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**Town of West Newbury**

**Board of Selectmen**

**Minutes of Meeting**

**September 23, 2019 Open Session**

**ATTENDANCE**

City of Newburyport	Matthew Coogan, Chief of Staff, Jon-Eric White, City Engineer
Town of West Newbury	Selectman David Archibald, Glenn Kemper, Richard Parker, Angus Jennings Town Manager, Michael McCarron Town Clerk/Town Counsel, Wayne Amaral DPW Director
BSC Group	Peter Reed P.E., Director of Transportation; Micah Morrison P. E., S.E. Manager of Structural Engineering
Residents	Tom Leonard, William Beard, John McGrath, John Connors, Preston Rogers, Dana Bridges, Matt Gagnon, Bob Thomasino, Bethany Groff-Doreau, Rich Baker, Forbes Durey, Byron Lane (resident of Newburyport), Polly McDowell, Jim Speralakis, Mary Cash Prudie, Bert Knowles and several other residents.

The Meeting was called to order at 7:19 by Chairman David Archibald.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- This meeting is being broadcast on local cable TV and recorded for rebroadcast on the local cable channels and on the internet.
- Board of Assessors has completed FY 20 property revaluation. Taxpayers are invited to inspect values for review and discuss changes in proposed values at the Assessor's Office 381 Main Street from September 23-26, 2019 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and September 27, 2019 from 8:00 a.m. to noon. Proposed valuations viewable in person and on the Assessor's page on Town website.
- Essex County Creates calendar; and Essex County Arts & Culture Summit September 27, 2019 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Beverly.
- Opportunities for FY 20 Committee appointments posted online at <https://wnewbury.org/board-selectmen/pages/2019-20-volunteer-opportunities>.

**REGULAR BUSINESS**

- A.) Joint Public Meeting with City of Newburyport officials regarding Middle Street/Plummer Spring Road Bridge: engineering consultant (BSC Group) presentation of design alternatives and preliminary cost estimates; public comments and questions, potential recommendation of preferred design alternative to advance through engineering and permitting.**

Angus welcomed the residents and gave a short overview. The current goal is to start this bridge project 2020-2021 with an estimated one year of construction. A small bridge grant was received from Mass DOT by the City of Newburyport. These funds were used for design support

and BSC Group was hired as the consultant. At the current time application has been made for an additional \$1,000,000.00 to support the project.

Jon-Eric White the City Engineer of Newburyport gave a short review of the deterioration of the bridge from 2016 until the bridge was shut down in May, 2018 due to collapse of the southern bridge retaining wall.

Peter and Micah presented a slide show regarding the project history from June 2016 when Mass DOT conducted a routine bridge inspection and rated it as severe-priority. The project is complex due to being located within the drinking water reservoir which requires more permitting and has construction implications. The depth of the water requires extensive cofferdams. Pile support is required due to poor soil conditions and there is minimal existing roadway width. There were 7 different alternatives brought forward by BSC Group. The various alternatives are contained in the agenda packet. The engineers recommend alternative 1 and alternative 2.

After review the residents were asked by the board for their input into this project. The concerns raised are as follows:

- 1.) Is the bridge a choice or must it be rebuilt?
- 2.) Weight Limits – will the new bridge have weight limits – No weight limit on bridge – Mass DOT requires that the proposed bridge be designed for statutory load.
- 3.) Emergency Services and Evacuation route – The bridge would be used by ambulance service to the Anna Jacques Hospital. The bridge is also an emergency evacuation route for the Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant.
- 4.) Speed Limit. This area is considered safer by some due to the road closure. It is used for fishing, walking, cycling and horseback riding. Traffic calming devices such as speed bumps were brought forward. In order to legally restrict/exclude trucks Mass DOT would need to approve the change. Data and justification would need to be presented. When traffic counts were done of a total of 930 vehicles 32 were trucks which is 3.5%. Other considerations were police patrols which have taken place in the past.
- 5.) Making the traffic one lane with large sidewalks. Also, encouraging people to fish on the side of the bridge rather than on the bridge. The new proposed bridge will have an 8" curb reveal but no guardrail. A fishing pier was suggested for safety.
- 6.) This road is scenic and actively used for recreation.
- 7.) If this bridge is not rebuilt the residents are relying on Route 113. There should be more than one route of egress. This route is also shorter than Route 113 to Newburyport.
- 8.) Signs to post speed limit.

A resident asked again whether there has been a determination that the bridge will be built. Selectman Glenn Kemper replied that the cost would be \$2,400,000.00 provided that the grant application is successful. If it is not successful and the project has a \$5,000,000.00 price there would need to more thought put into the project.

It was suggested that Alternative #2 with the sidewalk was the better option.

**B.) Request to install signs on public property – Apple Harvest Road Race sponsors.**

A motion was made by Chairman David Archibald, seconded by Selectman Richard Parker to allow signs on public property with the exceptions of Bridge Street, Church Street and Cammett Field Island.

Yes 3, No 0.

**C.) Appointment of Interim Town Accountant.**

Selectman Richard Parker made a motion to appoint Michael Morris as Interim Town Accountant on a temporary basis until a full time Accountant is appointed and begins work. Motion seconded by Selectman Glenn Kemper.

Yes 3, No 0

**D.) Board of Selectmen review of proposed and potential warrant articles for November 4, 2019 Special Town Meeting, determination of which articles will appear on the Special Town Meeting Warrant, and vote to close the warrant.**

Motion made by Selectman Glenn Kemper, seconded by Richard Parker to close the warrant for the Special Town Meeting Warrant.

Yes 3, No 0.

Motion to adjourn made by Selectman Glenn Kemper, seconded by Richard Parker.

Yes 3, No 0

Meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Mary DiPinto