



**LANCASTER BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Special Meeting Minutes
Of Monday, September 29, 2021**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jason Allison called the meeting to Order at 6:00 P.M. via Zoom. He noted that the meeting was being recorded.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88480680293>

Meeting ID: 884 8068 0293

Roll call was taken, Alexandra W. Turner, present, Jay M. Moody, present, Jason A. Allison present.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

6:00 P.M. Opportunity for the public to address their concerns, make comment and offer
6:10 P.M. suggestions on operations or programs, except personnel matters. Complaints or
criticism directed at staff, volunteers, or other officials shall not be permitted.

Chairman Allison read into the record one public comment received from Deb D'Eramo, resident of Harvard Road, "Hello, I'd like to voice my strong support of the town's COVID vaccine mandate policy for town employees. I'd like to know if that if that also includes town contractors and hourly workers. Thank you."

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES - NONE

IV. SCHEDULED APPEARANCES & PUBLIC HEARINGS – NONE

V. BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND DEPARTMENTS REPORTS - NONE

VI. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT - NONE

VII. ADMINISTRATION, BUDGET, AND POLICY

Mr. Allison asked the Select Board if they would be okay with taking agenda items out of order to quickly deal with Item 3, COVID Vaccine Mandate policy. Ms. Turner stated that she did not receive a packet for this meeting and saw that the agenda had been revised. Mr. Allison stated that

the revised agenda had been sent via email and that there was no packet for this meeting. Ms. Turner would like to talk at some other time about better ways to distribute materials. The Board agreed to discuss vaccine policy; (notes below under Item 3 although taken out of order.)

1. Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM)

- **Discussion on Land Sale Partnership Agreement**

Mr. Allison asked Ms. Turner to take the lead on this discussion because she is the DCAMM liaison. She welcomed Lisa Verrochi, Stephen Andrews, and Paul Crowley (Deputy Commissioner of Real Estate for DCAMM) from DCAMM and cautioned the Board that this is a very preliminary discussion meant to set expectations and next steps. The ongoing discussion will need to involve the legislative delegation, and interested citizens such as neighbors and the Historic Commission. Ms. Turner requested that Mr. Pacheco enable a Zoom feature allowing anyone to record the meeting.

Ms. Verrochi explained that every deal done by DCAMM is different and that they are excited about some ideas for Lancaster.

See attached for Ms. Verrochi's presentation. DCAMM recommends filing disposition legislation that would authorize sale partnership model conveyance to Lancaster.

Ms. Turner questioned how the property would be valued for municipal use, such as affordable housing or a playing field. Ms. Verrochi's answered that this happens when the municipal use is determined, and typically comes through at a much lower appraisal than a market rate appraisal. It was noted that DCAMM does not have the power to approve the Proposal, that this power is entirely Lancaster's. In response to another question, the Town could use some of the property and sell the balance, a "hybrid" model.

Ms. Turner recalled that in the past if the State had taken property for whatever use and then sold back to the Town for \$1. Ms. Verrochi explained that while the town would have to pay the "sunk cost" for expenses occurred by the State in managing the property.

Mr. Allison recognized resident Victoria Petracca from the Lancaster Affordable Housing Trust (LAHT). She asked for clarification as to whether the appraisal would be for the land in its existing condition or for when it is operational. Ms. Verrochi explained that the appraisal would be based on the use. Mr. Andrews noted that a restricted use such as affordable housing would probably result in a low value restricted appraisal.

Ms. Petracca's follow up question to that is in order to consider a plan for moving forward, we have to have some ballpark numbers to know if there is a huge difference between buying one of those buildings in existing shape versus completely rehabbed energy efficient affordable housing with 30 units. Ms. Verrochi concurred that they would not be appraising the finished product.

Mr. Allison recognized resident Deb D'Eramo of Harvard Road. Ms. D'Eramo who had questions as to the usage of agricultural land and possibly a water pump or municipal well. It was confirmed that the DCAMM site in question included land that has been discussed as a possibility for a well location. Ms. Verrochi and Mr. Andrews will consider how this usage might impact the plan.

Mr. Andrews recapped. He explained that DCAMM's value here is a collaborative effort to get this property back into productive use on the tax rolls, and to do something production with the land. Mr. Andrews offered to provide tonight's presentation so that it could be posted on the Select Board website. Ms. Turner would like the Select Board to establish a small team to help work on this project.

Mr. Allison recognized resident Frank Streeter. Mr. Streeter noted that the property will need to be extensively documented and asked how much of this will be done by DCAMM. Ms. Verrochi explained that DCAMM would not handle that part of the model. Mr. Streeter is particularly concerned about the big brick buildings. Mr. Streeter stated that the LAHT did convene a meeting with the neighbors about the design project that was previously presented and the reaction to redevelopment of the site was very positive.

Ms. Turner wrapped up, verifying that the next step is for the Select Board to meet with the legislative delegation and to get back to DCAMM if, indeed, the Board is interested. Ms. Verrochi explained that at this stage appraisals are not needed. DCAMM would transfer the land to the Town at a nominal cost, and the Town wouldn't owe any money until the property is developed.

2. Discussion on status of the Economic Development Committee (EDC)

Mr. Allison brought this topic forward. He is concerned that the EDC may be not working in accordance with their defined charge and mission statement. He stated that he is not sure that the EDC is "being a good listener" and representing all parties. Speaking about the North Lancaster development, Mr. Allison stated, "I believe there are members who are against this project... and that's not okay, we have a landowner in town who wants to work with the town, who wants to figure out a path forward."

Ms. Turner stated that she has watched the last couple of EDC meetings, and that while they were "difficult" and not very productive, she did not view them as obstructionist.

Mr. Moody thinks there are some problems, noting that from the beginning the EDC wanted one person to be Chair and to take all the minutes; as a result minutes were not posted for a long time. He, however, does not think that the Select Board should interfere with the working of a committee that is in the middle of projects.

Mr. Allison would like the Board members to think about this and to continue discussion at the October 4, 2021 meeting. He asked them to think about resizing the committee from the current seven members to five or less to make the committee more streamlined. He suggested that another option would be to dissolve the EDC and rethink it. Ms. Turner is

concerned that the EDC seem to be solely focused on the North Lancaster Capital Group project.

3. COVID Vaccine Mandate policy

Mr. Allison moved to table this discussion to a future meeting after the Board has received feedback from Labor Counsel. Ms. Turner seconded.

Discussion: Ms. Turner recalls that the Board at prior meeting passed a vaccine mandate subject to review from the Board of Health and review from Town Counsel. Mr. Allison states that this is not his recollection, but that he recalls that the Board asked Town Administrator Orlando Pacheco and HR Director Sandi Charton to put together a proposal for the Board's review. Mr. Allison requested that Mr. Pacheco keep the Board of Health appraised of the status of this mandate.

Vote taken, Jason A. Allison vote Aye; Jay M. Moody vote Aye; Alexandra W. Turner vote Aye. Motion passed. [3-0-0]

VIII. APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS - NONE

IX. LICENSES AND PERMITS - NONE

X. OTHER/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- **Annual Town Report**

Estimated due date for the Annual Town Report will be December 2021. Mr. Pacheco reported that some of the reports are now in and can now start compiling them sooner therefore may be able to accelerate the December date.

- **Code of Conduct Policy**

The HR Director is currently compiling comments received into a document for the Select Board. This should be available for the Board's review in a couple of weeks.

- **North Lancaster Settlement**

The Board has received a letter from the Capital Group outlining the North Lancaster settlement and requesting a meeting. Mr. Allison suggests assigning a liaison to Capital Group to meet with the landowner(s) and the developer who could be a facilitator, and who could engage with all parties on a regular basis. Ms. Turner expressed frustration that the project has taken so long to get to this point. Mr. Allison would like to be considered for the liaison role. Mr. Moody discussed how well the Affordable Housing Trust has worked with the Capital Group to jointly plan for the residents of Lancaster to bring about items from dog walking areas and playgrounds to lower rates on affordability. No conclusion was reached; Mr. Allison asks that this item is left on the agenda, but he will not bring it up again.

- **Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM)**

Addressed in earlier presentation.

- **Aggregation**

The Select Board has received a memo from the Energy Commission following their meeting with Colonial. Mr. Pacheco reports that he is expecting official pricing from various suppliers to service the aggregation load tomorrow. Mr. Pacheco advises that the best approach right now is a 12-month contract, at which point we could evaluate the impact of additional renewables. He noted there will be some “sticker shock” with the electric bills.

- **Gazebo Ramp**

Materials have been ordered and the goal is to have this completed by Halloween is on target. Mr. Pacheco reported that Dig Safe will need to be called for this project.

- **Status Barrett Planning Group**

Mr. Allison directed the Board’s attention to a memo from Mr. Pacheco on this topic. He notes that Mr. Pacheco is “trying to make it work” and that he was displeased with the way that the Planning Board Chairman had spoken to the Town Administrator. Ms. Turner asked that this be discussed at the next meeting so that she has an opportunity to review the material.

- **Audit Services**

Powers & Sullivan is under contract for the FY22 Audit. Mr. Pacheco reported that this is an exempt service but can do a quote. Ms. Turner would like to assemble an Audit Committee.

- **0 Hardy Street**

Value has been re-adjusted to \$1,100.00. Property was listed as buildable but is a non-buildable land locked parcel. Town Administrator would like to look into the title work on this parcel and the town’s tax attorney Jim Coppola look into it. Mr. Pacheco reported that there have been some ambiguities in the town records for this property. He is planning to meet with the Assessors to clear this up and will report back to the Board. He notes that the Board’s mandate is to get full cash value for property sold, so the Board will continue to work on this but will not rush through.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

**This item is included to acknowledge that there may be matters not reasonably anticipated by the Chair*

Ms. Turner expressed concern about money paid by the Town for legal bills and asked Mr. Pacheco the status of the RFP for Legal Services. He reported this will close November 4 at 4:00 pm.

Mr. Allison asked the board if they would like to schedule interviews for Building Inspector. He suggested that the HR Director schedule them for the October 4 meeting. The Board agreed and

told Ms. Charton that the interviews could be scheduled for the beginning of the meeting.

XII. COMMUNICATIONS

- Select Board's next regular meeting will be held via Zoom on Monday, October 4, 2021 at 6:00pm

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Select Board member Alix Turner offered a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Moody. Jason A. Allison, Aye, Jay A. Moody, Aye, Alexandra W. Turner, Aye. [3-0-0]

Respectfully submitted

APPROVED

Jay M. Moody Clerk
Approved and accepted: 10.18.21