

The Meeting of the Board of Selectmen held on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, began at 5:30 p.m. in the Board of Selectmen's Conference Room.

Members Present: James Gennette, Derek DeBarge, Manuel Silva, and William Rosenblum

Members Absent: Antonio Goncalves

First Order of Business: The Pledge of Allegiance

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## VISITATIONS

5:35 p.m. Ron Saloio – To discuss 250<sup>th</sup> Committee Children's Bike Parade.

Mr. Saloio: I came to request most likely the riverwalk for a children's bike parade. My wife and I saw in Maine when we were on vacation they had a bike parade where kids came and decorated anything they could push, pull, tow or pedal and they decorated to a theme, probably patriotic. They walked through a common and they had judges at the end. The plan is the Saturday before the Memorial Day parade and hopefully the winners of that and anybody else that wants to if their floats are still together if they want to march in the Memorial Day parade they can. The riverwalk would be a cool place, secondary would be Baird.

Mr. Silva: It is ours and it's a public walkway and I don't know if we have anything to do with no bikes on there. I think it's a great thing to do and I don't see any issues.

Resident: My name is Lucy and I live across the street from the riverwalk and I drive through that area a lot. A lot of cars going through that area now. We should have it there but we have to control the cars coming in and out of there now. They're just using it for a short cut to get to the other end by the Senior Center. It's the perfect place for a riverwalk parade but the cars are starting to pick up. We probably need one cop or somebody on either end, probably 20-30 minutes.

Mr. Silva: Or just control the kids.

Mr. Saloio: I don't know how many people. I'm hoping it's a great showing. There will end up being cars parked along that road too because there's not a whole lot of parking there.

Mr. DeBarge: I think it can be done. I love the idea.

Mr. Gennette: If you're going to do a theme and put things up on the riverwalk you just have to clean it up when you're done. Chief, can they put DPW sawhorses out?

Chief Valadas: You're going to have to have officers work that?

Mr. Gennette: We can put that together.

Mr. Saloio: May 25<sup>th</sup> 10:00. We'll start earlier than that getting ready. It will be K-5.

## CORRESPONDENCE

193. Charlene Nalle, Licensing Coordinator for Cumberland Farms Stores – Informing the Board of the sale of the land located at 320 East Street, Ludlow.

194. Charlene Nalle, Licensing Coordinator for Cumberland Farms Stores – Informing the Board of the sale of the land located at 105 West Street, Ludlow.

195. Charlene Nalle, Licensing Coordinator for Cumberland Farms Stores – Informing the Board of the sale of the land located at 463 Center Street, Ludlow.

Mr. Silva: I believe that's just an intercorporate sale. A lot of these big franchises do that often. They switch corporate names and I don't think it has any bearing on this board here.

**Motion made by Mr. Silva to file. Mr. DeBarge second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

196. Jennifer T. Dufour, Resident – Requesting the Board appoint her as an unenrolled election poll worker.

**Motion made by Mr. DeBarge to appoint Ms. Jennifer T. Dufour as an unenrolled election poll worker. Mr. Rosenblum second.**

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Mr. Silva: We should get the Registrar, Town Clerk, usually there always is but if we appoint her and there isn't really any spot for her...

Mr. DeBarge: I'm assuming because it came through their office.

**All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

197. Christ the King – Annual Beano Report for 2023.

**Motion made by Mr. Silva to file. Mr. DeBarge second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

198. Polish American Club – Annual Beano Report for 2023.

**Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum to file. Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

199. Jamie Tomas, Director – Department of Public Works – Informing the Board that the Department of Public Works Snow and Ice Removal Budget has been over expended as of February 8, 2024.

Mr. Silva: Information for the public out there listening, although it looks like we haven't had much snow, our snow budget is usually very low and every year it runs out between the small snow, the ice. This is a budget item that lets us go over budget and I believe it's the only one that can go over budget and it's always a good thing to have and for the public out there that's why.

**Motion made by Mr. Silva to file. Mr. Rosenblum second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

200. Melissa Rickson, Director – Hubbard Memorial Library – Requesting permission from the Board to use the lawn adjacent to the parking lot of the library on Saturday, March 30, 2024, for the Egg-Stravaganza from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. with a rain date of Saturday, April 6, 2024. As well as the use of the lawn for a solar eclipse viewing party on Monday, April 8, 2024, from 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

**Motion made by Mr. DeBarge to approve as stated by the Chairman. Mr. Silva second.**

Mr. Gennette: Marc, did we coordinate these times with other people that are using the library parking lot? Have we checked the schedule to make sure we're not in conflict.

Mr. Strange: The library keeps the schedule so presumably.

**All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

201. Sgt. Brian Shameklis, Chairman Safety Committee – Informing the Board of its recommendation for a temporary new traffic pattern for East Street School. They are proposing changing Merrimac Street into a two-way street to allow residents to drive to or from their homes during student pick up in the afternoon.

Mr. Silva: I believe we made that a one-way road several years ago to alleviate some of the issues and I don't know if two-way is going to alleviate some of that. The other thing we need to have the school notify some of the parents that there is parking allowed and we're in a contract with the church across the street so some parents may take benefit of that and park there and walk over and pick up their children. As far as whether or not this is a good idea, if the Safety Committee has looked at it I don't know what else to say.

Mr. DeBarge: I'm going to support the Safety Committee. I'm reading the letter again and looking at the map and if this is something they think can alleviate it, but I do think Mr. Silva has a very good point, there is that parking lot there. I don't know if there's no desire for someone to park

and walk over but there's got to be a little give from those that are part of this as well. If this can help it and the Safety Committee thinks so, I'll support it. I would assume this would be a trial period.

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Mr. Strange: At the end of the letter, it says we recommend ~~2024~~ ~~MAR 20~~ ~~P 3:14~~ become effective April 1 and continue to the end of the school year.

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Ms. Ferreira: We live at 18 Merrimac Street and we cannot go to our house from 2:30 to 3:00 because they block the street. It's one way to get out of it.

Mr. Gennette: I agree with you and it looks like the Safety Committee is backing you up. They're going to try it and see how it goes.

Mr. Silva: A suggestion to let the parents know they can park across the street and if it takes 3-4 cars out of that jam it might help. This is relatively new so they might not know yet.

Mr. Strange: It says it was voted 4-0 to recommend to the Board of Selectmen and upon approval submit to East Street School so they may begin the process of educating parents of the new traffic plan and as part of that we can make sure they inform the parents they can park across the street at the church.

**Motion made by Mr. Silva to approve as sent in by the Safety Committee. Mr. Rosenblum second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

5:45 p.m. – Joshua Levine, Esq – Levine Law – to discuss his client, Shreeji Ne Sung, Inc – Plan to purchase 21 Harding Street.

Mr. Levine: I'm Joshua Levine of Levine Law East Longmeadow representing Shreeji Ne Sung, Inc. I appreciate you having me in here to discuss my client's plans not to buy 21 Harding Street. My client is currently under contract to buy the license for Turnpike Package store and transfer it to another location in town. The original intent was to put it at 21 Harding Street, which is currently a flooring store by CVS. I submitted a transfer application last May to this board and was told to take care of the location issue first. I spoke to the Planning Director and he suggested to do a change of occupancy application which would forgo a site plan, but the Planning Board rejected that and asked for a site plan, as the old site plan was over 20 years old. My client had a site plan prepared and traffic letter prepared by a consultant and last year I was in front of the Planning Board and a number of residents came to voice their opposition to the site plan and have the liquor store located there and it became clear that the board was worried about traffic increasing at that location and having enough parking with CVS. My client wants to be a good resident in Ludlow, he doesn't live here, and did not want to push through the application and didn't want to anger the neighbors. That site plan application as of last month has been withdrawn and I'm here tonight to discuss an alternate plan and to field questions from the board and see where we're at. A related corporation who runs the Shell gas station at 227 Center Street that there was a beer and wine license issued to them at that location in 2019 by this board and to my knowledge there has been no problems there. Given that the Harding location did not work out with the Turnpike Package license my client would like to move the Turnpike Package all alcohol license to 227 Center Street and take the place of the beer and wine license. For those familiar with the property, in the back there are car wash bays that are not being utilized and they haven't been for a while and my client has been in discussion with the landlord to block those off and use the back location of the building for storage, which would be necessary for a full package license. With that beer and wine license, my client is interested in transferring that to another related corporation that runs the Mobile station at 341 West Street, which currently does not have a liquor license. I'm on the Longmeadow Select Board which is the local license authority and I know when we have something with a lot of moving parts coming in it's nice to get a heads up, so that's what I'm here for today. Rather than drop 2 applications in your lap, I was hoping to discuss with you if you had any questions, concerns, suggestions, and I'm happy to answer any questions.

Mr. Silva: At this time, I feel the board doesn't have any comments or jurisdiction or anything we can give you. All of this does have to come with approval of the Planning Board and once they approve a site we look at it. From there we approve the licenses whichever way it's going to go. It's unfortunate some of these things didn't work out there but right now I really don't know I can come forth on. The location you're trying to put an all-alcohol liquor license there on West that

seems like a more intrusive traffic pattern and more than Harding. Right now, that is getting to be troublesome getting in and out of there. We've tried to do certain things, block the street off, a right of way there, and it's still the police department can probably tell us more on that. For me, I would have to wait to see what the recommendations of the Planning Board are.

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Mr. Levine: West Street would be the beer and wine license.

Mr. Silva: I'm sorry, West Avenue. West Street is beer and wine. Most package stores have beer and wine so that's not an issue. It's the all alcohol that could be.

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Mr. Rosenblum: I agree with the traffic pattern. I think that's worse than Harding because that intersection trying to get through there pretty much all day is back up coming off of West Ave and I think it's hard coming in and out of there. I'm not in any position to make a decision on it until we see what Planning has to say about it.

Mr. DeBarge: I appreciate this conversation because it's nice to be informed about things like this before they happen without our knowledge or some discussion. I also like the Harding Avenue residence. I think it would have worked out there. I think the traffic is always going to be difficult but I didn't think the business would add so much traffic to make it more congested but if you add 4-6 cars/hour to that parking lot as opposed to 4-6 cars/hour to the Shell gas station which makes it more chaotic. This is the Planning Board's but I appreciate you coming in. I understand you want the liquor to go to that Shell then the beer and wine to go to West. The West Street one I could see very easily but we'll see what Planning says.

Mr. Levine: To clarify, that's certainly a good point. The feedback I heard on Harding was the flooring store does not have a lot of traffic at all and we weren't adding a great number of trips according to the traffic study but adding a few extra trips to a gas station which already has a lot of trips it would be less noticeable but I will certainly keep this in mind when we're going forward.

Mr. Gennette: For some clarity, the same person that owns the liquor licenses also owns the Mobil and the Shell?

Mr. Levine: Same family.

Mr. Gennette: Are they transferring ownership from one person to another?

Mr. Levine: The idea would be to transfer the license between the entities. It's easier to keep the ownership and transfer the license rather than move the license completely.

Mr. Gennette: I don't have any questions. Same sentiment. Thank you for coming in and letting us know this is coming up and we can see what's happening. I'm sure if the community is watching they're going to let Marc know and they'll call in.

202. Chief Pease – Request to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for an injury sustained by a Firefighter/Paramedic as a result of an incident that occurred on February 12, 2024.

**Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum** to approve charging off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for an injury sustained by a Firefighter/Paramedic as a result of an incident that occurred on February 12, 2024. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

202. Chief Pease – Request to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for an injury sustained by a Firefighter/Paramedic as a result of an incident that occurred on February 13, 2024.

**Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum** to approve charging off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for an injury sustained by a Firefighter/Paramedic as a result of an incident that occurred on February 13, 2024. **Mr. DeBarge second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Board to approve and sign the Selectmen Minutes of January 23, 2024.

**Motion made by Mr. DeBarge** to approve and sign the Selectmen minutes of January 23, 2024, with all members present. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Board to approve and sign the foregoing Conservation Restriction from Elaine Hodgman to the Town of Ludlow, acting by and through its Conservation Commission, in the public interest pursuant to Section 32 of Chapter 184 of the General Laws of Massachusetts.

Mr. Silva: Elaine, you're sectioning off some of your property, a separate parcel and you're keeping your house? Is that portion considerable wetlands?

Ms. Hodgman: The front section is considerable wetlands. There is buildable sections in the land behind that to almost the spillway but it abuts the Springfield conservation restriction also.

Mr. Silva: As far as building, and we're putting this in conservation, is that going to be totally restricted for conservation purposes only?

Ms. Hodgman: I am going to retain ownership and harvest it if I want to.

Mr. Silva: You're going to retain ownership, it's just a formality. The land is not going to transfer to the town.

Ms. Hodgman: Not as of this time.

Mr. Silva: As a Town, we're always looking for parcels for various things.

**Motion made by Mr. DeBarge** to approve and sign the foregoing Conservation Restriction from Elaine Hodgman to the Town of Ludlow, acting by and through its Conservation Commission, in the public interest pursuant to Section 32 of Chapter 184 of the General Laws of Massachusetts. **Mr. Rosenblum second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

## VISITATIONS

6:00 P.M. – Patrolman Interview – Brandon Martins

Mr. Gennette: We're going to give you a chance to open, say a few words, we're going to ask you some questions, we'll let you close, we'll ask Chief what he thinks and we'll go from there.

Mr. Martins: I want to thank everybody for the opportunity for allowing me to be here. It's a great honor and privilege to sit in front of you today. My name is Brandon Martins. I'm 23 years old. I've lived and grown up in Ludlow my entire career. I graduated from Ludlow High School in 2018. I continued my education at Westfield State University where I obtained my bachelor's degree in criminal justice. While continuing my education I worked at Evan's Egg House in Ludlow for 6 years and I'm still currently working there. While working there I was working part-time at Mercedes-Benz in Springfield as a car detailer. Thank you again.

Mr. Rosenblum: Brandon, thanks for coming in. Congratulations for making it into the room. What do you see as your personal weakness?

Mr. Martins: I believe I'm very self-critical of myself. If I don't do something right I'm very hard on myself. I want to make sure I get things done the proper way, correct. I try to push myself and continuing to be better. If something doesn't go right the first time I want to make sure the second time it's done completely correct and try to make sure there is no second time.

Mr. Silva: I think I know this answer but considering what's happening with the police, it's not like it used to be, it's difficult and probably every town has an officer request out there. We're just not filling these positions. There's a lot of places you could go. Why Ludlow?

Mr. Martins: I grew up in Ludlow and lived here my entire life. The community has been great to me. I've worked in the community for the past 6 years. I'm dealing with customers every single day and a lot of them are residents of Ludlow. I love the community. We have many different

events. I'm Portuguese so the Festa and upcoming 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The community is always growing. Between the Portuguese and Polish Clubs, the Elks and Lodge, I believe the community is wonderful and I want to give back to the community that's been so great to me.

Mr. DeBarge: Brandon, congratulations, it's good to see you here. I was hoping at some point knowing your aspirations of law enforcement that I would see you here. Congratulations for being the first one in the interview tonight. What is your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a police officer?

Mr. Martins: I believe it's the police officer's duty to serve the community but also protect and keep the well-being of the community. Also, being involved with the community. It's not just pulling people over and giving tickets, it's also helping others out. Whether it be accidents even if you're not wearing the badge seeing them out there. They're speaking to you and you have to have a good responsibility and trust with the community. I believe that's major in the community...trust. Having good integrity and character.

Mr. Gennette: If you got the job, what would be the next step going forward?

Mr. Martins: I push myself to keep continuing and I would continue my education and hopefully get my master's degree in criminal justice and hopefully pushing through the department, whether it be a detective down the line or just pushing through the ranks. I just want to say again it's a great privilege to be here and I hope I'm able to serve the community in the future.

Chief Valadas: Our requirements for each candidate individually. If you're appointed by the Board this evening you have a pre-academy check list. None of this is of cost to you. A medical exam, drug testing, psychological exam. You'll have to complete a PAT, which is an obstacle course, by the Mass Human Resources Department. You'll have a PT test. You already did one but you'll have one through the academy for the MPTC which is the same standards you already experienced. The POST Commission requires an intake certification requirement form, we'll complete that form for you. The next ROCK Academy class is in your introduction letter and that's scheduled in May. If you negotiate the academy as a student officer and graduate you'll be subject to a 3-4-month FTO program. During your time of employment, you must maintain a Massachusetts license to carry a firearm, drivers license and POST certification. You can't use tobacco products, THC, or cannabis. Your civil service requirement is to live within 15 miles straight as a crow flies from the Ludlow border. This is a patrolman's position which will require you to work holidays, weekends, and mandatory overtime. There is a one-year probationary period. I hand this to all the recruits and if you're appointed today the police department will contact you with the further procedures.

6:15 p.m. – Patrolman Interview – Colette Trembley

Mr. Gennette: We'll give you an opportunity to say an opening statement, we're going to ask you a couple questions, we'll let you close, Chief is going to have a few words and we'll go from there.

Ms. Trembley: Good evening everyone. My name is Colette Trembley. I was born and raised in Ludlow. I went to Ludlow High School. I got a bachelor's degree in criminal justice at American International College. My goal at the end of that was to become a police officer. I was advised by a few people to go to the jail and work for them. You'll get your foot in the door and you can see whether or not you like this field. I applied as a cadet and I worked at the Women's Correctional Center in Chicopee for 3 months and I absolutely love it. I'm currently a recruit in the 51<sup>st</sup> WMCCOC Correctional Officer Academy. I'm about 6 weeks into that. I'm going to graduate April 5. I'm loving it. It solidified my decision to enter law enforcement and I'm excited to apply for this position and to be a police officer one day.

Mr. Silva: Viewing what's happening in the police world, not many are applying to be police officers. I'm surprised we have 5 candidates here before us. There's so many areas you could go into policing, why Ludlow?

Ms. Trembley: It's where I grew up. It's what I'm familiar with. I enjoy the community. I worked at Walgreen's and I enjoy working with our community in this Town. It's what I'm familiar with. I've interacted with some members of the Ludlow Police Department and I think they're an awesome group of people.

Mr. DeBarge: Pleasure to meet you. Congratulations for pursuing this position and making it here. Through my own experience I know it's not easy to get into the room and DeMelo Silva's point there's not a lot of people applying. What is your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a police officer?

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Ms. Trembley: From my perspective and what I've seen and learned, number 1 is to protect and serve the community. Whether it be helping out on smaller or larger things it's catering themselves towards the community as well as being open to the community.

Mr. Rosenblum: Congratulations. What do you see as your personal weakness?

Ms. Trembley: It might be caring too much about others, so much so that sometimes I can forget about myself. In this academy you have to think about your fellow recruits because it's a team effort. If someone forgets an item we all get punished or put through physical exercise. Sometimes I'm focusing so much on other people that I forget about myself.

Mr. Gennette: What's next if you get the job?

Ms. Trembley: If I do become a police officer one of my ultimate goals is to become a police detective. I know that can take a few years and it's not promised. I would like to move up within the ranks and work my way up through the department.

Mr. DeBarge: How do you feel about doing the corrections academy then jumping right into back-to-back academies?

Ms. Trembley: I have been told I have grit for doing 2 academies in 1 year. I'm really glad I did it. Being in the correctional officer academy I am going to be a correctional officer for about a month before this academy would start. I did it because it would get me extra in shape and prepare me even more. It would solidify the knowledge I'm going to learn in the correctional academy as well as what I'm going to learn in the police officer academy. There is some stuff that crosses over like first responder training. For me it's more knowledge for me to gain. Thank you for having me here tonight and I'm really excited for this journey.

Chief Valadas: I have a prerequisite list to go over with you. If the Board chooses to appoint you this evening, next what will be happening is you'll have a medical exam for the civil service HRD standard, that includes drug testing, a psychological exam. You'll have to do a PAT, which is an obstacle course required. You'll have a PT test through the MPTC which is the academy standard and you've already gone through. There's a POST Commission and we'll complete that with you before the academy. The next academy listed in your letter is in May and we're hoping to get you in that Holyoke academy. After the academy with successful graduation, you'll transfer from a student officer to an FTO, basically as a probation officer. It's a 3-4-month program. During your employment with the Ludlow Police Department, you have to maintain a license to carry a firearm, a driver's license, you have to always be POST certified. You're not allowed to use tobacco products, cannabis, or THC products. You have a residence requirement in civil service which is to remain 15 miles as the crow flies from the Ludlow border. This is a patrolman's position and it includes holidays, weekends, mandatory overtime, and the probationary period is one year. I'm going to hand you this today. You don't have to do anything with it and we'll make contact with you if the Board appoints you tonight.

6:30 p.m. – Patrolman Interview – Lucas Dantas

Mr. Gennette: We're going to give you an opportunity to open and say your piece, we're going to ask you some questions, let you close and go from there.

Mr. Dantas: My name is Lucas Dantas. I've been a resident of Ludlow for the vast majority of my life. I work at Randall's Farm as a deli clerk part time and I volunteer at the Three Rivers Fire Department part-time as well. I graduated from high school in 2021. I'm currently at Holyoke Community College in my last semester trying to receive my associate's.

Mr. DeBarge: Pleased to meet you and congratulations and thank you for taking the test and wanting to do this. We're happy when we get good candidates for our police department. What is your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a police officer?

Mr. Dantas: The basics, such as protecting and serving the community and also putting yourself out there as a good person, showing the community and other police officers that you're a trustworthy person and knowledgeable of the job and you can do the job without any fear or reluctance.

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Mr. Rosenblum: Congratulations. What do you see as your personal weakness?

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Mr. Dantas: Overthinking situations, even minor things to the point where I could probably lose some sleep at night. For example, explaining something to somebody if they didn't fully understand it I think about it. Could I have said that better to have them fully understand it or if a situation happens what could I have done to have a better outcome.

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Mr. Silva: Congratulations for choosing this profession. It's problematic what's happening with the police department and every day you hear things that are atrocious. Right now, there's probably many police departments that are looking for police officers all over the area. Why Ludlow?

Mr. Dantas: I chose this town because I've lived here the vast majority of my life interacting with the community on a daily basis where I work at Randall's Farm. It gives me the impression that the vast majority of the community is very good and even within themselves they always communicate and talk with each other. It gives me a good impression of not just the community but police officers as well. Having grown up and interacting with them it gives me the impression that this department is professional and respectful of everything.

Mr. Gennette: If you get the job, what's next?

Mr. Dantas: I would attempt to go for my bachelor's as a part time student and finish that and later down the road moving up in the ranks. Thank you all for having me here and listening to me talk. It is a good opportunity.

Chief Valadas: Each candidate tonight I will go over a prerequisite check list that we will help you complete if the Board appoints you tonight. You'll have a pre-academy screening of a medical exam which includes drug testing, a psychological exam. You'll have to pass a PAT, which is an obstacle course. You'll have a PT test from the MPTC like the one you just took. You have a POST Commission intake certification checklist that we help you do. The next academy we're hoping to get you in is in May in Western Mass, Holyoke. If you successfully graduate the academy you'll have to transfer from a student officer to a probationary FTO program, which is our training officer program. It's 3-4 months. With your employment you have to maintain a license to carry a firearm and driver's license. You have to meet all POST certification standards. You cannot smoke or use cannabis or THC products. Your residential requirements per civil service is 15 miles as the crow flies from Ludlow. This is a patrolman's position and it requires you to work holidays and weekends. There's mandatory overtime and the probationary period is one year. I'm going to give this to you and if you're appointed today we'll make contact with you, you don't have to do anything.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Board to approve the Animal Control Officer's classification effective immediately.

Mr. Strange: This is just a housekeeping matter. When the Board approved the reclassifications Octavia was part of the vote was for it to start July 1 but the Chief wants it to start immediately.

Mr. Gennette: Is there a problem in the budget?

Mr. Strange: I don't think so.

Chief Valadas: Do you remember Kim telling you a long time ago you have 4 budgets and it's cumulative so we don't have any end of year transfers. There's no line item in the ACO budget for overtime, but there is for salary. If I was to exceed it I would transfer from another account. The question for the Board is you had mentioned to her there's a big difference between that salary increase at the NU level and it's different between 40 and 35 hours. You would be giving her a raise but it's up to you. I spoke with Ms. Ribeiro and Mr. Strange and are you doing a 35-hour



position or 40-hour position? At some point in time 35-hour people also make overtime and I have no line item for overtime. That's something the Board needs to consider.

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Mr. Gennette: This remedies that situation then?

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Chief Valadas: If you give her 40 hours it's a substantial increase so you would be telling her she's doing it in 40 hours with no overtime. Mr. Strange can clarify with the Fair Labor Standards Act, can you tell someone she can't work overtime and if she does she'd have to get paid. You're giving her 5 hours more to accomplish her duties in a week. She has made it very clear that she needs a lot of hours to get her job done.

Mr. Rosenblum: I'd like to hold off until we talk to Carrie and get the job posting and how its listed. I know that we had it in front of us I don't remember what the breakdown was.

Mr. Strange: The way it works is Octavia was not on any scale so this puts her on the non-union scale and the non-union scale is based on 35 hours.

Mr. Gennette: What's your recommendation? Table this until we can get what?

Mr. Silva: Numbers.

Mr. Strange: The numbers are what they are. You discussed this at the meeting where you considered all the reclassifications. The non-union 10 step 4 is where you voted to put Octavia on effective July 1 is about \$9,000 increase. That's at 35 hours. At 40 hours it's a \$16,000 increase. The non-union scale presumes a 35-hour workweek. The Chief put through a personnel action form which is standard operating procedure to make that reclassification effective immediately. You voted to make it effective July 1.

Mr. Gennette: Was the original request for immediately?

Mr. Strange: It's part of the fiscal 25 budget.

Mr. Gennette: What's your recommendation?

Mr. Strange: I think we should be consistent with the reclassifications. If we move Octavia's up there's probably going to be other people who are going to want to move theirs up. That's what we've seen in recent history. I think she's worth the money but in terms of administering budgets and making it fair for everybody it probably should wait until July 1.

Mr. DeBarge: Some of the other reclassifications we talked about, one at the Senior Center, and Marc brought it up and that was the point I was going to bring up, yes, Octavia does a fantastic job, as everyone does that we want to reclassify. This is unusual for me sitting here to have a request for immediately so I'm more inclined to stay where we're at, where we agreed. How do you make one more important than the other so I'm for keeping it on July 1.

Mr. Silva: Was our vote for July 1 and Chief is requesting we do it immediately. I think maybe stay where we are is the prudent way to do it and also look into the issue with 35-40 hours. I know there was some discrepancy as to whether or not she can do her job in 35 hours or she needs those 40. Maybe we can look later on and see if there's a change we need to make to get her to the 40 hours and adjust the compensation.

Mr. Gennette: Is July 1 40 hours?

Mr. Rosenblum: To Mr. DeBarge's point, I agree in doing it for one means doing it for everyone. The other part of it is I do see that if the money is in a different line item to do it now for 35 to where the Chief can find the money in another line item and transfer it and he stays within the budget and I wouldn't have a problem with that. If we went back and reassessed the July 1 date looking into 40 hours so what we're doing is giving a raise and reducing hours. As we've heard she doesn't have enough hours to do her job now and we're going to keep her at 35. I go back to the point that if we do it now someone else could come to us and ask for it. I would say we stay put right now and reassess going to 40 hours and the different pay increase in fiscal 25 to make it

because I think we might have all expressed the thought about overtime is if she can't do it within the 35 maybe revisit 40 so I would stay put right now and reassess.

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Mr. Gennette: I think this has become a pretty important position in town. I would love to be able to do this.

Mr. Rosenblum: I think staying consistent is the main thing. Someone will say you did it for police now can you do it for us. Again, I agree. If we can afford to put her at 40 so we don't have to discuss overtime and she gets the extra pay and that's effective July 1. The other point is we're trying to get it to level budget right now.

Mr. DeBarge: Is the number still the number \$600,000 over?

Mr. Strange: Yes, \$550,000.

Mr. Rosenblum: It's only another \$7,000 but it's still asking for more money.

Mr. Silva: Marc mentioned something about this year and I questioned whether or not we're going to meet our revenues, they were saying our revenues are down for the year. That could be an issue. If we're going to spend money that will add to that revenue deficit.

Mr. Strange: Yes.

Mr. Silva: You said we should still meet the revenue for 24. We don't want to run into deficit for 24. That would really put us in a jam.

Mr. Strange: The position has already been approved so unless you are going to change that vote.

Mr. Rosenblum: It is something we have to look at.

Mr. Gennette: Alright, we'll take no action.

## VISITATIONS

6:45 p.m. – Patrolman Interview – Jonathan Boire

Mr. Gennette: We'll give you a chance to say a few words, we'll ask you some questions, let you close, Chief is going to have some comments and we'll go from there.

Mr. Boire: My name is Jonathan Boire, I am 24 years old from Chicopee, MA. After high school I attended Holyoke Community College. There I graduated with an associate degree in criminal justice with honors. At 19 ½ years old I enlisted in the US Navy as a communications electrician. As a petty officer 3<sup>rd</sup> class, I also worked as a firefighter on my ship on the import emergency team. There I combated fires, flooding, toxic gases, and medical emergencies. After my 4 years in the US Navy, I was awarded a Naval Achievement medal for my role as a safety electrical supervisor working with the nuclear reactor department. After my discharge I started my work at Holyoke Medical Center as a security officer. There I learned the tactics of de-escalation and CPI and now I'm here.

Mr. Rosenblum: Congratulations. Thanks for coming in and thanks for choosing this line of work. What do you see to be your personal weakness.

Mr. Boire: My personal weakness might be second guessing myself. I always try to do the right thing and especially in this line of work. If you don't do the right thing that can be you. As much as I want to I see myself second guessing myself. That would probably be my weakness. On the basis of trying to do the right thing.

Mr. Silva: Viewing what's happening in the police departments across the country it's a difficult decision to move into this field of work. There's a lot of police departments that are looking for employment.

Mr. Boire: I believe Ludlow is a great town to live in. It's one of those towns to raise a family, the schools are great, the local community is great. Country-wide for the last few years we know policing hasn't really been looked on in a good light. My goal entering the police force is wanting to leave it better than what I found it. No one is perfect, no one is expecting you to be perfect and there are going to be hiccups along the way but at the same time when I enter something I want to leave it better than what I found it. As I leave the police force after 25-30 years and retire I want it easier for the next guy and I expect the same thing from him. When the next guy comes in 30 years I want him to leave it better than when I left it.

Mr. DeBarge: What is your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a police officer?

Mr. Boire: From my understanding it's to serve the public in whatever needs they have at that time. It's that simple. You take an oath to protect and serve. You take an oath to defend the constitution of the United States and that's what you and the police chief expect out of a police officer. To uphold people's rights and their livelihood.

Mr. Gennette: If you get this job, what's next? What's the plan?

Mr. Boire: To move up within the ranks of the Ludlow PD and after 30-40 years retire.

Mr. Gennette: Do you have any closing comments you'd like to make?

Mr. Boire: No.

Chief Valadas: Jonathan, each candidate tonight is going over a list of prerequisites. If you're appointed by the Board this evening you'll have to complete a medical exam per HRD standards, which includes drug testing. You'll have to complete a psychological exam; the PAT test is an obstacle course. You'll take the PT test you've already done administered by us but you'll take the MPTC academy pre-entry PT test. You'll have to complete a POST commission intake certification requirement and we'll do that with you. In a letter I mentioned to you that the Holyoke academy is starting in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of May and we hope to get you in that class. If you successfully transfer and graduate from a student officer to a probationary police officer there's an FTO program within the police department that's 3-4 months. During your course of employment, you have to maintain a license to carry a firearm, a driver's license, maintain your POST certification. You are not allowed to use tobacco products, cannabis, and THC. There's a residency requirement in civil service that you live within 15 miles as the crow flies from the border of Ludlow. This is a patrolman's position so it will require you to work holidays, weekends, and mandatory overtime duty assignments. You have a probationary period of one year. I'm going to give this to you. If you're appointed today we'll contact you and we'll help you get all that done.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Board to approve and sign the extension contract between the Town of Ludlow (DPW) and Veolia Water in the amount of \$24,962.65 for the operation and maintenance service agreement for the four pump stations.

**Motion made by Mr. Silva** to extend the contract between the Town of Ludlow (DPW) and Veolia Water in the amount of \$24,962.65. **Mr. DeBarge second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Board to discuss the proposed aggregate electric program.

Mr. Gennette: In a couple weeks we're going to have a presentation. We've moved into the next phase of aggregate electric. For those that don't know what aggregate electric is, Massachusetts offers residents the ability to choose their electric supplier. You can pick any supplier you want. There's a lot of them trying to earn your business, some of them good some of them bad. What we can do as part of Mass Power Choice is we can combine our purchase power with the residents, negotiate on behalf of them with other towns and we can get an electric supply rate hopefully cheaper than what Eversource can provide. It will give you an alternative. It is an op-in automatically programmed, which is not uncommon for something like this. You can opt in and out of this program at will if you just don't like it and you want to go to Eversource, so be it. If you want to get back in you can opt back in any time you want. None of the savings from the supply go to the municipality, it is literally just for residents to save money on their electric. The

reason we put this on the agenda is because Mass Power Choice, Peregrine Energy who is our third-party consultant, said it would be beneficial to alert the Board that they're coming in with a presentation so if you had any questions or if we wanted to talk about it ahead of time at least you knew a little more before the presentation. There is a public comment period open to the community to come in and have conversations about it. It's more for that reason that we're doing this. We have to by Mass state law meet certain requirements and they're very stringent and we have to meet so many times through a certain amount of time to meet the minimum requirement to be able to pursue aggregate electric. Right now, we're in phase 2. I asked Peregrine Energy to send the PDF for your perusal. This is the Ludlow Power Choice logo. The website is up. You can search Ludlow Power Choice. Ludlow Power Choice is a municipal electric aggregation, which is a form of a group buying for electricity in which a municipality secures an electricity supply for its residents and businesses. The loans goals are to provide cleaner electricity for residents and businesses, create new electricity choices, provide stable electric prices. Another good thing about this program is you can choose if you want to select more green energy in your bill. If you don't and you just want your bill to be real cheap. You can pay a lot of money and be all green if that's really important to you but you have the ability to choose what level you would like to participate in green energy. It's part of the reason Massachusetts is backing it. They have a 2050 goal of being carbon neutral by 2050. I believe it's 90% carbon neutral. The biggest thing is if you want to see for yourself what we're looking at right now it's on the website. This is more for the selectmen to understand what's happening.

Mr. Silva: What happens when Ludlow goes into this aggregate in storms and maintenance with Eversource? Who's going to be taking care of that? Is Eversource going to be responsive to Ludlow.

Mr. Gennette: That's probably the first question on most people's minds. Eversource is a distribution company. Your bill will still come from Eversource. They still maintain the power lines, they're still our electric distributor, it's just they don't buy the supply of power. It's bought through somewhere else through a negotiation. It's still supplied through their lines and they still maintain all of it. Nothing would change as far as service goes.

Mr. Silva: Are we assuming that or is that fact?

Mr. Gennette: It's definitely the case.

Mr. Silva: You call Eversource and generally they're responsive. I just hope that keeps going.

Mr. Gennette: This doesn't hinder Eversource in any way. There's not any kind of backlash or anything like that. It doesn't matter where the supply comes from as far as Eversource is concerned. Their focus is distribution.

Chief Valadas: Is that similar to Veridian where you have an Eversource bill and they're your provider and you sign the 1, 2, 3 year and they're just the supply, not the conduit.

Mr. Gennette: It's the same thing but just for the residents.

Chief Valadas: And the town would be the facilitator?

Mr. Gennette: Yes. The municipality right now doesn't use the supply from Eversource. I think we use Spark. We don't buy our supply from Eversource. The residents will get an opportunity to participate in some savings as well.

Chief Valadas: I think it's an excellent idea.

Mr. DeBarge: I think you did a hell of a job on this. You and all the people you work with. I know you came onto the Board with this in mind and it's nice to see when you get elected and you start to see something come to fruition. Great job on this.

Mr. Gennette: Thank you, I appreciate it.

Mr. Rosenblum: Thank you for bringing that up. I mentioned it once before how you can shop your supplier. I shop my supplier and find better rates. I think Eversource is over 14 and you can find some under 11.

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Mr. Gennette: You can opt in or out.

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Mr. Rosenblum: You can see the rate you'd get through this vs shopping another rate.

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Mr. Gennette: I don't know what that would look like. You can definitely shop the rate. You'll know what it is when it comes out. You can opt in or out any time and this third-party company will take care of who's in, who's out and the municipality doesn't have to manage that. We don't get into the paperwork on the town side of doing it so even better.

## VISITATIONS

7:00 p.m. – Patrolman Interview – Michael Ponce

Mr. Gennette: We're going to let you open up, we'll ask you some questions, we'll let you close and the Chief has some comments.

Mr. Ponce: My name is Michael Ponce. A quick background. I'm military. I'm in the Reserves. I'll have 10 years May 19; I'm looking to shoot for 20. Air Force at Westover. I'm currently a Sergeant with plans of moving up. I'm currently working at the Springfield RMV as an armed guard. I work with reports, de-escalation, medical calls. If something goes down, Springfield police arrives and my reports to them usually helps out with information and EMS helps out as well as fire department depending on the issue. I have prior academy experience as well. I was with Chicopee but resigned on week 22, a few days before graduation. I have knowledge of the academy.

Mr. DeBarge: It's a pleasure to meet you. Congratulations and it's nice to have applicants for this position. What is your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a police officer?

Mr. Ponce: Like I've said before in other meetings, you are the public face of your department. Anything you do in the wrong will make the department look bad. You don't want that. You are the face of your department. Their role is keeping the peace as best you can. There's hiccups across the road. You try your best to fix your mistakes.

Mr. DeBarge: Since you brought it up, I am curious about your resignation just before graduation. I'm a retired police man so I know how the academy is. Do you mind expanding on that?

Mr. Ponce: In Chicopee there was a cheating scandal going on. The initial people in the cheating scandal were pushed out in May. They kept following up and saw my name in a group chat that my number was not part of. At the same time, I had 2 test fails and there was another test fail that did not count because it doesn't go towards your GPA. It was describing if a person is intoxicated while operating a motor vehicle. You need a state requirement of 80 and I got a 75.

Mr. DeBarge: I appreciate your honesty, thank you.

Mr. Rosenblum: Congratulations for making it here. What do you feel is your personal weakness?

Mr. Ponce: Like anybody else, I'm 29 years old and came a long way controlling emotion, that's very easy, but better understanding, as in more time management.

Mr. Silva: Thank you for applying because what's happening out there is very difficult. Right now, there's a lot of police departments in a lot of different communities that are looking for police officers. Why choose Ludlow?

Mr. Ponce: Ludlow is a very nice town. The police are very involved in the community. From what I've seen, everybody knows each other. It's across the river from Westover so I'm very familiar with Chicopee. I'm not from here, I'm an outsider. I can learn like anybody else. From what I've seen, you do a marathon for the Marine, toys for tots, a historic area around and the golf

course. Ludlow looks like a beautiful city to go on with your career, enjoy life and never have to worry about anything.

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Mr. Gennette: Let's say you get the job, what's next?

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Mr. Ponce: If I get the job it's always going to move up forward. I don't care how long it takes. You work holidays, maybe even get held back. I've been deployed and I know what it's like working 16 hours or longer and you have to finish things before you can go to bed. Losing sleep is no problem. I want to be a Sergeant and keep moving on. Patrolman first, Sergeant would be the next goal. Obviously there's a lot of studying for that. From there see where else I can keep moving up. I'd like to ask the Chief, I've seen you in the academy and I've watched you teach, you did a great job. Do you have any questions for me?

Chief Valadas: I have a list of things I'm telling all the candidates tonight.

Mr. Ponce: Whatever happens tonight, however it goes, I don't hold anything personal. There's always another opportunity in life. Always stay positive.

Chief Valadas: I'll give you this before you leave but what you'll have to get done as prerequisite to complete being a Ludlow police officer is we will screen you again just like you did pre academy screening. There will be another medical exam, drug testing, psychological exam. You would still have to take the PAT test, which is the obstacle course. The PT test you've already taken. You'll take another one for the MPTC. We'd have to complete a POST commission intake certification requirement. The next Western Mass ROCK is in May. We'd have to check your academy status and see if you could go back to the same academy or if you'd have to go to another one. If you were successfully able to complete the academy and graduate you would join our department as a probationary officer. There's an FTO program of 3-4 months. You'd have various shift assignments. You have to maintain your license to carry a firearm, drivers license, and POST certification at all times. You're not allowed to use tobacco products, cannabis, or THC. There's a residential requirement in civil service that states you have to live within 15 miles of the municipality. It's a patrolman position so you would be subject to holidays, weekends, mandatory overtime, and there's a one-year probationary period. If you're appointed by the board this evening we will reach out to you.

Chief Valadas: I'd ask the Board if you would, I have 3 openings, those are budgeted positions that are vacant. You'll have promotional interviews in front of you in a month for Lieutenant and subsequently a Sergeant's position and that will create a 4<sup>th</sup> opening that's budgeted. I would ask that you do an alternate. So, appoint 1-3 to determine their badge number and seniority and if you would oblige me with an alternate that would facilitate us moving faster with the hope of getting them in for May.

Mr. Silva: Chief, how do you feel about these candidates? Have they been looked at vigorously and are they capable to do these positions? It's not easy anymore to be a police officer. I'm just wondering if we did our due diligence with all of these candidates being fit or should we appoint 1-2 and wait to possibly get some more. I know it's difficult but I hate just filling a position and it's not a fit.

Chief Valadas: I appreciate the question. Ms. Ribeiro has participated for many years with us on the oral boards. Those backgrounds you got were just finished at 10:30 on Friday morning. We went out further than we have. I used to say the civil service system for us was expedient and cheap and we always had 20 people from Ludlow. This time we went over 60 and we went out of town. We did last time. We had a small number initially send in the notice, 8 people, and that dwindled down to 5. I believe as you interviewed today the top 3 oral interviews are Ludlow residents. Lt. Brennan and 3 officers administer a PT test. That's a big hiccup for a lot of police departments. They want to hire but they won't be able to make it through the PT test. I was assured by the staff that was there that they all passed, or very close. Four of them passed and one was very close to the 30<sup>th</sup>. I can say with confidence, and I spoke to Lt. Brennan, they would pass the 40<sup>th</sup>. All 5 of them. The oral board you have the scores in front of you. This is very objective. I don't know any of these people. The Board was diverse to include Ms. Ribeiro as well. I think these are very comprehensive. Use your judgement and go in the order you wish. You understand civil service. Your 3 candidates from Ludlow are fine, likable young people that are from town that are Ludlow High School graduates. I think that does have some standing. I will say that I do believe Mr.

Martins is a superior candidate. Mr. Martins would be your sought-after candidate in every other police department. Watching him do PT and the way he conducts himself he's a star candidate and could go work anywhere. I'll offer that opinion and leave it at that.

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Mr. Silva: I'm happy to see. In my rating he was the top candidate.

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Mr. DeBarge: I had Brandon Martins as my highest score in the confidence and way he answered the questions, he was very prepared. I liked a lot of his answers especially to Mr. Silva's question about why Ludlow. He said the community has been great to me with the job that he has in Town. I was impressed by that answer. He seems very driven. I would definitely put him first. I hold a lot of respect to the police department's interview process. It's much more thorough as it should be than ours in a way. I would love that information a little bit earlier than noon today because I had to scramble to read some of the stuff.

Chief Valadas: I apologize for that and I take responsibility for that.

Mr. DeBarge: I appreciate that. Nonetheless, the bullet points I've said every time we interview, the bullet points that lieutenant, sergeant, and patrol provide are stellar. I'm prepared. I know how you rated them, but I also agree with you about residence, which brings me to a point. I would love to take this list as it is, I think Brandon Martins should be first no matter how the order goes, and I was very impressed with Ms. Tremblay, how she handled herself in the interview. I liked her answers. I thought that her demeanor was something that could be a great asset to the police department. I would put her 2<sup>nd</sup>, as the order goes. Lucas loved his answers about the community. Interacting with customers from Randalls, being young and trainable I think he'd be an asset. Jonathan Boire, a naval veteran which means he's experienced, he's been around, he's seen things and been able to react to things. I notice in the police department's they were impressed with his answers to his stress questions because of the things he has seen and done. Mr. Ponce, I give anybody credit when asked a direct question and they give a direct answer. I appreciate that. That is something that is unfortunate but I appreciate him bringing that up and expanding on the question that I asked. Chief, the way the succession goes you said we'll have the lieutenant interviews and sergeant interviews. Is that to say that an alternate that we appoint tonight would be that or do we have to do this again?

Chief Valadas: No, Ms. Ribeiro has cleared this with civil service because we've done this twice before.

Ms. Ribeiro: We would have to revise the requisition instead of hiring 3 to hire 4 and you can make the appointment as the alternate.

Mr. Rosenblum: We always say we always defer to the experts when it has anything that has to do with police and fire. Your process is above anything that we could do here so I take it for the work that you have to do and Ms. Ribeiro has to do. Brandon, of course, is my number 1. I would go down second with Colette Tremblay. I have a flip only because I like Mr. Boire's background so I would have him 3 and have Lucas Dantas as alternate. Understanding residency and that there's a good chance he's going to end up coming in.

Mr. DeBarge: I'm not opposed to that with the question being answered about the alternate.

Mr. Rosenblum: However the motion goes I'm fine if it falls on those 4.

Mr. Gennette: I don't disagree with any of you. I think that everybody says it's difficult to do. Every single one of these candidates had something special about them. I actually had Ms. Tremblay first. I was blown away by her.

Chief Valadas: Excellent candidate.

Mr. Gennette: She's phenomenal. I literally wrote on a note to Derek, Wow. I was really blown away by her. She was my number 1; Brandon came in number 2. Once you get a little further down, you start talking about military service, Ponce has got coming up on 10 years in the Air Force. It's kind of hard to overlook military backing. A little experience that some others don't have. Again, Boire has military experience in the Navy. I'm right in there with the same 4. I don't see any reason to stretch out any further. Does it matter who's first, second or third?

Chief Valadas: For seniority it does. Please do each one individually. That's their badge and seniority.

**Motion made by Mr. DeBarge** to appoint Mr. Brandon Martin to the Ludlow Police Department effective midnight. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

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**Motion made by Mr. DeBarge** to appoint Ms. Colette Tremblay to the Ludlow Police Department effective to be determined. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

**Motion made by Mr. DeBarge** to appoint Jonathan Boire to the Ludlow Police Department effective to be determined. **Mr. Rosenblum second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Mr. Silva: The only reason I have that is there is a little more experience than Mr. Dantas. He looks like he needs a couple more years under his belt. He looks pretty young. They're close as can be so I'm good with it.

**Motion made by Mr. DeBarge** to appoint Mr. Lucas Dantas as the alternate to the Ludlow Police Department effective to be determined. **Mr. Rosenblum second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Mr. Gennette: You got that order, Chief?

Chief Valadas: I do. Thank you gentlemen.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Board to discuss and possibly vote to allocate opioid settlement funds.

Mr. Gennette: We did have a letter come in from resident, Walter Craven, who is a precinct member as well. RE: Opioid Settlement Funds. As you are aware, the Commonwealth has allocated funds to all of its towns and cities as part of the Attorney General's opioid settlement lawsuit. These funds will be distributed through the Massachusetts Opioid recovery and redemption fund earmarked to programs that incorporate community input from those directly affected by the opioid epidemic, address service disparities, to increase access and equity and treatment and services for OUD prevention and harm reduction related to opiates and the efforts are supposed to leverage existing state, city, town and community opioid use disorders, mental health disorders and behavioral health disorder programming and services. With that said I would like to share some thoughts and my reasons for writing you about this topic. My family has been personally affected by opioids in several different ways. From adults dealing with lifetime substance abuse issues to one of my children being exposed to opioids in utero. These issues have profound impacts on my family for which they are having or will have long life struggles. In addition, I work with several state agencies, see attached, that see the daily impact of the opioid issue. At work, like at home, the social impacts are profound, but what is most profound is the fact that it's all around us and it mostly goes unseen or unspoken about. The epidemic simply lives in the shadows of shame. Ludlow, like so many other communities, have people of all ages dealing from this fallout. How do we as a community best help them? By enhancing or bringing in programs already available that can't be ruled out within Ludlow. These programs can involve direct treatment, post and pre-exposure education programs, long term therapeutic and support programs and direct family and kinship support programs. Many of these programs are active in other areas and many are community or volunteer driven. Ludlow's unique current base of family, religious and civic programs position us to do wonderful things if we are all brought together with common cause. What should be the first step? To bring people together in a cooperative fashion, to talk and review our town's needs and wishes and to gain exposure to the fact that it's shared issues by many others. Once done, a plan can be presented to the Board with a longer-term plan to support the families who have been impacted by this epidemic. This letter is just the beginning and I hope your Board embraces the fact the need to do more is clear. I know the money currently allocated really isn't a lot of money but clearly from my perspective it can be a profound impact with just a little bit of community effort and a focused direction. Sincerely, Walter E. Craven. Some of the organizations he mentioned are Massachusetts Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, Massachusetts Juvenile Court, Massachusetts Department of Children and Families, Massachusetts Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Elliot Community Health Specialists, Center for Human Development, Federation of Center with Special Needs, Community for Public



Council and Ludlow Public Schools CPAC Co-Chair. Thank you Mr. Craven for sending that in. I would say that I think most of the community is with you. When you talk about what do you have to do and bringing people together in a cooperative fashion and talk about the teen's needs and wishes and exposure to the facts. Ludlow CARES is a pretty strong group and they actually do that. They're in the schools. We just distributed some money to them, we voted on it, and for them to be able to have direct impact to what's going on. I strongly encourage you to check out a Ludlow CARES event. Everybody in Ludlow is a member of Ludlow CARES whether you realize it or not. You are a member, just go show up. It's a wonderful group of people down there.

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Mr. DeBarge: CARES is the benchmark. It's everything that Walter had to say, which I appreciate his letter and I agree with it. It explains what CARES has done for years. What I say about a benchmark is after CARES started and became as successful as it is you see a lot of others start to pop up in other communities. Again, I've always been in support of...I think we're lucky to be able to sit here and discuss we have this opioid money, what can we do. To have CARES Coalition be as seasoned as they are in this epidemic is a benefit to us to be able to provide funds. I'm glad we're able to do it.

Mr. Rosenblum: I'd just like to thank Mr. Craven for sending in that letter and thank him for the work he does. You can tell he's very involved and compassionate about it. I don't know if he's involved or if he's gone to CARES meetings but maybe that's something for him to, if he hasn't already maybe go to one of their meetings and see where funding is going and compare it to where he is thinking about it. Maybe he has some more input into what CARES can do with it.

Mr. Silva: I looked at the different areas we could possibly funnel some funds to and I listed them in somewhat of an order. CARES is on top of my list as well. I was a member and what they do is incredible. I have police and fire which directly deals with opioids and whatever monies we can funnel to them is certainly beneficial to buy Narcan or whatever it is they need. Then I have the Board of Health and Michael J. Dias. They've had Ludlow residents in their facilities and they do wonderful work with the opioids. There's probably others as well. I know the library mentioned something. It depends on what we have and how they allocate them. Do we need to allocate these funds shortly? Do we have requests for amounts or anything? How much do we have?

Mr. Strange: To date we have \$157,000 minus \$30,000 that you already allocated to CARES. I just got an email today we should be receiving a couple more deposits in the amount of \$131,000 that should be coming in the spring sometime. The reason we wanted to put this back on the agenda is this has been an evolving situation. Initially, Town Meeting had to be the entity to allocate the funds. If you remember at the fall town meeting there was an article to create a stabilization fund for the opioids. Subsequent to that in the Governor's supplemental budget she created a special revenue fund. Instead of waiting for Town Meeting to allocate those funds the Board of Selectmen are now able to allocate and you can do that whenever you want. What we had done when we were beholden to the stabilization fund we asked everybody who was potentially interested in an allocation to send us a request by December 1, which is what you have in your packet here. It's a little bit of a moving target and the allocations can be made whenever the Board wants to essentially. Other than the library I don't think there was a dollar amount included with fire or health or MJD. It's open discussion now if you would like me to go back to them and solicit more specific requests for funding. How often do you want to entertain requests for funding. It's kind of a new program and process is really up to the Board.

Mr. Silva: I think we need to go back and see what programs, like the police, need to fund. What kind of monies they're looking at. Fire as well. Did we allocate for CARES? We did. It would be nice to get something saying we want to do this for this money. Take that money off the top. Now we got this and this. Otherwise, to sit here, I'm clueless.

Mr. Gennette: One of the reasons I like CARES and the Michael J. Dias Foundation is they're not a municipal entity. We don't have a financial vehicle other than this, to be able to get funds to those 2 organizations. When you say police and fire and board of health, they're part of our operating budget, they can go to Capital for items. We have several different financial elements that we can use to get funds to those departments. If the Board of Health sends a request for Narcan units to Capital to this Board, we can fund them. We can take them out of 40R, we can get them money. We cannot take anything from the municipality and send it to CARES, who's actually operating in the schools. They're literally the boots on the ground in the schools and we don't have any way to get them funds other than this. That's part of the reason I've been pushing in that

direction. It's not that I don't think the police should get it, I do, I just think we have different vehicles by which we can get them the money.

Mr. Silva: I agree with that, but we need to keep our money where we can keep it. We're in a situation and I keep harping on it, we're in a situation where wherever we can keep funds the operating budget wherever we can keep funds whether you alleviate some of the funds for police and fire from the regular budget and capital, whatever, and we're keeping the funds, it's a good thing to do. I'm seeing serious problems slowly with the state deficits and all kinds of things. I agree with you, we can get them their funds but keeping it for the town to operate is better. Police and fire work with all of this stuff.

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Mr. DeBarge: Marc, what did you say the balance we have is?

Mr. Strange: \$127,000. The installments are all over the place. You really have to have a master's in calculus to understand all the different allocations.

Mr. DeBarge: This \$127,000 that's left, it's fair to say that there's more coming. One point something million. I'm just talking out loud, if we figured out a percentage, Mr. Silva I was talking about CARES because of Mr. Craven's letter. I agree with you. I think the total amount we're obligated to give our departments. I don't think it should be taken out of the budget, especially now, next year and the year after. I think it's simple to say Board of Health, what do you need? We'd like to put a Narcan machine over here, we'd like to do this, we'd like to have a couple classes here, great, give us a cost. For me, with this kind of thing I wouldn't mind giving a threshold for our Town Administrator to approve as projects come rather than coming in front of us. That could be a whole other conversation. I think it's a good way to filter conversation from our departments. Fire Department has a request. I think moving forward it's a good idea and doesn't bog down the distribution. That's what we're talking about. These entities are looking for us not to just make a decision but also, let's just give them the money so they can start working. Let's let the community see the opioid money the town has received. Let's see it put to work. It can be put to good work by giving CARES what they need along with the other departments you mentioned.

Mr. Rosenblum: What I would consider is that any funding we do in general, is it going to be something that is going to be continuous? Like hiring a full-time position with ARPA money or ESSR money. At some point, the money dries up. The money is going to dry up here so if we go ahead and do something with the funding we have now it could be something that 5 years down the road is going to have to be a budgeted item. I'll go to a golf course. You open a brand-new golf course and you throw rangers everywhere, starters everywhere then you start pulling it away because you can't afford it. It's being diligent with it either way and it's a case-by-case scenario. Narcan, let's face it, that's going to be continuing. If it's training or just the product itself. I think we have to look at it that way and it's a case by case.

Mr. DeBarge: That's why I'm saying give it to him.

Mr. Rosenblum: I think when it comes to I think we should with our police and fire because they go out into the community and do education, they're in the schools with their resource officers. Any way you go with it I think you have to look at a case by case. Is it going to be something permanent or a one off. I deal with a lot of grant money and if you can get something for free with your grant money, get it because you don't touch a budget item. Like me with cart paths and drainage. I've got a 1.2-million-dollar project and one for 3 million, I could never get that project done budgeting. That project is being done with the grant money. I think if you have the money, maybe there's a good-sized capital purchase that goes with this that you could use with this money it might be a smaller budget item down the road for fulfilment of it and replenishment. We're talking about the money now, 10 years down the road where are we? Is that stuff that could be sustained?

Mr. Gennette: I've got a proposal with that in mind. There's a lot of restrictions on what this can be used for and cannot be used for. If we did it by per use...

Mr. DeBarge: I thought that was opened up. What it can be used for.

Mr. Gennette: It's specific uses, right?

Mr. DeBarge: Well, you can't buy a car with it.

Mr. Gennette: My point is if the police department has something the opioid money could go for, let them submit the request to be funded by opioids to Marc, Marc can submit it to the Board and we can say yeah, go ahead and give them part of the opioid money. Board of Health can do it, CARES can do it, everybody can do it, and we just go by the request to have a legitimate reason for the money.

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Mr. Silva: That's exactly what I was talking about.

Mr. Rosenblum: To that point, the money can be allocated as loose as the language is in the settlement. I'm not saying you can work your way around things but it depends on how tight that language is in the scope of how you can spend it. You might be able to get into where you can spend it in a roundabout way that nobody thought about.

Mr. Strange: There's a reporting quarterly we have to file to say the Board allocated \$30,000 to Ludlow CARES and this is what it was for. We do need to do some tracking. I'm happy to go back to police, fire, health, Michael J. Dias and ask them for specific requests for funding then bring it back just like we did here and you guys can vote on it.

Mr. Gennette: Identify their purpose and make sure it meets the goals of the grant.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Board to re-appoint Alan Aubin to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA).

**Motion made by Mr. DeBarge** to re-appoint Alan Aubin to the Zoning Board of Appeals. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Board to accept the Grant for the Firefighter Safety Equipment in the amount of \$19,000.

**Motion made by Mr. DeBarge** to accept the Grant for the Firefighter Safety Equipment in the amount of \$19,000. **Mr. Rosenblum second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Board to approve and sign ten copies of the call for the election for March 5, 2024, presidential primary.

**Motion made by Mr. DeBarge** to approve and sign ten copies of the call for the election for March 5, 2024, presidential primary. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Board to approve and sign ten copies of the call for the election for the March 25, 2024, Town Election.

**Motion made by Mr. DeBarge** to approve and sign ten copies of the call for the election for the March 25, 2024, Town Election. **Mr. Rosenblum second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Board to approve and sign the contract between the Town of Ludlow (LPD) and Guardian Uniform in the amount of \$33,030 for armor vests.

**Motion made by Mr. DeBarge** to approve and sign the contract between the Town of Ludlow (LPD) and Guardian Uniform in the amount of \$33,030 for armor vests. **Mr. Rosenblum second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

#### BOARD UPDATES/MISC

Mr. DeBarge: A lot of stuff going on with the 250<sup>th</sup>. First Night is this Saturday. I was just at the meeting last night. There are up to 70 vendors; craft, food that are coming to First Night at the high school. We have a bunch of people doing parking, we have committee members everywhere, masons are coming to help with traffic, fireworks. You can listen to Valley's Greatest Hits at 97.7 FM for all the details throughout the year of all of the events that Ludlow 250<sup>th</sup> committee is putting on. First Night is from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday the 24<sup>th</sup>. That signifies the inception of our town. There's going to be a lot of food, craft vendors. Elsa and Anna are going to be there from

Frozen meet and greet. Sheriff's Department mounted patrol, Interskate 91 character kids' corner which is free, train rides for free, 413 cornhole will be there along with a lot more fun and games for everybody. There's a historical presentation going on at the high school at noon and 3:30. Alegria Dance is performing at 2 p.m., Chmura's bakery birthday cake, ice carving by Mike Rondeau from 11-4, wood carving by Kodiak Carving 11-4 sponsored by PV Financial. PV Financial is always involved with our events. Bonfire all day on Monday and you can go inside the high school gyms and auditorium. Thank you to the Ludlow DPW for helping us out with the bonfire. Also, the Boys & Girls Scouts are going to be lighting those bonfires. Everybody is going to be involved. Tell your friends and come on out on Saturday the 24<sup>th</sup> from 11-6. It's going to be a good time.

Mr. DeBarge: Charter Committee. We met last Thursday. We won't have one, because the way the dates fall, until next week. We meet the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month at 6 p.m. right in this room. Public welcome. We delved into the legislative branch, which is article 2 when it comes to the charter. We started with what we would do for city/town councilors. As a precursor to all of this, these aren't set in stone, these are our recommendations at this point. We're going to have open forums. We're hoping to meet with town meeting members after the election and also other areas, going to the senior center with coffee talk and other ways of getting information out to people and getting feedback as well. These aren't set in stone. Seven at large councilors to be elected from the voters townwide was the suggestion from the committee. The clerk would be the judge of the election and qualification of its member. Eligibility would be registered voters that are members of the town. We're looking at 3-year staggered terms so that we don't have just everyone gone in one election and figuring out how we're going to stagger them. Whoever the chair of the council is would be considered president and there would be a vice president. The suggestion was that person, the president or chair, would serve I believe as a voting member of the school committee. Prohibitions would be that you cannot hold another paid position in town. It goes back to collecting 2 salaries in town. We did agree that there should be some compensation for those councilors. Again, 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday in the Selectmen room, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of town hall 6 p.m. There's an open comment portion of the meeting. There's also an email you can get on the town website to email in any questions or comments. We have a Facebook page where you can see updates on things of that nature.

Mr. DeBarge: I just want to add one thing. March 18<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. contingent of the Charter Committee, myself included, will be at the senior center for an informational coffee hour so some public information coming.

Mr. Gennette: If there's going to be city councilors regardless of the number are you planning on incorporating a secretary for that committee, because a mayor or town manager is no longer going to be providing that service.

Mr. Rosenblum: This is the first part of it with the councilors. Councilors are going to come first before a town manager. That would be a chief of staff almost. Do you mean secretary, minutes for the meeting?

Mr. Gennette: Agendas and that kind of stuff.

Mr. Rosenblum: We haven't gotten to that point yet. It depends on how you write the charter and how the town manager wants to do it. It could be basically the same effect of what you're doing now. It's recorded and the minutes are done by the town manager's office or the assistant, but that hasn't been discussed. Then you're building out what are you approve and sign the contract between the Town of Ludlow (LPD) and Guardian Uniform in the amount of \$33,030 for armor vests.  
doing with departments.

Mr. Silva: There is no quorum if you're not deliberating on anything. You're just going to attend an informational thing.

Chairman to approve and sign all bills, warrants and abatements. A record of all warrants is in the Selectmen's office for perusal provided to the Town Accountant's office.

## CLOSING COMMENTS

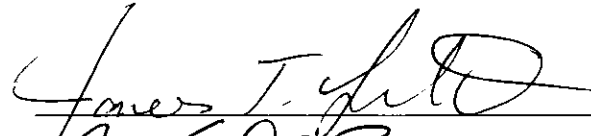

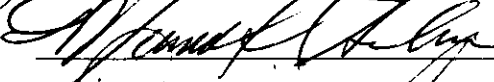

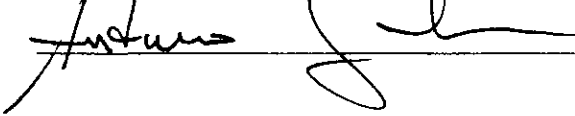
Mr. Silva: The only thing I would like to say is hopefully everybody does attend these festivities we're doing for the 250<sup>th</sup>. There's a lot of planning. Donations are always welcome. Derek mentioned the dinner dance on Saturday at the Gremio Lusitano March 9. Tickets are available. It's going to be a fun time. Lots of funds are needed for this so please attend.

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Mr. Gennette: I want to say thank you to Ron Saloio for coming in. I thought that was a great idea to do a bike ride on the riverwalk. Thank Mr. Craven for his letter. The new people on the police department, thank you for your applications. We're glad we could fill the empty positions and congratulations.

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**Motion made by Mr. DeBarge to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m. Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_ Chairman  
  
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