

AMENDED

**Board of Selectmen
Regular Meeting
Thursday, October 13, 2022
Preston Town Hall - Lower Level**

Call to Order - Sandra Allyn-Gauthier called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

1. Roll Call

Sandra Allyn-Gauthier

Jerry Grabarek

Ken Zachem

Also Present

Sean Nugent - PRA Chairman

Bruce Chudwick - PRA Attorney

Kimberly Lang - Recording Secretary

2. Acceptance of Previous Minutes

● **September 22, 2022 - Regular Meeting**

It was noted that under taxes Jean and Jade Swift the tax refund was \$59.80, not \$9.80. The correction needed to be noted in both the Minutes and the Motion.

Ken Zachem motioned to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of September 8, 2022 as amended. Jerry Grabarek seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

3. Correspondence

A request from *Safe Futures*, a non-profit that reached out during budget time, and they have now sent a follow up letter requesting \$5,000. In the past they were given \$300 out of the Operating Budget, but they were one of the organizations listed as possible additional support depending on finances.

4. Reports - None

5. Appointments and/or Resignations - None

6. New Business

- a. Resolution - To act on a resolution titled "Resolution to Approve a Second Amendment to the Terms and Conditions of the 2013 Loan from the Department of Economic and Community Development for Preston Riverwalk Property."**

Sean Nugent shared the progress that has been made to move Riverwalk forward. He stated that the appropriate people: Sandra Allyn-Gauthier, Erin Gizio, Bruce Chudwick, Jill Keith, with himself met earlier today to review, discuss, and sign all the appropriate documents. He explained that the final documents are being packaged to give to the state and that they are working through final checklists of steps to be done. The purpose of the Resolution is to bring the 2013 Loan in alignment with the new Loan. At this point he turned to Bruce Chudwick who explained the Resolution and the need for it.

Attorney Bruce Chudwick shared that the Resolution is hopefully the final step to the process which will bring the \$2,000,000 - 2013 Loan in alignment with the new 2022 Loan with all the same conditions, timing, and rates. The Resolution is asking the Department of Economic and Community Development to revise by amending the 2013 Loan to align with the 2022 Loan. The Loans would continue to be non-interest bearing loans until May of 2026 or 5 years after conveyance. At that point it would be accruing 1% interest on the principle. There is a conditional forgiveness clause that would allow the Town to pay nothing back. So, there is the incentive for both the Town and the Tribe to finish before the Loan comes due so that it's forgiven. At this point it's a matter of just waiting for the State's Attorney General to sign off. Attorney Chunwick then reviewed each paragraph of the Resolution giving pause for questions and comments. The State is allowing the Town to tie the 2013 Loan into the new Loan. The new amendment lowers the interest rate, extends the retainment date, and has the additional forgiveness provision that is allowed by the State.

Ken Zachem motioned to approve the Resolution as stated - To act on a resolution titled "Resolution to Approve a Second Amendment to the Terms and Conditions of the 2013 Loan from the Department of Economic and Community Development for Preston Riverwalk Property. Jerry Grabarek seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Sean Nugent shared with the Board that he has met with Tighe & Bond, the engineers, and Manafort, the contractor to review the final clean up plans to see if there are ways to reduce the cost and speed it up. He is hoping instead of time and cost of the tasks listed that he can get them to agree to a not to exceed cost.

b. HR Compensation & Classification Study Update

Sandra Allyn-GAuthier updated the Board as to the progress of the HR Study. All the in-house questionnaires, job descriptions, and interviews have been completed. As part of that process *Key Skills and Ability Questionnaires* for each job/employee have been completed to identify key components that allowed for draft job descriptions to be written and then distributed to staff and supervisors to review. These are presently being reviewed. Once they are completed then the final job description can be determined.

The External Survey which is for compensation is the next step. Next week the consultants and the Brooklyn team will meet to identify key pieces of information to be included in the survey to obtain the information desired. Once the survey has been solidified, then it will be distributed to the surrounding towns that Preston and Brooklyn have identified.

So, as of now the HR Study is on track and it's hoped that it will be completed in time to use when creating next year's budget.

c. Capital Planning

The Board reviewed the Capital Improvement Requests: Detail and Information handout. Looking at the Fire Department requests, all items except for 3 are being financed by ARPA Funds. Out of the 3 remaining items: Update Vehicle Exhaust System, Fire Marshall Vehicle, and Dry Hydrant Repairs; it was mentioned that the Fire Department and Public Works crews are making good progress in repairing and clearing the hydrants throughout the town and should be able to complete all repairs in house; elimination the \$20,000 cost out of the Capital Plan's budget.

The Public Works' Capital projects are more costly, however, multiple grants are reducing the need for funds significantly. Sandra Allyn-Gauthier shared that she'd be meeting with Matt Pugliese on November 10th to discuss Community Investment Funding Grants which have a minimum of \$250,000 and no maximum request for funds. This particular Grant Preston could apply for multiple grants for several projects at a time. It's hoped that the meeting on the 10th will provide information towards more funds to further reduce the amount that will be needed for Capital Improvements.

Next discussion was the dire need for a 16 passenger bus with a lift, for the Senior Center's use. It was noted that there are grants through SCCOG and the DOT that are to be offered, but not as yet. It was also mentioned that there is a year lead time to purchase a new one, and the one presently being used is a 2006 vehicle.

Finally the Board reviewed the Town Hall needs for Capital Improvement. It was stated that a *Building Needs Assessment* would help in knowing the best way to move forward and would evaluate each building and what the best course of action would be.

There was a brief discussion that it would be prudent to "*pay as you go*" for items rather than taking out loans. It was suggested that any item less than \$100,000 should be "*pay as you go*". It was also mentioned that it's important to look at the debt schedule to ensure payment of items is completed well before they need replacing. It was also mentioned that any savings from completed Capital Projects should be used before moving forward towards a new Bond.

It was noted that the Auditors will be in on Nov. 2nd and 3rd and that it would be helpful to figure out which items will be "*pay as you go*".

d. Schedule Planner BoS Plan of Conservation and Development

The general consensus was that the goals need to be reworked. Many of the goals in the plan were out of the realm and/or control of the Board of Selectmen. It was decided that it would be good to have representatives from PZC, IWWC, CAC, and the PRA attend their meetings to share information. It was stated that it doesn't have to be the same person each month that the Commission members could take turns making it a more palatable obligation. Making sure Commissions and Boards are communicating information with one another is one way to build a stronger infrastructure. It was decided that 3-4 broad general goals working towards a stronger infrastructure, connecting priorities, and supporting community engagement would be better for the future of Preston.

7. Old Business - None

8. Tax Refund

- a. James Holland of 6 Route 117 - \$16.78

Ken Zachem motioned to approve a tax refund to James Holland of 6 Route 117 for \$16.78. Jerry Grabarek seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

9. Public Comment - None

10. Adjournment

Ken Zachem motioned to adjourn at 8:22 P.M. Jerry Garbarek seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly Lang

Recording Secretary