

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes Monday September 7, 2023

Finance Committee

12 in attendance

Dennis Crowley (Chair)

Douglas Shea (Vice Chair)

Kathleen Foley Greulich

Steve Hendricks

Lisa Van der Linden

Scott Wassel

Jean Kenney

Mark Sullivan

Mark Trudell

Josette Burke

Susan Lawson

Audrey Grace

Absent: Lawrence Pitman

Additional attendees:

Jim Johnson, Patrick Shield, Jodi Cuneo

Meeting minutes of recorded meetings include time stamps from the video for viewing actual content.

The video can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4snKcW-QJuc&list=WL&index=4>

Approval of minutes is based on the printed word and not the video

The meeting was called to order by Dennis Crowley at 7:00pm.

Jim Johnson briefly discussed the agenda items, and why the Article numbers have changed.

Article 13

Jim Johnson explained that this article intends to change the date for the elections from a Saturday to the third Tuesday in May.

Mark Sullivan asked if the school is aware of this change, and Jim Johnson explained that there was no pushback.

Doug Shea asked if there are any projections on what increases the town expects to see with the change, and Jim Johnson explained that there is no way to tell.

Jean Kenney asked why the third Tuesday was chosen, and Jim Johnson explained that it was to give space between Town Meeting.

Mark Sullivan asked if the Town has to go to the State for approval to run an election, and Jim Johnson explained that it is a town bylaw, so the Town would vote.

Josette Burke asked if this would take effect immediately, and Jim Johnson replied yes.

Motion by Mark Trudell for favorable action on the election date change, seconded by Doug Shea.

Motion passes 11-0-1, Josette Burke abstained.

Article 14

Jim Johnson explained that this Article change is to modify the last sentence of the existing bylaw to “or enter into an inter-municipal agreement to conduct such duties of the ACO”.

Doug Shea indicated that there was a second change to the bylaw, which would remove the word "Town" and allow any kenneling of animals to be done in any of the inter-municipal towns.

Lisa Van der Linden made some comments on the grammar of the suggested bylaw, and suggested that it be changed.

Susan Lawson suggested additional grammatical changes to further clarify the proposed bylaw.

Motion by Doug Shea to accept the Article 14 as amended by Susan Lawson and Lisa Van der Linden, and also amended with removing "within the Town" from section 5-7, Seconded by Audrey Grace. Motion passed 11-1-0, Lisa Van der Linden voted no.

DPW Contract (Now Article 16)

Jim Johnson recommended no action.

Article 17 – Zoning Bylaw Change

Jim Johnson recommended action at Town Meeting. A Planning Board meeting would be held to discuss this item, and provide further information.

Doug Shea shared his concern with the third degree of kinship, and wishes that it was less preventative.

Patrick Deschenes understands, but explained that the Town also cannot overregulate occupancy.

Mark Sullivan asked if someone would approach the town for application, and Patrick Deschenes explained that it would be a permitted process, and certain provisions would be recorded to the deed for the property, which would signify an attached in-law apartment.

Motion by Doug Shea for recommendation at Town Meeting, seconded by Jean Kenney. Motion passes 12-0-0

Article 18 – Zoning Bylaw Change

Jim Johnson explained that the ZBA has opened a public hearing regarding this matter, and it has continued. He also indicated that the applicant has requested to make changes to the language. If this gets voted down, it is not able to come forward for an additional 2 years.

Peter D'Agostino represented Mr. Gupreet, the petitioner. He explained the changes in the language remove verbiage that is already covered by regulations, as well as typographical changes.

Mark Sullivan asked why this is being presented, and Mr. D'Agostino explained that the various uses are not technically allowed in Walpole, and there are no zones in which they are allowed. This change would allow for new businesses to come to Walpole, and would specify where these businesses would be allowed to operate.

Mark Sullivan is concerned with the impact, and would like to see a comparison of how this could affect the Town.

Audrey Grace raised concerns that this proposed change would override a town-wide vote from 2017 which restricted the allowance of recreational cannabis in Walpole.

Jodi Cuneo asked if there were financial projections, and Mr. Gupreet explained that there were no projections done, but the town of Sharon takes 3% of the 3-5 Million that ZenLeaf brings in.

There was concern in the advertising saturation and the smell that these facilities would bring in.

Kathleen Foley Greulich stressed the concern for smell, and if these buildings can be built with no smell impacts, and Mr. D'Agostino suggested that it can be done, and that the Town could use the bylaw to better protect the town.

Mark Sullivan asked to see what Sharon's Bylaws are, and what other towns have done to provide due diligence. Mr. D'Agostino has used the same language that they have presented to other towns, and if the town would sponsor the changes, they could work with the Planning Board.

Motion by Mark Sullivan to recommend at town meeting, seconded by Josette Burke. Motion passed by roll call vote 12-0-0.

Article 19 – Zoning Bylaw Change

Jim Johnson explained that the resident who put forward the petition had provided some additional information, and that the Planning Board voted for it (3-2).

Susan Lawson had to exit the meeting.

The petitioner, Mr. Kirby, explained that he has been a resident for 30 years, and has owned an RV for a large portion of those years. He has parked the RV in his yard for all the years he has owned it during the off-season, or when it was not in use. He was approached by the Building Commissioner, who explained the bylaw to him, and that he had 30 days to remove the RV. At that point, he worked with the Jim Crowley and Patrick Deschenes to craft changes to the existing bylaw, and eliminate the 1 month provision in the existing bylaw.

Kathleen Foley Greulich explained that she watched the Planning Board meeting, and voiced her concerns with lack of restrictions regarding where the vehicle could be parked.

The applicant handed out revised wording, which included restrictions in where the vehicles could be parked.

Mark Sullivan asked what the Town allows for boat parking. Jim Crowley explained that if they are parked on a trailer, they are allowed to be parked on property.

Mark Sullivan asked about the restrictions on the vehicle being 15 feet, and Jim Crowley explained that the exception to the bylaw applies to RV's over 15 feet in length.

Jack Conroy, Planning Board Chair, explained that his objection to this bylaw was regarding the placement of the RV in the yard.

Audrey Grace suggested that allowance of parking by Special Permit may be a good idea.

Phil Czachorowski, Planning Board, voted yes as it was presented because he feels that it is a reasonable change, and doesn't want to overburden residents with the concept of special permits or additional restrictions.

Mark Sullivan asked if adding an additional restriction for vehicle length would be valuable, and Mr. Kirby explained that all he wanted to revise was the 1 month restriction.

Mark Trudell added that he likes the additional restriction on allowed parking areas.

Motion by Doug Shea to recommend the Zoning Bylaw Change as amended, seconded by Mark Trudell. Motion passes by roll call vote 10-1-0.

Mark Sullivan made a comment about the RVs, and that he is concerned with residents parking on their lawn.

Adjournment

Motion by Mark Trudell and seconded by Josette Burke to adjourn.

The motion passed 11-0-0.

The Finance Committee adjourned.