

# PLYMOUTH SELECT BOARD

TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2022

REMOTE VIA ZOOM, PLYMOUTH, MA – 5:30 PM

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## 5:30PM - CALL TO ORDER

Richard Quintal, Chairman of the Board, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and asked Vice Chairman Cavacco to read the following statement:

In accordance with S2475, and pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted via remote means. Members of the public who wish [to watch the meeting may do so](#) in the following manner: tune into PACtv government cable access channels Comcast Channel 15 or Verizon Channel 47 and watch the meeting as it is aired live, or watch the meeting live through PACtv's website at <https://pactv.org>. Members of the public who wish to PARTICIPATE in the meeting may do so in the following manner: contact the Select Board's Assistant, Chris Badot, [who is available prior to and throughout the meeting to provide public remote access](#), via the public call-in line, (508) 322-3383, or [cbadot@plymouth-ma.gov](mailto:cbadot@plymouth-ma.gov). No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, for reasons of economic hardship and despite best efforts, we will post on the Town's website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

Present: Richard Quintal, Chairman  
Betty Cavacco, Vice Chairman  
Patrick Flaherty  
Harry Helm  
Charlie Bletzer  
  
Lee Hartmann, Acting Town Manager

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## 5:30PM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session: To review and approve Executive Session Minutes (Executive Sessions of August 3, 2021, October 19, 2021, November 4, 2021 and November 30, 2021) pursuant to Section 21(a)(7) of M.G.L. c. 30A. (See Section 22 of M.G.L. c. 30A requirements).

❖ Approval of Executive Session Minutes

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## 6:18PM – BACK TO OPEN SESSION

Chairman Quintal called the meeting to order and said that the Select Board had been in Executive Session since 5:30pm and apologized for being a little bit late.

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## **6:19PM – CITIZEN OF THE MONTH**

Vice Chairman Cavacco said we have two Citizen of the Month recipients. She said the first person is Nate Buchanan. She said he was the person that was hiding new bikes around town and then would give clues to where they were. He then had whoever found the bikes to text him and he would give them the lock combination and they got to keep the bikes. She said this act of kindness made so many people happy during the holiday season.

Kristen Buchanan came on and accepted the award on Nate's behalf and said it really was a community project. She said resident of Manomet all chipped in to make this happen.

Vice Chairman Cavacco said the next recipient is Jeff Cohen. She said he has showed his generosity in so many ways but that he was nominated this time because he bought some Chromebooks for two children in a local family that desperately needed them. She thanked him for everything he does for this community and said this Board really appreciates it.

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## **6:21PM – PUBLIC HEARING – Black Lantern**

Chairman Quintals read the Hearing Notice into the record as follows:

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, notice is hereby given that a Public Hearing will be held on Tuesday, January 4, 2022 at 6:05pm to consider the application for a new Annual All Alcohol Restaurant License from SMG Group Inc d/b/a Black Lantern, 1 Greenside Way, Plymouth, Sahin Gulsen, Manager. Description of premises is as follows: 3266 square foot ground floor comprised of main dining area, bar, kitchen, waiting area, and wheelchair accessible bathrooms. Large patio and a deck in front of the building. Anyone wishing to be heard on this matter should plan to attend this meeting.

Sahin Gulsen came on and thanked the Board for meeting with him tonight. He said he and his wife have been a part of Plymouth since 1995 and have three children that were born and raised in Plymouth. He said they have had a pizza place in Sagamore Beach for nine years and also a concession stand at Scusset Beach for seven years. He said he has worked for twenty years total in the restaurant industry in both front and back of the house. He said they would like to put their experience into their own restaurant in this part of town.

Joseph Hutchinson came on and said he can't speak enthusiastically enough about the opening of this restaurant in this location.

Selectman Bletzer said he agrees that the location is great because we need businesses that way. He then asked what type of menu they would be offering, to which Sahin Gulsen said it will be an American family style menu.

On a motion by Charlie Bletzer and seconded by Betty Cavacco, the Board voted to approve a New Annual All Alcohol Restaurant License for the Black Lantern. *Voted 5/0*

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## **6:28PM – TOWN MANAGER SEARCH**

Bernie Lynch came on and wished everyone a Happy New Year. He then said they started this process in earnest back in October and spent a lot of time talking to Board Members and Department Heads and gathered information so they could go out and begin to recruit people for the Town Manager's position. He said through the month of November they received about twenty-five resumes and applications for this position which is really average.

Bernie Lynch then said that on average they see about one third of the applicants are actually relatively qualified for these types of positions. He said the Screening Committee which the Select Board appointed was an excellent committee to work with in reviewing these resumes. He said the committee identified the candidates that they felt were the most qualified and ultimately chose seven people to interview. He said they then set up the interviews over the course of a couple of days and during that process one of the candidates dropped out. He then said they focused on a few candidates that they felt were very strong, but they did have a number of withdrawals which is common. He then turned it over to the Chairman of the Town Manager Search Committee to go into more detail.

Leighton Price came on and thanked the Board for having them int tonight. He then said from the beginning the committee's objective was to have three candidates that they could bring forward to the Select Board to be interviewed. He said after interviewing the six candidates that were left the committee voted unanimously on three that they thought were qualified to become the Town Manager. He said over the course of the next two weeks they had two of those candidates withdraw. He said they identified an alternate that they would move forward with in the event that this happened. He said the Search Committee met yesterday and after considerable discussion on this matter the committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Select Board go back out and re-advertise the position as they felt that there were not a sufficient number of qualified candidates.

Selectman Helm asked if the two candidates that dropped out gave a reason, to which Bernie Lynch said yes, one of them would have had to move across country and the other felt it would be advantageous to stay in her current position and continue working on a number of projects in that community.

Selectman Helm then asked what makes the Search Committee think they will find better candidates this time around, to which Bernie Lynch said people's situations change often and people that were not interested back in October or November very well maybe now.

Steve Bolotin came on and said he agrees that this is a landscape that is constantly shifting. He said they were also made aware of one potential candidate that missed our deadline by a few days but is very qualified, so we know there are more people out there. He said whether or not what is happening right now in Plymouth will affect how many applicants we get no one can tell but their hope is that they will have sufficient qualified candidates to give the Select Board for consideration.

Selectman Helm asked if we were offering enough salary, to which Leighton Price said if we are trying to attract well qualified candidates then it may not be enough because they are already being paid that much elsewhere.

Steve Bolotin said that he agrees with Leighton Price. He said from what they have seen we are consistent with what is currently being paid by smaller communities with far less to deal with. He said if we compare ourselves with other cities and similar sized municipalities then we are on the lower end of the salary scale.

Brian Baragwanath came on and said he is also on the Town Manager Search Committee. He said the simple answer is that the salary is too low. He said that is part of the reason why the Town Manager Search Committee is not comfortable moving forward with the two candidates that we currently have, to which Bernie Lynch said he agrees. He said some that are watching this feel it's too high of a salary bit the fact is that everywhere on the Cape is paying around \$200,000 so we need to go higher is we want to attract some talent.

Selectman Bletzer came on and said from the beginning Kathryn Holmes said we were paying too much, and he said he felt it wasn't enough. He said that the Town Manager's contract was just about the middle of the road which is why they put the range of \$200,000 per year plus or minus. He said once we get a candidate it will be up the Select Board to negotiate the contract. He then asked if the alternate was qualified, in their opinion, to be the next Town Manager, to which Leighton Price said they voted unanimously to support three candidates and there was considerable disagreement with some of the committee members. He said this is a strong person but just not as strong as the other three candidates.

Selectman Bletzer said if we go back out to advertise this position again will these top two candidate be out of the mix, to which Bernie Lynch said in his professional opinion if that happens then these two primary finalists should remain I the top tier.

Selectman Bletzer then asked how long it would take to go back out and get some new candidates, to which Bernie Lynch said if he posts the position right away then he can have a group of qualified candidates in a couple of weeks from now.

Vice Chairman Cavacco said after going through this process she thinks the Select Board should just interview the two candidates that we have rather than going back out to post. She said she thinks it is kind of unfair to pull back especially when they have already been told that they are top contenders and were going to be interviewed.

Selectman Flaherty asked if he agrees with the Town Meeting Search Committee to go back out to find additional candidates, to which Bernie Lynch said he understands why the committee feels this way, but we do have other options. He said we can re-post the position or we can bring the two candidates back with a couple of other new candidates.

Chairman Quintal said if he were an applicant and was told that I was a finalist that would be interviewed and then that never happened he said he would probably drop out altogether. He said if we told two candidates that they were being interviewed then we should interview them before going back out and posting the position again.

Selectman Flaherty said if we decide to go back out and re-post this position would you consider raising the salary, to which Bernie Lynch said yes, he would.

Selectman Flaherty asked if the committee was unanimous about going back out to re-post, to which Leighton Price said yes, it was unanimous with the search committee.

Selectman Flaherty said that he agrees that the two candidates that have made it all this way should be considered and maybe bring another candidate or two to join them, to which Leighton Price said the search committee did not feel that anyone left in the original pool of candidates was strong enough to bring into the top tier.

Vice Chairman Cavacco said that the salary is part of the negotiations. She said Plymouth is not an easy Town to run and people would have to want to work here to be successful and the salary can be raised for a good candidate. She then said she is also concerned about the time because we started this in October and now the committee is talking about starting over.

Bernie Lynch said he can give the Board another candidate or two by the end of next week that they can consider with the two current candidates that we have.

On a motion by Patrick Flaherty and seconded by Harry Helm, the Board voted to instruct Paradigm to secure another candidate or two to add to the current top two candidates and if not then we will interview the two current candidates on January 18, 2022. *Voted 5/0*

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## 7:29PM – COVID UPDATE

Karen Keane, Public Health Director, came on and thanked the Board for having her in tonight. She said today in Massachusetts there were 16,621 new cases and 94 new deaths. She said in Plymouth today we had 128 new cases mainly in people between 21 and 40 years of age as well as age 60 and above. She said they are in the process of ordering 7,500 home covid test kits with two test per kit. She said they are working with Lynne Barrett to use some of the ARPA Funds for those kits. She said there has been new guidance issued as well. She said if you have a confirmed case of covid then the isolation time has dropped from 10 days to 5 days which means from day 1 to day 5 you must isolate yourself from everyone in and out of your home. She said on day 6 to 10 you can return to your normal activities, but you must wear a secure face mask. She said quarantining has also changed. She said for those who are vaccinated and have been exposed to covid you do not have to quarantine however they are advising you to wear a mask for 10 days. She said if you are unvaccinated and are exposed then you must quarantine for 5 days and then from days 6 to 10 you must wear a face mask. She said the Pfizer vaccine is now available for kids 12 to 15 years of age and they are also considering children aged 5 to 11 if they are immune deficient. She said Kevin Coughlin who is the President at Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital has been nice enough to keep us updated on what is happening there. She said as of last week they have had 44 covid cases that needed hospitalization. She said 7 of their 14 ICU patients are covid patients. She also said that 63 members of their staff are out on quarantine because of covid and covid exposures which is adding to the vacancy issues with staff that they have already been dealing with. She said there are no elective surgeries being performed at BID at the moment especially those that may result in inpatient admissions. She said there are also three National Guard Troops assisting at the hospital. She said the last thing she would like to talk about is the Board of Health meeting being held at 4:00pm tomorrow evening. She said as most people know the Board of Health passed a mask mandate in all indoor public buildings and since then the Public Health Department has been inundated with emails and phone calls from residents who are displeased with this decision. She said all emails and voicemails received become part of the permanent record, however, there is simply not enough time to read them all. She said they will take about ten minutes of that meeting and read some of them into the minutes. She said they will also discuss what the Board of Health's credential are because there were many emails questioning their ability to set such mandates as far as covid is concerned. She said Amy Naples of the Chamber of Commerce will also be there to discuss the results of a survey that she sent out to businesses and what the impact is from this mask mandate. She then said there will be a discussion to see if the mask mandate should be removed or changed in some way. She said many people have been invited to join under public comment and encourages anyone that is concerned about this to also join the meeting.

Vice Chairman Cavacco said one of the members of the Board of Health took to social media and asked how the Board of Health could earn the public's trust back. She said there were some vicious attacks on that thread which was totally unfair. She said that post had about 800 comments, so it is a very hot topic. She said one of the things that is alarming is that from day one, Plymouth always followed the State guidelines for covid, and we never deviated from the State mandates. She said this time we have deviated from the State and that is one of the biggest problems she has with this mask mandate. She said she is prepared to speak at the Board of Health meeting because the mandate has no enforcement, and nothing will be done if someone doesn't wear a mask so what is the use. She said it bothers her to see that this mask mandate is ripping this town apart because people are angry. She said she appreciates that Amy Naples did a survey but there are other businesses not involved in that.

Vice Chairman Cavacco said she thinks the Board of Health should rescind that mask mandate and make it a mask advisory. She thinks everyone should be able to make their own decision because right now everyone is fighting. She said her hope is that with a mask advisory people will get to the point of doing the right thing but right now people are angry, and they are fighting back. She said sometimes when you force people to do the right thing they rebel and do just the opposite and it is really bothersome. She said she has talked to forty different business owners over the past two days, and they are begging the Select Board to try to encourage the Board of Health to reverse their mask mandate. She said we have young kids working in our businesses and they are fighting with their customers, and it is just a huge mess out there around Plymouth.

Karen Keane came back on and said what people need to realize is that the Board of Health and the Public Health Department are two different things. She said the Board of Health is a five-member appointed Board that serves as the regulatory force for public health here in Plymouth and the Public Health Department are Plymouth Town employees and many people do not realize or know that there is a difference between the two. She said this is why the Board of Health is meeting off schedule and discussing the mask mandate once again and clarifying what authority they have over the Public Health Department.

Vice Chairman Cavacco said she thinks the issue is that Plymouth pulled away on their own and are not following State mandates. She said all of the surrounding towns do not have mask mandates, so people are upset, and it is absolute mayhem out there.

Selectman Bletzer said he agrees with Vice Chairman Cavacco and said she was spot on. He also commended the Board of Health for taking this mask mandate up again and meeting off schedule to try to come up with a solution. He said he wears a mask and has no problem with that, but he also thinks it should have been a mask advisory rather than a mandate. He said the Select Board has no authority to change the mandate, but we can certainly recommend it.

Karen Keane thought it was important to mention that even though the State hasn't enacted a mask mandate Plymouth's vaccination rate is much lower than the State's vaccination rate so that should also be factored into the reason why the Board of Health feels strongly that Plymouth needs a mask mandate until more people get vaccinated. She also wanted give her staff a shoutout for all of their hard work. She said they are a small office consisting of herself, Margaret Coe who is a Health Agent, Rachel Milroy who is a Health Technician, and Dana Burke who is their new Administrative Assistant. She went on to say that she and her staff have heard some things this past week that she has never heard in her life. She said she has never seen such a level of hatred expressed towards another person either like she has this past week. She said that she hopes that people that partake in the Board of Health meeting tomorrow realize that it is very important to be civil and to follow professional guidelines while discussing such an important subject like covid.

Chairman Quintal said regardless of what happens, the Board of Health has his total support no matter how they vote. He said we got the opinion of Town Counsel, and the Board of Health definitely has the authority to enact this mandate. He said he has also heard the feedback from others and said that it was mentioned publicly that this mandate will not be enforced, and people will not get fined for not wearing a mask, so he does not understand why everyone is getting so upset. He then said that he was hospitalized a year ago today with covid so he will never tell people that he won't wear a mask. He said we have all seen people on the news say that they wish they had listened and wore a mask. He then said if anyone gets out of order during the meeting then shut them down and push them out of the meeting. He then thanked Karen Keane for updating the Board and the public tonight.

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**7:52PM – PLYMOUTH MUNICIPAL AIRPORT – Update**

Ken Fosdick came on and thanked the Board for having them in tonight. He said he is the Chairman of the Airport Commission. He said also present tonight is Doug Crociati who is the Vice Chairman, and Tom Maher who is the Airport Manager. He said they also have Jeff Adler who is their resident Engineer who is available to answer any questions. He then said they are getting ready to announce that they are entering into a Master Plan update. He said the Master Plan is where the federal government and the state organize their capital improvement plans over the next twenty-year period. He said every ten years we have the opportunity to update that plan. He said they have no intentions of changing the category of our airport which defines the size of the aircraft, and we will remain a B2 airport. He said this update is only being done so we will have our funding in place as we move forward for things like re-paving a runway and safety improvements. He said once we complete the update we go back to the FAA and State Aeronautics Commission and talk about safety improvements that they think we feel are necessary and that they want to fund to update the airport and make it as safe as possible. He said the process begins by us announcing to you tonight that we are going to begin this Airport Master Plan update. He said they will have a public meeting on January 13<sup>th</sup> which we advertised in the paper, and they will announce to the public that they will be going through this process. He said they will then begin the physical update process by incorporating our needs and desires. He said they will then have another public meeting and tell them what we would like to do. He said they will take public comments at that point and then finalize the Master Plan and then go back to the public one last time. He said tonight we are simply announcing that we are starting that process. He said the process will take at least six months to complete. He then said they welcome questions.

Chairman Quintal said he visited the newly updated airport, and the place looks great. There are a lot of changes, and it is amazing. He then thanked them for coming in tonight.

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**7:58PM – BUDGET – Discussion and Vote**

Lee Hartmann, Acting Town Manager, came on and said at the last meeting they presented the budget and asked for updates and comments and there were some made about salary reserve. He said they made those adjustments and forwarded a copy of the job description for the Climate Change Planner and talked a little bit about what that salary would be.

Lynne Barrett, Finance Director, came on and said that all of the adjustments that she made to the budget allowed her to move about \$500,000 into salary reserve. She said the overall budget did not change because they were able to simply move funds around. She said they were also able to add \$95,000 to the Town Manager's budget for the Climate Change Planner and then \$541,836 into salary reserve for potential contractual increases.

Lee Hartmann said that amount is their best estimate but said that we also have the Fall Town Meeting to make any adjustments, to which Lynne Barrett agreed because we still have a good deal of negotiating to work on and complete so we may have to revisit this number.

Chairman Quintal asked about the \$95,000 salary for the new position of the Climate Change Planner, to which Lynne Barrett said yes, that is just an estimate based on the information that they got from Selectman Flaherty and the HR Director. She said this does not mean that this will be the salary, but she just put those funds on as a placeholder. She said once we have everything in place then we can also revisit this number as well.

Chairman Quintal then asked what the Assistant Town Manager's salary range was, to which Lynne Barrett said that position is an E4 in the non-union executive group and the range is \$97,823 up to \$1223,677 which is the senior step.

Vice Chairman Cavacco said the Assistant Town Manager's position has a pretty low salary and asked if there is room in the salary reserve to adjust this salary, to which Lynne Barrett said there are funds that we put into the salary reserve budget and we also have some funds in the current year salary reserve that we could use to adjust. She said any changes to the Assistant Town Manager's salary range would have to go to Town Meeting for approval in order to change the bylaw.

Vice Chairman Cavacco said she feels that if we had to post the Assistant Town Manager's position right now, she thinks we would have trouble getting anyone to apply. She then asked what our options would be if we needed to offer someone more money, to which Lynne Barrett said the bylaw does allow us to add more money if they have a master's degree. She said other than that, if you want to hire someone outside of that range then we would have to go to Town Meeting and change the position to an E5 or an E6 in order to do that. She said the April Special Town Meeting Warrant would be the earliest that we could do that.

Vice Chairman Cavacco then talked about the Town's legal fees. She said there was a freedom of information request back in 2018 by a Town Meeting Member for the previous ten years' worth of legal fees and that was about \$20,000,000 total for that time span. She said she would like to do a cost analysis to see if it would save the Town money if we hired our own legal counsel.

Lee Hartmann said they can certainly look at what the fees have been for the last few years which we would have to breakdown because we had some pretty high charges due to the sewer main break. He said the other issue would be that we would never be able to find on counsel that could handle zoning, land use, labor, along with all of the other litigations.

Lynne Barrett said in the last fiscal year they got information from Town Counsel that said approximately 34% of the annual charges were associated with labor verses zoning and other legal matters, to which Vice Chairman Cavacco said she just thinks this is something that we should look at to see if we can be doing something better.

Chairman Quintal said that during the transition with the Town Manager there were costs associated with that and he committed to cut that amount out of the budget. He said he feels he owes that to the taxpayers to make those cuts, to which Selectman Helm said that he agrees. He said we made a commitment to take those costs that were incurred during this transition and find somewhere in the budget where we can save that money.

Lynne Barrett said she is not familiar with this commitment that they made and asked for an explanation, to which Selectman Helm said he would give her a call in the morning and go over what those commitments were and what they entailed.

Selectman Flaherty said if we are going to decide something that will affect the Select Board budget, we should discuss it openly so we can all be involved and kept in the loop.

Lynne Barrett asked if they were going to vote the budget tonight, to which Selectman Helm said he would rather hold off on a vote until we have this number because it is hundreds of thousands of dollars, but it is up to the Board.

Chairman Quintal asked if we could have that number pretty quickly, to which Selectman Helms said yes, and he has ideas on where to cut that amount as well.



Selectman Helm said that we made a commitment to reduce the budget by the cost that was involved with transitioning the Town Manager to the Special Assistant to the Town Manager.

Lee Hartmann said he feels this will all go back to the new initiatives that the Board added into the budget this year. He said that would be the first place he thinks should be looked at.

Selectman Helm said that he was thinking the same thing but said the question is how do we do this and not delay the budget any longer, to which Lynne Barrett said after tonight we were going to print the budget books for the Finance Committee because they are going to begin their sub-committee process next week. She said if we don't vote this tonight then they will have to wait to begin their work.

Vice Chairman Cavacco asked if we could postpone the joint meeting to the following week, to which Lynne Barrett said that will hold everyone up because all of the sub-committee meetings have been scheduled and advertised.

Lee Hartmann said we could come up with a number fairly quickly, but the problem is still how do we do this cut. He said everyone has already been told that they are getting these expansions to their budgets and now we'd have to circle back around.

Selectman Flaherty said he is trying to work through the process and wondering how we got here tonight trying to cut a significant amount from the budget and how it will affect the services and initiatives that we already put out there. He then asked if they could take the amount needed out of free cash, so it takes the burden off of the taxpayers, to which Lee Hartmann said we could vote this tonight and offer an amendment down the road.

Lynne Barrett said for next year's budget she was only going to fund one Town Manager's salary and the severance part of the outgoing Town Manager was going to come from free cash anyway, to which Selectman Helm said that sounds like the best plan.

On a motion by Betty Cavacco and seconded by Patrick Flaherty, the Board voted to approve the budget in the amount of \$272,334,007 total.

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### **8:28PM – CEDARVILLE TRAFFIC – Update**

Lee Hartmann said that there is some good news and bad news in terms of Cedarville traffic. He said Jonathan Beder and the DPW have been awesome with this project. He said for a number of years we have looked at these issues through the Route 3A corridor from Hedges Pond Road all the way down to Exit 3 off of Route 3 which was previously Exit 2 until recently. He said the biggest challenge is that all of these roads are under the control of the MassDOT. He said anything we do has to be approved by them and meet their requirements. He said early on we met with our State Delegation and MassDOT and asked them to look at these intersections. He said our focus was the Herring Pond Road exit where the traffic comes off of Route 3 trying to get into Cedarville. He said we have federal money that comes through the State and the Old Colony Planning Council. He said it is called the TIP which is the Transportation Improvement Program which looks for projects such as the Obery Street project which was on the TIP Program. He said the only problem is they require 25% design plans to advance the project and even if we had those plans today, we are talking about a five-year process for it to be ranked. He said they have met with residents and heard their concerns, and we currently have two conceptual plans. He said one set of plans was for traffic signals and the other was for roundabouts at Hedges Pond Road and Herring Pond Road as well. He thanked Jonathan Beder for heading up these designs with contractors.

Lee Hartmann said MassDOT made it clear that the only designs that they would agree to are the roundabouts at both of those intersections. He said we did these designs about two years ago and the estimate was about \$1,500,000 for each intersection so we would be looking at about \$3,000,000 total for the two intersections. He said when we met with the neighbors, they made it clear that their main concern was the Herring Pond Road intersection so that would be a good place to start. He said we also have the land next to the Cedarville landfill that is being sold to the Economic Foundation for about \$1,500,000 and they would work with us to do these improvements. He then cautioned everyone saying even if we have that money in hand, they still have a lot of design work to do as well as getting it approved with MassDOT. He said he is very optimistic that we have this solution to do these improvements, but because of these number of people that are involved it will take some time. He also said that Jonathan Beder and himself have attended some MassDOT meeting regarding the Cape Cod Canal Bridges and they are pushing for these improvements before the bridge projects begin. He said we need to mitigate these traffic issues before they start their projects because we are anticipating detours in and around this community. He also said that they are looking very closely at federal funds that might be available as well so we can get this moving. He said we are still two to three years away from starting any work but that will give them time to look into some possible grants for these projects as well.

Selectman Helm thanked Lee Hartmann for getting this information together and this issue is very important to not only Cedarville residents but anyone that has to navigate that area.

Chairman Quintal also thanked Lee Hartmann for all of his work on this project. He said he also reached out to Vinny deMacedo and Matt Muratore to ensure that this doesn't get put onto the back burner.

Vice Chairman Cavacco asked if we could use ARPA Funds for a project like this, to which Lee Hartmann said he does not think so because those projects have to be shovel ready.

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## **8:28PM – TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

### Special Town Meeting Warrant

Lee Hartmann, Acting Town Manager. Said that the Special Town Meeting Warrant opened today and will be closing on February 4, 2022 at the end of the business day.

### Covid Test Kits

Lee Hartmann wanted to give kudos to Karen Keane and her staff for working so hard on getting at-home covid test kits. He said it looks like we are getting 7,500 at-home test kits using some of the ARPA Funds awarded to the Town of Plymouth.

### MIIA Insurance

Lee Hartmann said he received an email today from MIIA Insurance and our Safety Officer, Michelle Newell, received an award from the State for her work. He said she was chosen to receive the MIIA Risk Management Award as she demonstrated her dedication to the safety and well-being of the DPW employees by providing training, inspections, and guidance. He said this is exciting to have one of our newer employees receive such an award.

### Complete Streets Grant

Lee Hartmann said the Town of Plymouth received a \$398,395 Complete Streets Grant for sidewalk improvements which will be used for sidewalk gaps between Plymouth and Morton Park on Billington Sea. He said this is a great grant that will help us improve our streets and our sidewalks as well.

### MIIA Rewards Program

Lee Hartmann said that Tiffany Park who works on our MIIA insurance program has been asking employees to attend training courses such as Slip and Fall and Backhoe Safety classes and in doing so she has saved the Town of Plymouth about \$66,234 on our insurance costs.

### Eversource Grant

Lee Hartmann said we received a grant from Eversource through Patrick Farah who is our Energy Officer. He said the grant is for \$310,000 which will be used to update energy efficient lighting at the Plymouth Community Intermediate School.

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## **8:43PM – PUBLIC COMMENT**

John Hammond came on and said we are all in a stressful situation with the mask mandate and all of its implications. He said he is sorry to hear that so many people are upset about this mandate. He said we are also going through a tough time with the transition of the Town Manager. He said he is not surprised that there is a lot of suspicion, defensiveness, and upset involved surrounding this. He said he hopes that as soon as the Executive Session Minutes are ready that they will be released and hopefully calm things down. Lastly, he said he hopes that they change to Zoom format soon to allow more people to attend and watch the meetings. He said we should look into the webinar forum sooner than later.

Joe Hutchinson came on next and said he agreed with John Hammond. He said he thinks anyone that wants to join the meeting they should be allowed. He said he thinks we should also be able to see who is at the meeting as well. He then suggested coming up with some type of virtual meeting policy.

Ginny Davis came on and said she agrees that the webinar version would be the best. She said you can have a hundred people in the meeting, but you can't see them.

Matt Tavares came on and said that its unfortunate that we have to be virtual but understand that this is the way it has to be for now. He said he agrees that the webinar panel format would be better but at the end of the day its still a participatory meeting.

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## **8:50PM – LICENSES AND ADMINISTRATIVE NOTES**

None

### ADMINISTRATIVE NOTES

On a motion by Charlie Bletzer and seconded by Harry Helm, the Board voted to re-appoint the following Agricultural Committee to the Agricultural Commission as voted under the October 16, 2021 Fall Town Meeting: *Voted 5/0*

- Cassandra Thayer (Expires June 30, 2024)
- Christopher Badot (Expires June 30, 2022)
- Jacqueline Millar (Expires June 30, 2022)
- Jack Risso (Expires June 30, 2024)
- Kyle Mazzola (Expires June 30, 2023)
- Patrick Farah (Expires June 30, 2023)

On a motion by Harry Helm and seconded by Charlie Bletzer, the Aboard voted to endorse the decision made by the Roads Advisory Committee to deny the Snowplow Request for Whispering Pines Drive and Monument Ponds Path. *Voted 5/0*

*Selectman Helm said he did some light research on that neighborhood and what he discovered was half of them had it listed that there was a Homeowners Association. He said half of the people in that neighborhood had a listing that stated they had an HOA. He said the Registry of Deeds has the information and said that the Town is not responsible for plowing the roads.*

*Selectman Bletzer said there was also a document supplied to the Board that lists the approval criteria for these types of requests. He said if we accept this request and start plowing them then we will be opening a whole can of worms with other neighborhoods. He said it is clearly stated in the approval criteria.*

*Selectman Flaherty said that he agrees, and he really appreciates getting all of this information before tonight's meeting. He also appreciated the extra time taken.*

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### **8:57PM - COMMITTEE LIAISON / DESIGNEE UPDATES**

Selectman Helm said that the Outdoor Dining Task Force is prepared to present what they have come up with for a plan and it is very impressive. He said the residents of Plymouth will be very proud of these plans. He then asked if they could schedule this for an upcoming meeting, to which Chairman Quintal said he will go over the schedule with Chris Badot, but it looks like we can squeeze this in for next week's meeting.

Lee Hartmann said we also have to talk about approving some of the ARPA Funds to finance this endeavor, to which Selectman Helm said yes, the plan is to have uniform dining areas and uniform barriers with plantings. He said there was a lot of thought and effort put into this Outdoor Dining Program which will be ADA Compliant throughout.

Selectman Bletzer said that he did not like seeing parking spots blocked off and not being used by some of the restaurants, to which Selectman Helm agreed and said that is going to be made clear in the procedures for the Outdoor Dining Program.

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### **9:03PM - OLD BUSINESS / LETTERS / NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Quintal said as we wrap up another year, he would like the Board to please start to think about some of your other goals so when we do find a new Town Manager, we can hit the ground running with he or she. He then talked about some of the things he would like to see done and said he met with Patrick Farah and went through his CANZ packet and watched a few videos and this Town needs to step it up a few notches in regard to this initiative. He said he would also like to be proactive about future well sites. He also asked Jonathan Beder about giving us updates on water, sewer, and wells. He said he would also like to address our cemetery shortage as well. He said he also wants to look at Parks and Forestry as well as Holtec and their PILOT Agreement. He then said that he spoke to Mr. O'Brien at the County, and he has a check in the amount of \$2,000,000 for the Town of Plymouth. He said they are also buying 200,000 covid test kits so we should keep in touch regarding those. He also said that the Board passed a policy, and he would like to address several complaint letters that he and the Board have received. He asked the Acting Town Manager to begin the process that was approved by setting up meetings with these board members.

Chairman Quintal said we are not going to start letting these board and committee members go but we need to make sure that everyone is safe and being treated fairly and kindly. He said this only has to do with treating other board members and town staff with respect. He then wanted to thank Frank Gomes for his hard work. He said some days he begins at 2:30am to makes sure this community is up to par. He said he goes above and beyond and is always amazed because at all of the meetings he goes to someone always tells him to “ask Frank Gomes” so you know he’s a busy guy. He said a lot of the Town employees do a great job and he wants to thank them as well. Finally, Chairman Quintal wished everyone watching a very Happy New Year.

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**9:10PM - ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Betty Cavacco and seconded by Charlie Bletzer, the Board voted to adjourn the Open Session at 9:10pm.

*Voted 5/0 By Roll Call: Quintal-Yes, Cavacco-Yes, Flaherty-Yes, Helm-Yes, Bletzer-Yes*

**Recorded by:** Christopher Badot

*Administrative Assistant, Board of Selectmen*