

MINUTES
SHARON SELECT BOARD
October 13, 2020

The meeting of the Sharon Select Board was called to order at 7:00 pm by Select Board Chair Emily Smith-Lee remotely via Zoom. Select Board members William Heitin and Hanna R. Switekowski were in attendance as was Town Administrator Frederic E. Turkington, Jr. and Assistant to the Town Administrator, Lauren Barnes. The meeting commenced with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Wine and malt liquor license - DDAS Corp. dba BP Foodmart, 68 Pond St.

There was a public hearing on the application submitted by DDAS Corp. dba BP Foodmart of 68 Pond Street at the last meeting of the Select Board on September 29. At that time, the applicant's representative Attorney Greg Demakis explained that this location is the site of the former Tedeschi convenience store. The location has a 2300 square foot retail space. The applicant, Mr. Daneshkumar Patel, and his wife own and operate 8 other convenience stores nearby and have had liquor stores for 15 years. Their employees are TIPS certified. Mr. Patel submitted a petition previously in July which shows over 70 signatures in support of his application. Illustrating the good relationship with his clients in Sharon. The owners have had no tobacco violations and Attorney Demakis feels that they are sharp and highly qualified.

The Board expressed a few concerns regarding the teenagers who frequently hang out at the store, expressions of opposition from residents who live nearby the store, its close proximity to both another retail liquor store and a residential area, along with crowding out staple convenience store items on the limited shelf space.

Mr. Demakis feels that the retail space available should be of little concern as he has represented other successful retail establishments in Massachusetts with smaller square footage. He understands that some neighbors may have concerns but there are clearly many who would like to see beer and wine offered at the store given the number of signatures in support of the owners.

Despite Mr. Demakis' remarks, the Board wishes to take some time to see the impact of the four new all alcohol package store licenses on the community before acting on new licenses at this time.

MOTION: To decline the wine and malt license application submitted by DDAS Corp dba BP Foodmart of 68 Pond Street without prejudice so that they may reapply at a future time.
(Heitin - Switekowski)

Heitin: AYE
Switekowski: AYE
Smith-Lee: AYE
3-0 **PASSES**

Discuss Sharon Halloween observance and COVID precautions

Mr. Turkington explained there has been a fair amount of inquiry beginning mid-September around Halloween observance this year both from residents and colleagues from other Norfolk County communities. Certainly, the Town doesn't control or sponsor Halloween celebrations but there have been requests for guidelines and safety precautions. Materials offering guidance from MA DPH and the CDC was provided for the Board as part of their packages for this meeting. About the same time, Paige Davis had led a discussion on one of the Facebook groups about safety protocols and put together a very thoughtful list. The Recreation Department has also put together alternatives to traditional Halloween events.

Ms. Berger explained the events that the Recreation Department has planned to provide a safe alternative for families for Halloween. Everwood Day Camp has allowed an expanded area for Trunk or Treat. This year's event will be a Drive-Boo. Cars will be decorated as in the past and will be placed along a path at Camp Everwood on October 25 from 2-4. Car set up will begin at 1pm. There will be timed entry, attendees will be guided through the path and at the end, participants will receive a goody bag since the traditional "trunk or treat" isn't a viable option this year. Recreation is also sponsoring a Halloween house decorating contest. Registration closes at noon on Friday, October 23.

Ms. Davis explained that she thinks it is in the Town's best interest to make a recommendation such as spreading out the time for trick-or-treating, say from 3 to 7 pm. There are concerns about touch points and it has been suggested that candy be laid out on a table at the end of the driveway so children can take what they touch. If there is no table, then the household is clearly not participating. She feels that simply leaving the lights off is no longer effective in communicating non-participation.

The Board agrees that these are great ideas and are happy to hear other thoughts. It is hoped to create consensus on guidance so that families can make decisions on what's best for them. The Town can't enforce a time for trick-or-treating. It was agreed that staff will publish guidelines on the webpage and on social media outlets.

Discuss proposed questions for School Committee candidates

A second round of interviews to fill a vacancy on the School Committee left by Fern Fergus' resignation due to health concerns will take place on October 15. Some of the candidates who had expressed interest in the previous vacancy have expressed interest in being considered. The School Committee met and made some adjustments to the questions they will ask of the candidates so there is an opportunity for the Select Board to change or add a question or two as well. If the Board chooses to make changes, the School Committee will be advised and the questions will be forwarded to the candidates in advance of interviews.

Mr. Heitin expressed his disappointment that the School Committee Chair denied the opportunity for both groups to collaborate in preparing for this interview process. He would like to ask whether candidates intend to run for the elected seat in May.

Ms. Switekowski is interested in knowing how the candidates envision the Sharon community over the next few years but feels that this may be conveyed overall through the number of questions that will be asked of the candidates during the course of interviews.

Ms. Smith-Lee would like to make a minor change to the wording of the question the Select Board offered during the last round of interviews, from this to these: "The School Committee works as part of a governance team with each other and with District Administration. What are some qualities and/or experiences that you feel you bring that would help make this relationship work effectively?"

MOTION: To propose the existing question as amended and discussed this evening and to add a question seeking the candidate's intention to run for the seat in May of 2021.

(Heitin - Switekowski)

Heitin: AYE

Switekowski: AYE

Smith-Lee: AYE

3-0 **PASSES**

Review and vote to approve Select Board 2021 meeting schedule

MOTION: To approve the Select Board 2021 meeting schedule as discussed but is subject to change if conflicts arise.

(Heitin - Switekowski)

Heitin: AYE

Switekowski: AYE

Smith-Lee: AYE

3-0 **PASSES**

Review and approve consent calendar

- I. Vote to approve the following minutes
 - a. September 29, 2020 – Regular session
- II. Vote to accept donation of \$5,003.91 from Sid Rosen for memorial benches at Veterans' Memorial Beach and Community Center Beach
- III. Vote to appoint Valerie Vigoda and Daniel Brenner to the Sharon Cultural Council for terms expiring June 30, 2023

MOTION: To approve the consent calendar.

(Switekowski-Heitin)

Heitin: AYE

Switekowski: AYE

Smith-Lee: AYE

3-0 **PASSES**

Report of the Town Administrator

Mr. Turkington provided the following update:

- Board of Health will interview four additional candidates for the Public Health Nurse position tomorrow evening.
- Reminder that early voting begins on Saturday, October 17.
- The diversity stone donated by the Rotary and Lions' Clubs is ready. Installation is expected in the next couple of weeks and a dedication ceremony is being planned for November 8.
- The next Select Board meeting will include topics related to the upcoming budget cycle, capital projects, employment agreements, solar lease subcommittee and the start of the Select Board goals process. The November 10 meeting will include the tax classification hearing.
- Correspondence:
 - A total of 24 emails were received between the last two meetings. Among them, 12 were related to the School Committee's decision not to renew or extend the School Superintendent's contract, removal or School Committee members, or the relationship among members of the School Committee; 1 requested the Board to consider salary freezes, 4 new applications for the School Committee vacancy, 3 in support of candidates for School Committee, 1 requesting coordinated action between DPW and Eversource regarding vegetation maintenance to help avoid power outages, 1 requesting information on commercial activity from a suspected consultant looking

to support economic development initiatives in Town, and 1 from the School Committee with the list of interview questions for School Committee candidates.

Ms. Switekowski provided the following update on the first Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee meeting.

- Will the Committee have a budget or how will they request funding for projects such as training programs? Mr. Turkington has since explained that there is no budget and requests for funding of projects should be requested of the Select Board. Funds would then be allocated from various Department budgets.
- The initial meeting was very successful and many important questions were raised.
- The Committee would like to expand the scope of the charge to include anti-racist policy development.
- There were questions surrounding connecting with other Boards and Committees in Town to understand the demographics of Boards and Committees as well as Town Departments. There was also a discussion about hiring practices and data collection.
- The Committee has organized and Kiana Pierre-Louis was elected as Chair, Dru Ledbetter was elected to the position of Vice-Chair, and Wendy Alexis Janvier was elected to the position of Clerk. The next meeting will be on October 22 at 7pm. The Committee is targeting December to provide the first update to the Select Board.

Topics not reasonably anticipated within 48 hours in advance of the meeting

None

Adjourn

MOTION: To adjourn at 8:02 pm.
(Heitin - Switekowski)

Heitin: AYE
Switekowski: AYE
Smith-Lee: AYE
3-0 **PASSES**

List of Documents

- Petition
- Correspondence in opposition
- CDC guidelines
- MA DPH recommendations
- Email of September 21, 2020
- Boston Globe article of October 7, 2020
- Draft interview questions
- Candidate list
- Draft meeting schedule
- Minutes
- Memorandum
- Membership list
- Board/Committee applications (2)
- Town Administrator's report