

State of Rhode Island

County of Washington

In Hopkinton on the nineteenth day of October 2020 A.D. the said meeting was called to order by Town Council President Frank Landolfi at 6:30 P.M. in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 1 Town House Road, Hopkinton, RI 02833.

PRESENT: Frank Landolfi, Scott Bill Hirst, Sylvia Thompson, Barbara Capalbo and Town Manager William McGarry were present in the Meeting Room; Sharon Davis; Town Solicitor Kevin McAllister and Town Clerk Elizabeth Cook-Martin attended remotely.

The Meeting was held remotely due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The agenda included instructions for participating in the meeting. The meeting was called to order with a moment of silent meditation and a salute to the Flag.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR CAPALBO AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR HIRST TO CONVENE OPEN SESSION AND RECESS TO EXECUTIVE SESSION UNDER: RIGL SEC. 42-46-5(A)(4), BRIEFING/STATUS REPORT/BY TOWN SOLICITOR ON EXISTENCE OF INVESTIGATIVE PROCEEDINGS REGARDING ALLEGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT, EITHER CIVIL OR CRIMINAL.

POLL VOTE:

IN FAVOR: Landolfi, Hirst, Capalbo, Thompson, Davis

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

Upon adjournment of the Executive Session, the Town Council returned to open session.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR HIRST AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR CAPALBO TO SEAL THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION.

IN FAVOR: Landolfi, Hirst, Capalbo, Thompson, Davis

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

Council President Landolfi reported no votes were taken in Executive Session.

The Meeting was called to order with a moment of silent meditation and a salute to the Flag.

Council President Landolfi introduced new Chariho Regional School District Superintendent Gina Picard. He welcomed Ms. Picard, noting it was nice to have her in attendance. Ms. Picard advised that she had commenced work on June 18, 2020 and promised to be very transparent; noting that she is a communicator and a listener. She went on to state that she had graduated from the University of Rhode Island with a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership and noted that she has two degrees from Rhode Island College, one a Masters in Reading and the other a Bachelor's of Science in Elementary Education with a background in English. Ms. Picard explained that she has been an educator for over 23 years and is a facilitator for the National Institute for School Leadership which allows her to be a thoughtful educator on passing research and to assure that it is not about her idea for success for herself, but the success of the students, first and foremost.

Councilor Capalbo asked what Chariho was doing to keep the children safe and how are the school days and work week scheduled? Ms. Picard noted that they had over 65 members of the reopening team working on a plan to reopen during the summer. Since the date of opening, all kindergarten through grade 5 students were full time in-person if they chose to be; then they did a slow roll into Middle School during the first week of school, so by the end of week one all grades pre-K through 8 were in school. The high school was done as a slow roll out for two weeks using a hybrid model with all students distance learning on Monday and then students with the last name starting A through J were in-person Tuesday and Wednesday and K through Z were in school Thursday and Friday. Masks are required to be worn in school. There have been three cases of COVID-19 at the high school but no students have been affected. Families need to do a daily self-check and fill out a COVID-19 form if their children are coming to school.

Councilor Capalbo also asked what would be happening with sports.

Ms. Picard noted that a lot of conversation was happening with the Inter-Scholastic League and the Department of Health, along with the Superintendent's Association, to determine high-risk sports versus low-risk sports. Right now they were running soccer, track and field and tennis and Chariho has purchased athletic masks for all students who are playing a sport. They were now reviewing what winter sports will be allowed; football has been moved to the spring; basketball is currently being reviewed; and, baseball and softball are spring sports so they are not currently dealing with them.

Counselor Hirst welcomed Superintendent Picard and thanked her for reopening the schools. He asked about the students with learning disabilities and how they would receive the remedial help they might need. Ms. Picard explained that they have completed a screening of students in math and English language arts and they are creating individualized plans for students who might need extra help.

Counselor Davis asked Superintendent Picard about the COVID cases at the high school and it was noted that none of those cases involved students. She also asked about the athletic masks that student were wearing to play sports and if they were KN95 masks. Ms. Picard noted that the masks had a certain amount of layers and was tighter around the nose; they were not N95 masks. Councilor Davis asked Ms. Picard if she would consider having an independent management review, since both she and the director of finance were new, and noted that they had made this suggestion to the school committee in the past. Ms. Picard noted that she would leave that up to the school committee. Councilor Davis questioned if there had been a savings due to distance learning. It was noted that the only savings the school realized was when buses did not run and some small facility savings when the children were not in school.

Councilor Thompson wondered if they have needed to use more buses due to the virus; Ms. Picard noted that right now they are using the same number of buses as previously used but they are not providing any late buses. They are not allowed to have more than 36 individuals on a bus and should there be a big increase in students who need to ride the bus, they believe they will need to add three additional buses for an additional cost to the district of \$170,000. Councilor Thompson indicated that she had heard from several residents who had told her

that the school committee had authorized a payment to the bus company even though the buses weren't running. Ms. Picard noted that the school does have a contract with the bus company so they would be responsible to pay something but not the full amount if the buses weren't running.

Council President Landolfi noted that the savings for the buses would not be as much as he had original thought. He asked if the golf team would be playing in the spring and Ms. Picard believed that to be very likely.

Councilor Capalbo felt there would be additional savings due to the buses not bringing student athletes to sports games that were not being held.

CONSENT AGENDA

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR CAPALBO AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR HIRST TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS

FOLLOWS: Approve October 13, 2020 Special Town Council Meeting Remote Minutes; September 28, 2020 Special Town Council Meeting Remote Minutes; October 5, 2020 Town Council Meeting Remote Minutes; Accept the September 21, 2020 transcript as the record of the decision re: Centrica/Cherenzia; Accept the September 21, 2020 transcript as the record of the decision re: Centrica/Fothergill; Accept the following monthly financial/activity report: Town Clerk; Approve the abatements for a tax-exempt property and for a condition adjustment submitted by the Tax Assessor.

IN FAVOR: Landolfi, Hirst, Capalbo, Thompson, Davis

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

NEW BUSINESS

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO HOPE VALLEY WATERLINE DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM ORDINANCE – CHAPTER 250

This matter had been scheduled to discuss and consider setting a hearing date for an amendment to the Hope Valley Waterline Distribution System - Chapter 250 introduced and sponsored by Councilor Thompson.

Councilor Thompson reported that they should schedule this hearing date to sometime in February in order to give the new Council some time to look this matter over. She noted there was an environmental review that was done and other documentation as to why it is important to look at the Hope Valley Water

Line Ordinance. She noted that when you bring a waterline into an area and provide public water, there is always pressure to increase development. There was an inter-governmental review process and there was a notice of determination back in 1990 with specific recommendations to look at the waterline district: that it is in a flood plain; in an environmentally sensitive area when you are bringing in water from another town; and, you are now adding water into an area which already has high water tables and failed septic systems. She wished to postpone this matter to February since the Town Clerk's office will have to send notice out to every individual who is on the waterline to let them know that there will be a hearing which they can attend and say yeah or nay or state whatever their concerns may be.

There was discussion that a hearing date would be scheduled for February 1, 2021 unless the new Council wished to change that date.

PUBLIC FORUM

Eric Bibler indicated that he had read the executive session portion of the Town Council Agenda and wished to know if the Town Council was the subject or the complainant in any investigative complaint. Town Solicitor McAllister indicated that the agenda spoke for itself and he did not wish to elaborate on the matter. It was indicated by the Council that the subject matter had nothing to do with the Town Council or any of its members.

Joseph Moreau of Old Depot Road said hello and advised that he has been listening to all of the meetings, though he had not been speaking.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR HIRST AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR CAPALBO TO ADJOURN.

SO VOTED

Elizabeth J. Cook-Martin

Town Clerk

Marita D. Murray

Deputy Town Clerk