



**Town of Ayer
Ayer Select Board
Ayer Town Hall – 1st Floor Meeting Room
Ayer, MA 01432**

Broadcast and Recorded by APAC

**April 2, 2024
Open Session Meeting Minutes**

SB Present: Scott A. Houde, Chair; Jannice L. Livingston, Vice-Chair; Shaun C. Copeland, Clerk

Also Present: Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager
Carly M. Antonellis, Assistant Town Manager

Call to Order: S. Houde called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. S. Houde further stated that this meeting/hearing of the Ayer Select Board (SB) will be held in-person at the location provided on this notice. Members of the public are welcome to attend this in-person meeting. Please note that while an option for remote attendance and/or participation via Zoom is being provided as a courtesy to the public, the meeting/hearing will not be suspended or terminated if technological problems interrupt the virtual broadcast, unless otherwise required by law. Members of the public with particular interest in a specific item on this agenda should make plans for in-person vs. virtual attendance accordingly. This meeting will be live on Zoom and Channel 8. The public may access the proceedings by joining Zoom (Meeting ID# 897 9080 0793) or by calling (929-205-6099).

Pledge of Allegiance: Select Board members and meeting attendees stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

S. Houde stated that all votes will be Roll Call Votes, as member S. Copeland is joining the meeting via ZOOM.

Approval of Meeting Agenda:

Motion to Accept the Agenda: Motion made by J. Livingston and seconded by S. Copeland to approve the meeting agenda. **Roll Call Vote:** J. Livingston; aye, S. Copeland; aye, S. Houde; aye. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Announcements: None

Public Input: None

Continued Public Hearing – M.G.L. 148 sec. 13 – Amendment to Storage of Flammable and Combustible Liquids, Gases and Solids License – JAR Realty Corporation, 1 Nemco Way: S. Houde reopened the continued Public Hearing from March 19, 2024 for JAR Realty Corporation.

J. Livingston recapped the last meeting stating that the JAR Realty Corporation, 1 Nemco Way is requesting an additional 420,000 gallons of storage of oils. She continued stating that the question of insurance was asked to be addressed. JAR Realty Corporation provided the Town with proof of insurance. The board received a memo from Carly Antonellis, Assistant Town Manager stating proof of insurance/insurance certificate was received. C. Antonellis communicated that she contacted Town Counsel to confirm if proof of insurance was required. Town Counsel stated proof of insurance is not required, although Town Counsel reviewed the certificate of insurance.

S. Houde asked if there were any other comments and/or questions. Chair Houde asked if there were any members of the public with comments and/or comments. There were no other comments or questions.

Motion: S. Copeland made a motion to approve the amended ch. 148 sec. 13 license for JAR Realty Corp. 1 Nemco Way. Seconded by J. Livingston. **Roll Call Vote:** J. Livingston; aye, S. Copeland; aye, S. Houde; aye. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Motion: S. Copeland made a motion to close the Public Hearing at 6:09 PM. Seconded by J. Livingston **Roll Call Vote:** J. Livingston; aye, S. Copeland; aye, S. Houde; aye. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Appointment of Assessing Administrator, Ms. April Iannacone: R. Pontbriand introduced April Iannacone to the board stating that Ms. Iannacone was the most qualified applicant interviewed for the Assessing Administrator. He said Ms. Iannacone has a wealth of municipal experience and education and is currently the Assistant Assessor in the Town of Littleton. Mr. Pontbriand respectfully asked the board to ratify the appointment of April Iannacone to the position of the Assessing Administrator with the start date of April 8, 2024.

Motion: J. Livingston made a motion to ratify the appointment of Ms. April Iannacone to the position of Assessing Administrator effective April 8, 2024. Seconded by S. Copeland. **Roll Call Vote:** J. Livingston; aye, S. Copeland; aye, S. Houde; aye. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Joint Meeting of the Select Board and the Finance Committee Final Review and Approval of the 2024 Annual Town Meeting Warrant: Finance Committee Chair Kurt Fraczkowski called the Ayer Finance Committee meeting of April 2, 2024, to order at 6:14pm. He noted that Finance Committee members, Andrew Sealey, Robert France, and Eric Sechman were in attendance at Town Hall and member Jin Hong was joining remotely. Votes will be taken by Roll Call Vote. Town Manager Robert Pontbriand confirmed that the members of the Select Board and Finance Committee received a copy of the draft Warrant for the scheduled Annual Town Meeting on April 22, 2024.

He stated that there are 31 Warrant Articles and no Citizens Petitions as of deadline per the Town Clerk. He continued stating that two additional articles were added to the Warrant since the March 29, 2024, Select Board meeting.

- Article 30: Extension of Sewer line on Willow Road for benefit of 254-260 Ayer Road in Littleton. Mr. Pontbriand informed the board that there is a scheduled Public Hearing on April 16, 2024, regarding this article.
- Article 31: Senior Tax Work-Off Program effective July 1, 2024; to adjust the exemption by; (1) allowing an approved representative, for persons physically unable, to provide such services to the Town; or (2) allowing the maximum reduction of the real property tax bill.

Mr. Pontbriand communicated the following adjustments made to the Warrant since the last draft.

- Article 3 – Contract Police Patrol correction in the explanation, amount should be \$35,793.
- Article 9 – Sewer Direct Costs \$3,079,602.
- OMNIBUS Budget reflects the \$25,000 approved by the COA Board.

Chair Houde stated he would read the Warrant calling out the Articles. He asked anyone wishing to discuss an Article please indicate so, and we circle back for discussion.

One edit was made, adding the word borrowing to Article 11 and Article 12.

Motion: S. Copeland made a motion to approve the Annual Town Meeting Warrant 2024 with one edit. Seconded by J. Livingston. **Roll Call Vote:** J. Livingston; aye, S. Copeland; aye, S. Houde; aye. **Motion passed 3-0.**

K. Fraczkowski stated that the Finance Committee will be voting on Articles 1 – 24 as these Articles at in their purview as to recommend or not recommend at Town Meeting. K. Fraczkowski asked if any of the Finance Committee members wished to discuss any of the Articles. No members wished to discuss any of the Articles.

Finance Committee Motion: A. Sealey made a motion to recommend Articles 1 – 24 in the Annual Town Meeting Warrant 2024. Seconded by R. France. **Roll Call Vote:** R. France; aye, E. Sechman; aye, J. Hong; aye, A. Sealey; aye, K. Fraczkowski; aye. **Motion passed 5-0.**

Presentation of ClearGov Budget Platform: R. Pontbriand thanked Carly Antonellis, Assistant Town Manager, Barbara Tierney, Finance Manager, and Kerry Cooper, Town Accountant for their work on bringing the ClearGov Budget Platform to the Town. Mr. Pontbriand highlighted some of the features in ClearGOV such as access to the Town Budget and the ability for anyone interested in the Town finances to have easy access to information. Links will be available to ClearGov on April 5, 2024.

Ms. Antonellis presented/demonstrated ClearGOV. Ms. Antonellis opened the floor to comments and questions through the Chair.

Pauline Conely requested a printed copy of the ClearGov information/financial information. The Town Manager's office will prepare a printed copy for Ms. Conely and notify her when it is available for pick up.

Eric Sechman asked how far is the lookback on data? Ms. Cooper confirmed that the lookback can be as many years as desired.

Motion: A. Sealey made a motion for the Finance Committee to adjourn at 6:42pm. Seconded by R. France. **Roll Call Vote:** R. France; aye, E. Sechman; aye, J. Hong; aye, A. Sealey; aye, K. Fraczkowski; aye. **Motion passed 5-0.**

Alicia Hersey, Program Manager, Community Development Office Letters of Support for 65 Fitchburg Road, 40B Project, Ayer Commons: Alicia Hersey was not in attendance for the meeting. Alan Manoian Director, Office of Community & Economic Development stood in for Ms. Hersey. Mr. Manoian said the non-profit Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH) is requesting letters of support from the Select Board for their funding application. The letters are for Senator Markey and Senator Warren. The application/request is for a \$4 million Federal Earmark to help bridge the gap in funding of the 40B affordable housing project at 65 Fitchburg Road, Ayer Commons.

Motion: J. Livingston made a motion to sign the letters of support as presented for the Federal Earmarked funding to bridge the financial gap for the Ayer Commons 40B. Seconded by S. Copeland. **Roll Call Vote:** J. Livingston; aye, S. Copeland; aye, S. Houde; aye. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Alan Manoian, Director, Office of Community & Economic Development Approval of FY '25 UDAG Budget: Alan Manoian, Director, Office of Community & Economic Development presented the UDAG-portion of the funding for Community & Economic Development, contained in the meeting packet.

Motion: S. Copeland made a motion to approve the UDAG Budget for FY25 as presented. Seconded by J. Livingston. **Roll Call Vote:** J. Livingston; aye, S. Copeland; aye, S. Houde; aye. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Town Manager's Report - Administrative Update/Review of Warrants: R. Pontbriand presented an administrative update on the various activities, initiatives, and projects of the Town since the Select Board last met. He referenced the Town Warrants that he reviewed and approved, as referenced in his written report. R. Pontbriand updated the board on the new hires in the Town Hall. Lisa Castro, Assistant Town Account, Maureen Adema, Administrative Assistant to Town Manager's Office & Selectboard and April Iannacone, Assessing Administrator. Mr. Pontbriand communicated that he is working with Ayer Parks Director Jeff Thomas on hiring a new Director, as Mr. Thomas is scaling down into a lesser role and will eventually retire.

Annual Town Meeting Update – R. Pontbriand stated that with the approval of the Annual Town Meeting Warrant, the Town will begin final preparations for the Annual Town Meeting to be held on Monday, April 22, 2024. R. Pontbriand said that there will be presentations on Articles 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6.

Vote to Approve Council on Aging Donation - \$2,000 – R. Pontbriand communicated that the Council of Aging received an anonymous and unrestricted donation in the amount of \$2,000. He requested the board approve and accept the donation.

Motion: J. Livingston made a motion to approve and accept the \$2,000 anonymous and unrestricted donation to the Council on Aging. Seconded by S. Copeland. **Roll Call Vote:** J. Livingston; aye, S. Copeland; aye, S. Houde; aye. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Vote to Approve Letter of Support for Central Mass EMS Corp. - Fire Chief Johnston is requesting the Select Board to sign letters of support written to Senator Eldridge and Representative Sena requesting the Massachusetts Regional Emergency Services (EMS) Councils increase funding this fiscal year to bring the level of funding back to the amount in FY23.

Motion: S. Copeland made a motion to support Fire Chief Johnston's request to sign letters of support for the Central Mass EMS Corp funding request as presented. Seconded by J. Livingston. **Roll Call Vote:** J. Livingston; aye, S. Copeland; aye, S. Houde; aye. **Motion passed 3-0.**

New Business/Select Board Member Questions: None

Executive Session Pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21A Exemption #2 (Non-Union Personnel) Assessing Administrator Contract: Motion made by J. Livingston at 6:49 PM and seconded by S. Copeland to enter into Executive Session Pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21A for non-union personnel contract for the Assessing Administrator and not to return to regular session and to adjourn in executive session. **Roll Call Vote:** J. Livingston, aye; S. Copeland, aye; S Houde, aye. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Maureen Adema, Administrator Assistant to Town Manager and Select Board

Date Minutes Approved by SB: 4/16/24

Signature Indicating Approval: 