

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

MEETING DATE: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2021
5:30 P.M.

MEETING PLACE: ZOOM ONLINE MEETING

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

5:30 p.m. Special Session

First Selectwoman Lyons called the Special Session of Thursday, February 25, 2021 to order at 5:33 p.m. Also in attendance were Selectwoman Duques, Selectman Goldberg, Selectman Murphy and Selectman Wilson.

1. Pledge of Allegiance.
First Selectwoman Lyons led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Review Island Avenue School RFP process.

Marc Sklenka from Colliers provided an overview of the process that Colliers could run for the Town. Mr. Sklenka stated that the process would entail submitting the RFP to the public in the middle of March, receive back RFPs in the middle of May and then review and disseminate information to the public through the summer with the goal of moving to referendum in November.

Selectman Wilson questioned if the Town has done enough to determine that selling the property is what the residents want. He cautioned that the Town underwent a similar process for the Academy School which was met with criticism from the public.

Graham Curtis, Chair of the Ad-Hoc Island Avenue School Future Use Committee stated that although the public feedback was limited, most feedback supported the building being sold to remain a school. Other comments received were to convert the building to residential use but overall the comments supported selling the building for tax revenue.

Selectman Wilson again cautioned that the Town has not moved forward a community center yet, which was seen as important during the Academy discussions. This building lends itself to being a community center better than the Academy School so the Town should consider whether residents will now comment on using this building as a community center.

Selectman Murphy asked if there was an opportunity to create a forum for the public to provide input in advance of the RFP being published. First Selectwoman Lyons stated that this wasn't a bad idea; the Board needed to consider where the public input sessions would be scheduled along the process. The Board reviewed that the process would need to be reviewed again and that the Board would revise the RFP to make sure that the Town received clear proposals.

Overall the Board reviewed that OLMPA would be interested in purchasing the building. It was also mentioned that there might be a possibility for this building and the Academy building to tie together; the process could move forward with a developer providing a proposal to develop both this and the Academy Building.

Town Planner, Dave Anderson stated that the Town was underway with a comprehensive facilities study and he felt that this process should proceed a decision on the Island Avenue building. He stated that the comprehensive strategy for all town facilities should be established first before the Town disposes of any building. He cautioned that the Town should consider whether or not they have a responsibility to support affordable housing especially over tax revenue. Mr. Anderson added that the RFP could instead go after very specific elderly or affordable housing project proposals.

Selectwoman Duques stated that she agreed with Dave and one of the outcomes of the facilities review is that the Town needs more space. It has come up several times that offices can be moved to Academy. So she questioned how the Board should compare Island to Academy to accommodate the needs for more space.

The Board reviewed the need to balance the needs of the community at large, the needs of the OLMPA community and also the needs of the space in Town. They also reviewed the need to know what the status is of the heir search for the building. Overall, the Board reviewed the balance of moving forward with the future of this building while respecting the need for an overall comprehensive facilities master plan.

3. Citizens Comments.
4. Adjournment.

There being no objection the Board adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Rhines
Town Svcs. Coordinator / Risk Manager