

Aquinnah Select Board Meeting
Minutes
03/05/2024 Meeting

Attending: Tom Murphy (Chair), Julianne Vanderhoop, Gary Haley, Jeffrey Madison (Town Administrator), Randhi Belain, Adam Petkus, Jeff Duarte, Vika Duarte, Phil Regan

Call to Order at 5:00 p.m. by Tom Murphy, Chairman

Minutes
(Accepted minutes February 20, 2024)

Building Permit Fees
(No action taken)

Phil Regan made a presentation to the Board in which he outlined his objections to recent increase in cost of building permit. He indicated that there had been discussions within his architectural firm about why permits were increased “up there.” Up there was referencing Aquinnah. He asked why permit fees could not be determined using metrics for quality of construction on a per square foot basis to arrive at a permit cost of less than \$10/ sq. ft. Tom Murphy responded that Adam Petkus had been hired as the Building Commissioner and he had complete faith in his ability to determine construction values. He also pointed out that prior to the established fees schedule the permit cost was thirty cents per square foot. That did fee did not cover the Town’s administrative costs. Adam Petkus, building inspector, told Mr. Regan that the decision to raise fees was not frivolous. Before increasing fees the Town considered lots of information including the cost of construction in Aquinnah as well as fees charged by other communities in the Commonwealth. Gary Haley indicated that the costs were “fair” to all concerned and that Adam had devoted “lots of time” to his recommendation regarding fee increases. Tom thanked Phil Regan for attending the meeting. The Board took no action.

Emergency Management Coordinator
(Deferred action for further discussion)

Town Administrator informed the Board of discussions in a call received from Martina Thornton, County Manager, pertaining to hiring of a Regional Emergency Management Coordinator at a cost of \$5,000.00/year/town. TA, at the time of the original discussion of the position objected to Aquinnah paying the same rate dollar for dollar as other Towns. Martina confirmed that there is no written agreement on sharing costs and that the positions had been funded without an agreement for 3 years. She supports there being a more equitable cost sharing formula suggesting either by a 50-50 basis used by the County or equalized valuation. She is seeking to develop a written agreement that reflects a more reasoned approach to funding. Board ended the discussion with Julie saying that she would “get more figures” form Martina and get back to the Board with more information.

Phones at Town Offices
(Authorized Town Administrator to investigate new systems)

Town Administrator requested that he be authorized to look into getting new phone system for Town Offices as the existing phones are costly, difficult to use and not up-to-date as far as

features. Later in the meeting Chief Belain agreed that police phones were inadequate and his consultant was looking for recommendations on replacing phones in the police headquarters.

Lighthouse Lantern replacement

(Authorized TA to provide notice of acceptance of Coast Guard Plan)

Town Administrator provided a report on plans by the Coast Guard to replace the lantern at the Lighthouse. Plans for September 2024 – March 2025 include placement of the flashing light at the Lookout and replacing lantern with a newer model. TA suggested that the Select Board endorse a return to the traditional 3 whites and a red pattern of the Lighthouse beacon for over 100 years. Board, after discussion, approved request of TA to communicate their endorsement change to the Lighthouse Committee and the Coast Guard.

MCC Grant Assignment

(Voted to assign grant)

Board voted to assign \$15,000.00 proceeds from 2024 Massachusetts Cultural Council Grant to the Aquinnah Cultural Center. This is similar to recent MCC awards that each year subsidize activities within Aquinnah Circle.

Seasonal Hires/Activities

(Invited Deborah Medders to next meeting)

Board reviewed email from Deb Medders wherein she proposed activities at the Gay Head Light for the upcoming season. Requested TA to invite Ms. Medders to next meeting.

Food “Cart” Request

(General support for proposal for seasonal food sales inside Aquinnah Park)

Jeffrey and Viki Duarte made a proposal to the Board requesting that he be allowed to sell sausages and peppers 3-4 days during the week from 11a.m. – 2p.m. Board suggested that they speak with members of Circle Committee and Board of Health as well as current shop owners to provide feedback on whether to move forward.

Landfill Operations

(Supported BOH Suggestions)

Town Administrator reported on conversation with Marina Lent pertaining to Natalie’s request cut back on her hours. BOH is not recommending cutting landfill hours, rather they are suggesting that Natalie be supported by another person who would fill in during the hours she is not at the landfill. Board voted to support the BOH request.

Town Clerk Appointment

(Accepted resignation of Gabriella Camilleri)

Requested TA to secure a specific email from Gabbi that officially supported Kayla Manning as a replacement. Julie made a motion to request a email. Gary seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Kite Festival

(Authorized use of Aquinnah Circle for Kite Festival on Easter Sunday)

Meeting was adjourned at 6:06 p.m.