

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING  
MARCH 20, 2018

PRESENT: Jay Hopkins, John Veaser, Joanne Meshna

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Office.

Selectman Hopkins thanked the voters for coming out last week and for their vote of confidence in the Board of Selectmen.

Adam Aimes – Mr. Aimes owns The Schoolyard, previously Central School, located at 571 Turnpike Road. He has done extensive renovation to the building and has rooms available for rent. Mr. Aimes stated he had spoken to Tim and Beth Somero about holding the Farmers' Market on his property. He asked on facebook what businesses the community would like to see in his building and received several suggestions including a community center and senior center.

Selectman Hopkins stated he was not sure how much the Town would want to get involved with a private endeavor. Selectman Veaser added the Town had no interest in buying the property when it had first refusal. Further, the 2018 budget has been voted. He also stated he could not in good conscience recommend to the Town that sort of commitment. Mr. Aimes stated he was trying to create something for the community and fill up the building. Beth Somero wanted to see if there was any interest in the Town renting space in the building. Nichole Talbot noted the Recreation Department is always looking for space to do things for the community through the year especially in the winter. Selectman Veaser responded he had not heard of the schools refusing use of their facilities and Nichole responded that sometimes schedules clash. Selectman Veaser responded that was an issue with the school not using the facility usage forms properly and not a lack of space and suggested meeting with the School Board. He added that trying to get the taxpayers to come up with rent could be a lot harder than figuring out a schedule at the school. Tim Somero noted one of the disadvantages of using the schools is setting up and taking down and with Adam's property no take down is needed.

Selectman Hopkins noted the farmers' market is a private endeavor and the Town has no control over it. Shawn Talbot stated he had spoken with the Someros about the Rec Department taking over the market. Mr. Aimes suggested the market be located on his property on the back side yard and on rainy or hot days the market could be inside. Selectman Veaser stated the market needs to be shown it can be self-funding and self-supporting and then it can be added to the next budget knowing the revenues can cover expenses. There are other places to hold a farmers' market such as the Town Office lot that would not cost money. Selectman Veaser added he would like to use the schools so taxpayers can see there are Town activities being held there.

Nichole spoke on the benefits of using the Schoolyard – space for storage, the kitchen for community dinners, a place for other functions, and office space. Tim noted he wanted to see the scope of the discussion go beyond just the farmers' market and include other programs. The Selectmen stated more discussion was needed with the full board.

Mr. Aimes stated his understanding was it was a dollars and cents thing from the Selectmen's point of view and they would support all of the ideas if it did not cost the Town money. Selectman Hopkins stated the Selectmen cannot be all things to all people and it would depend on the amount of people interested in the function. Selectman Veaser stated to him it did come down to dollars and cents and getting the most for the money for the taxpayers. Tim asked if a Town event could be held on property other than the towns such as the basement of the Schoolyard and the Selectmen responded they could.

Nichole Talbot, Parks and Recreation – Nichole spoke on the Recreation Department overseeing the farmer's market. Beth and Tim do not want to be in charge of it any more. There would be no cost to the Town. It would be located between the Babe Ruth field and the swing sets where it was originally. The Selectmen were not in opposition only concerned that it be done well and safely. Tim stated they would come up with a detailed plan. The market could be held on Mr. Aimes' property. The market starts in May and applications to vendors will go out the end of March. Nichole noted she and her husband have been educating themselves about farmers' markets. Nichole stated she would use the revolving account for the market. The Selectmen were not opposed to the idea but wanted to discuss with Selectman Lage. Beth added they had envisioned summer farmers' market held in the field and a winter summers' market inside the Schoolyard. The Board noted it would have to be self-sufficient and again the rental of the space would need to be addressed.

Shawn asked if the Board would be favor of having a coffee night at the Town Office and the Board was not opposed. Different activities for the evening were discussed. Nichole added she would still like to get involved with the Memorial Day celebrations and was advised to speak with the Memorial Day Committee. Beth inquired if there was Town land that could be used for a community garden and she was advised to speak with the Conservation Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joanne Meshna, Town Administrator

Board of Selectmen March 20, 2018 minutes approved by:

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David S. Lage, Chairman

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Jay Hopkins

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John E. Veaser

