

**Select Board Meeting
November 20, 2023 – 7:00 PM
Sanford Hall
155 Village Street**

Present Glenn Trindade, Chair; Frank Rossi, Vice-Chair; Todd Alessandri, Clerk; Dennis Crowley, Member; Maryjane White, Member.

Staff Present: Michael Boynton, Town Manager; Allison Potter, Assistant Town Manager; Carol Pratt, Finance Director; Chris Park, Principal Assessor; Joanne Russo, Treasurer/Collector; Barbara Saint Andre, Community and Economic Development Director; Peter Pellitier, Department of Public Works (DPW) Director; Sandra Johnston, Communications Director.

Others Present: Deb Rossi, Parks Commission Chair.

At 7:00 PM, Mr. Trindade called the meeting to order, led the Pledge of Allegiance, and reminded all to remember the number 19 representing the number of Medway residents who died in service to our country.

Mr. Crowley noted the loss of Mickey Rojee, and the Board recognized a moment of silence.

Public Comments: There were none.

7:00PM Public Hearing: Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Tax Classification

The Board reviewed the PowerPoint presentation.

Mr. Trindade explained the need for the tax classification hearing and the option of a split tax rate with commercial rates higher than residential rates. It was noted that we have not done that in Medway as we have not seen a benefit.

Mr. Alessandri moved that the Board open the public hearing. Ms. White seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Mr. Park explained the three questions to be addressed which include: (1) having a residential exemption, (2) having a small business exemption, and (3) do we want a single tax rate or a split the tax rate. He then explained each of these exemptions and the burden on commercial businesses of a split tax rate. He noted 16 out of 351 communities apply a residential exemption but those are mainly areas with a lot of vacation/second homes and rental properties. He noted that 14 out of 351 communities apply a small commercial exemption. He stated the exemption applies to properties having a value of less than \$1 million and fewer than ten employees. He noted the following increase in values: (1) 15.4 percent for single-family homes, (2) 13.5 percent for residential condominiums, and (3) 7.7 percent for commercial/industrial. He then reviewed the assessed values by class from 2022 to 2024 for Class 1 residential, Class 3 commercial, Class 4 industrial, and Class 5 personal property including the total assessed values for those years. He then reviewed the percentage by class from 2021-2023 noting in 2023 that we have a 79.7 percent of residential/open space and 23.3 percent of commercial/ industrial/ personal property. He then reviewed the tax rates from FY22 to FY24 explaining how this is derived noting this is lowest proposed tax rate since 2008. It was noted a lower tax rate does not translate to a

lower tax bill. He then reviewed the average single family tax bill by surrounding Towns noting Franklin, Bellingham, and Milford are all higher than Medway and we are directly in the middle. Mr. Crowley requested to meet with Mr. Park to understand the calculations relative to this information. He requested that the tax rate calculation for surrounding towns be added for a \$650,000 home value based on that towns tax rate. Mr. Park then reviewed the top five real estate and commercial taxpayers in Medway. Mr. Crowley requested that Mr. Park wait to post this until the numbers are discussed. Mr. Crowley stated he had an issue with the overall values of single-family homes increasing and asked if this is just new construction and additions. Mr. Park confirmed noting that this is also based on the market. There was further discussion and explanation of how the values are determined in the Town's six districts relative to the increase in value of the homes and the tax rate. Mr. Crowley stated that his issue is that the Department of Revenue (DOR) forces the Town to use this formula to determine these tax rates. He noted the need to educate the public that it is DOR that drives this and not the Assessors, Town Administration, or Select Board. Mr. Alessandri stated it is not just due to the DOR formula but is also due to the increase in value of a resident's home. Mr. Trindade noted that it is important that residents realize that we follow the rules and regulations on how we assess properties and that we are following best practices. Mr. Rossi reminded all that Mr. Park explained these calculations to the Board six months ago. Mr. Crowley asked when the value of the Town began to be calculated. Mr. Boynton stated Proposition 2 ½ passed in 1980 and resulted in a valuation of the Town in 1981, which established the Town's levy base. Mr. Boynton stated you take the prior tax base plus anticipated new growth, and we can only increase our spending by 2 and ½ percent of that number. Mr. Boynton explained the impact of the Tri-County project within the restrictions of Proposition 2 ½. Mr. Alessandri stated that our tax rates have been going down due to the value of homes but does not understand the fluctuations in 2018-2020. Mr. Boynton stated what determines this is the valuation and what we leave on the table from the levy. Mr. Alessandri said he would like the commercial base added to the fiscal year single family tax bill slide before it is posted. Mr. Trindade asked for public comments. There were none.

Mr. Alessandri moved to close the public hearing. Ms. White seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Mr. Alessandri moved that the Board approve the single tax rate for Fiscal Year 2024 and there be no residential or commercial exemption. Ms. White seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 4-1-0. Mr. Crowley voted nay.

Mr. Boynton recognized Mr. Parks efforts.

Approval of Minutes: November 6, 2023

The Board reviewed the draft minutes of November 6, 2023.

Mr. Alessandri moved that the Board approve the minutes of November 6, 2023. Ms. White seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Approval: Oakland Cemetery Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Grant Agreement - \$15,000

The Board reviewed the (1) agreement, and (2) easement.

Ms. Saint Andre stated she will explain both the Oakland Cemetery and Evergreen Cemetery agreements at this time noting at Annual Town Meeting, funds were appropriated for restoration of stones in cemeteries. She explained the estimates of both agreements. It was noted the work must be completed in one year and it is a reimbursement basis. She reported that we will receive pedestrian access as well. These agreements have been approved by both the CPC and the cemetery owners. Ms.

White asked if this is historical. Ms. Saint Andre noted this is from the Historical CPC funds. Mr. Alessandri asked if this includes everything. Ms. Saint Andre confirmed.

Mr. Alessandri moved that the Board vote to approve and execute the Oakland Cemetery Community Preservation Committee Grant Agreement and notice of easement as presented. Ms. White seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Approval: Evergreen Cemetery Community Preservation Committee Grant Agreement - \$25,000

The Board reviewed the (1) agreement, and (2) easement.

Mr. Alessandri moved that the Board vote to approve and execute the Evergreen Cemetery Community Preservation Committee Grant Agreement and notice of easement as presented. Ms. White seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Advance of Funds In Lieu of Borrowing: High School Culvert Design - \$260,000

The Board reviewed the (1) memo from Joanne Russo, and (2) in lieu of borrowing form

Mr. Trindade explained the issue with the High School culvert. Ms. Russo stated we will cover this up front first and apply for the borrowing later.

Mr. Alessandri moved that the Board vote to authorize the advance of funds in lieu of borrowing in the amount of \$260,000 for the high school culvert design approved at the November 13, 2023, Fall Town Meeting as discussed. Ms. White seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Action Items from Previous Meeting

The Board reviewed the action items dated October 23, 2023.

This agenda item was not discussed.

Town Manager's Report

There were no items for the Board to review.

Town Hall Office Reconfiguration: Mr. Boynton explained the reconfiguration of the first floor of Town Hall. Due to the COVID pandemic, we have someone sitting in the kitchen who now needs to be relocated. He explained the specific reconfiguration of office space.

Medway Block Property Update: Mr. Boynton stated as of tomorrow afternoon, the Town will take control over the property. Mr. Crowley asked for a status on the feasibility study. Mr. Boynton stated it is sixty percent completed and we hope to have this before the Board in January. He noted that the relocation of Parks and Recreation is still to be determined. Mr. Crowley asked if the Select Board can meet with the consultant prior to the final report. Mr. Boynton stated we will coordinate each Select Board member to meet individually with the consultant.

Workshop with Millis – Tuesday, November 28th, 7PM, Senior Center: Mr. Boynton reminded the Board of the workshop scheduled with Millis next Tuesday.

Bonfire & Parade Reminders & Updates: Mr. Boynton reminded all about the bonfire scheduled for November 22nd at 7PM at the Medway Middle School and the Christmas Parade on November 25th scheduled to begin at 5:30PM.

Thanksgiving Holiday Schedule: Mr. Boynton stated Town Offices will be closed as follows:

- Wednesday – Closed at noon
- Thursday & Friday - Closed

Town Manager Out of Office: Mr. Boynton stated he will be out of the office as follows:

- Thursday & Friday, November 30th, and December 1st – West Barnstable Assessment Center

NEXT Select Board Meeting – December 4, 2023

Select Board's Reports

There were no items for the Board to review.

Mr. Rossi said the Pumpkin Walk was very successful.

Mr. Trindade wished all a happy and safe Thanksgiving holiday.

At 7:43PM, Mr. Rossi moved to adjourn. Mr. Alessandri seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Langley
Executive Assistant
Town Manager's Office