

FARMINGTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Tuesday, November 23, 2021

6:30 P.M.

The conduct of the meeting included remote access by telephonic, video, and electronic means. The public may attend in person or by viewing the live stream at <http://mtbluetv.org/program-live-stream-farmington-selectmen.html> or Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/MBTV11/> and/or calling 778-6538***

Vice-Chairman Stephan Bunker called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. with the following members present: Michael Fogg and Scott Landry. Chairman Matthew Smith and Joshua Bell were unable to attend. Town Manager Christian Waller, Executive Assistant Nancy Martin, Chief of Police Kenneth Charles, Treasurer LucyAnn Cook, and Mt. Blue camera operator Andre Cormier were also in attendance. Casco Bay Advisors, LLC President Brian Lippold, members of the press and public participated remotely as authorized by PL 209. C.617.

ITEM 1: Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

ITEM 2: To Hold a Public Hearing on the Following Application for a Marijuana Business Permit/License:

**Cory Boyker & Jyssica Boudreault, 21-MJ-04
Medical Marijuana Store – Addition of Jyssica Boudreault
184 Farmington Falls Road #2 - U10-066**

Christian Waller provided a copy of Cory Boyker and Jyssica Boudreault’s 21-MJ-04 Medical Marijuana Store application. The store, Cannacabana, is located at 184 Farmington Falls Road, in the former Farmington Pawnsters building.

Vice-Chairman Stephan Bunker opened the Public Hearing under Item 2 at 6:33 P. M.

Cory Boyker was previously approved as the sole owner (application 21-MG-0) by the Board on August 24, 2021. The purpose of this new application is to add Jyssica Boudreault as co-owner.

Vice-Chairman Stephan Bunker closed the Public Hearing under Item 2 at 6:34 P. M.

Scott Landry moved to approve the application of Corey Boyker & Jyssica Boudreault 21-MJ-04 Medical Marijuana Store; Michael Fogg seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 3 ABSENT 2 MOTION CARRIED

ITEM 3: To allow Tiffany Estabrook and the RSU 9 Strategic Planning Committee to address the Board regarding the Goals of the Committee

Tiffany Estabrook was unable to attend. A copy of the Mt. Blue Strategic Vision Planning Survey was placed in the Selectmen’s files for review. Hard copies of the survey are available in the lobby of the Town Office, and a link to RSU 9 is available through the Town’s website at <https://www.farmington-maine.org/>. Completed surveys may be dropped off at any RSU 9 Office by December 20th.

ITEM 4: To Consider the Application of Terry S. Bell, Sr., for Alternate Member on the Zoning Board

The Selectmen reviewed the application, which indicated a desire to serve on the Planning Board and the Zoning Board. The Zoning Board Ordinance 3-1.6D states, “No person who is a municipal officer, town manager, code enforcement officer, town planner, member of the Planning Board or Board of Appeals, or who is a father, mother, spouse, sister, brother, or child of one of the above may be appointed as a regular or alternate to the Zoning Board.” At the time of his application, Mr. Bell indicated a preference to serve on the Zoning Board.

The Selectman thanked Mr. Bell for his past service to the Town and his willingness to serve on the Zoning Board.

Michael Fogg moved to appoint Terry S. Bell, Sr., as Alternate Member on the Zoning Board; Scott Landry seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 3 ABSENT 2 MOTION CARRIED

ITEM 5: To Authorize the Sale of the LESO Acquired 1971 Caterpillar D7 Dozer via Auction or Accepting Bids

Christian Waller stated that the dozer is in good condition and offers a winch on the back. Mr. Waller said that the blade on the front of the dozer does not articulate from side to side as far as some of the modern dozers do. However, it has incredibly low hours of use, and it runs very well. Police Chief Kenneth Charles reported that the dozer was initially acquired to move the firing range to its current location. The only cost to the Town was \$1,400 to have the item delivered. The dozer is far too big for its intended use; Chief Charles would like to sell the dozer and place the proceeds into the Vehicle Reserve Account. Chief Charles answered the Selectmen’s questions.

Michael Fogg moved to authorize the sale of the LESO acquired 1971 Caterpillar D7 dozer sale via auction or by bid and apply the proceeds to the Police Department Vehicle Reserve Account; Scott Landry seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 3 ABSENT 2 MOTION CARRIED

ITEM 6: To Consider the Expenditure of up to \$11,000 from the Police Department’s Reserve Account for the purchase of two computers for cruisers

Police Chief Kenneth Charles gave an overview of the department’s current computer inventory and the need for two additional computers. Chief Charles reported that he has an opportunity to purchase a display model and save \$3,000. He provided an invoice dated November 16, 2021, from Glacier Computer LLC for \$8,254.82. Chief Charles stated that there might be enough funds remaining in a COVID-19 grant to cover most of the cost of the computers.

Scott Landry moved to authorize the expenditure of up to \$11,000 from the Police Department’s Reserve Account for the purchase of two computers for cruisers; Michael Fogg seconded

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 3 ABSENT 2 MOTION CARRIED

ITEM 7: To Review the Consumer Price Index and Approve Wage and Salary Adjustments for the Calendar year 2022

Christian Waller provided a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) table, which contained Consumer Price Index (CPI)/Bureau of Labor (BOL) statistics from January 2021 through October 2021. The table from January through October 2021 shows a historically high average of 6.2%. A COLA of 7% is forecasted for November and December 2021, placing the projected COLA at 7.1%. Stephan Bunker stated that the Board’s past practices have been to look at the figures in time for Budget preparation and provide guidance to the department heads to figure salary expenses for the next fiscal year. Mr. Bunker indicated that he is pleased with the CPI/COLA table that Mr. Waller presented; the COLA has been as low as zero percent in past years. He noted that the Board does not have to use the COLA percentage from the CPI. However, the language has always been; “wherever it hits, is what you get.” Scott Landry indicated that 7.1% seems like a substantial increase and asked what the overall increase in cost would be for the salaries. Mr. Waller said that he would provide the Board with an approximation. Mr. Bunker acknowledged that Mr. Waller was doing his due diligence and reviewing all salaries and overall fringe benefit packages. He asked what would be an appropriate deadline for the Board to provide the COLA percentage? Mr. Waller stated that the department heads would need the initial COLA percentage before beginning the budget process. Mr. Landry reiterated that he would like to see the projected costs, and he stated that he would like all five Selectmen present when they vote on the final COLA percentage. LucyAnn Cook reported that the employees’ cost of health insurance benefits increased by 2%, and dental insurance increased 1%. Michael Fogg stated that if the Board waits to provide a figure until after the budget process, the department heads are going to ask what percentage should be used. Mr. Fogg agrees, that 7.1% sounds high, but if that is what it is, then that is what it is. He believes the increase must be whatever the cost of living is. A consensus was reached, the Board would vote on COLA when the full Board was present.

ITEM 8: To allow Treasurer LucyAnn Cook to address the Board regarding Bangor Savings Bank Timekeeping and Accrual Tracking Software

Treasurer LucyAnn Cook followed up with the Board regarding their questions from the November 9th Selectmen’s meetings. Ms. Cook reported that she researched numerous payroll companies online, and she called local banks. The local banks do not provide payroll services, only Bangor Savings does. The payroll companies would have to rewrite their software programs to meet the Town’s various payroll needs. Bangor Savings already has this capability. The Town of Sullivan uses Bangor Savings Bank, and their treasurer gave a great review of their services: always on time with payroll and IRS reports, and they respond quickly. Ms. Cook provided an overview of the Town’s unique payroll challenges and the benefits of implementing Bangor Savings Banks’ timekeeping and accrual tracking software. Ms. Cook answered the Selectmen’s questions.

Scott Landry moved to authorize the expenditure of \$9,481 to purchase Bangor Savings Timekeeping and Accrual Tracking Software; Michael Fogg seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 3 ABSENT 2 MOTION CARRIED

ITEM 9: To allow Casco Bay Advisors, LLC President to address the Board regarding the proposal to provide infrastructure mapping, financial analysis, and assistance to expand the availability of high-speed Internet for the Town

Casco Bay Advisors, LLC (CBA) President Brian Lippold addressed the Board via Zoom. Mr. Lippold reviewed CBA’s proposal to “provide infrastructure mapping, financial analysis, and assistance to expand the availability of affordable, reliable, high-speed Internet to the Town.” CBA will perform a field audit and update the mapping on the 2018 mapping developed for the Greater Franklin Development Council

ITEM 9: To allow Casco Bay Advisors, LLC President to address the Board regarding the proposal to provide infrastructure mapping, financial analysis, and assistance to expand the availability of high-speed Internet for the Town. (continued)

(GFDC). They will add a GIS “point layer” by manually examining 911 data, parcel boundary data, and aerial imagery to identify each potential subscriber location. Individual road segments will update the GIS mapping layer for the data collected during the field audit. Areas without Cable TV coverage will be considered “gap” areas, and a GIS layer will be created for each gap area by road segment. All data will be mapped and added to CBA’s VETRO GIS system. CBA will provide extra data from VETRO into tabular form, identifying the road segment mileage and associated potential subscriber location counts by infrastructure and gap types. All data produced within the Vetro Fibermap system can be easily integrated into the overall State of Maine GIS and mapping systems. And can also be supplied as Google KMZ/KML files or in industry-standard ESRI standard shapefiles. The data extracted from VETRO will be incorporated into the financial analysis to estimate the cost of extending Cable TV infrastructure and constructing a community-wide Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) Internet System. CBA’s final study report will include all the data and mapping information created in the overall scope of work. The mapping and underlying GIS data will be generated in an industry-standard format suitable to support negotiations with Internet service providers and grant program applications in the first quarter of 2022. CBA will require six weeks to complete all the work listed above. The total project cost of \$4,800 is valid for 30 days. CBA also offers the following services on a time expense basis: 5-year Financial Operating Pro Forma development for municipal-owned networks; FTTH Engineering; pole data collection; RFP development; process management; grant application drafting and submission. The Town will be invoiced every month based upon the percentage of the project completed during the billing period. Payment is due within 30 days after the date on the invoice, and outstanding balances will accrue interest at a rate of 1.5% per month (18% annum). Mr. Lippold answered the Selectmen’s questions.

Michael Fogg moved to approve the expenditure of \$4,800 to Casco Bay Advisors, LLC to provide infrastructure mapping, financial analysis, and assistance to expand the availability of high-speed Internet for the Town; Scott Landry seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 3 ABSENT 2 MOTION CARRIED

ITEM 10: To discuss the Route 2/Wilton Road striping project.

Mr. Waller reported that he and Public Works Director Phil Hutchins met with MDOT Regional Traffic Engineer Timothy Soucie and MDOT Region Manager Denis Lovely’s previous proposal to re-stripe a section of Route 2/Wilton Road. They propose a single lane in each direction, with a wide turning lane in the center. MDOT has completed the planning, and the assets are in place to complete the work. Mr. Waller stated due to the scope of the change of the proposed project; he felt it prudent to discuss their proposal with the Board. Mr. Waller revealed that the MDOT would need the Town’s decision by January. Stephan Bunker said that the Selectmen had received citizen input on single lanes with a turning lane; he is unsure if citizens’ views have changed. The proposal was not well received in the past. Scott Landry acknowledged that something needs to be done, but he does not know if single lanes are the correct answer at this time. He certainly would not want to be changing the lanes now; with snow covering the lines, people would not know what was going on. Re-striping Route 2 lanes at this time of year would create a hazard. Mr. Waller stated that additional transportation options would be worth discussing, which would not necessitate changing the current two lanes in each direction component and may provide time and safety enhancements. Mr. Waller said that roundabouts have proven to be effective in other places. The Selectmen said they are open to further discussion and would like the MDOT to share information with them. Mr. Waller stated that the Town has a copy of MDOT’s updated plan, and he will bring the plans to the next discussion. Mr. Bunker invited interested citizens to sit in on or tune into the Board’s next MDOT discussion. Michael Fogg asserted that MDOT’s previous proposal had several key negative points. One concern was the section of road just past Hannaford

ITEM 10: To discuss the Route 2/Wilton Road striping project (continued)

Brothers, when you top the hill in front of Farmington Ford, the eighteen-wheelers will be in the right-hand lane, and they will want to merge and not want to yield. Mr. Waller said that he believes the merging tractor-trailer issue was addressed in the new proposal. Mr. Bunker said that as a side note, he would like MDOT to address the long-standing issue of de-laminating on Wilton Road. Mr. Waller reported that MDOT would be repaving the de-laminated section in the Spring of 2022. Parks and Recreation Director Matthew Foster asked that pedestrian safety be addressed. He expressed concern for the many walkers and bicyclists who traveled Route 2 bicyclists and recommended a wider breakdown lane. Mr. Waller said he would invite MDOT to a Selectmen's meeting.

ITEM 11: To discuss potential appropriations of funds to the Rail Trail bridge project.

Christian Waller reported that the Rail Trail bridge project was initially looked at in 2007. High Peaks Alliance (HPA) Executive Director Brent West addressed the Board a few weeks ago and presented new engineering options for a bridge across the Sandy River. Since that time, easements have been obtained; the University is on board with all use aspects (snowmobiles, foot traffic, mountain bikers, etc.), except for ATV traffic. High Peaks Alliance is currently working on securing federal and state grants, which require a twenty-percent match. Previously, the Board approved moving \$5,000 from the Rail Trail Bridge Reserve Account to High Peaks Alliance towards the \$15,000 cost of the re-engineering report. That left the question of matching funds, and Mr. West indicated earlier this week that a local foundation committed \$300,000 to the project. Mr. West used the initial cost plus an inflation factor to project a cost of \$2.8 million. However, Mr. West anticipates that the cost of the re-engineered bridge will be significantly less than \$2.8 million. Scott Landry reported that High Peaks Alliance is hoping to receive some funding from Franklin County. He spoke with Franklin County Commissioner Lance Harvell, and he favored the Rail Trail bridge project. Franklin County Commissioners (FCC) hired an ARPA analyst, and hopefully, they will allocate \$150,000 - \$200,000 to the Rail Trail bridge project. Mr. Landry stated that one goal is to raise \$150,000 for a long-term maintenance account for the Rail Trail bridge. Mr. Waller said that having a maintenance fund makes the project more attractive to the State, and it shows that High Peaks Alliance has the funding to care for the bridge. Stephan Bunker asked if the project qualified for ARPA funds. Mr. Waller stated that the Rail Trail bridge would draw in recreational users, tourism, economic development, and enhance mental and physical health. The improved psychological and physical health proponent qualifies the project for ARPA funds. Michael Fogg asked where the potential revenue from the Town would come from? Mr. Waller indicated that the Town could appropriate funds from the new solar farm valuation monies, and the Town's ARPA funds could be used. The Selectmen agreed that they were not ready to commit to a dollar amount at this time. Mr. Waller stated that High Peaks Alliance also requested a letter of support from the Town.

Scott Landry moved to write a letter supporting the Rail Trail bridge project; Michael Fogg seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 3 ABSENT 2 MOTION CARRIED

ITEM 12: To Approve the Minutes of November 9, 2021.

Scott Landry moved to approve the Minutes of November 9, 2021; Michael Fogg seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 3 ABSENT 2 MOTION CARRIED

ITEM 13: To Discuss Other Business

- A) Christian Waller announced that lifelong Farmington resident Judith Bjorn donated \$100,000 to the Parks and Recreation Department to be used to support the programs for youth and families. Parks and Recreation Director Matthew Foster requested that the funds be placed in an escrow account while the Town figures the best use of the funds. Mr. Foster stated that he would like to meet with Mrs. Bjorn and discuss what she would like to see done. Mr. Foster said that after careful consideration, he would come back to the Board for approval.

Michael Fogg moved to accept \$100,000 from Judith Bjorn to be placed in a Parks and Recreation Department Escrow Account; Scott Landry seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 3 ABSENT 2 MOTION CARRIED

- B) Stephan Bunker wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving and encouraged everyone to attend the 45th Annual Chester Greenwood "Vacationland Fun" parade on Saturday, December 4th. The parade starts at 10:00 A.M.

There being no further business to come before the Board, **Scott Landry moved to adjourn at 8:00 P.M.; Michael Fogg seconded.**

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 3 ABSENT 2 MOTION CARRIED

Minutes respectfully submitted by Nancy L. Martin.

Michael J. Fogg - Secretary