

PLYMOUTH SELECT BOARD

MONDAY, JUNE 13, 2022

GREAT HALL, 26 COURT STREET, PLYMOUTH, MA
HYBRID REMOTE MEETING VIA ZOOM, PLYMOUTH, MA – 5:00 PM

5:00PM - CALL TO ORDER

Betty Cavacco, Chairman of the Board, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and asked everyone to join the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

In accordance with S2475, and pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted via remote means and in-person. 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 the PACtv website at <https://pactv.org>. Members of the public who wish to PARTICIPATE in the meeting may do so in the following manner:

Remote Participation: please go to the Town website under the Select Board page and click on the Zoom Webinar Registration box or simply click on the link below.

https://pactv.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_-cge_yk_Q9KtC8f1ydH61g

Present: Betty Cavacco, Chairman
Richard Quintal, Vice Chairman (*Absent*)
Harry Helm
Charlie Bletzer
John Mahoney

Derek Brindisi, Town Manager
Brad Brothers, Assistant Town Manager

5:00PM – RECONSIDERATION OF VOTE – 46 Sandwich Road

Derek Brindisi, Town Manager, came on and said at the Select Board's last vote there was unanimous support to use \$1,400,000 of ARPA Funds to balance the \$3,750,000 purchase price for this property. He said at the time the Board discussed the quantum of vote and we all believed that using ARPA Funds would mean the quantum vote would be a majority vote. He said we were then told the following morning by Town Counsel that because it is a land acquisition the quantum of vote would need to be a two-thirds vote. He said in addition to that he has been working with Town Counsel because there have been dozens of requests for information relative to whether or not we can use ARPA Funds for this land acquisition. He said our Town Counsel opined that based upon their review and consistent with the recommendation of our Finance Director that we can use ARPA Funds for the acquisition of this land. He said the reason for this meeting is basically to reaffirm that you would like to use ARPA Funds or to borrow for this land acquisition.

Selectman Helm asked Derek Brindisi to remind everyone where the rest of the money would be coming from beside the ARPA Funds, to which Derek Brindisi said that they would use \$2,271,409 in Free Cash and \$78,591 from Premium Debt Funds as recommended by the Finance Director, Lynne Barrett.

Selectman Bletzer said we were worried about getting this passed through the Special Town Meeting and we thought that by eliminating the borrowing of funds that we would have a majority vote and not a two-thirds vote. He said he was hesitant using ARPA Funds for this purchase because he knows there are a lot of other projects that we could work on with these ARPA Funds. He said now knowing what we know he would be in favor of rescinding our previous vote and voting to borrow that \$1,400,000 instead of using ARPS Funds.

Selectman Helm came on and said he voted to use the ARPA Funds because he thought that was a good use of those dollars and not necessarily to have a lower voting threshold at Town Meeting. He said using the ARPA Funds does not require borrowing but it might add an extra step for Town Meeting to approve any of the mentioned project with the use of ARPA Funds. He said he is a little bit concerned about borrowing but if we could sell the Water Barn and possibly the South Meadow Road building we could be in better shape and pay off this debt as quickly as possible. He said he is very interested in purchasing this property, but he is not a very big fan of borrowing at this point.

Derek Brindisi said if we were to sell land then the money would be transferred into the sale of land account but what he would have to find out is whether we could apply funds from that account towards debt.

Selectman Mahoney said he can think of an example from about a decade ago where the community made an investment in land at the Fall Town Meeting under the guise of raise and appropriate and then a piece of property was sold before the Spring Town Meeting and those proceeds went into the sale of real estate account. He said we went back to the following Spring Town Meeting and got permission to use those funds to pay off the debt from the purchase of the land from the prior Fall Town Meeting, so he has seen this done before.

Lynne Barrett, Finance Director, came on and said the sale of real estate account is also called receipt and reserve for appropriations so once we receive those funds it is available for appropriation at a future Town Meeting and can be used for land purchase or other capital projects such as the Fire Stations.

Chairman Cavacco said we are looking at town properties that could be sold and she knows that Town manager and Assistant Town Manager are working on finding a firm to market these properties to get the best value for them, to which Brad Brothers said he should have an Excel Worksheet ready for the Board with all of the town owned properties with specific ones identified to put up for sale.

Selectman Helm asked if it is common for a municipality to use a real estate broker to sell our properties, to which Lynne Barrett said we have use people in the past to come in and help us with the auctions of our tax title properties a few times since she has been here. She said how that works is they get a percentage of the sale price, and we can pass that information along to the Town Manager as well to assist in their search for who to use.

Derek Brindisis said traditionally if the property is in tax title it would be offered through the Treasurer's Office in an auction, but if it is a property that we already own and is under the care and custody of the Select Board we would then put it out to bid like any other procurement process. He said what we have done in the past is to send the direct bid documents to interested developers, especially properties located in desirable areas such as properties on Long Pond Road.

Chairman Cavacco said if we decide not to use ARPA Funds and choose to raise and appropriate then what would that look like for our taxpayers, to which Lynne Barrett said if you decide that then we would request the borrowing of \$1,400,000 for this property at the June Town Meeting. She said then we would close on that sale sometime in July. She said we would end up borrowing from ourselves in the first year which would be FY23 and by the end of that fiscal year we would cover that debt with a long-term borrowing if we haven't already sold some of that other property. She said then there wouldn't be any effect to the budget until we took out that long-term borrowing if needed. She said that would equate to about \$5.11 on their taxes for an average homeowner in Plymouth.

Chairman Cavacco then said if we did decide to use the ARPA Funds then which of the projects that were mentioned would you take off of that list that you put together with the Department Heads, to which Derek Brindisi said that is a tough question to answer at this moment. He said we would present this list to the Select Board. He also said that the list he presented is a priority list and said there are other projects out there that would also be considered. He said he would provide the Board with a more comprehensive list before making any decisions on which projects to remove. He said the projects on the list that he presented last week simply rose to the top of the list based on conversations. He said if he had to take a guess, he would say the two park projects would be put on hold.

Pat McCarthy came on and said even though Town Counsel said that the ARPA Funds could be used for this purpose several people have concerns that the ARPA Funds will not be used for what they were intended for. She then said that she had questions about the motion because the current motion does not match what they have for Article 1 in their Town Meeting Books. She said her Precinct already had a caucus and Ashley Shaw was there and she had previously attended the Motions Meeting and the draft motion says the property would be used for recreation and/or open space which does not relate to Article 1 in our book which relates to a public safety facility and the building. She said if the motion is made the way it is currently written then it will be a totally different outcome based on people's votes.

Derek Brindisi said Town Counsel reviews and approves all motions. He said the original motion only referenced recreational and open space purposes although the Article itself also list general municipal purposes as a possibility for this land. He then said they have another draft motion to consider once this meeting is over and the Board has made their decision.

Pat McCarthy then asked who approves the final motion and when do the Town Meeting Members receive the motion in order to review it, to which Derek Brindisi said Town Counsel will review and approve the final motion and as soon as this meeting is over and the motion is approved, he plans on sending the motion to Jeanette White who will in turn send it out to all Town Meeting Members for them to review as well.

Pat McCarthy said there has been a lot of confusion on correct email addresses especially with the new Town Meeting Members. She said she knows Jeanette White along with the Town Clerk's Office have been working on this, however only about 105 Town Meeting Members were getting sent emails which could be problematic. She said it is very important to get all of this information out to all Town Meeting Members. She said some of the new Town Meeting Members did not even receive their Town Meeting Books in the mail even though they were sworn in and all set. She said in light of all of the confusion and to minimize any more confusion, she would hope that the Board would give a good presentation tonight and at all of the caucuses that they are able to attend. She said more importantly she hopes that they give a good and thorough presentation at Town Meeting where we can all ask follow up questions and get as much information as possible.

Selectman Mahoney said he came into this process with 90% of it completed but we still have eight days to go, and we want to be clear and concise on what we would like to do. He said we need to let everyone know how important this piece of property is for the town as infrastructure is a problem from here all the way up to the federal government. He said if we want to move away from using the ARPA Funds and go to straight up borrowing then he doesn't have a problem with that. He said he has seen this done with the example he gave earlier but the last thing we want to do is to bond \$1,400,000 over twenty years. He said having said that he thinks that borrowing is the direction we should head in.

Selectman Bletzer said he agrees with Selectman Mahoney and said we should borrow so we don't need a two-thirds vote. He said we can use the ARPA Funds for other much needed projects and then we can sell some of our surplus properties in order to pay down the debt.

Selectman Helm said he also agrees with Selectman Mahoney and Selectman Bletzer, and he plans to keep tabs on the surplus property sales because he really wants to minimize the impact on borrowing this money. He said he thinks it is important that we acquire this property regardless of the back and forth that has been going on. He said we have missed many opportunities to purchase land, so he hopes this is not one of those times.

Robert Zupperoli came on and said he agrees with the short-term borrowing and staying away from the ARPA Funds is a smart thing to do. He said he feels that we should stick with the infrastructure plan because we never know what is going to happen during hurricane and blizzard season. He said he hopes whoever attends the caucuses and of course Town Meeting gives a clear and concise description of this land and the building and what the benefits are to acquiring this piece of property.

Chairman Cavacco said Precinct 1 is holding their caucus this evening and she has already sent everything over. She said she will also be attending that caucus to present this Article and to be there to answer any questions they may have.

Chairman Cavacco asked if it would be possible to have the list of surplus town properties for the next in-person Select Board meeting, to which Derek Brindisi said yes, Brad Brothers is meeting with Department Heads tomorrow to go over all of those properties and put them into a comprehensive spreadsheet for the Board to consider.

Brad Brothers said the property would have to be presented to the Board first for them to declare the property surplus and then we could consider putting them up for sale, to which Derek Brindisi said that is correct.

On a motion by Charlie Bletzer and seconded by Harry Helm, the Board voted to rescind their vote to use ARPA Funds for the purchase of 46 Sandwich Road and to instead borrow the \$1,400,000 to complete that purchase. *Voted 5/0*

5:33PM – LICENSES AND ADMINISTRATIVE NOTES

LICENSES

On a motion by Harry Helm and seconded by Charlie Bletzer, the Board voted to approve a Special Auctioneer Permit for **J James Auctioneers & Appraisers** for a Stamp and Coin Auction being held on June 21, 2022 from 6:30pm to 9:00pm at 190 Court Street. *Voted 5/0*

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTES

None

10:31PM – OLD BUSINESS / LETTERS / NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Cavacco wanted everyone to know that Town Meeting Preview is tonight at 6:00pm and if any of the Board Members would like to attend, we can pass along the zoom link to anyone that would like to attend and watch that meeting. She said there is also a Precinct 1 Caucus Meeting tonight as well and the rest will be held this week. She said it will be a busy week and asked the Board Members to let her know which nights they would be able to attend the Caucuses that would be appreciated.

10:32PM - ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Harry Helm and seconded by Charlie Bletzer, the Board voted to adjourn the Open Session at 10:32pm.

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

Recorded by: Christopher Badot

Administrative Assistant, Board of Selectmen