The Meeting of the Board of Selectmen held on Tuesday, June 6, 2023, began at 5:30 p.m. in the Board of Selectmen's Conference Room.

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

Members Absent: None

First Order of Business: The Pledge of Allegiance

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Mr. Gennette: Alright, we've got a busy night. Eric Weiss, PVPC coming in to discuss trash. He's not here yet, is he?

Mr. Strange: He is running a little late. He'll be here like quarter of or so.

Mr. Gennette: If you want to jump right into your Town Administrator's report?

Mr. Strange: It's just one item. With an eye toward increasing town hall access for residents and businesses during the week we're going to change the Town Hall operating hours starting July 3rd. The new operating hours will be Monday 8-4:30, Tuesday 8-5:30, Wednesday 8-4:30, Thursday 8-4:30, Friday 8-12. We're going to keep these hours through Labor Day and see what kind of impact it has, either positive or negative and determine the best way forward after that. The goal here was to open a little earlier so people can stop by and conduct their business before work. We talked to some of the departments and apparently people are lined up waiting to get into the town hall before work. We also wanted to stay open one day later during the week for those that want to stop on their way home from work. Typically, there is a lot less activity in town hall on Friday afternoon. We're hoping this works out. We want to start July 3rd so we can have to opportunity to communicate the change and people can ask questions. We've also encouraged department heads that if there's a time sensitive issue to honor any requests for meetings after noon on Fridays. We just want to make sure everybody is getting what they need. We'll see how that works out, but people seem to be pretty positive about it.

Mr. Gennette: Excellent. Perfect, thank you.

64. Our Lady of Fatima Parish – applications for all alcohol one day permits for Thursday, August 31st, Friday, September 1st, Saturday, September 2nd, Sunday, September 3rd and Monday, September 4th, 2023, and a Sunday music and dance for the annual Festa. Board to waive the fee if approved.

Motion made by Mr. DeBarge to approve Our Lady of Fatima Parish – applications for all alcohol one day permits for Thursday, August 31st, Friday, September 1st, Saturday, September 2nd, Sunday, September 3rd and Monday, September 4th, 2023, and a Sunday music and dance for the annual Festa and to waive the fees.

Mr. Goncalves: Don't they normally start coming in around now?

Mr. Strange: Yes, there was a planning meeting that was scheduled but had to be postponed so I think the first planning meeting is coming up this week or next week.

Mr. Goncalves: You're going to that?

Mr. Strange: Yes.

Mr. Rosenblum second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.

65. Alexandre A. de Carvalho – Petition for the transfer of a wine & malt liquor license for a package store from Cady Street Meat Market, inc. dba Cady Street Meat Market to Cady Street Market, Inc. Board to schedule public hearing.

Mr. Goncalves: I'll be abstaining from all discussion on this now and at the hearing. Mr. Carvalho was my employee for 18 years and the current owner is a customer and friend for a long time.

Mr. Gennette: Dually noted, thank you.

Motion made by Mr. DeBarge to schedule a public hearing for the transfer of a wine and malt liquor license for package store from Cady Street Meat Market dba Cady Street Meat Market to Cady Street Meat Market Inc.

Mr. Strange: The proposed date is July 11th.

Mr. Gennette: Would you like to add that to your motion?

Mr. DeBarge: For July 11, 2023.

Mr. Rosenblum second. Motion passed 4-0-1.

66. Louis Gillia, EH&S Engineer – Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC) notifying the Board of the yearly operational plan and an Environmental Monitor Public Notice for vegetation management.

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Mr. Gennette: I will be abstaining from this.

Motion made by Mr. DeBarge to file. **Mr. Goncalves second. Motion passed 4-0-1.**

67. Brian Shameklis, Chairman, Safety Committee – requesting the Board of Selectmen and Department of Public Works consider initiating an engineering or safety study of the Moore Street area due to various safety issues.

Motion made by Mr. DeBarge to follow the Safety Committee's recommendation and initiate an engineering safety study for Moore Street due to various safety issues.

Mr. Goncalves: Should we have them come in and talk about it first before we spend money and make sure it's something we want to do? Moore Street is kind of out there. What can you do?

Mr. DeBarge: In the letter they talked about the possibility of the need for expansion of the roadway because of the width of it and the high traffic volume, the corners, what I call Moore Woods, is difficult, as are Minechoag Heights, Fox Run, Dowd Court. It's all difficult coming off on those side streets. I'm not saying…to widen that road is a massive, massive project but isn't this something we can have PVPC do? A safety study without a cost?

Mr. Strange: We might be able to do that. I can look into it.

Mr. Gennette: This was only to consider initiating by the way.

Mr. DeBarge: It's a safety study so I think we wouldn't have to pay for it.

Mr. Strange: If PVPC can do it we can get them, if not, we can get some quotes and let you guys know what we're looking at.

Mr. DeBarge: It's an issue, so why not.

Mr. Goncalves second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.

68. Chief Pease – request to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for an injury sustained by a Fire Fighter as a result of an incident that occurred on May 12, 2023.

Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum to approve a request to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for an injury sustained by a fire fighter as a result of an incident that occurred on May 12, 2023. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

69. Bob Radowski, Ludlow Cultural Council, requesting the Board to reappoint him as his term ended April 30, 2023.

Mr. Gennette: Marc, is that on our lists?

Mr. Strange: Yes.

Mr. Gennette: Is he on it?

Mr. Strange: Yes.

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Mr. Gennette: We're going to be making appointments here so I think we can do that as part of our group.

Mr. DeBarge: Do we need to make a motion to reappoint since his term ended?

Mr. Gennette: We can do it just to cover our bases.

Motion made by Mr. DeBarge to reappoint Mr. Bob Radowski to the Ludlow Cultural Council. **Mr. Goncalves second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

70. Linda Collette – application for one day beer & wine permit for 250th Semi-Quincentennial fundraiser at Lupa Zoo on June 24, 2023, from 5:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. and board to waive the fee if approved.

Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum to approve the application for one day beer & wine permit for 250th Semi-Quincentennial fundraiser at Lupa Zoo on June 24, 2023, from 5:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. and to waive the fee. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

71. Recreation Commission – Reorganization.

Mr. Gennette: Do you have the list for the reorganization? Can you read that off for me?

Mr. Goncalves: Sean McBride Chairman, John Archambeau Vice Chairman, Joe Lupa Member.

Motion made by Mr. Silva to file. **Mr. Goncalves second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

72. Board to vote to abate invoice #51756 for $100 for John's Corner as they only have 1 video game not 2.

Motion made by Mr. DeBarge to abate invoice #51756 for John's Corner as they only have 1 video game not 2. **Mr. Goncalves second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

73. Chief Pease – request to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for an injury sustained by a fire fighter as a result of an incident that occurred on May 31, 2023.

Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for an injury sustained by a fire fighter as a result of an incident that occurred on May 31, 2023. **Mr. DeBarge second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Mr. Gennette: You must be Mr. Weiss. Come on up. Just to remind everybody, Mr. Eric Weiss is from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to discuss the town trash collection options.

Mr. Strange: Just a quick background. We reached out to Eric and PVPC about helping us coordinate some sort of community outreach, maybe in the form of a survey, to get some feedback as to what the town might be interested in or what options they might prefer in terms of our trash issue. Low and behold, Mr. Weiss was the chairman of the MRF board for 20 years. He knows trash inside and out. With that introduction I'll flip it over to Eric.

Mr. Weiss: I have an extensive background dealing with trash. I ran a group called the Hilltop Resource Management Cooperative, which was all those little towns like Worthington,

Cummington, Goshen, up that way on a regional contract. I was chairman of the Springfield Materials Recycling Facility advisory board for 14 years. I'm a resident of Belchertown. Served on our school committee, served on other committees in town. I fully respect you as a board knowing all the things you have to put up with and do. When Marc and I talked I said I've got some background in that. It just occurred this past week, we're going to be housing Susan Waite, who is the regional DEP person for working with municipalities on solid waste issues. It used to be Arlene Miller. I wasn't exactly sure what the town was looking to do but there are always opportunities amongst the various grant programs that we work with, not the least of which is called district local technical assistance, in which we work directly with a community or group of communities on a particular topic. We worked with some of the hill towns on joint fire, joint police, joint services. I'm working right now and they're actually using a little bit of their DEP recycling money they got, the DEP money the towns receive each year. It's called the recycling dividend. They've hired me to work with their new DPW director and new recycling coordinator to help them get dual stream back on track in the City of Holyoke, which is what they really want to do. I respect the fact that the town wants to take a good hard look at this. If I can work something out where we can be of assistance to the town that is also very important to us. As the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, we do all kinds of things in all kinds of places. We deal with transportation money. The Tip comes through us. We deal with land use issues, zoning, and pieces like that. I know that a member of our staff just assisted you with putting in the one stop on something, Ken Comia. Was it a zoning upgrade thing?

Mr. Strange: Yes, it was a zoning review.

Mr. DeBarge: Was that Joy Street?

Mr. Strange: That was a different one.

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Mr. Weiss: I think it was an overall review of zoning bylaws and you do it with the state. I said to Marc that I would really like to come talk to you and I don't know exactly what the town's thinking but I do know that when you reach a certain point with solid waste cost and you're trying to figure out if you should keep going with the system you've got, and there are those that are in favor of doing that because they like the way the system is or they've always done it that way. Then there's towns that move toward privatization of services, and either the town pays or each resident pays, it depends on the model. As far as a cost saving measure and something to look at long-term, we all know the budget situation. We also know that next year is going to be a tough year because of all the different changes in the budgets that are there, federal, state and everything else. I guess the message I'm trying to deliver is yes, with a little bit more definition I can work that out with Marc, I can probably make a justification to find a way for us to work with Ludlow to help push this forward in a way that is responsive to the town. What I would ask for, and I don't know who's in charge of solid waste, whether it's the town manager, town administrator or DPW, Board of Health or whether it's a combination, but if you're going to make any changes with regards to trash, put together a good committee. A committee that represents different views of how things can be done so you come up with a balanced decision in the end of what's good for the town. I'm very comfortable in the municipal environment. I know that some days in the municipal environment they hate you. That's the way it goes. I'm perfectly happy to help the town and in fact we're looking for ways to work with Ludlow to make sure we provide you with the types of services we can provide as a regional planning organization. This would be an example of that. I don't know where you wanted to take it from there, but when Marc & I talked I said I can help take that on.

Mr. Goncalves: I think our costs have doubled in the last 4 years. It's getting completely out of control. I don't know if we're going to have much of a choice except to have resident pick up their own at this point. If we were to have another increase and if we were to stay level funded, we'll need a 2 ½ override next year. It's getting that ridiculous. Hopefully you have a solution. That would be great.

Mr. Weiss: Just give me a layout of the details you've got that would be really helpful in starting to move forward. The thoughts and organizational ideas that I would have.

Mr. Gennette: Currently, we're under contract to have our services picked up but I think one of the big things is that we're looking for automation at some point. A lot of these contractors don't want to do manual pick up anymore and it's putting pressure back on us to try to figure out a solution for it. I'm not a big fan of residents picking up their own trash. I think that puts more trash

trucks out on each street. They're all getting picked up at different times and I think there's detriment on the back side of that. There's more things to worry about than just everybody paying for their own trash. We don't have a lot of good ordinances to keep people doing the things they should do to keep their properties the way they should be. Those are some of my issues.

Mr. DeBarge: Most importantly, in the interim or the beginning, which is why I'm happier here is information dissemination to the public. I think that trash is not only a volatile subject because of cost and reverting the cost back to our taxpayers, but it's also a volatile subject because the changes that were made with the fee, purple bags and all of that, the information was not disseminated properly, and people didn't understand what was going on while changes were being made. No matter what decision is made in the end, collecting information and options is what our citizens want.

Mr. Weiss: I followed it in the local paper, how could I not.

Mr. Rosenblum: On piggybacking on both sides of what we're discussing is that if in fact we did go and put it on the citizens, our citizens have showed through some of their words and actions that it's really not about the money, it's more about the service. A lot of them are more upset that the service isn't that great sometimes. I'm also of the school that maybe we go ahead and eliminate trash, but I also look at this way is we're trying to save the taxpayers money it's actually going to cost them more money if we take trash away. I think in our taxes we're around $250 a household, and then the $100 so we're at about $350, I know a lot of other communities are paying $60/month, $600-$700/year for their trash pick-up. It's going to cost the taxpayers more, in the same sense. I understand we're saving 1.8 or so back to the budget that can be used elsewhere possibly, but it's tough because if we could find a way to at least cap it where it's at and slow it down then that would be an option. It's tough. Me, I'd rather get a dumpster. I know people love that they can just stuff anything in there. In the same sense that's what they're saying. This is great- I can put anything in there. How much does it cost? It's like $600/year. Oh, that's great. You show that it's not the money, it's the service. I think that's part of the problem we've had. In certain pockets of town, the service isn't consistent. We also know that a lot of the trash companies are short on staff as well. Sometimes a truck doesn't show up till the next day when it's supposed to be here today. In my neighborhood in the 24 years I've been there, I think I've had one issue with trash. I go buy purple bags every now and then but I'm a family of 5 and I never use them for my regular trash because I recycle diligently.

Mr. Weiss: I think like any local issue this can be as complex as it can be in terms of people having an opinion on providing service, etc. The best thing is to create a set of options for you to take a look at and give you an opportunity. The only other thing I would think of is if you can find out the status of that recycling dividend money and what it was put toward for the town that would be helpful. Over the last 3-4 years. It's called RDP, I think. That could help provide some additional options if it's unused and still sitting in wherever. The other thing is in terms of issues like this you have to look at the short and long. You have to look at what's happening now and what you're going to do long term and how that's going to affect people. Like I said, some towns have opted for the set up whereby the town owns the contract and holds the contract, and they hire the hauler for the community, and everything is transacted through the town. The 2nd option is where you have a hauler that people can choose to use or not, like most favored status. The 3rd one is saying I'll take Waste Management; you get BFI, and it goes that way. In terms of first steps, I would say whoever you feel is both knowledgeable and can participate in a good way on a committee like that, it would be great. It's always great to have a working committee of some sort.

Mr. Silva: Several years ago, we had a meeting in Wilbraham with the local towns and he was saying that we should probably be looking at having a 4-stream coming. Do you know if that's still…they were talking about taking food, compost, and glass was becoming an issue. Do you think that's been resolved?

Mr. Weiss: I don't know if the compost side of things has been resolved but glass has been an issue because it's of little value for 2 reasons. It's heavy to move and when you mix glass with other colors you can only use it as an aggregate. You can't turn it into something else. Different glasses melt at different temperatures. One of the primary uses of glass as a recycled material is roadbed.

Mr. Silva: He was saying at some point it could possibly come to 4 different streams of trash collection.

Mr. Weiss: The markets have been really volatile like everything else was during the pandemic. And now they're starting to settle down.

Mr. Strange: For the record and the public's information and for Eric, right now we charge $100/unit for our trash fee. That works out to about $600,000 revenue. Our total budget for this year was 1.9 million for trash.

Mr. Gennette: The next step is to get a committee together.

Mr. Weiss: I hate to say it but forming a committee is a good thing.

Mr. DeBarge: I am anti committee but for this situation I think it's a great idea.

Mr. Weiss: The camel is a horse designed by a committee.

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Mr. Gennette: Thank you very much for your time, Mr. Weiss and we look forward to working with you. We're a little early for our 6:00 but we'll do it. James Tyburski – Interview for Golf Commission. Would you mind introducing yourself?

Mr. Tyburski: My name is James Tyburski, Jimmy. I know Mr. Silva. I used to play golf with him. I know the faces, but I didn't know the names to all you guys. I want to get on the committee of the golf course. I've been a member of Ludlow for years. I left Ludlow and I've been playing at Westover for the last bunch of years, and I'd like to be part of the committee to help out with the golf course. Mostly the minutia of the golf course. We need a ranger there and I volunteer my time to help do that. Being on the commission would give me the authority to discipline and give people warnings. We have problems with guys driving all over the course. These guys do their jobs. The groundskeepers, Billy in the clubhouse they do their jobs great. But it's the little things that I think need a little more attention to. It would cost a lot of money to have a ranger.

Mr. Gennette: How many positions are available?

Mr. Strange: There is 1 spot and 2 interviewees.

Mr. Rosenblum: Thank you for volunteering for this position. What is your business background?

Mr. Tyburski: I used to paint cars. I've been retired for the past 10 years. I had hip replacements. Since then, I've been on disability. I was in the autobody business for a number of years. Painting cars. Running paint shops, dealing with budgets of the paint shops, help in the paint shops. I have background with that.

Mr. Goncalves: Recently the commission decided they didn't want to have tournaments anymore. How do you feel about that?

Mr. Tyburski: Depending on the tournaments. If they can fill up the course. Right now, it's money. If they can sell foursomes all day Saturday and Sunday and if you go to an outside tournament they expect a break on greens fees, this and that. To me, if they want to pay to play the course, fine. I don't think these people need a break as a deal to shut down the golf course to the public. The revenue from the public is what the course lives on.

Mr. Goncalves: And seasons that it doesn't rain. Ok thank you.

Mr. DeBarge: I appreciate your interest in the commission. I do a little homework before these interviews and asking around. It's not fair for me to make a decision without knowing both of you just on an interview alone. Both candidates are very highly respected in the course by all that play and all that work there. I really wish we could appoint the both of you, but we can't. I would like to ask you a little more about the ranger part. Anybody I play with knows that I like to play fast.

Mr. Tyburski: Sometimes you need a guy to go out there and give someone a boot in the rear.

Mr. DeBarge: I mentioned that before. Do you think it's something that would be a huge benefit to the course? Do you think it's something necessary with the limited funds they have?

Mr. Tyburski: Limited funds. That's why I'd like to volunteer my time. I'd go there not only to play but hang around with my buddies there. If slow play, you put the red flag on the cart and you go out and say pick it up. As a commissioner you have authority to do it rather than some bum out of the clubhouse.

Mr. Silva: I've heard some talk for several years now that it would be best that the town go to a private entity and move the course. What's your feeling on that? As far as selling it or management company.

Mr. Tyburski: No. Ryan and his crew does a phenomenal job at all the maintenance. The course is in better shape than most private courses around. I was at Ludlow when they had IGM come in and to me that was a waste of money. You know Ludlow and our budget for the grounds crew is probably is a lot less than Ludlow's when they had IGM.

Mr. Silva: What do you feel would be your #1 priority to make the course and the golf better? Other than ranger.

Mr. Tyburski: That's basically it. These guys do a great job. There could be a little more detail here and there. Right now, the biggest problem for any business is the lack of finding good help. These guys that work there are fantastic. Some guys are better than others. Being a ranger is like look at the carts in the morning. Make sure they're all clean. If the kid that's cleaning the carts isn't cleaning the carts, then you mention to clean the carts better. The minutia of the course. This isn't the president of the golf commission, it's an appointee to the commission. A volunteer spot. I don't want to run the course; I just want to help out a little bit.

Mr. Gennette: They've gone up on their prices quite a bit lately and I think Westover ranks among some of the higher courses in the area. What's your thoughts on how they're relative to other locations?

Mr. Tyburski: It's not as expensive as Ledges, but Ledges is IGM. Chicopee is about the same price. Veterans and Franconia are just a little bit cheaper. If you have a good product, then you can charge the money. If you go there on Saturdays around noon, find a parking spot in the corner. The conditions of the course brings the people in.

Mr. Gennette: So, you're happy with where the fees are?

Mr. Tyburski: Yes. I think they're fair market value.

Mr. Gennette: Do you have anything you'd like to say in closing?

Mr. Tyburski: No, not really. I was a little nervous. I haven't been on an interview in forever.

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Mr. Silva: Jimmy, you do not get nervous.

Mr. Tyburski: Trust me, I do. This is nerve racking for me.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Panek, how are you? Do you want to take a couple minutes to introduce yourself?

Mr. Panek: My name is Andrew Panek. I've lived in the Town of Ludlow for 69 years as of May 7th. I worked as a junior caddy at the Ludlow Country Club for quite a few years. From when I was 13 till 17. Then I had the opportunity to work in the pro shop at Ludlow for a pro by the name of Don Parsons. I caddied for him on a whole Connecticut circuit and actually caddied in 1 PGA tournament in Cromwell. That was pretty interesting. I've played golf at Ludlow for 33 years, until my daughter went to college and that was the end of golf for a few years. I worked 22 years at Smith & Wesson. Top Hitch Corporation bought it, and they took us off of piece work and that's when my daughter was going to school. Put an application in over here and went for 5 interviews with Sheriff Ashe because I had a high school education. He put me through the ringer, but he finally gave me an opportunity to pass the PT test at 40, which he probably thought I wouldn't, but I did. I worked for him for 19 years. Became a corporal and a firearms instructor for the State of Massachusetts. Then I became a supervisor working for him and set up his armory for the DOC

audits. Had a career working for him. Like I said, I've lived in this town my whole life. I went from Ludlow up to Westover because I'm limited to golf with my physical. I've got a fused ankle and a couple back operations. Met Billy up there. A fantastic pro with a great personality. There's changes that could be made, little things. A ranger would be very important. A ranger that would donate his time would be a big asset. Just like what Tyburski was talking about. To be able to go out when the course is being held up and you see a guy brings his girlfriend or someone that's never played golf before, and you see it start you either move him aside and let other people go through. You do it in a nice way. There's a way to talk to people. Working at the jail I went through a lot of communication courses. Just to donate the time and know what's going on. I've been around golf my whole life. The golf course, what Ryan's doing out there, amazed how that golf course looks and what he's done. He's got kids working in the summer and a few full-time people. Phenomenal. The whole staff. The guy that was working at Palermo's is working in the kitchen. Morcavage. I played on the Ludlow football team for 4 years with his father. Phenomenal cook. He's starting to do different things. He's bringing a lot of people. Guys are bringing their wives up and have a meal. He's putting different things on the menu. Which is good instead of a hot dog and hamburg. He's got a good variety starting there so I think he's gonna be a big asset to the place to bring in revenue. As far as the prices, I think the prices are well in the realm of what you're getting for that golf course. You don't hear anybody complain. When they walk off that golf course, they're amazed what they've purchased for that afternoon of golf.

Mr. Goncalves: I'll ask you the same question. They went to a no tournament policy. How do you feel about that?

Mr. Panek: Tournaments can be a big asset when you have big projects going on in town that you want to have a tournament for. Billy knows the slow periods of time and what days are the best days to run a tournament, when there's leagues and stuff like that. I wouldn't count out tournaments because they can bring revenue. What you have to realize is it makes a lot of money afterward for the food and bar room. You have to look at the whole picture. What's going to happen up there. That's what I would say about tournaments. You have a lot of private members that left Ludlow and joined there because of the rate and golf cart situation. You've got a lot of good players that left Ludlow that are up there. They're bringing a lot of people from outside to play golf, which is fantastic. You're getting higher caliber players. It's fun to watch. If you've been around this game long enough. I watched Dave Larivee shoot 68 the other day. He was 1 over in the front 5 under in the back. It was like watching a magician on the golf course. The ranger part, exactly what Tyburski was saying. That would be a great thing because if you're on this commission and there's a problem and the starter doesn't know there's a problem, you can talk to Billy about it, grab the flag, put it on there and address the problem in the right manner and be polite. There's a way to talk to people and move them along. If they persist and don't move along, are damaging the golf course and doing things then you have to handle that. You've got the proper authorities to do that.

Mr. DeBarge: Do you authorize hitting into the slow playing group in front of you?

Mr. Panek: I never hit into anybody.

Mr. DeBarge: I don't have any formal questions. Like I said last time, I usually go off of people that I talk to about interest and all of that. You and Mr. Tyburski are well known, well respected, well liked. It's a tough choice but I'm very happy to be in a position here where we hear this from 2 gentlemen that want to help out.

Mr. Panek: It gives you an opportunity. #1 both of us love the game of golf and it's been a big part of our lives. So, when you have an opportunity where a position like this opens up and you can be an asset and put some good input into decisions being made and you know what common sense decisions of what's going the wrong way or what can be the right way. It's an asset for the town. It's going to help the revenue of the town and help the revenue of everything. Nobody wants to see that golf course go.

Mr. Silva: I probably know these gentlemen the same. They're both very qualified to do this. It will be a very difficult decision.

Mr. Panek: Whatever this board makes is a decision I respect.

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Mr. Silva: Anything else, other than the ranger, do you feel would increase the volume that we would generate by making the course better.

Mr. Panek: He's done so much with the traps. What he has for staff up there. When I started there a couple years ago, you couldn't even play out of the traps. You didn't want to go in there with $160 wedge because they were all stones. He's raked everything out and groomed everything and cut everything. He's made such improvements, Ryan, Ludlow doesn't even compare to that place, and I was a member for 30 something years. To go over there, I played 18 holes the other day, I played the ball down, I didn't have one bad lie on the fairway. The place is amazing of what he's done. You've got to give him a lot of credit. Are there more improvements you can do? Little details you can do. They way they cut the trap, how to make it look presentable. When you start making big improvements, you're starting to add a lot of money into your budget too. That's what you have to look at. What are you going to get in return for what you put into it. Right now, maybe the clubhouse could use some paint and renovation. That right there is old. What they could do with some rugs I think that's where you could make that place a lot more attractive. I don't think you need to put a ton of money in there.

Mr. Silva: Do you have a checkbook?

Mr. Panek: I do. I have a business I'm running right now strike zone calls. I've been involved in hunting my whole life. I have several major sponsors. Mossy Oak out of Mississippi, Trulock Chokes out of Tennessee. I'm running a business right now where I make game calls for turkey hunting. I pursued that and traveled all over the country doing that for 10 years. I got out of that. Started this business that's been going. Kind of supplements my income. I play golf in this wonderful town of Ludlow.

Mr. Rosenblum: The letter and resume, my comments was business background pretty much speaks for itself. The only thing both of you had discussed about volunteering as a ranger. I would probably be careful of that not only because of liability issues as a municipality that owns the golf course, so I don't know about volunteering.

Mr. Panek: I wouldn't do anything.

Mr. Rosenblum: I'm saying in general as a commissioner going out and volunteering your time to go out there is now you're acting as an employee, so we'd have to be careful of that. That's something that would have to be looked at down the road.

Mr. Panek: That's what you have your board meetings for and that's what you discuss and come up with what to do and what the boundaries are.

Mr. Rosenblum: You've discussed a lot here and it pretty much answers any questions I had. I just want to say thank you for volunteering your time.

Mr. Panek: I appreciate the opportunity to meet the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Gennette: You already answered my question when you were talking about the price for the golf, so I'm all set there. Do you have any closing comments you'd like to make before we're done?

Mr. Panek: Like I said, being up there for about 4 years now and seeing how that place runs and watch how that golf course has progressed, I just want to be a part of trying to make it better for the town of Ludlow. Try to bring some revenue in and talk and have a little bit of input. Input is the most important thing. That's why we got 2 ears and 1 mouth. You listen, you learn.

Mr. Gennette: We appreciate it. Thank you very much.

Mr. Rosenblum: They both come very respected. I made a couple phone calls and asked some questions and both I've been told are great gentlemen. Based on what I've seen tonight, my recommendation would be Mr. Panek. Short and sweet that's it.

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Mr. Silva: I'm going to defer. I could go either way. I know both of them. I golf with both of them, and they both have good interest in golf. Andy might have a little more being on different rounds of the golf itself but I'm pretty good with either gentlemen would benefit.

Mr. DeBarge: I said it to both of them. I'll go with what Bill said because he said a name first. Out of respect to both of them I'll go with the first one mentioned because I could go with either one.

Mr. Goncalves: Again, we're very lucky. They're both highly qualified. I hope maybe we can talk to whoever we don't pick and get some volunteer hours out… That's a great idea the commission needs to look at if someone is willing to do that. Maybe you can even do that a little bit.

Mr. DeBarge: Sure.

Mr. Gennette: Do you have a recommendation?

Mr. Goncalves: Mr. Panek has the business experience and I think that's a serious budget that's got some issues. It's been running tight for a few years. Maybe somebody with a business background would be a little bit better for that board. Watch the budget and make some better decisions.

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Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum to appoint Andrew Panek for the open golf commission position. **Mr. DeBarge second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Mr. Gennette: We have 10 minutes before our 6:30 but I think everybody is here. Can we get started a little early?

Mr. Strange: Yes, I have to hook up the computer.

Mr. Gennette: We're going to get Erin Hastings, Executive Director for WESTCOMM Regional Dispatch up here who's got a presentation. After that we'll have some comments and questions and bring the Chief's up. While we get set up, to give everybody a little bit of a background, we're trying to get some information about WESTCOMM Regional Dispatch as a replacement for our dispatch services here. It's obviously a very big issue. It's a touchy issue. We're going to try to get all of the information out on the table and go from there. Ms. Hastings, are you all set?

Ms. Hastings: I am all set.

Mr. Gennette: Would you mind introducing yourself please?

Ms. Hastings: I'm Erin Hastings. I'm the executive director of WESTCOMM Regional Dispatch in Chicopee. Mr. Strange invited me here tonight to present on regionalization to see if it's something you would be interested in. For regionalization I have a quick agenda. We're just going to try to understand what it actually is. Tell you a little bit about WESTCOMM and what the benefits of joining would be. Talk about the state 9-1-1 department grants and how to join. Regionalization basically is just a shared resource. You're using your 9-1-1 emergency communication specialists as a shared resource. It's one dispatcher handling several towns. The CAD, the computer aided dispatch, and the radio are all shared resources under regionalization. We have the ability to keep up with advancing technology. 9-1-1 is now becoming more like a live crime analysis center with video and audio and cameras. We can track that by grouping our resources. We can actually spend a little bit more money in that area and keep up with the times. The response experts advocate for regionalized dispatch because it's working across the nation. The Commonwealth's administration supports it as well. We do have data that supports it has the best possible outcome for the patient or victim. Right now in Massachusetts there's 212 total PSAP's, public safety answering point, a 9-1-1 center. The state is trying to get that down to a much smaller number. Maryland, who is comparable to our population, only has 24. This is just a map of the regionalization's in the state. The white areas are single centers. This is our area here. Right now we cover Chicopee, Ware, Monson, Longmeadow, East Longmeadow. We just signed with the Sheriff's yesterday. We started dispatching for them as well.

Mr. Gennette: Hampden County?

Ms. Hastings: Yes, Hampden County Sheriff's. Our governance, we are a special district in the commonwealth under Chapter 6A so we have a board of directors. The board of directors is the highest-ranking municipal officer for each town or city or their designee. They are the advisory board that run the district. Deputy director that works for me and myself. I have been dispatching for 33 years and I started before 9-1-1 was in my area. I lived in Brimfield at the time. I've come through the beginnings of 9-1-1, enhanced 9-1-1 to next gen 9-1-1. I spent 20 years at a regional dispatch center for the state police. We have an operations advisory committee, that is the police chief and fire chief for every municipality that we dispatch for, and a finance advisory committee. That's a finance person from your municipality and they sit on our board as well. Everybody has an equal say in the district, and they have an equal vote. Chicopee is our biggest town, and they don't get any more votes than anybody else. If you think about your existing 9-1-1 capabilities, are you ready for the next century challenges? One of the big things that we talk about is changes caused by police reform. We have training for our dispatchers that is above and beyond the training that the state requires. We train with our police departments as well so that we know that if somebody calls in a suspicious person, you have to actually define what is suspicious about this person before we're going to send an officer. We're going to let the officer know what kind of information we have so they have an actual reason to make a stop. We have competitive staffing. We are one of the higher paying agencies in the area for our starting rate. We spend a lot of time on a cultural environment in our dispatch center making it a positive place for people to work. Some place that they actually want to come to. We are the only agency in Massachusetts that is doing emergency police dispatch, emergency fire dispatch and emergency medical dispatch on a national standard for the international academy for the emergency dispatch. So, we're working towards accreditation through that agency. Advanced technology. We have video to 9-1-1 already at our center, where the dispatcher can where they're taking a call for example for a vandalism they can send a link out to the caller, the caller clicks the link, and we get a live video stream from their phone. With our new CAD system that we'll be implementing over the next fiscal year we'll be able to live stream that to our cruisers and fire personnel as well. We run specific employee assistance unit for our dispatchers. They're getting checked on once every 12 weeks. They sit with our Human Resource for a well-being check to make sure they're not struggling with any calls. Again, we spend a lot of time on the culture at our center to make it a positive place to make it easier. We provide them with all kinds of resources that they use if they're struggling with any calls. We recognize generational differences. A lot of our dispatchers are Gen Z dispatchers, and we recognize they want more of a work-life balance so we over-staff our center so they can have more time off so they're not getting forced a lot. We upped our staffing to cover that. Plus, other things that we do to recognize the differences. Gen Z doesn't tend to read a lot of emails, so we use chat groups for a lot of things instead of email. It's quick, it's to the point. They read it; they understand it. We also overlap our shifts half an hour so we're able to do a role call training before every shift and spend some time with the dispatchers. If there's a subject they want us to teach them we'll bring it to them. We let them teach subjects to each other and everybody plays a part in the role calls. We do a lot with behavioral health. We have a contract with CHD now, we used to have it with BHN, where we can transfer calls directly to a crisis counselor, stay on the line. They have one of our radios. If they feel that police need to respond they can ask us to have a response or just send a clinician out. They make the determination on some of our lower-level calls for behavioral health. 36 full-time dispatchers right now. 5 part-time. We have an outreach team. We do tactical dispatching so for example when we had a drowning in the river, and they were trying to find the body we were able to send our dispatcher out to the scene and provide coverage for them for 3 days in a row and take all of that radio traffic and calls out of the dispatch center so it ran normally and had that taken out for tactical dispatch. Well also send a dispatcher out with a cert team if they want it. We have our own training division so if somebody is struggling with one area, they can get specialized training in it. We have quality assurance units so every call that gets reviewed gets brought back to the dispatcher and they can be sent back to training if necessary but mostly it's just an education piece right on the spot. We constantly do oversight and continual improvement for our training division to the quality assurance. We have our own IT department and our own Human Resource department. These are important factors that never get accounted for when you talk about the money saving because with our HR director, we're posting the position, we're screening for interviews, we're doing all the hiring. That's personnel man hours that you don't have to do any more. IT department, if there's a problem our IT department is handling it, so your IT department is not getting called in as well. It's man hours that you save. We provide core services that any dispatch center would provide, other than we're trying to get away from filling details. That was a huge interruption of emergency services. We've identified that but we're looking for outside agencies to take that over. Monitor fire department, access emergency notification systems, we do all the CAD statistics. Our benefits again, our salaries are

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right up there. We do all the posting; we do all the negotiations for the union. We carry the long-term employee benefits because we are a municipality, so we are in the state retirement. We carry the insurance, long term, and we pay partial insurance as well. We take over the costs for any of your CAD, your computer aided dispatch, we handle all your IT issues, HR issues and radios. We have our own radio technician on site. We are supported by the state 9-1-1 department. They are really focused on regionalization right now, so they have provided the slide for us. There's 40 million dollars in development grants this fiscal year coming up that they're giving to regionals for secondary PSAP's. We've already applied for this year. We usually end up applying for 4 million and end up with 3. The grants that state 9-1-1- offers, there's 2 different grants. There's a development grant and a support and incentive grant. The support and incentive grant covers 75% of our operating budget every year. That's what they've decided to give us as a regional center. Right off the bat 75% of our budget goes to state 9-1-1 and they reimburse that. The other 25% is what gets split through assessments to the cities and towns that we dispatch for. So, we take 25% of our budget and divide it up based on population and call volume for each town and figure out their percentage and that's what we bill each town. The development grant will cover that bill for the first 3 years of a municipality joining a regional center. For the first 3 years you pay nothing to belong. The 4th year, state 9-1-1 development grant will guarantee you 50% of whatever we're assessing you and the 5th year they'll pay 25%. Year 6 is when you start paying 100% of that 25% of our budget based on population and call volume. It's 50% population, 50% call volume and we average the percentage there. We are moving to a new facility on Shawinigan Drive so we wouldn't be far from you. Right now, we're in 750 square feet. We have 9 positions. We're moving to the old Salter College with 18,000 square feet and we'll have 29 positions. The onboarding process is fairly simple. You send us a letter of interest. We would get some information on your call volume and the systems you use and be able to present you with a quote. We just educate your community on what it means to regionalize, and we would need a letter of intent from the board. That's when we can actually apply for grant money under your municipality. Once we get that letter of intent. We do a feasibility study and bring it to our boards. They vote and we bring it back to you to sign. There are a few myths about regionalization. That we won't know your town and one of the things we've learned from that is your dispatchers, when you hire them, unless you require them to live in your town, most of the time they don't know your town either. Our dispatchers will learn your town. Learn the regular addresses that you respond to. Any landmarks in the town they learn them pretty well. Plus, all of our dispatchers are required to do ride-alongs with the police and fire departments of each of our municipalities.

Mr. Rosenblum: I believe there's probably more comments from the people in the audience that I'd probably rather hear first.

Mr. Gennette: I'm going to give the chiefs a chance to come up and ask their questions in a moment, but I want to make sure you guys are all set first. Chief Pease if you wouldn't mind coming up.

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Chief Pease: I'll defer to Chief Valadas to start since he's been doing dispatch a lot longer than we've been involved. I think we'll start by giving you some of the history of what's been going on recently.

Chief Valadas: Since its inception, myself, and Ms. Hastings, I also worked 30 years ago and was the first 9-1-1 when it wasn't 9-1-1. When it was a phone on a desk. You had 2 of them and you kept a typewriter log. With all due respect to Ms. Hastings, basically you're looking at a product we have in Ludlow that's irreplaceable and can't be replicated. Because you have the infrastructure. It's in the building. In other words, everything we have we've developed since 1996. We've developed our first police dispatch because it wasn't too cost effective for police officers working the desk and not being on a patrol. You're wasting all that skill set to sit at a desk but provide some real time information that was very beneficial. We got a policing grant, hired our first dispatchers, have evolved since, the most evolvement happened in 2017. This was a statewide push for regionalization began early 2000's we started our first study. The first study that we found had Ludlow parting with Amherst, which was different. It wasn't too well received. Back in 2017 it was evaluated, and a lot of meetings held about other states can do it, why isn't Mass doing it with 300 cities and towns. Why can't we regionalize? In state 9-1-1 they save a lot of money. Basically, they're looking to eliminate the PSAP's. The PSAP's are a lot of responsibility and a lot of liability because those calls are governed by law and they're emergency calls. Ludlow's volume is 2 PSAP's. That's what we've always maintained. From the 2015 study, our predecessors for Chief Pease and I decided to go ahead and consolidate our running a secondary PSAP service

is not efficient because you can have a call come in and bounce off a cell phone or state police and it comes in one PSAP and goes to another PSAP next store. So, it wasn't efficient. We centralized all of our ALS, fire, police, EMS, all into our central dispatch, which is what we have now. For Ludlow it took everything. It's the town's nerve center. For everybody that's watching, I'll be glad to explain and show someone, in Ludlow if you have a call to make 24-7-365 it goes to those 2 people sitting at that com center. That is the best service that you can have. I remember sitting many, many years ago with a gentleman from Maryland and we were trying to explain, he was flabbergasted at the number of PSAP's we had. I told him if we can't get a 2nd dispatcher a police officer sits there. He's like that's so attentive. Everything is so local. You treat everything like little castles. That is the description of what Massachusetts really is. Everybody treats their little enclave as theirs. I said I know it's very attentive, it might not be the most cost effective, but for services it's the highest quality you can get because you have that local control, the local flavor, modality, operational ability every single day. Thankfully, most our dispatchers, the town currently employs 9 full-time dispatchers, we have no positions opening. We have 4 per-diem dispatchers and one of those per-diem dispatchers handles our EMD audit, which is our emergency medical dispatch. We have a state-of-the-art system now in the fact that the town as part of that consolidation decided to pursue the need for a P25 system, upgraded radio system. That wasn't easy. When it came to if we were going to progress into the 21st century and continue with a central dispatch where you need to provide those services because they're very critical, the town made the decision to invest a 4.8-million-dollar bond for the radio system. That includes interoperability which had to exist between town departments. We had to include large entities such as the school department, senior center, DPW and have that instant interoperability if we needed it. We've achieved that. This was a 5-year project culminated. All of that being tied into that nerve center. I will bring up a point that was recently brought up to us by the school department at a safety meeting last week. They are extremely not comfortable about sharing any video with any outside agency whatsoever. They would have very serious considerations about that. For us, that video would be instrumental in a response. So, we have some concerns and some problems. I'll let the fire chief go, as far as the radio project, go on with that but I do want to stress a few more points that I've been on the phone all week with different chiefs from those white communities, basically the communities that are sole proprietors. If you look at that map, it's emblematic of Massachusetts. The eastern part of the state has more affluent communities, and they maintain their sole control over their central dispatches. That's why the eastern part of the state in what 495 built is all white because they don't really…there's some…there's different agencies they do share, but they're larger. We model more of that than we do the central and western Mass. Basically, for those of you that don't know, we're the 11th largest community in 4 counties. There's 1 town larger than us and that's Agawam. We're larger than the cities of North Adams, Greenfield, and Easthampton. The closest assembly would be Agawam and us as far as still remaining towns, if you will, but large towns. We are more emblematic of an eastern Mass or central Mass town with our population size, our call volume, our arrest volume, than we are for more say rural Franklin, Hampshire and Berkshire County towns. For some of these towns and some of these chiefs I've spoken to, I happened to have a chief's meeting today, just today I spoke to Lenox, West Springfield, Easthampton, Holyoke, Chicopee, Palmer, Agawam, all my colleagues just talking about, I know what your volumes are as far as what you do and what we do and what's your perspective on this type of thing without having some of the things we have. One of the things they envy is our communication system. Right off the bat they're pretty envious of that. We talked about as far as what they do and what we do. Sometimes they don't have that close operability that we have with fire and EMS. We work well together. It's just what we've evolved to in Ludlow. That's a benefit to all the residents. When you call and you're talking to that person you're going to get those services. You've got a fire captain and an OIC at the police department, which is usually a sergeant. Those 2 supervisors walk steps, and they have real time information. They're standing behind the person who's talking on the phone with the person in need. You can't replicate that. It's not possible. What happened two weeks ago when 2 people walked in and say I don't speak English, I walk steps and I'm talking to them in Portuguese. You can't replicate that. You can do language line services and all the other things, but you just can't change that. A lot of the communities that did regionalize many of them were burdened with tremendous turnover and costs from not having enough people to work. So many of these chiefs I spoke to are like I'm in a rock and a hard place. I can't fill these jobs. The certifications are difficult. Professional dispatch has become, other than DNA, real time video, that type of thing, crime centers and what not, in criminal justice it's dispatch and it's become tremendously professional from having somebody just sit at a phone. Some of that evolvement, it takes a lot. A lot of people don't do well and can't perform the tasks, so they go do something else. To that end, they just couldn't find anybody. They're competing for limited labor pools against bigger pockets and better benefits and even if they're collective they

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just couldn't. If the chiefs are telling them I can't fill the spots, what am I going to do. I had to regionalize. I've got no choice. Some of these larger places is a little bit different. The larger places, what they worry about is basically losing that ability to have their officers and their involvement more with their com center and with their CAD operations. The west sides, the Holyoke's, I don't want to partner with a city. If you're the big fish in the pond you get the attention. If you're the smaller entity you're going to get less. Just so everybody's clear, if one dispatcher runs a radio and a PSEV, you have 2 doing that now. You cut it to one you have half. Every one of these chiefs tells me the same thing. You're going to get lucky to get one dispatcher, so that's half of what you have. You're cutting your service in half to save $400,000, which is half of 1% of the town's total budget. Half of 1%.

Mr. Strange: That's not accurate.

Chief Valadas: I know my budget.

Mr. Strange: I know your budget too.

Chief Valadas: If I'm over $500,000, I have $80,000 in reimbursements. That's one of my points. Basically, if you're over $400,000.

Mr. Strange: Let's talk about facts.

Chief Valades: The dispatch budget is over $500,000.

Mr. Strange: Plus benefits.

Chief Valadas: There's benefit costs as well. My proposed budget was over $500,000. We get about $80,000 from state 9-1-1 reimbursements so we're under $500,000. The town's budget is 84 million.

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Mr. Gennette: 80.

Chief Valadas: 80 flat? So slightly over half a percent for the entire dispatch budget. I have many more points, but I certainly want to give other people a chance.

Mr. Gennette: Marc do you want to make a comment?

Mr. Strange: No, I'm happy to share the financial benefit after everybody has had a chance to talk.

Chief Pease: Again, Chief Valadas has been running the dispatch center a lot longer and I'll give you our history with dispatch as the fire department goes. Way back when I first started, we were a secondary PSAP. We would take a call and back then if somebody dialed 9-1-1 in the early 2000's from a cell phone it went to state police, it went to our police department and then it went to the fire department. By the time the ambulance is getting out the door it's probably 4 minutes in the call or more because of the switchboard effect of the state and the fact that we had a secondary dispatch, which wasn't very efficient at all. Fast forward to 2015 or so when we started doing emergency medical dispatch only because we were running the ambulance service too. Again, not a very efficient way of doing things. There was a rec study, regionalization study with Longmeadow and East Longmeadow, I wasn't directly involved with it. A lot of these guys were. Chief Babineau and Chief Madera they stayed with all the towns involved with the study. After some careful thought and deliberation, they decided maybe this regionalization thing isn't the best for our town. Why don't we form a centralized dispatch for police, fire and I'll say that the dispatch for not only police and fire but also DPW and school department. They're taking every emergency that comes into town and sending resources where the town needs them with that personal service. We worked on that and in the meantime, the town was convinced to build upon, we had a failing radio system, failing infrastructure, failing subscriber units and a failing system. The thought at that point, once the town decided to go with its own central dispatch was to say, they had a couple options at that point. I think it was to go to a place like WESTCOMM that would probably pay for their subscriber units possibly, pay for their radio infrastructure, which you've done for some other communities. Instead, Ludlow decided that we are going to be a self-sustaining, self-sufficient organization that provides the individual services in the town for the towns people of Ludlow and it's first responders through one entity. Back then we went to town meeting, mostly it was Chief

Madera's brain child with Chief Babineau, but I had just gotten to the chief position in 2017, I believe it was the spring of that year we went to town meeting with a proposition for a 4.8 million dollars, it might have been 2018 by that point that it actually went before town meeting, for a town wide radio system that provided interoperability for the town of Ludlow and really took every emergency entity, and we don't always think that DPW is an emergency entity, but they surely are, especially during times of natural disasters. Police, Fire, DPW are working together. You can't ignore the school system now in that same radio umbrella because of obviously the issues we've had with security and trouble at school. So that one entity, our dispatch, Ludlow's dispatch has Ludlow people in it that we have direct control over that sit inside our building, we decided to spend the taxpayers 4.8 million dollars on that project building a brand new tower at Nick Silva field, working extensively with the MWRA to build a tower on their facility including a generator, backup generator and all the other supporting infrastructure, and the last thing we did as far as the infrastructure, we've always had a microwave dish up on Minechoag Mountain, but we were able to, with a lot of collaboration of everybody here, build a shelter to house all of our equipment, propane generator, and upgrade that facility up there. I'm going to tell you that personally working with every one of those agencies it's been 3 years of blood, sweat and tears put into this project to finally make this system the best that it could be for Ludlow. I'm telling you that the final acceptance test has not been signed on this, but we have the best system with 4 public safety frequencies, 4 UHF public safety frequencies, which I want you all to know weren't very easy to get at all. We bent over backwards along with our radio vendor to attain those frequencies. I'm not sure if you guys have 4 yet, do you? As far as public safety rated frequencies.

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Ms. Hastings: We have 5.

Chief Valades: We have 4 just for us.

Chief Pease: We have 4 for the town of Ludlow, they have 5 for the 5 communities that they have. This is our baby, and this is something we feel so passionate about. When you talk about emergency services in any town, the heart of that is the dispatch system. One problem goes wrong from receiving that call, handling that call, or our responders get the wrong information and end up at the wrong address or God forbid something catastrophic happens, it happens on that first call. And this is such an important decision for this town, and I want you to realize that it should not be taken lightly in any effect. These 2 people sitting behind us, we know they have our back no matter what. Like Chief Valadas said, Fire captain, Fire chief, anybody, we can stand right behind them in real time and know what's going on and what calls are coming in and we don't have to guess at all. When any resident walks in they know they're going to be greeted by a dispatcher. We've had people with serious medical conditions walk right into our lobby and immediately they got attention. Right now, we could all be out on calls and there could be nobody in that station, but there always is 8 dispatchers there and the townspeople should feel comfortable knowing that. I guess my biggest problem is that we spent all this money on this project and had we chose to go in the other direction we could have gotten a different way for the town, but we invested in this town. Let's let the town provide the service that we invested in and maybe not be so quick to regionalize. I'm telling you that not everybody is doing it. I'm sure it has its advantages, most of them are dollars and cents. I get it. It's going to save us money. But the local knowledge that our dispatchers have, they'll send you to an address on West Street and let you know that the driveway is off of Prospect Gardens, and they know all that stuff because they've been doing this solely for the town for a long time. We have our own radio service and maintenance and 24-hour support. We've already bought that. I know WESTCOMM offers it to a degree. I would just caution us before we go jumping into an opportunity like this. I don't think this opportunity is going to disappear if we don't go today. I know you guys are growing. Obviously, you can't take on people right away. There's a building that still needs to be built. Still a lot of unanswered questions that I would really caution us after committing to the direction we've already committed to and knowing the level of service; this is not unknown. We know the level of service that is provided at Ludlow, to jump at something that we can't be sure of. To me, it's just not time for that. That's my piece and I'd be happy to answer any questions that anyone might have about the services we provide. I could go on and on about other concerns, but I think everybody gets the point here at this particular time.

Chief Valadas: Let me add something. Who would you have attending people that walk in the door? Or do you shut the door? If the police department joins WESTCOMM, there's a phone in the lobby. Somebody goes into the lobby, dials the phone to WESTCOMM, then it gets put back, who do we have to take the door? LATOSS union doesn't answer the lobby. The dispatchers walk

up, and they get the service they need. If you eliminate the dispatchers, the supervisors sit in different offices, if they're in booking they're on the other side of the building. A lot of these towns they grab a contact system, a pager system or cell phone, and they go out and the supervisor, OIC, pick up the phone and they know I gotta go to the lobby to meet the person. If all these chiefs are telling me, what's your call volume, Dan? 17,000-18,000. 600+ arrests and you're going to have a dark station?

Mr. Gennette: I'm going to cut you off there Chief because that was a lot of information you guys put out there, so I want to make sure everybody…do you have anything you want to add?

Mrs. Hastings: The radio system, for you to connect to our radio system we're running the same thing, we're running the P25 UHF trunk system. It's a fiber line like a microwave and connects back to your core here.

Mr. Gennette: I don't understand any of that.

Chief Pease: It means we can use our system with their system.

Ms. Hastings: They're compatible.

Chief Pease: We are getting the benefit they would provide to other communities had we not had a system. What I'm saying is we invested a lot into what we have.

Mr. Strange: I have some follow up questions for Erin, basically what the Chief said is important. I don't know if you want me to go through the financials now or just touch on them? Contrary to the Chief's statement we're looking at our dispatch costs every year are probably somewhere around $725,000, which we would save each year for the first 3 years. Not getting into the hard details but over the first 6 years, we'd save 4 million dollars. That's 4 million dollars that could be used for public parks, fields, streets, sidewalks, buildings. That's a lot of money the town would be foregoing. Then after that we're looking at an extra $500,000 in our operating budget money. That's game changing money.

Chief Valadas: Does that include the 9-1-1 reimbursements?

Mr. Strange: Yes.

Chief Pease: My questions was the town's municipalities sharing 25% of your cost, the rest of the 75% are provided by a grant. What is the guarantee that the 75% will be funded into the future.

Ms. Hastings: That's legislation. They would have to change legislation for that to go away.

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TOWN OF SOUTHWICK

Mr. Strange: The chief's made some really good points that I want to make sure everybody gets answered. One of them was the interoperability between the departments. It's DPW, police, fire and the schools. If the town went to WESTCOMM how would that effect…

Ms. Hastings: You'd still have the same interoperability. In fact, you'd have more because you could talk to Chicopee, East Longmeadow, Ware.

Chief Pease: You would be able to provide dispatching for the schools and DPW?

Ms. Hastings: We have the radios for that in other towns as well.

Chief Pease: You currently dispatch their DPW?

Ms. Hastings: If we get a call for an emergency, we dispatch but not regularly.

Chief Valadas: PSAP call or landline call.

Ms. Hastings: Right, we're not.

Chief Valadas: Nothing through the landlines?

Ms. Hastings: We have business lines for police and fire, we don't have business lines for DPW.

Chief Valadas: We do a lot of business lines. People still call us direct.

Mr. Strange: I'm still not sure. I don't know about this stuff either. It seems like being able to talk among our own departments is important.

Ms. Hastings: Yes, you would not use that ability.

Mr. Strange: The chief made a point about sharing videos with the schools, which seems like a viable concern. Have you run into that.

Ms. Hastings: Chicopee has hesitations on sharing it so right now we don't have Chicopee's school video. We have the rest of their city. But we have the schools in other towns.

Mr. Strange: So, you're able to say…

Ms. Hastings: Yes, and it's something that Chicopee could send to us if there was an active assailant event, they could actually turn that on for us on the spot.

Mr. Strange: I think Chief Pease was talking about we have this beautiful radio system; how does that integrate with WESTCOMM.

Ms. Hastings: It actually integrates fairly easily because they are the same systems. It's just a matter of adding it to our console. We run a fiber line and microwave back up.

Mr. Strange: Do you have any follow ups to that? I think it's an important point.

Chief Pease: I get that they can work together, but I'm saying this is our system. We're going to lose control of what we have. We have a lot of town agreements that are particular to the town use of all our facilities in the town of Ludlow. I don't think that these state agencies are just going to sign everything over. It was hard enough for us to establish what we have.

Ms. Hastings: We have a couple of licenses in the town's names, we don't sign everything over to WESTCOMM.

Chief Valadas: What we went through to get our 4 multi band licenses, to get some from Connecticut was an arduous process. Just so we could have an expandable system with communication experts telling us your size community, the ideal is 4 multi band for a total of 8 and expand further. That means multiple channels on each multi band. It's a trunk system, which is the best. I asked the guy how many P25's across the country? Maybe like 30% of public safety has that. You have that now. You have plenty of channels for many, many, many years in your town. You won't exhaust them all. That's what we have right now. That's why Ms. Hastings is here. It's excellent. You've got a lot of hardware that they would love to have.

Mr. Strange: One of the things we've talked about internally is when WESTCOMM first started, 2018-2019, there's public narrative and public statements about how its going to evolve, how its going to expand. It seems like WESTCOMM hasn't met those benchmarks in terms of expansion. Can you talk a little bit about what you've seen. Why the uptake hasn't been quite as robust?

Ms. Hastings: It's space right now. Until we get into the new building that's what we need is space before we can take on anything that's going to add to our dispatch staff. We are in negotiations with some smaller areas that we could take on and it doesn't affect our staffing. Any place larger we'd have to wait until we're in our new building.

Mr. Strange: The new building build out, where is that?

Ms. Hastings: December 2024.

Mr. Strange: Has it been designed?

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Ms. Hastings: We're in design development with the architect. We're in the final stages with the architect right now. We're going out for construction documents starting next month.

Chief Pease: The original building I figured that was going to be done years ago. Was there a plan much sooner to have that completed?

Ms. Hastings: This building? No, we're actually 8 months behind schedule. We were waiting on some documents before we can move further. Other than that, we're moving right along with it.

Chief Pease: Where is your radio service vendor located?

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Ms. Hastings: Our contractor is out of Arizona.

Chief Pease: So emergency calls?

Ms. Hastings: He has a local guy plus we have our own radio guys.

Chief Valadas: Let me clear up something also. We have public safety emergencies that the volume gets high. We have something now where the supervisors get hands on and involved right away. There's no other place they have to relay to. In other words, in an emergency, the supervisors, captains, sergeants would be speaking with WESTCOMM, and that link would be crucial, vital for our real time information as well as what we need for our responders to go out there. You have that now instantaneously. If we have to bring in more staff, we do. We look at what we're doing, where we are, there's no other intermediary. It's just there, it's in the building, in the safety complex, that's what you have. A joint complex for central dispatch. You lose all that. There's time delays. Everything takes time. Picking up a phone is not easy.

Chief Pease: I think especially when there's a large-scale incident going on in our town, we don't have to devote extra staff to opening up an EOC, an emergency operations center, because we can send one member from each department over there and call in an extra dispatcher at our fingertips. We have that real time information. I think we will get less of a service as far as that goes. It's certainly very important to us in those times that we don't have to devote any extra resources to that, and our dispatchers really help.

Chief Valadas: We set up an entire dispatch just for Festa.

Ms. Hastings: On that note, we do supply a dispatch EOC for any large event or when storms come in. We'll send one to Longmeadow, one to Monson and we send the extra staff over there so we can take things, again, anything excessive the dispatch. We can still run routine things and have that face to face for the large events.

Chief Valadas: Ms. Hastings, the Festa is a unique event. Our dispatchers work and man the secondary dispatch from there with a FEMA NEAC center like the Big E does and we handle our own just like west side does. Like Holyoke and the Holyoke parade, they do their own. We can do it. Agawam does what they do. So, we have that ability. I don't want to lose that ability. We man our own dispatch, we run our own biggest event we have in 75 years. We do it systematically every year, with state support at no cost.

Mr. Goncalves: In the situation where you're going to send somebody over to Festa or another event, is there an extra charge for that?

Ms. Hastings: No, that's included.

Mr. Goncalves: So, no matter what's going on there's somebody available. You made a comment about some type of drowning that was going on and you took a dispatcher and put them there because you wanted to take them out of the call volume.

Ms. Hastings: When you get a major call like that that's a lot of extra radio traffic, a lot more details, a lot more phone calls that are being made. We like to take that activity out of the dispatch center and put it at the scene so that you have that face to face with the responders on the scene and you can give them exactly what they need when they need it. We give them a phone, a

computer, the CAD system, everything, and they can run it from the scene. Especially if it's something that's a long event like that. It ended up being 2 ½ days.

Mr. Goncalves: Another note I made here. You have 9 dispatchers now and you're going to go to 29.

Ms. Hastings: 29 positions. We have call takers and dispatchers. One person that stays on the line that can provide emergency medical dispatch instructions or fire dispatch instruction. While that person stays on the line with the caller the dispatcher is sending it out simultaneously on the radio. There's 2 people that handle that 1 call. We're also adding in a records division which will do call analysis. Because we video to 9-1-1 now and we have so many cameras we use that 3rd person to stream the video out to the cruiser or find a camera in the area to see if they can track a car that's leaving a scene. It's actually 3 people that touch a call when a call comes in.

Mr. Goncalves: What is the ratio of employee to population wise? What does it look like now? You've got 5 communities with 9 dispatchers. We have 9 dispatchers in Ludlow just for us.

Ms. Hastings: That's 9 at once that can work in the center at once that can work in the station. We have 41 dispatchers.

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Mr. Goncalves: Right now? For these 5 communities?

Ms. Hastings: Yes.

Mr. Goncalves: Do you know how that works out population wise?

Ms. Hastings: I don't off the top of my head. We go through a national analysis for staffing which takes into consideration our call volume, our 9-1-1 volume, our business lines, our radio traffic, and it analyzes what you should have on staff and then we add to that just to make sure there's enough.

Mr. Goncalves: What is WESTCOMM? Is it a quasi-state agency?

Ms. Hastings: It's almost like a charter school. Under Mass General Law Chapter 6A we're a district. We're a municipality in the commonwealth but our only function is 9-1-1 dispatch.

Mr. Goncalves: For the chief's, it was interesting. You said something about people coming into the lobby. What happens when somebody comes into the lobby, and we don't have a dispatcher there how is that going to be handled?

Chief Valadas: Stations have divided that up. If they're smaller they do the phone system. The OIC, the police officer on duty, carries that phone tied to the lobby. For larger police departments they establish an in-house station officer, which we don't have. I don't have that post. When we let go of the dispatch the patrolmen did back in the 90's they lost that post. The only way they work now is situations where we need somebody to answer a 3rd phone, a water main break or something and the phones are going crazy, so we put a police officer there who can't answer the 9-1-1 but they can answer landline calls. It helps out quite a bit. They get over time that way. Some departments developed a station officer. I would have a designated post to work in the station. That designated post, like you do when you walk into many police departments, Springfield, Holyoke, there's a police officer that greets you. A lot of departments I visited out east. They handle all your walk-ins, landline calls, they can watch cameras, watch booking cell cameras, matron duties if there's female officers. We would have to create that. I would anticipate the 4 collective bodies that are affected by this, 5 or 6 collective bodies, that you would probably have some demand to impact bargaining for patrolmen that would want to add for. I can't take an officer now and say get out of the cruiser out of patrol and I'm putting you at a desk. That's really not something they're supposed to be doing. I could pull them into booking for security. I could say you have to help dispatch out because they're real busy because a sergeant has other things they've got to do. I could pull them in temporarily but it's a post I don't have. Before we would do it voluntarily, if you will. I was a volunteer post. Now the post doesn't really exist. To create that, the cost of 6 officers would be over $300,000, if I did 2 officers every shift, 365, 24-7 and obviously over time to cover days off, all their training and everything else. Six officers over $300,000. I could just station an officer in the station.

Mr. Strange: That's all speculation and conjecture. It would not mandate us hiring 6 new officers if we did this. There's a way to problem solve everything. If this was a situation, nobody would regionalize. My first year on the Longmeadow select board was 2019 so we were going through it. One of the biggest complaints we heard from residents were when they would go up to the police station and it's dark, as you're saying, and they had to actually use the phone to call dispatch, which again, it's not ideal. An ideal situation is we have our own dispatch but we have a serious budget situation so we're looking at a significant savings so there's got to be some sort of trade off. One of the trade offs is instead of going into the police station and you have somebody there to greet you, you can use the phone. It's not the same, of course. In totality you have to look at all the benefits and detriment to the situation. I just don't want the public to think that if we do this, we're going to automatically incur $300,000 more in salaries, which is not the case.

Chief Valadas: I didn't say it was going to be mandated, I just said it was an option.

Mr. Strange: As long as that's clear.

Lt. Irwin: Thank you for recognizing me. For those who don't know, I'm Dave Irwin, Ludlow Police Operations Lieutenant. I supervise dispatch on a day-to-day basis. WESTCOMM is our partner. We can't lose sight of that. We work with Chicopee police, Longmeadow police, East Longmeadow police so I don't want to say anything that undermines the good work that WESTCOMM does, because let's face it, they do good work. When you talk about tradeoffs, it makes sense to have some trade off if you're going to at least get the same level of service. Ideally you want to try to do it where you're going to get a better level of service. At the very least you want to get the same level of service. You will not get the same level of service right now. I promise you. When you have a resident in need of help, seconds matter. Trust me. Myself and Sgt. Shameklis were talking in my office one day about something. A call comes over for male in the lobby who cut himself. We go out there and he needed a tourniquet fast. We got the tourniquet on in 22 seconds before the paramedics even got there to help him and got him the treatment he needed at the hospital. You can't guarantee that if you switch over. Everything in that power point, we can match that. We have the employee assistance program. We have recognition that we have more Gen Z workers. You want to talk about burnout. In fall of 2022 I sat with union president Ashley Korney and we came up with a new system for time off to allow for that work-life balance because we don't want people getting burnt out. We want people staying. And we've done that. You want to talk about a gold standard? It's Ludlow. Dispatchers have left other area communities to come work for the Ludlow Police Department, Ludlow Central Dispatch. It's the place you want to be. Quite honestly, I think this unit does the best job in the station. I have no complaints with them on a day-to-day basis. They get it done. They keep the officers safe; they keep the firemen safe, and you can't put a price tag on that. I don't think that we should have to be listening to departments radio traffic on a day-to-day basis. I care about keeping officers safe and you do that because it's just Ludlow right now. Everything is Ludlow. I know these dispatchers. I know when they sound panicked. I know when it's a serious call. I know when I have to stop what I'm doing and go down to dispatch, just like the sergeants do. We could go through that entire power point, and I could show you how we could match it. I don't see the sense in going backwards and outsourcing it. I trust them. Thank you.

Mr. Wakowski: My name is Al Wakowski. I live in this town.

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Mr. Gennette: Try to keep it as brief as possible.

Mr. Wakowski: I'll do my best. I have 33 years in a large department. I've also been E-911 certified. I've also been a supervisor in charge of CAD. I've worked through many major disasters. I currently work in the civilian sector and have had dealings with police departments that have had WESTCOMM as their source of communication. I have nothing against WESTCOMM. I have no real horse in the race. I can tell you from personal experience, after I retired from my police career, I walked into the Ludlow Police Department and had a medical emergency of my own. One of the officers spotted me and said what's up. I said I've got some chest pains. I ended up in the ambulance lickity split and on my way to the hospital. Thank goodness it wasn't as serious event as I felt it might be, but I had Johnny on the spot service right there. There was nobody that I had to wait or call or anything like that. Outstanding. I belong to the ambulance service. I commit to that. That's a great benefit to the town and the townspeople. I hope they realize that's huge. When you live in town you get a free ambulance ride. At any rate, where this company is moving to, I

will divert a little back to we just celebrated the 12-year anniversary of a tornado in Springfield. I worked during that. Chaos isn't even a good word to put for the radio traffic that was coming over that radio system. And that's just Springfield. When you add 4-5 communities and get hit with a tornado or we get hit with some disaster that is unpredictable and you have one company running the show that's the kind of communication problems you're going to run into when minutes and time count. I don't know how WESTCOMM would handle that. I would say this though. Where they're moving to very nearby is a major chemical company. What would happen if some disaster were to befall that company that would take out the dispatch area that WESTCOMM is going to? That's in very close proximity, without naming the company. You have your maps, and you know where that is. Like I said, my concern is right at the present time my concern is that dispatching and everything is handled right here. It's instantaneous. I, myself, have had experiences with people on the radio that you can tell their demeanor if you know them. You're probably not going to get that with 40 other dispatchers or call takers in another company who aren't in town to know their officers or their personnel. That's the kind of thing you can't duplicate. When an officer is on a hot call and may be in danger of losing their life that dispatcher might recognize that person's voice or demeanor to the point where they know what's going on without being there. I've experienced that. I'm just throwing it out to you as a hope that you give this a good hard look. Sometimes being penny wise and pound foolish isn't a way to go. I know that there's budget problems. There's probably some other way to come up with a solution. Sometimes when you see the budget and there's just pennies in there and something bad happens and then all of a sudden the budget is overflowing with money, you've probably seen that little picture.

Mr. Gennette: That's not happening.

Mr. Wakowski: I understand that. In this situation here where you have communication ability amongst all the agencies in town right at their fingertips. There's no phone calls to be made. There's no additional people to have to be contacted in order for it to have to go from one city or town back to the other. Like I said, when you get a multitude of agencies under one umbrella taking their dispatch from one place, when there's a disaster like a tornado that wipes out all 3 or 4 communities at once how is that going to be handled with the situation you're looking at. Sometimes this communication might be the only one that's still up. That's all I would offer to you. I'm sorry if I took too much time.

Ms. Korney: Can I say something brief? I will be brief I promise. My name is Ashley Goncalves-Korney and I would like to make a statement regarding the issue being discussed here tonight that could impact the public safety of this town. I've dedicated the last 16 years to being a proud member of the Ludlow Police and Fire Dispatch unit, which has given me the opportunity to observe dramatic changes that have made dispatch part of an inter-connected network of people who are equally committed and emotionally invested to serve the town. When I first started here in 2007, my role was to dispatch for police only. This meant we transferred all fire and medical calls to the fire department. Years later the decision was made to invest money into not only a brand new multi-million-dollar radio system, but also into creating central dispatch, which required funding to certify us as emergency medical dispatchers. We have evolved into now triaging all medical calls and providing emergency instruction to the caller while simultaneously dispatching police officers and fire fighters. In this added role we instruct callers with pre arrival instructions on how to perform CPR and the Heimlich Maneuver, just to name a few. In other words, becoming centralized has streamlined communication resulting in a more efficient and cost-effective system. Did you realize that because of all these improvements there's a minute or less of response time from when we receive a call to when responding units are dispatched to the scene? Members of the Board of Selectmen, I'm sure you are intrigued by the option that brings us here tonight; however, please also don't forget that central dispatch is the hub of our entire town communications, including animal control, DPW and the schools. Central receives all calls, radio traffic and foot traffic. Our dispatch unit invites you to tour our new space within the safety complex any time so that you can really appreciate the $60,000 state of the art dispatch consoles that were part of a $100,000 central dispatch remodel in April. The dispatch unit consists of 9 full timers and 4 per-diems, all of whom are exceptionally familiar with not only street names but specific locations of businesses that existed years ago but are no longer known by that name. Most importantly every member of dispatch can gauge the seriousness of an incident just by listening to the tone of the officer or fire fighter's voice when they radio in. These are just a few reasons why our response times are immediate and therefore so beneficial to the residents that need our help. Please bear with me for one second while I put a face to our dispatchers whose years of experience, education and commitment must be recognized. Dispatcher Linda Zina, 27 years of dedicated

service, dispatcher Shelby Anderson 23 years of service, who holds a master's degree, myself 16 years of service who holds a bachelors degree, dispatcher Marc Pasteris 10 years of service. Furthermore, over the last year we gained dispatcher Michael Lynch, who is a 22-year dispatch veteran who also holds a bachelor's degree and dispatcher Evan King, an 8-year dispatch veteran. Both came from 2 different departments to come work here. The remaining 3 full-time dispatchers also bring significant qualities to the dispatch team. Dispatcher Sean Andre, 2 years of service, is a Ludlow resident, speaks Portuguese and holds a bachelor's degree. Dispatcher Ben Taylor 2 ½ years of service, is a Ludlow resident, knows the town well and also holds a bachelor's degree. Dispatcher Jasmine Colon, 1 year of service and is fluent in Spanish. As I hope you can now understand, this dispatch unit is comprised of a high caliber of people who cannot be replaced. I have to beg the question. What would you do if a takeover could result in ending your career? There is no denying that police, fire, and dispatch are all interconnected and work as a seamless unit because we are so familiar with each other. Disrupting the special bond would dismantle the public safety of this town. The bottom line is there is no logical reason to look elsewhere and disrupt the landscape of this organization.

Mr. Gennette: We're going to hold there. We've got a lot of thinking to do and we'll have to go from there. We are not making any decisions tonight.

Mr. Goncalves: Is there a way to get that slide presentation? Can you send it to Marc.

Mr. Strange: Sure.

Mr. Gennette: Thank you everybody for your time. I'm sure there's going to be other conversations to be had.

Chief Pease: We just feel passionate about what we have. We feel like we have one of, if not the best service and best system and it's our recommendation that we keep what we have because we know what we have. We know we have the best. I understand it's going to result in a cost savings, but I'm not convinced we're moving to a better place. Like Lt. Irwin said, if we're going to make a move, we want to be sure the citizens are getting a better service or at least an equal service and I don't know that at this time.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Board to sign the five One Day All Alcohol Permits and the Chairman to sign the Sunday Entertainment License for Our Lady of Fatima Parish Annual Festa.

Board to sign the One Day Beer & Wine Permit for the 250th Semi-Quincentennial Fundraiser at Lupa Zoo on June 24, 2023, from 5:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Board to approve and sign Selectmen Minutes of March 28, 2023.

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Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to approve and sign selectmen minutes of March 28, 2023. All members present. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Board to approve and sign Selectmen Minutes of April 4, 2023.

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to approve and sign selectmen minutes of April 4, 2023. All members present. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Board to approve and sign Selectmen Minutes of April 18, 2023.

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to approve and sign selectmen minutes of April 18, 2023. All members present. **Mr. Rosenblum second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Board to approve and sign Selectmen Minutes of May 2, 2023.

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to approve and sign selectmen minutes of May 2, 2023. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Board to approve and sign Selectmen Minutes of May 8, 2023.

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to approve and sign selectmen minutes of May 8, 2023. All members present. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Board to approve and sign Executive Session Minutes of April 11, 2023.

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to approve and sign executive session minutes of April 11, 2023. All members present. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Board to approve and sign Executive Session Minutes of May 16, 2023.

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to approve and sign executive session minutes of May 16, 2023. All members present. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Mr. Strange: Can we check and see if the May 2nd minutes were part of that group?

Mr. Rosenblum: May 2nd is right here.

Board to discuss and possibly vote on allowing the Hubbard Memorial Library to use the lawn adjacent to the library for the following additional dates.

Mr. Gennette: I'm not going to go through all these dates. If there are any dates that you guys are interested in talking about or if you would like to talk about this in general, there is a list of dates from May 26 to October 10. It looks like it covers almost every weekend except September, which was only one.

Mr. Rosenblum: When I thought they were only looking for a few extra dates that we weren't going to see every weekend taken here. It's great. My only concern would be public safety and the amount of traffic that's going to be going in there. I didn't expect it to be every weekend. I thought they were saying extra days here and there. It's an impressive list.

Mr. Goncalves: The majority of these events are an hour, hour and a half, 2 hours.

Mr. Gennette: The only thing I don't know is are they planning on using the gazebo.

Mr. Silva: It says the grass next to the parking lot.

Mr. Gennette: I get it but there's other stuff they're talking about.

Mr. DeBarge: No, just the lawn. Marc, do we know of any conflicts with these dates with any other department? That area isn't used that often.

Mr. Strange: I don't think anybody uses the space.

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to vote to allow the Hubbard Memorial Library use the lawn adjacent to the library for the dates published in our minutes. **Mr. DeBarge second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

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Board to approve annual appointments.

Mr. Gennette: I have an appointed officials list here of annual appointments from May 1st to April 30th and I'd like a motion to approve the positions.

Mr. Silva: I usually request that we read these because there's people out there who want to know who's on this committee, who's on that committee. With these people being on there it's nice to recognize.

Motion made by Mr. Silva to appoint the following positions for the year. ADA Coordinator – Leslie Ward. Agent of Record – Anjou Anjou Pereira. Agricultural Commission – Karen Pilon. Airport Master Plan Consulting Committee – Joseph Queiroga. Animal Control Officer – Octavia Anderson. Board of Appeals – 5 years – Elaine Hodgman. Board of Registrars – 3 years – Paul T. Babin Jr. Building Commissioner – Paul Adzima, Local Building Inspector. Cable Committee – Michael Assaf, Antonio Goncalves, Thomas Ghazil, Michael Hill, Marc Strange. Capital

Improvement Planning Committee – James Gennette, Josh Carpenter, Tony Sanches, Louis Vitorino, Kathleen Demetrius. Celebrate Ludlow Committee – Lori Smith, Chair, Tom Fournier, Michelle Annecchiarico, Marc Moran, Eric Segundo, Diane Walton, Sara Sweeney, Joanne Wrona, Lisa Martin, Derek DeBarge. Commission on Disability – Beverly Barry, Harry Mills. Communication Officer – Marc Strange. Conservation Commission – Penny Lebel, Angela Tierney. Constables – Detective David Kornacki, Detective Stephen Ricardi. Constable for Tax Collector – Reid Jeffrey Jr, Christine Jeffrey. Council on Aging – Debora M. Johnson, Rosalind Forti, Frank Krzynik, Robert Radowski, Kara Ribeiro. Director of Emergency Management – Chief Ryan Pease. Dog Park Committee – Diane Boilard, Darlene Kennedy, Jesse Mendez, Sara Mendez, Steve Nicoll, Kara Ribeiro, Marc Strange, Penny Lebel, Douglas Stefancik, Melissa Dion. There is a vacancy from the Board of Public Works. Jamie Tomas. Economic Development Officer – William Rosenblum. Fair Housing Committee – Marc Strange, Josh Carpenter. First Meeting House Committee – Thomas Haluch, Jeremy Kavka, Agnes (Betty) Kibbe, Marilyn Paul-Lewis, Bert Ramage. Graves Registration Officer – Eric Segundo, Steven Sawyer. Hazardous Material Coordinator – Captain Seth Falconer. Historian – Marilyn Paul-Lewis. Historical Commission – James Harrington, John Moll, Karen Pilon, Agnes Kibbe, Angela Tierney, Allison DeLong. Information Officer – Marc Strange. Insurance Advisory Committee – Michael Bertini, Michelle Annecchiarico, Kathleen Houle, Angela Kramer, Denise Kukla, Deputy Chief Jeffrey Lavoie, Sgt. Steve Ricardi, Zachary Ellison, Debra Parker, Amanda Lemiuex, Marc Strange, Lt. Mike Brennan, Marc Pasteris, Sharon Martins, Kathy Demetrius. Internal Safety Committee – Dave Ritchie, Melissa Rickson, Sgt. Brian Shameklis, Mike Bertini, Deputy Chief Jeff Lavoie, Heather Jolicoeur, Jamie Tomas, Leslie Ward, Kathy Demetrius. Long Range Planning Committee – Elsa Barros, Joe Alves, Frank Tiano, Kathy Houle, Marc Strange, James Goodreau, Sean McBride.

With that safety committee, I believe we had something coming up on our agenda about, I mean the long-range committee about disbanding the safety committee. Should we eliminate those and wait and then appoint.

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Mr. Gennette: From what I understood is that we already did that.

Mr. Strange: Not the long range, no.

Mr. Gennette: Until we do, we've got to at least fill it out.

Mr. Silva: Ok, so we'll keep those names on. I believe I went through them all. Marc Strange, James Goodreau and Sean McBride. Ludlow Cultural Council – Grace Barone, Debbie Goodreau, Michelle Goncalves, Sharon Letourneau-Clark, Janet Settembro, Robert Radowski. Mobile Home Rent Control Board – Judith Kornicki, Michael Szlosek, Joseph Young, Mary Evangelista, Antonio Goncalves. MMWEC Board of Directors – James Gennette. Open Space Committee – John Archambeau, William (Bud) Ellison, James Goodreau, William Rosenblum, Joao Dias, Elaine Hodgman, Joel Silva, Ryan Linton, Penny Lebel, Jamie Tomas, Angela Tierney. Parking Hearing Officer – Derek DeBarge. Permitting Authority Trench Regulations – Ken Batista, Jim Goodreau, Jamie Tomas. Pioneer Valley Planning Commission – Ray Phoenix, Josh Carpenter. Pond Management Committee – Janis Santos, Judy Breault, Elaine Hodgman, Patricia Kwasiborski, Michelle Markiewicz, Tony Vital, Anna Vital. PVTA Representative – Manual Silva. Safety Committee – Christopher Coelho, Leslie Ward, Deputy Chief Jeff Lavoie, Penny Lebel, Manny Silva, Captain Seth Falconer, Sgt. Brian Shameklis, Ryan Churchill. Sealer and Weights Measures – Vacancy. Sworn Weigher – Joanne Martins. Town Counsel – Attorney Brian Winner, Mead, Talerman & Costa. Town Labor Counsel – Stanley L. Weinberg. Westover Golf Commission – Sean Lebeau, Kire Trajkowski, Mario Morton, Andy Panek. Westover Municipal Development Corp – Maureen (Kim) Dowing.

Mr. Goncalves second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.

Board to sign the corrected common victualler's license for Cady Street Market – (should have been Cady Street Market, not Cady Street Meat Market).

Board to sign the corrected mechanical amusement license for John's Corner – (should have only been for 1 machine, not 2).

NEW BUSINESS

Board to discuss Strategic Planning.

Mr. Gennette: There's a lot of things we're doing in town and its easier for Marc to know what kind of direction the board is headed. If we're offering some strategic objectives for. There's a couple of things to note right out of the gate. We know that he has to deal with the DPW. He's acquired that and he's got to address that. Just to give everybody an example, I'm hoping that Marc can further the aggregate electric program and I would be very interested in seeing some pathways or terminology to try to create some ordinances that we can better control the town of Ludlow. Does anybody else have any discussions of anything they would like to discuss as far as strategic planning?

Mr. DeBarge: I brought this up last time when we talked about this. We need to have a focus where this board wants to go in the near and distant future. I think we should be able to prioritize specific things that make the public and our departments better off and that is infusion of new money into the town through the mills project and through future business ventures. Whatever direction that is we need to have it out and planned so we have that direction. That goes without saying. That's something this board has not done since I've been on the board, unless specifically asked by our town administrator, like what do you want me to do on this, what do you want me to do in the next whatever. We need to help out here and do our jobs and give Marc and those along with him a good vision of where we think we should be headed. I'm in favor of moving on this and spending some time with it.

Mr. Silva: I think we should be doing something. I know I've been contacted by several people with the parking situation and they're looking for a space to put a park somewhere on East Street and they're very involved and I think we probably should look at avenues. I know Marc emailed something about some of the areas and places that could be looked at. Is there any funds Marc, available?

Mr. Strange: What we can do, with the redevelopment of Mill 8 there should be a significant influx of cash, tax revenue. What we would propose to do is expand the DIF district to go down East Street all the way to Stevens and then around and that would allow us to use DIF money to buy property. As long as we're going to use it for municipal parking.

Mr. Silva: I believe the Mills owns that vacant land that's on Meadow Street. It could be a considerable parking.

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Mr. Goncalves: It's behind the building that's across from my office. Busses used to go down there and pick up people.

Mr. Silva: It's behind the elderly housing.

Mr. DeBarge: It's across the street from Mill 10.

Mr. Silva: Acquiring that property in the mills, I don't know what they would have any idea for that. That property is a considerable piece for parking if it would be possible to acquire the property in front of it. They're trying their best to come up with something over there. There's no real answer there though. It should be a little closer up to the center but there's nothing available. The building across was available but it got sold.

Mr. Strange: We've got to let people know that we're looking and when opportunities present themselves, we've got to be ready to act. In talking about Starzyk and his opinion something closer to the middle, kind of like what you were saying, would be able to service some of the other businesses.

Mr. Goncalves: They missed a spot. It would have been a piece on Hubbard where Santos Barbershop was.

Mr. Silva: That was a good piece for parking. At the time they questioned if that would be something that the town could do. It was just nothing that we could afford or even consider it. Now if there is some funds to do something like that, we probably should look at it.

Mr. Strange: East Street is so important to the town.

Mr. Silva: To go along with that I've noticed some work has been done. Some of the trees have been removed on East Street and hopefully DPW is going to stay on that and fix those sidewalks. They're unbelievable walking through there. It's raised, it's terrible.

Mr. Rosenblum: That was kind of my thing. The only thing I would ask about. It's private property I guess but what's going on with Frank's Diner? Is it just going to sit there and look like an eye sore forever or, I don't know what's going on down there. We lost the tree that was on the corner.

Mr. Strange: That was unfortunate.

Mr. Rosenblum: That can be an integral property somewhere down the road. I've discussed it before. When that mills project is done and mixed-use retail down below, you can see now with the development the amount of space between the road and the building. I don't know how far they're going to come out. I think it's going to be in the future a great opportunity to close off that street for a couple blocks, or at least the length of the building to have a walking area to be able to go down there. If you could have parking there or parking behind the mills. Those are the kinds of things I think about and my wife, every time we go down there, she said it would be great if we could just come down here and walk. Go to the new Mad Wings, Primavera, the bakery, you've got everything right down there. We need to do something down there. When we were marching, I said to you they've done some great jobs with the store fronts too and you don't really have a chance to showcase them until you go like this, driving by. Some businesses have done some nice work down there.

Mr. Strange: Absolutely.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Goncalves, anything?

Mr. Goncalves: Nope. Good.

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Mr. Gennette: I think we can probably keep going with this discussion. Generate some ideas and get a list and get some goals to our town administrator. I think that's what he's looking for. He wants to know what we want so we can work on that.

Board to discuss and possibly vote on decommission the Long-Range Planning Committee.

Mr. Gennette: I don't think the long-range planning committee has met as far as I know.

Mr. Silva: In years and the vacancies, there was like 6 vacancies.

Mr. Gennette: With the capital planning committee they're already planned 5 years out and we're probably going to end up going 10 years out. I don't know if that's something we can bring together or if they do the same thing, one is longer than the other. Further out?

Mr. Silva: For the time being we can disband it and bring it back if we need it. We brought it in when we were having considerable things like the new school. We kind of brought that in to discuss things to do and right now I think we're pretty much good with the school and we're doing the track. We could certainly bring it back.

Motion made by Mr. Silva to decommission the long-range planning committee. **Mr. DeBarge second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Boad to discuss and possibly vote on using 40R funds to pay for a new sign at the corner of Chapin Street and Sportsmen's Road.

Mr. Gennette: Marc, how much are we talking here?

Mr. Strange: The quote is just over $7,000. It's a 2 sided 66 x 118-dimensional sign. It has 6 panels. It's made of aluminum and vinyl. It's weather resistant. It's maroon and white, kind of reflects the town colors. It has the town seal on it. Certainly, an upgrade from the sign that was there and

should last a lot longer. In terms of beautifying it, we talked with the DPW about maybe putting in some landscaping rocks or some plantings or something to make it a little bit more inviting.

Mr. Gennette: Is this the model for the other signs that we're going to be doing?

Mr. Strange: It doesn't have to be, but the thought was let's do this one. This is probably the big one, the biggest expense, see what kind of reception we get. Chuck's Signs is doing it. They're right down the road and they're very flexible. It would be nice to have a consistent theme around town. There's all kinds of different ways to do signs. You can get really crazy. You kind of have to decide on something. I think this is attractive and it communicates the locations on Sportsmen's Road.

Motion made by Mr. DeBarge to use 40R funds to pay for a new sign at the corner of Chapin Street & Sportsmen's Road in the amount of $7,028.13. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Board to discuss and vote on whether to support the Hampden County Retirement Board's request to increase COLA's for retirees from 3% to 5%.

Mr. DeBarge: I will be abstaining from this as I am retired.

Mr. Silva: I will recuse myself as well since I am on Hampden County's retirement system.

Mr. Goncalves: Is that a one-time thing?

Mr. Strange: Yes. It will add to the unfunded liability the retirement board has, which could impact our assessment in the future. It's uncertain at this point.

Mr. Rosenblum: Does it say here that there's no impact on Ludlow's operating budget?

Mr. Strange: Yes.

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Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to recommend the 5% increase. **Mr. Rosenblum second. Motion passed 3-0-2.**

Board to approve and sign the contract between the Town of Ludlow (DPS) and Dennis K. Burke, Inc. for FY24 Gas Agreement.

Motion made by Mr. Silva to approve and sign the contract between the Town of Ludlow (DPS) and Dennis K. Burke, Inc. for FY24 Gas Agreement. **Mr. DeBarge second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Board to approve and sign the contract between the Town of Ludlow (DPW) and Sprague Operating Resources, LLC for FY24 Oil Agreement.

Motion made by Mr. Silva to sign the contract between the Town of Ludlow (DPW) and Sprague Operating Resources, LLC for FY24 Oil Agreement. **Mr. Rosenblum second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Board to approve and sign the contract between the Town of Ludlow (Hubbard Library) and New Clean, LLC for custodial services in the amount of $1,200 per month.

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to approve and sign the contract between the Town of Ludlow (Hubbard Library) and New Clean, LLC for custodial services in the amount of $1,200 per month. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Board to discuss and possibly vote on using building infrastructure funds for Life Safety Service in the amount of $500, TJ Conway in the amount of $275 and AK Electric in the amount of $200 – invoices for the Ludlow Community Center.

Mr. Strange: A little background. The line item that we typically pay these out of is really close to going over for the fiscal year and Dave Ritchie is expecting a couple more big items to come

through for things related to the pool. We figured instead of deficit spending that we use the infrastructure funds to pay for those.

Motion made by Mr. DeBarge to approve using building infrastructure funds for Life Safety Service in the amount of $500, TJ Conway in the amount of $275 and AK Electric in the amount of $200 – invoices for the Ludlow Community Center Randall Boys and Girls Club. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Board to discuss and possibly vote to authorize the Treasurer/Collector to file an application with the appropriate officials of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (the "Commonwealth") to qualify under Chapter 44A of the General Laws any and all bonds of the Town authorized but not yet issued as of the date hereof, and to provide such information and execute such documents as such officials of the Commonwealth may require in connection therewith.

Mr. Silva so moved. Mr. DeBarge second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.

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BOARD UPDATES/MISC.

Mr. Gennette: Nothing? Good.

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

Mr. Gennette: The event calendar coming up. The concert schedule at the Mack Donnelly Gazebo begins at 5:00 p.m. July 16 – Blue Brothers Briefcase Concert. July 23 – Pioneer Valley Concert Band Sounds of Summer. July 30, Bad Signs. We have several others that we'll read off again through August and one in September.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Mr. Silva: A lot of them I already discussed as they came through. One was the DPW and how hard they are working on East Street. Hopefully we can keep it going. I attended the strategic planning for the library. We've got another one coming up and they've got some ideas and some things they want to do. I just want to say that it's impressive what they're looking at doing and how many things they do and how libraries have kind of slipped away from people's minds, but they do a lot of things. It's amazing. And it's evident by the things they're doing and hopefully people can attend these functions and get back into the libraries.

Mr. DeBarge: Memorial Day. I want to thank everybody for coming out for the wreath laying on Friday, the candlelight vigil, which is my favorite part, on Sunday night. Always moving to read those 81 names of those that gave their lives for what we have today, what we're losing today. The parade was fantastic. I had a great time. I want to make sure that everybody watching understands this. The Ludlow 250th committee and specifically Bruce Durand ran that parade for Eric Segundo as a test run for the 250th parade next year. What a phenomenal job Bruce did, what a phenomenal job the parade committee did and the 250th as a whole. Remember, to those if you want to be involved in a committee, this committee I am not anti, I am pro, because the 250th committee does a lot of great work. Thank you for that. Thank you for those that came out for Memorial Day and remembered what that day is all about, not necessarily cookouts and beer but remembering those that laid their life down for our freedoms. Also, graduation. Congratulations to all the seniors of Class of 2023. I have one senior myself who graduated from Pope Francis. I wasn't able to go to, I would have gone since I know a lot of the kids in the class of 23 from Ludlow High but it was the same night. So, congratulations to all of you and I wish you luck in your future endeavor. I am going to say something about WESTCOMM dispatch because I didn't get a chance to last time when everybody was here. Reluctantly I would have liked to say this when everybody was here, but I can't. The main things I took away from this was we're going to lose control and of course a lot of emotion. Working in that police department having dispatched there for a very short time on light duty from back surgeries. I am not an emergency medical dispatcher, let me say that. I have the utmost amount of respect for all of our dispatchers. In taking the emotion out of it and talking about sheer financial gains for the town, but most importantly what are we talking about. We're talking about officer safety and community response. Those are the 2 things that are key in this. I didn't hear from any side compelling argument against WESTCOMM not providing that. I was actually quite impressed with the technology that WESTCOMM is coming up with. That being

said, I'll speak for me and not the board, I have no decision on this personally. The great part about being able to keep an open mind and trying not to be emotional about it, at least in the seat that I'm sitting in, allows me to hear both sides and understand both sides. It can't be all about money though. We have to look at that. But if the officer's safety and community response is there, and for the radio system, let me just say this. I was either the vice chair or the chair when we went to the first WESTCOMM meeting and we were right in the middle of this 4.8 million dollar estimate for the radio system and I remember sitting in Ellie Villano's office and saying what do we do. Do you think we should stop the RFP and cancel moving forward with this radio station and pursue WESTCOMM because they would have provided either full payment for the radio communication turnover or quite a bit of it. Again, timing is very important. We're in that transition. We were just ready to sign the contract and get started and to be honest with you, we would have needed it regardless if WESTCOMM was here or not and they just weren't. It was a newer thing then. They've come a long way. I'm optimistic at looking at them in the near future. Especially with the new building and operation. Without an operation it's hard for us to see what we're going to see. Again, officer safety, community response, those are the 2 things that WESTCOMM will have to prove to me that are still there for us equal to what we have now. Moving forward, collecting more data, making a wise decision on all aspects of financial for our taxpayers, officer safety and of course community response.

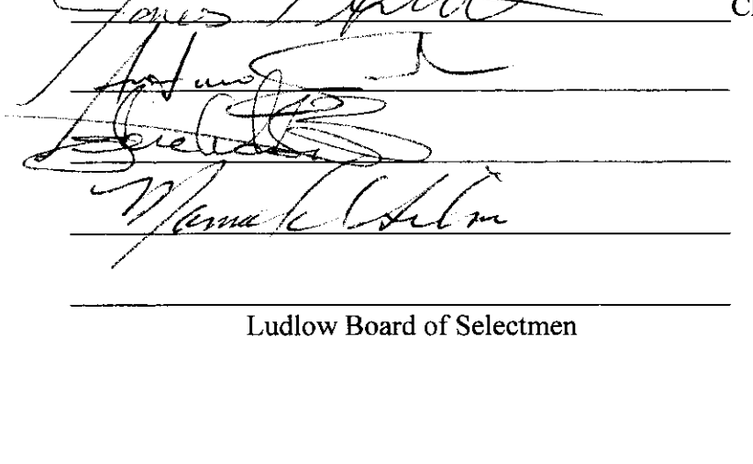
Mr. Goncalves: Again, the parade was great. I can't remember a parade in a lot of years where there was that many people out. Fantastic. Congratulations to the grads. Good bunch of kids. I'm out there in the morning dropping off my kids and I can see it. It's a good bunch. We're doing well here as parents. Finally, I haven't discussed this in a long time. This one is beautiful. It's stinging a lot of people and I would just warn everybody now. If you're the average iPhone user, you're buying additional storage because you take 5,000 pictures a month and your standard service doesn't include that much storage. You're buying this extra storage. What they're sending you now is a message that says you've exceeded your storage. It's perfect. If you were to get out and not answer that message and go on to the storage page of your iPhone it would look identical. What happens is when they ask you to sign in to up the storage and it's only $6.99 to get quadruple what you have, you're actually using your apple pay credentials to sign on to that site. At that point, your bank account is cleaned out. It's beautiful. These guys are tens of millions of dollars. That one's really dangerous. I remind everyone again, don't press anything on your phone. Don't touch anything you're not sure what it is. Get out and go back in and double check yourself but don't ever log in from a button on any financial site because as a rule they don't send you buttons that you can log in. It's in all the fine print that they'll never ask you to log on, they'll never ask you for a password, etc. Get out and go back in yourself if you have any doubt. This one is bigger than bit coin.

Mr. Rosenblum: I'm going to jump on the scam bandwagon only because I had to deal with this yesterday. It's not so much as a scan, but you were saying the storage on your phone is in IT thing. You can get google photos and download all your pictures to the cloud and take them all off your phone and you still keep all the storage. So, you don't even need picture storage on your phone. For everyone that has to buy the extra storage, my kid does, she had her cell phone stolen so we had to go pick up a new one that came in and we had to go to the store and get a new one and she said I don't have any storage and I said google photos. The parade was awesome. It was great to see all the people out there. We had a great day. Someone asked me why we got at 10:00 a.m. when we used to go at 8 or 9 and we wanted to be able to assess weather, in case there was going to be a weather event. Lastly, with the WESTCOMM, I reserved any comment. I've been doing research on it myself and I reserve comment until we get into the deliberation stage. I am still doing research. It's not so much a question it's comments. There are some questions but my whole thing is that this board has always talked about services and maintaining them. Unfortunately, I don't mind saying it out loud, our nursing program is going the way that it's going to be eliminated and I don't care if anyone hears that. But I can see that that's the direction we're going there. For me, it's all about the service. If the service is the same and we're dropping our service a little bit, I'm not so sure but they have to prove it to use before I make an educated decision on it.

Mr. Gennette: I'm going to make a comment on WESTCOMM. Mr. DeBarge said there was a lot of emotion. This is not an easy decision to make. There's a lot to consider here. We're just going to have to take it a day at a time and I don't have too much other than I really enjoyed the parade. Thanks to Eric for doing a wonderful job again. The parade committee for doing a wonderful job.

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Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 p.m. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**



Chairman

Ludlow Board of Selectmen

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