



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

# Town of Southwick

454 COLLEGE HIGHWAY, SOUTHWICK, MA 01077

## Community Preservation Committee

Telephone (413) 569-6056 - Fax (413) 569-5284

Town Web Site: [www.southwickma.org](http://www.southwickma.org)

### Minutes

May 6, 2020

6:30 Annual Meeting

7:00 PM Meeting

**Zoom online meeting-recorded**

**ATTENDANCE:** Chris Pratt, Acting Chair  
Susan Fox  
David Spina  
John Whalley  
Beth Thomas  
Susan Corey, Secretary

**ABSENT:** Tom McLaughlin  
Maria Seddon  
Ruth Preston

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Public Assess Zoom Meeting ID # 841-4917-4983

### **Written Minutes**

( Not verbatim-comments can be heard on the studio tape [www.southwick.org](http://www.southwick.org))

### **6:30 Public Informational Hearing**

- C. Pratt opened the meeting at 6:30 P.M. and D. Clark welcomed the public and those members who were in attendance by Zoom.
- C. Pratt began by presenting an *Informational Overview* for the CPC through the reading of the 2019 Annual Town Report on the CPC and proceeded to show an informational PowerPoint on the overview of the CPC's roles and responsibilities and project criteria.

- The PowerPoint covered: membership, duties, responsibilities, record keeping, reporting, tax surcharges and funding, project eligibility, local revenue, bonding and leveraging, and the goals of the CPC as a committee. It continued to explain the acceptable use categories of open space, historic preservation, community housing, land for recreation and the percentages of financial allocations as well as types of projects in each category. The application process was explained as well as the town's surcharges. Further explanation of the application process outlined with the suggestion that a plan should be looked at, and developed, to better inform the public and other surrounding town's examples were shown. This plan would allow the public access to view the town web site and obtain an application, get process information and forms as well as project criteria.
- The presentation lasted 40 minutes.

### **Comments and Questions:**

- B.Thomas asked if there was a rule or timeframe as to when they had to spend the Housing monies allotted.
- C. Pratt answered that there had not been any applications lately, and plenty of funds were available.
- M . Phelps 28 Depot Street, Southwick commented that he felt the selection criteria should also look at the number of people that would benefit from certain projects, ex. the playscape, and future maintenance costs should also be considered. He stated he would like to see improved parking for some of the projects and cited the "Rail Trail," as needing more public parking. He hoped the Park and Recreation department would acquire safe public parking.

**A MOTION** to close the Public Informational Meeting was made by J. Whalley and second by S. Fox. The vote to close the informational meeting - unanimous.

**At 7:21 the Meeting began and Public Comment was opened up.** There was none

- C. Pratt asked if there were any comments having none at that time he then requested the members review the minutes of the last meeting on, February 26, 2020. After a brief pause he suggested there be a motion on the minutes.

**A MOTION** to accept the Minutes of February 26, 2020 meeting was made by D. Spina and seconded by S. Fox. The vote - unanimous.

### **Applications on the Agendas to be reviewed and voted on.**

- C. Pratt suggested the members review the 4 applications/projects that were scheduled for the evening's meeting.

**First application, Recreational Signage-Southwick Agricultural Commission Applicant**

- R. Fox spoke and opened with a request to fund new signage and web site development for the town's recreational spaces and recent CPC projects. Town's people were requesting signage and web site information to gain information on some of the public areas.
- C. Pratt asked for the amount of money requested.
- R. Fox stated \$15,000.00 was being requested.
- S. Fox asked where the signs were to come from.
- R. Fox explained it was a rough estimate and they would get quotes for the signs and website development.
- S. Fox questioned if they could obtain estimates first.
- B. Thomas asked for the number of signs that were needed.
- D. Clark mentioned that by the town meeting they would have more specific details and that they wanted to be able to have a warrant ready for town meeting with the information available then. The town would be able to vote no if they felt they did not have enough information. He wanted to be on the warrant article and it was a timing issue.
- R. Fox stated it was part of the "Town's Open Space Plan," to meet this goal and come up with signage and rules for these specified locations. He also hoped that by the time Town Meeting was scheduled they would be ready to go with more details.
- J. Whalley asked who was going to decide what goes on the signs and where they would be placed. He questioned what committees would be involved.
- R. Fox explained it was part of a study and there was a group to decide.
- J. Whalley responded he would like to wait to see what each committee came up with.
- D. Spina felt it was a worthy project to bring to town meeting with a more solid plan, but thought it could be brought forward.
- C. Pratt said it could always be removed from the warrant article if they were not ready.
- S. Fox stated she did not like that there was no specific plan at that point and was not recommending it.
- J. Whalley agreed and asked for specific prices and more information.
- C. Pratt asked for further discussion.
- Brian Walker of 6 Woodland Ridge Rd. responded to let the voters decide.

**A MOTION** was made by J. Whalley to table the application to the next meeting and S. Fox second the motion. The Vote was 3 to table vs. 2 to proceed. 3/2 it was tabled.

#### Second Application, The Old Cemetery- Friends of Southwick's Old Cemetery- Applicant

- R. Fox stated the Old Cemetery project was a 3 year project that had been voted on favorably. He deferred to G. Thoreau for further comment.
- Mr. Gene Thoreau stated they had not planned for the damaged trees, retaining walls and needed sandstone repairs and monies needed to do the repairs.
- Ronnie Connolly of 12 Davis Road, Southwick interjected that the tree removal was included in a separate application and would be about \$10,000.00 and repairs to the vault and wall would be an additional \$35,000.00. to 40,000.00.
- D. Spina questioned that the amount for stone work would be \$40,000.00.
- S. Fox asked to understand what was to be included in the repairs.
- Mr. Thoreau stated the stone work would be in the repairs.

- J. Whalley asked what was the total they were asking for. Reply \$40,000.00.

**A MOTION** was made by J. Whalley to approve the \$40,000.00 application and B. Thomas seconded. The vote-unanimous

The Third Application, the New Cemetery- Applicant the Cemetery Commission

- Ronnie Connolly of the Cemetery Commission stated they would need \$55,000.00 which includes, \$10,000.00 for tree removal, retaining walls, vault repairs in the amount of \$5,000.00 .
- S. Fox asked if the \$55,000.00 included the bid for the retaining wall and repairs.
- S. Fox asked if any remaining monies would be returned to the CPC
- C. Pratt replied that all unused funds would be returned.

**A MOTION** was made by J. Whalley to approve the \$55,000.00 and S. Fox second the motion. The vote -unanimous.

- R. Connolly further explained that the Cemetery Commission was looking to hire a temporary worker to use the survey and update the cemetery plot listings and make it available on the town's web site. She explained the frustration with the old records and that the information needed to be input into the new system. She estimated the cost in temporary hours to be between \$7000.00 to \$9500.00
- B. Thomas asked what the plan was after the information was updated.
- S. Fox asked if the current secretary would be able to do this work.
- R. Connolly expressed her hope that the secretary would be able to get this done by the end of the year by continuing and adding hours inputting the data.
- J. Whalley stated it was not their job to determine who would do the work, and they should be able to find a worker.
- R. Connolly stated it would be a temporary position until she estimated the end of the year after the old records were added to the system.

**A MOTION** was made to approve \$9500.00, seconded by S. Fox the vote- unanimous.

Fourth Application- Right to Farm Signage- Agricultural Council representatives\_Maryssa Cook -Obregon and Burt Hansen

- M. Cook-Obregon explained the purpose of the signage was to inform those entering Southwick by placing 6 signs: 2 @ Rt. 202/10, 2@ both ends of Rt. 57, 2 @ Rt. 168 Point Grove Rd. She further detailed the cost of the signs would be \$2,500.00 and that the DPW would install the signs. The purpose was to inform visitors and residents of the town's farm status and they were asking for the money to complete the project.
- J. Whalley asked if the costs included the posts. It was answered yes.
- B. Hansen stated the Select Board had seen the preliminary designs and placement.
- M. Cook-Obregon shared samples of the proposed signs.

- A group discussion of the design and graphics suggesting cows, horses, tractors, barns, and other ideas circulated.

**A MOTION** was made by S. Fox to approve the \$2,500.00 and B Thomas second the motion.  
The vote -unanimous.

- C. Pratt stated we need to render the wording for the warrant articles for the town meeting that was now due.
- D. Clark stated that there were several housekeeping issues to resolve in regards to money allocation to the administration fees and the various project categories.
- C. Pratt asked if the committee wanted to keep the percentages the same with the administration fee of 5% remaining.
- S. Fox questioned the percentages.
- C. Pratt said it is a housekeeping item on how they allocate the funds and if they wanted the fee to remain 5%
- J. Walley covers them if they have to do appraisals.
- C. Pratt said yes as well as any legal fees.

**A MOTION** to approve the 5 % Administration fee was made by C. Pratt and second by S. Fox  
The vote- unanimous.

**A MOTION** to approve 10% Historic,10% Housing Authority,10% Park and Recreation and remaining to the General Fund, made by C. Pratt and second by S. Fox. Motion carries  
The vote- unanimous.

### **Old Business**

- C. Pratt stated that coalition dues in the amount of \$1750.00 had been paid.
- C. Pratt asked if there were any other funds to be returned and he suggested they discuss the North Longyard APR which as of yet had not moved forward.
- C. Pratt explained that they would need to reapply after a new assessment was done.
- D. Clark said the project will not happen and they would need to reapply.
- S. Fox stated she thought it was a great project.
- C. Pratt thought it would be better if they reapplied and returned the \$45,000.00 back.
- S. Fox asked what if the money was no longer going to be there.
- B. Thomas thought there should be enough money to grant a new amount at a later date.
- C. Pratt felt a new application would be necessary because of changes to the property.
- J. Whalley stated they would need new state approval.
- C. Pratt stated the \$45,000.00 was just sitting there and it would make sense to return it.
- S. Fox asked if there were any other projects coming at this time.
- C. Pratt stated no, but it could be used and would be good to have on hand.

**A MOTION** made by J. Whalley to return the \$45,000.00 and second by C. Pratt  
B. Thomas yes, D. Spina yes, S. Fox abstained.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- C. Pratt provided a disclaimer at the end of the meeting explaining Governor Baker's revised "Covid 19" open meeting laws, and stated the meeting was available through Zoom and had been posted, advertised and the public participation was offered.

**A MOTION** to end the meeting at 8:16 P.M. was called by J. Whalley and Second by S. Fox.  
The vote- unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Corey  
Secretary – CPC

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Chris Pratt, Acting Chairman

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Beth Thomas

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John Whalley III

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Thomas McLaughlin   not present

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David Spina

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Ruth Preston          not present

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Joanne Horacek          not present

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Susan Fox

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Maria Seddon          not present

11//3/2020   Minutes accepted at the October 28th Meeting as amended.