

2024 JAN -4 AM 8:27

Board of Selectmen's Meeting
Open Session Meeting Minutes
Meeting Conducted Remotely via Zoom

Members Present: Joseph Botaish, James Anderson, Christopher Gallo, William Harrington, Michelle Rouse

Members Absent:

Also present: Kevin Sweet, Town Administrator; Amanda Vasapollo, Administrative Assistant; Gregory Enos, Assistant Town Administrator/Human Resources Director

Called to order: The meeting was called to order at 6:30PM by Mr. Botaish. Followed by a roll call for attendance, all members and staff present.

Documentation:

November 21, 2023 Open Session Meeting Minutes
November 28, 2023 Open Session Meeting Minutes
Dog Hearing Information Sheet from Mead, Talerman, and Costa
Email from Amanda Davis re Vicious Dog Compliant
Filing letter to Cota's re Dangerous/Nuisance Dog Hearing
Hearing Animal Control Officer Report
Unsigned Affidavits from Jim & Sharon Cota
Order & Decision for Molly of 50 Farm Hill Road
September 5, 2023 Open Session Board of Selectmen Minutes
Behavioral Evaluation for Molly Billington
John Gugliemi Application to Commission on Disability
Special One Day License Application – James' Breakfast & More
2024 License Renewal Chart
2024 BOS Meeting Schedule
Updated Strategic Goals & Objectives as reviewed at September 19th Meeting
Letter of Resignation from Lori Yarworth from Fiske Library Trustees

6:30PM – DANGEROUS/NUISANCE DOG HEARING PER MGL Ch. 40 §157 - Seamus of 612 West Street

Present was Attorney Stephen Chaplin of Mead, Talerman, & Costa; Jim and Sharon Cota of 612 West Street; Attorney Keith Langer of 255 Harvard Lane; and Amanda and Ian Davis of 602 West Street. Attorney Chaplin facilitated the dog hearing and provided a brief description of the proceedings. Attorney Chaplin confirmed the facts and circumstances with the sworn witnesses of the incident on September 12, 2023.

Mr. Langer interviewed the Cota's. Mr. Langer asked questions regarding the relationship with the Davis' and a history of interactions with the Davis' dog.

Mrs. Cota reviewed the incident with Seamus and Ms. Davis and the subsequent actions following the interaction. Mrs. Cota noted there have been no other complaints for Seamus and has not had any other similar incidents. Mrs. Cota reviewed efforts and actions taken since the incident.

Mr. Anderson confirmed the age of Seamus, type of dog, and the history of interactions.

Mr. Gallo confirmed animosity between the Davis and Cota dogs.

Mr. Harrington confirmed Seamus has not bite any other person or dog.

Ms. Rouse confirmed the type of fence the Cota's have and whether Seamus has ever escaped that enclosure.

Ms. Davis reviewed the incident with Seamus and spoke on her intentions for requesting the dangerous/nuisance dog hearing was for the safety of others, herself, and family.

Mr. Davis noted his experience and history with animals, stating Seamus has been aggressive before.

Attorney Chaplin asked the Davis' what measures they were requesting for Seamus.

Mr. Davis responded that Mrs. Cota shouldn't be walking both dogs at the same time.

Patrick Moore of 362 West Street spoke, noted interactions he has had with Seamus and that there has been never any negative incident with Seamus on his property with other dogs or people.

Motion made by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Ms. Rouse the Board voted to declared Seamus of 612 West Street a nuisance dog. Followed by a roll call vote, Anderson – yes, Botaish – yes, Gallo – yes, Harrington – no, Rouse – yes. Motion carries, 4-1.

Motion made by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Mr. Gallo the Board voted to order the Cota's of 612 West Street to take the following measures, enforce walking dogs individually, one dog per person with no pull harness, a mussel when out walking, and to get professional training initiated immediately and up to three to five days to obtain a mussel, no sooner than six months to petition the Board to revisit the conditions of this order. Followed by a roll call vote, Anderson – yes, Botaish – yes, Gallo – yes, Harrington – no, Rouse – yes. Motion carries, 4-1.

OLD BUSINESS - Discussion of Decision and Order for Molly of 50 Farm Hill Road

Present was Attorney Stephen Chaplin, of Mead, Talerman, and Costa; Mark & Rebecca Billington of 50 Farm Hill Road; Attorney Jeremy Cohen of Boston Dog Lawyers, LLC; Ted Lukes of 35 Farm Hill Road Mr. Harrington read the following into the record,

Behavioral Evaluation for Nolly Billington, spayed female Jack Russel Terrier. Description and history: Molly was adopted by the Billington family as a young puppy, and has lived in at her current residence for her entire life. The household consists of Mark, Rebecca, and five children ranging in ages from eight to nineteen years old. Two other young adult children live elsewhere. Molly lives with three other dogs, a ten-year-old female JRT and two six-year-old Dachshunds. The family also has a bearded dragon which belongs to one of their sons. The neighborhood is quiet, composed of large single-family homes and lots, with no visible fences separating them. The family reports that Molly has met and played with several dogs in the neighborhood over the years, The family reports no prior incidents of aggression by Molly toward animals or humans. The family requested an evaluation after an incident with a Yorkshire terrier across the street. Molly had run out of an open door, ran across the street, and bit the Yorkie. The summary from the veterinarian describes the damage to the neighbor's dog as "minor lacerations". A subsequent hearing determined Molly to be a "nuisance" dog, and recommended a professional evaluation. Observations. I had asked the family to have all the dogs put away in another room when I first arrived. When Molly was allowed to meet me, she approached readily, wagging her tail and barking. She allowed me to pet her entire body without hesitation. To check for resource guarding, I had Rebecca reach for a large treat while Molly was chewing it. Molly did not relinquish the treat but showed no stiffness or other precursors to aggression when Rebecca tried to take it from her. Outside, we put Molly on a 50' drag line and played retrieving games with squeaky tennis balls. We also practiced "touch," a

behavior Molly was taught in puppy class years ago. While engaged with her humans, Molly ignored a passing car and showed no interest in the street beyond the yard. I then had the couple take Molly out of sight temporarily, and brought a stuffed dog on a leash into the driveway. When they brought Molly out, Molly ran up to the "dog," sniffed its back end and muzzle area. Her body language conveyed interest and excitement, but no aggression. Back inside, I asked for the other dogs to be let into the room. There was a lot of excited barking from all of them. Rebecca had the dogs sit for treats. Despite the high arousal of the dogs and the presence of treats, there was no conflict observed between. Conclusions and recommendations. Molly has lived in her current home for eleven years without incident. As upsetting as this bite incident was, the damage inflicted by Molly was relatively minor. This indicated that Molly inhibited her bite/bites to the neighbor's dog. It should also be noted that conflict with other dogs is completely distinct from aggression towards humans. Molly has never shown evidence of the latter. While future behavior is never guaranteed in any species, the following adjustments should help to prevent another incident. The family has installed baby gates to create an "airlock" system, so that one open door will not allow escape. I suggest an additional barrier at the front door. Outdoors, always supervised by adults, have Molly drag a 50' to 100' line. This will allow her to run and feel like she is loose, but she can be easily caught if she decided to leave the area. She is also being trained on an electric "fence" system. On walks, I suggest a harness and collar, fastened together with a carabiner or similar. Molly has never had an incident while being walked on leash, so I do not think a muzzle is necessary for this circumstance. All these strategies together should prevent escapes. As an energetic terrier, Molly needs to run outdoors. I suggest increased exercise and enrichment in the yard (retrieving games, flirt pole games, "sniffaris". Trails of treats to follow) to provide Molly with more motivation to stick closer to home. Confining Molly in a pen outdoors is likely to lead to higher levels of frustration and arousal, and increased barking. If adults cannot actively supervise Molly, she should be indoors. I recommend proofing the "touch" cue (recall) using high-value treats. Training can occur along with outdoor play. I also recommend using Kim Brophey's "get a grip contingency", requiring dogs to have feet on the floor and quiet to obtain what they want. This will encourage Molly and the other dogs to remain in a more productive state of arousal. Respectfully submitted, Patricia Inman, Family Paws Parent Education.

Mr. Billington spoke, reviewing the measures they've implemented so far to improve Molly's behavior and clarified the actions the family has taken since the public hearing and order from the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Lukes spoke, was appreciative of the measures the Billington's have taken and noted the improvements.

A discussion took place amongst the Board to update the order dated September 11, 2023 and rescind the requirement for the Billington's to install a six-sided pen.

Motion made by Mr. Gallo seconded by Mr. Anderson, the Board voted to amend the order of conditions to remove the six-sided fence and replace with a fifty foot drag line and to follow the instructions from behavior specialists Patricia Inman as noted in the report dated November 28, 2023. Followed by a roll call vote, Anderson – yes, Botaish – yes, Gallo – yes, Harrington – yes, Rouse – yes. Motion carries, 5-0.

Announcements:

Mr. Harrington read the following, Overnight Parking Ban on Public Streets is in effect December 1, 23 to April 1, 2024. Vehicles found to interfere with snow operations may be towed at the owner's expense.

Wrentham Recreation is hosting Pickleball open play on Thursdays at Wrentham Elementary, see Wrentham recreation website for more details! The traditional Army Navy Game Ball Run will be going through Wrentham on Saturday, December 9th. The Navy Midshipmen will be running through Wrentham on at 5:30AM, ending in Foxboro at Gillette Stadium prior to the 124th Annual Army vs Navy Football Classic. Join us to cheer them on as they finish their 460-ish mile trip. Join us and State Representative Marcus Vaughn for a rally honoring the D2 Super Bowl Champion King Philip Football Team on Friday, December 8th at 6PM on the Wrentham Town Common. Gilly's House is hosting the 5th annual menorah lighting on Saturday, December 9th at 6:30PM.

Interview/Appointment of John Gugliemi to Commission on Disability

Present was John Gugliemi of 50 Riverside Drive.

Mr. Gugliemi reviewed his resume, background, and interest in joining the Commission on Disability.

Motion made by Mr. Harrington, seconded by Mr. Gallo, the Board voted to appoint John Gugliemi to the Commission on Disability for a term effective immediately and expiring June 30, 2025. Followed by a roll call vote, Anderson – yes, Botaish – yes, Gallo – yes, Harrington – yes, Rouse – yes. Motion carries, 5-0.

Approval of the Minutes

Motion made by Mr. Gallo, seconded by Mr. Harrington, the Board voted to approve the November 21, 2023 Open Session Meeting Minutes. Followed by a roll call vote, Anderson – yes, Botaish – yes, Gallo – yes, Harrington – yes, Rouse – yes. Motion carries, 5-0.

Motion made by Mr. Harrington, seconded by Mr. Gallo, the Board voted to approve the November 21, 2023 Open Session Meeting Minutes. Followed by a roll call vote, Anderson – yes, Botaish – yes, Gallo – yes, Harrington – yes, Rouse – yes. Motion carries, 5-0.

Wrentham Village Premium Outlets Black Friday Weekend Report – Chief McGrath

Present was Police Chief Bill McGrath.

Chief McGrath review the events of Black Friday at the Wrentham Village Premium Outlets.

A discussion took place amongst the Board, Mr. Sweet, and Chief McGrath regarding traffic surrounding the Outlets on Black Friday, reviewed the history and prior years of the event, and noted next steps and future action.

Special One Day License Application - James' Breakfast & More

Motion made by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Mr. Harrington, the Board voted to approve the special one-day license application for James' Breakfast for December 12, 2023 and to authorize the use of electronic signatures. Followed by a roll call vote, Anderson – yes, Botaish – yes, Gallo – yes, Harrington – yes, Rouse – yes. Motion carries, 5-0.

Vote to Sign License Renewals - Alcohol, Common Victualler, Entertainment, Amusement, Class I, II, III

The Board reviewed the list of license renewals that was provided. The Board discussed the renewal of LaFamilia's license and decided to wait to vote to renew until their January meetings.

Motion made by Mr. Harrington, seconded by Mr. Anderson, the Board voted to approve the renewal of Alcohol, Common Victualler, Entertainment, Amusement, and Class I, II, III licenses of the attached list of establishments, excluding LaFamilia, pending confirmation establishments that owe taxes are currently

in good standing with the Tax Collector's Office, subject to issuance of a Renewal Certificate of Inspection issued by the Town of Wrentham Fire Chief and Building Commissioner for on premises liquor establishments and are in compliance with the Board of Health and to authorize the use of electronic signatures. Followed by a roll call vote, Anderson – yes, Botaish – yes, Gallo – yes, Harrington – yes, Rouse – yes. Motion carries, 5-0.

Approval of 2024 BOS Meeting Schedule

Motion made by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Mr. Harrington, the Board voted to approve the 2024 Board of Selectmen's Meeting Schedule as presented. Followed by a roll call vote, Anderson – yes, Botaish – yes, Gallo – yes, Harrington – yes, Rouse – yes. Motion carries, 5-0.

Vote to Adopt Updated Strategic Goals for FY24-25

Mr. Sweet spoke, the updated goals tie into the Government Finance Officers Association Distinguished Budget Presentation Award Program so that individual department budgets align with the goals of the Board and community.

Motion made by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Mr. Gallo, the Board voted to adopt the Fiscal Year 2024 to 2025 Board of Selectmen Strategic Goals & Objectives. Followed by a roll call vote, Anderson – yes, Botaish – yes, Gallo – yes, Harrington – yes, Rouse – yes. Motion carries, 5-0.

Resignation of Lori Yarworth – Fiske Library Trustees

Mr. Harrington read the following into the record,

It is with sadness that I must tender my resignation from the Fiske Library Board of Trustees, effective December 1, 2023. My husband and I are retiring to another state after living in Wrentham for over thirty years. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve the Town and the Library in this role multiple times over many years and I will miss them both.

Motion made by Mr. Gallo, seconded by Mr. Harrington, the Board voted to accept, with regrets, the resignation of Lori Yarwoth from the Fiske Library Trustees. Followed by a roll call vote, Anderson – yes, Botaish – yes, Gallo – yes, Harrington – yes, Rouse – yes. Motion carries, 5-0.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Sweet spoke, the Director of Planning & Economic Development, Rachel Benson is on the Boston Metropolitan Organization Board and recently had a meeting discussing the needs of Wrentham. The Town recently held an Annual Harassment Training for all employees.

Adjournment

Motion made by Mr. Anderson, and seconded by Ms. Rouse the Board voted to adjourn the open session meeting at 9:18PM. Followed by a roll call vote, Anderson – yes, Botaish – yes, Gallo – yes, Harrington – yes, Rouse – yes. Motion carries, 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Amanda Vasapollo, Executive Assistant