

TOWN OF LEE
SELECT BOARD MEETING
Tuesday January 3, 2023 @ 7:00PM
Town Hall • 38 Main Street • Former Courtroom

Minutes

Members Present: Sean Regnier, Bob Jones (via Zoom), Gordon Bailey

Members Absent: None.

Chairman Regnier called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

1. Minutes: Open Session Minutes of 12/20/2022 and 12/22/2022

Mr. Bailey made a motion to approve the 12/20/2022 and the 12/22/2022 minutes as submitted which Mr. Jones seconded and was unanimously approved, 3-0.

2. Public Comment

No public comments were made.

3. General Business

a. Update from the School Committee

Superintendent Michael Richard was present. Mr. Richard began by stating, as a reminder, that the School Committee open meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month.

Mr. Richard stated that this past fall they received MCAS results, and predictably like many other school systems across the state and country, they saw negative impacts from the Covid-19 pandemic and they are working to target the learning loss and address it.

Regarding the FY23 budget, they are in good shape and their projections were good. Mr. Richard stated they would hopefully not have to use the reserve money that was set aside. Mr. Richard stated that they implemented new math materials this year which are designed to help accelerate learning. They are also piloting new English Language Arts materials. There is a grant through the State that will allow them to offset some of the material costs and repurpose the money.

As of January 1, 2023, there are 643 students in Lee Public Schools and 153 of those students are school choice coming from surrounding communities. Forty-four of the school choice students are tuition students, coming from Tyringham and the Farmington River Public School District. Mr. Richard stated that they are exploring ways to get more school choice students with enticing programs.

Mr. Richard stated they are working on finalizing the FY24 budget that has a 2.5% increase for bargaining units and they do not expect much transitions of staff retiring in FY24. As for athletics and extracurricular activities, they are going full force.

Regarding Capital updates, Mr. Richard stated that the LMHS gym is complete and looks outstanding and a lot of work has been done on the playground. They will put down the safety woodchips at the playground once things dry out a bit. Mr. Richard thanked the LYA for their generous \$10,000 donation to getting the playground project done. Forwarding thinking, Mr. Richard stated that they are looking to update the HVAC systems, replace one of the trucks used by the facility department and update the wireless switches and access points. Two other projects that have a little more time to go before they act on them are redoing the roofs on both schools and the blacktop will need to be done. Mr. Richard stated that he understands those

are big expenses, but he wants to be sure they are on the Select Board's radar.

Mr. Richard confirmed for Mr. Bailey that all of the school's contracts are on the same cycle for the same bargaining percentages for the next two years. They'll begin contract negotiations sometime at the end of next year for FY25. Mr. Richard also confirmed for Mr. Bailey that the students do not come to Lee schools for the trades, but they do offer a carpentry program. Mr. Richard stated they are not losing students to those vocational programs right now, but if that is what a student wants, it is their job to support them.

Mr. Richard confirmed for Chairman Regnier that they are looking to use some of their funding to add intervention work at the elementary school for the learning loss they suffered from the Covid-19 pandemic. He added that smaller class sizes help as well, and they will offer summer programming.

b. One Day Alcohol License – Lee Fire Company

Mr. Jones made a motion to approve the one-day wine and malt license for the Lee Fire Company which Mr. Bailey seconded and was unanimously approved, 3-0.

c. Capital Outlay Committee Bylaws

As a result of moving to an Open Town Meeting, there is proposed amendment to the Capital Outlay Committee Bylaws. Admin Brittain stated that he wanted to bring it before the Select Board now before it got onto the warrant. The current bylaw states the Committee will consist of a member from each district, but now that the town reps no longer exist, it would be changed to consisting of "six members at large". Mr. Bailey stated the bylaw should read "Select Board" rather than "Board of Selectmen". Admin Brittain stated this is a Select Board appointment and is a three-year staggered Board, which isn't listed in the bylaw, but it can be added. The Board agreed that the detail should be added to the bylaw.

4. Any topic the Chairman could not reasonably anticipate.

No business was brought forward.

5. Town Administrator- RoR, Budget

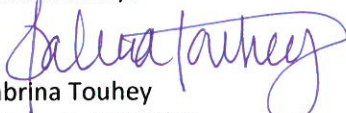
Admin Brittain stated that he had no new updates from RoR, which was expected now that things are slowing down in the winter months. He added that he did leave draft budgets for FY24 for each Board member and the Finance Committee will begin meeting next Tuesday and will meet almost every Tuesday until they are ready.

Admin Brittain also added that the Governor signed the legislation today for the new special act approved at the March 2022 town meeting.

The next regular Select Board meeting is scheduled for January 17, 2023.

Mr. Bailey made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:26pm which Mr. Jones seconded and was unanimously approved, 3-0.

Submitted by:


Sabrina Touhey
Admin Asst BOS/TA

Approved on 01/17/2023