

**SELECT BOARD MEETING**

**June 9, 2022 5:30PM**

**Town Hall/Hybrid**

**Quorum noted**

**5:30 PM:** Meeting called to order by Chairperson Donhauser.

**A. Roll Call:** Mr. Donhauser, Mr. McPherson, Mr. Widi, and Ms. Dow.

**B. Pledge of Allegiance recited**

**C. Public Comment:**

There was no public comment.

**D. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)**

**5:31 PM** Motion by Mr. Donhauser, second by Mr. McPherson, to approve the minutes of April 14, 2022, as written.

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Mr. Donhauser – Yes**

**Mr. McPherson - Yes**

**Mr. Widi – Yes**

**Ms. Dow - Yes**

**Unanimous vote to approve motion.**

**E. Department Head/Committee Reports**

**5:32 PM** 1) Town Manager's Report

Mr. Sullivan said that a lot of good, positive things are happening in the Town Hall. We will talk about the Summit a little later in the agenda. We did meet today with the Kittery Sewer Department to make sure we're all on the same page for the project going forward and it looks like we have a good plan. I'd like to thank our Planning Director in particular for staying on top of that project.

**Mr. Donhauser moved, second by Ms. Dow, that the Select Board accept the Town Manager's Report, as submitted, and direct that he post it on the Town website.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Mr. Donhauser – Yes**

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**Mr. McPherson - Yes**

**Mr. Widi – Yes**

**Ms. Dow - Yes**

**Unanimous vote to approve motion.**

**F. New Business:**

**5:33 PM 1) Request to appoint Michael Thompson to Aging-in-Place**

Mr. Sullivan said that we have one associate member opening and we actually have three applicants. There is another applicant that will be on here next meeting. I approached the Chair and she would like us to just hold off on making an appointment because she wants to discuss with the committee whether there's another model to allow other people since there are interested parties. We certainly want to accommodate and applaud people for being interested in serving on these boards and committees. She hopes to have a message back to the SB, through me, by your next meeting to decide whether you want to expand it. It's an ad hoc committee so you have the authority to expand it. I went over a couple options with her. Perhaps, having an executive committee that meets on a regular basis then using the adjunct, or the associate, members on different committees for specific tasks. That way people could stay involved and, as people move out of the executive committee, maybe they move people in. It's a really great committee. Ellen Ceppetelli does a great job as does everyone. They are really enthusiastic. Having people involved in a positive group like that is what I think Eliot is all about. If there is a way we can accommodate without making it too cumbersome a committee to get their work done, I would just ask that the SB consider that request. Do interviews tonight and then, if you care to, and hold off on appointment until you hear back from the Chair.

It was the **consensus of the SB** to postpone appointment until the next meeting.

Mr. Donhauser invited Mr. Thompson to speak.

Mr. Thompson said that, in kind of being new to this in a way, I want to help out and I've been in the community for a long time and would like to participate more in the community. I'd say that I'm kind of a cautious and deliberate type of person but I'm happy to dig in and work. I also do have some ideas that I'd like to share with the Aging-in-Place Committee. Being a retired builder and presently a semi-retired cabinetmaker, I guess my principal interest would be in housing as an issue with the Aging-in-Place Committee. ADUs have now been expanded, I believe, and maybe in the future deal with some zoning issues, encouraging the possibility of cluster housing with green spaces and maybe community gardens, and that

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kind of idea. In my mind, these would enhance, just in general, the ADUs, affordability housing for older people because a lot of people are on fixed incomes. I think these would all enhance connectivity among people in the community. Another thing I would like to work on with the Aging-in-Place Committee is finding ways for aging residents to stay engaged in the community. People, as they age, tend to be a little more isolated and it would be really nice to find ways to pull people in so they don't become so isolated and would feel more productive and possibly even employed. I think that would help the entire community, as well. Regarding healthcare, I don't know if the Town could support a small family practice-type of clinic in Eliot. Another issue is transportation and possibly have public transportation if Eliot could do it. Maybe a shuttle bus or something like that. I've Zoomed in on a couple of Aging-in-Place meetings and noticed how enthusiastic they are so it seems pretty good. Just in general, it seems like a good way to improve a community-kind of togetherness, communication with each other just on an individual basis with all people.

**5:40 PM** Mr. Donhauser said that it's interesting that you brought up housing. In fact, just today I have a sister-in-law that is in need of like subsidized housing. I checked out Barron Place. They have 41 units and they have a waiting list of 37 people. In checking in York and all around, they are all full. There is a need for affordable housing.

Mr. Thompson said that, in the Town with the way it's set up, it's probably a challenge for the Town to come up with funding to be able to support affordable housing and give people rent relief, or whatever. Maybe there are ways to try to do that or encourage some more State funding to help with affordable housing. Again, I think zoning might help, too, so that this could encourage ADUs to be built and to just increase housing without increasing congestion. That's a topic of some conflict or difficulty as Eliot is a nice, quiet little Town and we don't want to lose that atmosphere. I think there are ways to do that, again with more public transportation as we increase housing for people who need affordable housing; that we can find a way to not increase vehicle congestion. More sidewalks will help with that. It was kind of in there on the application about conflict of interest, so I would want to be very careful, being in that industry, to not have even a perception of conflict. If I encourage something to happen with housing, if there was any possible way that I would personally benefit from that, I would need to recuse myself when they are voting on that, and that needs to be completely transparent.

**5:44 PM** Mr. Sullivan said that the Capital Improvement/Town Hall/Building Committee just had some openings, as well. I don't know if Mr. Thompson would be interested in that. One of the key discussions about if we do expand this particular

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Town Hall in a renovation project, how can we harness that investment more acutely and get more out of it by using it in off hours for the senior activities, for winter activities, and he hit on some of that. The other one is the Comp Plan. The Planner is soon kicking off the Comprehensive Plan update and all the things that Mr. Thompson hit on are exactly the things that discuss and should be continued to be discussed about accessible transportation, different modes of transportation. We were talking about electric vehicles. Seeing if we can get more coverage for the Route 236 run of the Seacoast RTA. It comes once a day to the Eliot Commons. It would be good if we could figure a way to expand that. We've been talking to Eliot Commons about having a park-&-ride there, getting a trolley down there. So, I really appreciate what you're saying. If you are interested in those, I can give you more information on that, as well.

Mr. Donhauser said that we are pleased that you applied. Thank you.

**1) Request to appoint Karen Tomanio to Aging-in-Place**

Appointment action postponed.

**G. Old Business:**

**5:46 PM 1) Summer Summits**

Mr. Sullivan said that I would like to get input on what I presented to you. What I've heard from members of the public has been really positive, particularly from other boards and committees. They are interested in having these charrettes and being able to meet during the summer to talk about some of the things they feel are most important or are facing Eliot. If the SB thinks it's a good idea, and thinks there's subject matter I can whittle it down to, that would be helpful. One of the ideas I presented was to have one meeting in the summer for the SB and use these summits as kind of an offset, allowing you to use your time to attend those meetings, which would primarily be in the day because they are going to involve staff, as well. We certainly want to get well-rounded input. You have in your ordinance that you are to meet twice a month so there are a couple ways you could consider that. You could have the regular schedule, meet, and not have a quorum but have an informational meeting, if people are working on some of these other projects. The other thing is you could schedule the meetings, one at 5:30PM and one at 6PM, that meets the tenet of it. I think it's kind of a clumsy part of your ordinance. It's pretty commonplace to have these kinds of changes, particularly in the summer, for planning exercises and building relationships between committees. I've seen it work really well elsewhere and we could tailor it to schedules for not only the SB but for when people are on vacation here, and other things. It's a big project. It's very different than I think you've had before. It

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will consume a lot of my time, I'm sure, but I really think it's worth it. Hopefully, you will consider it and give me my marching orders as you see fit.

**5:49 PM** Ms. Dow said that I love it. I was reading over your topics, again, and thought that they were great. It seems you put a lot of thought and planning as to how it would work and we appreciate all of that. I'm looking forward to it.

Mr. Sullivan asked if there are any particular areas you would change or you would prioritize.

Mr. Donhauser said that I think it's a pretty broad spectrum of topics and interaction with various groups. I'm actually sort of excited to do this and interact with the Town employees, too. I think that's really important and appreciate that. I think we certainly want to move forward.

**5:51 PM** Mr. Sullivan said that the idea is to have a primary meeting on July 14 and August 18 and getting a sign-off from our legal counsel as to scheduling two meetings back-to-back to meet the ordinance. Hopefully, we'll be able to talk about some of the changes that need to be made to the ordinances or the Charter, not just on this subject matter but other things. Hopefully, if you have a dialogue with Town employees, you're going to find that they have a number of things that really make a lot of sense. Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

**H. Approval of Warrant(s):**

**5:53 PM** Mr. Donhauser moved, second by Ms. Dow, that the Select Board approve A/P Warrant #108 in the amount of \$55,933.47, dated May 25, 2022; A/P Warrant #110 in the amount of \$118,570.32, dated June 1, 2022.

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Mr. Donhauser – Yes**

**Mr. McPherson - Yes**

**Mr. Widi – Yes**

**Ms. Dow - Yes**

**Unanimous vote to approve motion.**

Mr. Donhauser said that this is a formality. We actually approve these warrants before they are issued.

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Mr. Sullivan said that, to that point, if anyone has a question about what their tax dollars are going to, they can go to this packet (Town website), look at these warrants, and see exactly who these warrants are being written to.

**I. Selectmen's Report: Seeking Committee Members Listing**

**5:54 PM** Mr. Donhauser discussed the "Safe Summer Kickoff" presented by EliotConnects and the Eliot Police Department – "Start the summer with some fun with your neighbors & local first responders!" They want to stuff a cruiser with items like sun block, bug spray, tick remover, and gas and grocery gift cards. There will be fun and games, a bike rodeo and safety, and a chance to meet first responders and check out their equipment. It will be held June 11<sup>th</sup> from 9AM to noon at the Eliot PB/Dixon Road Recreation area.

Mr. Widi said that there will be a candidates' meeting at the same time at the gazebo where you can meet and talk with candidates. Mr. Wypyski put that together.

**5:56 PM** Mr. Widi said that he went to the Budget Committee meeting last night. Same answers, same stuff. The whole inviting Mike to a meeting thing was then inviting Carol several months ago. We're never going to see eye-to-eye. It wasn't really argumentative. It was just the same differences of opinion.

Mr. Donhauser asked wasn't there an issue about training for the Police Department. As it was related to me, the Kittery Police Department always got their training for free when Mr. Strong was the Chief.

Mr. Widi said yes. He might have misremembered that they had a budget of \$10,000/year just for the police department for training. They didn't really give me new answers. It seems like they were upset with the communication thing. I told them I'd come in every couple of months and communicate directly to them and they said okay.

**5:58 PM** Mr. McPherson asked if Mr. Sullivan would explain the police presence as far as the election just so that people know that there will be a police presence at the school during the election.

Mr. Sullivan said that there will be a police presence at the polls on Tuesday during the voting and after the voting, making sure it's secure there and protected. We will also have a police presence here the following day. There have been some veiled threats made to the different departments and we take any threat to employee safety very seriously. We understand the importance of elections and how important it is to vote but making employees uncomfortable or feel

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threatened is not something that reflects the real values of Eliot and I think you'd all agree with that. So, we're beefing up protections during the election and around here the following day just to make sure nothing happens unexpectedly. Also, on a long-term basis, the Police Chief and his staff are starting to do an analysis of safety and security of this building. We all know that there are very tragic things happening all across this country and we certainly want to make sure that we'll be able to say long into the future that it would never happen in Eliot and, in fact, it doesn't happen in Eliot. But it's an unfortunate world we live in and we have to take a hard look at safety and security needs, particularly when we have these email threats and comments that are making staff feel uncomfortable. They are our most valuable asset.

**6:01 PM** Mr. Donhauser said that I welcome emails from any individual. What I don't welcome is profanity. I think that's totally unacceptable. I think they should check their email before they hit the send button because those emails are out there pretty much forever. Within the past month, there have been a number of emails received where there was profanity present. It takes the substance out of the email and they lose whatever they're trying to accomplish.

Mr. McPherson added that those emails can be requested through FOIA and made available to the whole public. The Freedom of Access works very well and they have the right to know.

**6:02 PM** Mr. Donhauser said that it precipitated concern among the staff of the Town Select Board members, Fire Department members. There's a concern that, with the individual that's doing these emails, there is something wrong or doesn't make sense. So, we're concerned, as a result, that there is an uptick. There is going to be a police presence at the polls. Communication with the police between this building and where we're voting. It's generally what's happening in the world today.

**6:03 PM** Mr. Sullivan said that I just want to make sure that people know that it's still very safe in Eliot and it's very safe to go out and vote. We're going to make sure it's safe. So, don't feel you can't go out to vote because you're in danger. The purpose is always to keep citizens and employees safe. None of us would ever want to scare voters away. We're going to make it safe so come out and vote.

**J. Adjourn**

**Mr. Donhauser moved, second by Ms. Dow, that the Select Board adjourn.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

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**Mr. Donhauser – Yes  
Mr. McPherson - Yes  
Mr. Widi – Yes  
Ms. Dow - Yes**

**Unanimous vote to approve motion.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 PM.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Ellen Lemire, Recording Secretary**

**S/ Robert McPherson, Secretary**

**Date approved: August 25, 2022**