of three towns approve the school budget. Mr. Kerrigan and Ms. Hodges explained that if the appropriation is not available then the bill will not, and cannot, be paid.)

1. Adopt, "...a fair and concise summary of each question, including a 1 sentence statement describing the effect of a yes or no vote prepared by the town counsel..." (Acts of 2004, Section 285) to be printed on the ballot.

Mr. Allison said, "I move, pursuant to Lancaster's Special Act of 2004, Town of Lancaster Voter Information, to approve the fair and concise summary of Question 1, 'Proposition 2 1/2 Override' as drafted by counsel, per section 285 of said act, to read as follows," G.L. c.59, §21 C, otherwise known as Proposition 2¼, limits the amount of revenue a city or town may raise from local property taxes each year to fund municipal operations. This amount is known as the annual levy limit. Proposition 2-1/2 allows a city

or town to increase tax revenues above that limit with approval of voters at an election. Here, Question 1 seeks to increase the amount of property tax revenue Lancaster may raise in fiscal year 2024 by \$1,200,000. The result is a permanent increase in taxing authority. The additional revenue will be used to fund the operating budgets of the School Departments and the Town government in FY'24." Ms. Turner seconded the motion. *Vote taken; Alexandra W. Turner, Aye; Jason A. Allison, Aye; Stephen J. Kerrigan, Aye; Motion passed. [3-0-0]*

Mr. Allison said, "I move, pursuant to Lancaster's Special Act of 2004, Town of Lancaster Voter Information, to approve the one sentence statements regarding the effects of a yes/no vote on Question 1 — Proposition 2 ¼ override, for inclusion on the May 8, 2023 annual election ballot and to allow the information to be distributed to the public in accordance with the 2004 Act. The statements shall read as follows:

A **YES** vote on **Question 1** allows the operating budgets of the Town Government and School Departments for FY'24 to be funded.

A **NO** vote on **Question 1** disapproves the operating budgets of the Town Government and School Departments for FY'24."

Ms. Turner seconded the motion. *Vote taken; Alexandra W. Turner, Aye; Jason A. Allison, Aye; Stephen J. Kerrigan, Aye; Motion passed. [3-0-0]*

2. Set a date to receive, "...arguments for and against the question as provided in section 195" from Town Administrator Hodges and Finance Director Cheryl Gariepy, appointed to the roles at the Board Meeting held Monday, April 3, 2023.

Mr. Allison said, "I move, pursuant to Lancaster's Special Act of 2004, Town of Lancaster Voter Information, Section 285 and including but not limited to, section 21C of Ch. 59 of MA General Law, to affirm Town Administrator Kate Hodges as the lead proponent for Question #1 and Cheryl Gariepy, Lancaster Finance Director as lead opponent for Question #1 for the purposes of preparing said arguments as outlined in the Act and to require each argument be received no later than Friday, April 21 ~ midday to ensure sufficient time to post the notices as outlined in sections 285 and 286 of the Act." Ms. Turner seconded the motion. Ms. Turner recollected that something needed to be done by today; she thinks that having Ms. Gariepy write the 'no' argument puts her in a bad position and that someone else should be identified since we have until the 18th or the 21st. Ms. Turner would like a Select Board member to find someone to write this. Mr. Kerrigan stated that he thinks it presents a hurdle to find someone who identifies as an opponent; Mr. Allison supports having Ms. Gariepy write the opposing view. Ms. Hodges notes that designating a different party than was voted on would then be outside of the seven day available window. *Vote taken; Alexandra W. Turner, No; Jason A. Allison, Aye; Stephen J. Kerrigan, Aye; Motion passed. [2-1-0]* Discussion continued as to whether the Board should have appointed Ms. Gariepy to write to opposing argument.

Mr. Allison said, "I move to authorize Town Administrator Hodges to distribute the official notifications to the proponents and opponents of Questions #1 and record said

letters with the Town Clerk effective today, Friday, April 7, 2023, in accordance with the Special Act of 2004 — Lancaster Voter Information.” Ms. Turner seconded the motion. *Vote taken; Alexandra W. Turner, Aye; Jason A. Allison, Aye; Stephen J. Kerrigan, Aye; Motion passed. [3-0-0]*

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Allison moved to adjourn the meeting of the Select Board. Ms. Turner seconded the motion. *Vote taken; Alexandra W. Turner, Aye; Jason A. Allison, Aye; Stephen J. Kerrigan, Aye; Motion passed. [3-0-0]*

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Rocco
Executive Assistant

APPROVED

Alexandra W. Turner, Clerk
Dated: April 18, 2023