

Shannon L. Hume
President
At Large

Charles B. Ryan
At Large

Julia Camille Flaherty
District 1

Steven A. Sciascia
District 2

Donna L. Connors
District 3



David M. Ringius, Jr.
Vice-President
At Large

Stephen C. O'Brien
District 4

Meredith L. Boericke
District 5

Lawrence C. Mackin, Jr.
District 6

OFFICE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

MINUTES

A meeting of the Town Council was held in the Johnson Chambers, Braintree Town Hall, on Wednesday, March 4, 2020 beginning at 7:30p.m.

Council President Hume was in the chair.

Clerk of the Council, Susan M. Cimino conducted the roll call.

Present: Shannon Hume, President
David M. Ringius, Jr., Vice-President
Julia Camille Flaherty
Steven A. Sciascia
Donna L. Connors
Stephen C. O'Brien
Meredith L. Boericke
Lawrence C. Mackin, Jr.

Not Present: Charles Ryan

Others: Charles C. Kokoros, Mayor
Dr. Frank Hackett, Superintendent of School
Nicole Taub, Chief of Staff/Town Solicitor
Marybeth McGrath, Director of the Department of Municipal Licenses & Inspections
Ed Spellman, Director of Finance
Ed Cronin, Business Director of Schools
Jack McCarthy, Executive Director from the Mass School Building Authority
John Keenan, Senator
Walter Timilty, Senator
Thomas Bowes, former Town Councilor
Nelson Chin, Director of Recreation
Lisa Heger, former School Committee Chairperson
Jennifer Dolan, School Committee
Kelly Cobb-Lemiere, School Committee
Crystal Evans
Mike Lang
Margaret Bellafore
David Oliva, President East Braintree Civic Association
Robert Kearns

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **007 20 Council President: Update on the Coronavirus**

Marybeth McGrath, Director of the Department of Municipal Licenses & Inspections read from a prepared statement: Mayor Charles C. Kokoros and the staff of the Health Department would like to share current information about an emerging global health concern, the 2019 Novel Coronavirus, COVID-19.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that may cause respiratory illness in people, and are generally spread through respiratory secretions (droplets from coughs and sneezes) of an infected person to another person. COVID-19 is a new strain of Coronavirus, first detected in Wuhan, China.

Since the outbreak started in the United States in January 2020, there has been one confirmed case of COVID-19 in Massachusetts. Additionally, on March 2, 2020 the (MDPH) announced the first presumptive positive case... These two cases had recently traveled from an area outside of the United States with ongoing community spread of COVID-19.

The Health Department is continuing to track guidance and updates from the CDC and the MDPH... We are also participating in regular CDC and MDPH conference calls and closely monitoring emerging information.

We also encourage the residents to take steps to help prevent exposure to any respiratory viruses, including seasonal influenza and Coronavirus by:

- Washing your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes and face.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of your elbow.
- Clean things that are frequently touched (like doorknobs and countertops) with household cleaning sprays or wipes.
- Stay at home when feeling sick.

For more information on COVID-19, visit the MDPH website at www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus and the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/index.html>

For questions, please feel free to contact the Town of Braintree Health Department:

Jean McGinty, Public Health Nurse at 781-794-8094 or Marybeth McGrath, Director of Health at 781-794-8095.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- None

CITIZEN CONCERNS

- **005 20 Council President: Compressor Station Update (Mike Lang – Presentation on 3/4/20)**

Mike Lang presented a timeline of what they have been doing since Spectra came to town and presented they wanted to supply gas to New England. They are actually going to supply gas to Canada. This is the wrong location.

Margaret Bellafore states we have working against this for five years. Construction began December 3, 2019. I got in this for health and safety. I suggest you watch the YouTube video titled "Telling the Stories of the Health Impacts in the Fore River Basin".

From Mike Lang he submitted many documents including: I was an intervenor on the Fore River Bridge project. There were many abuses and misrepresentations during the siting process by the MaDOT. One item I did not notice until I started working on the gas compressor issue is the the EA page with the red star. It states that the gas pipeline is not near the bridge infrastructure. The picture under the bridge shows a yellow pipe which was placed after the bridge was completed. The yellow pipe is the high pressure gas pipeline beside the bridge support. There is also a large oil pipeline beside it which supplies the power plant. Enbridge is also planning a second larger pipeline for the same area. Also included is a contractor's document which shows that Spectra did not supply the bridge contractor with the pipeline location. An additional document shows the law that Spectra broke by withholding the pipeline location. What's that got to do with the gas compressor you say !!! One picture shows a gasoline tanker going through the bridge and passing by the gas pipeline M&R station. The M&R a station vents gas to the bridge, commuters, and the ship on occasion. A hot catalytic converter or cigarette will ignite the gas and blow the pipeline which will take down the bridge supports. They are also planning the large gas compressor for an undersized plot beside beside the bridge. The Fore River Bridge handles 33,000 vehicles per day. The regional sewage pump station is beside the proposed compressor station, with the 60" sewer pipeline (60 million gal per day) abutting the compressor building. If destroyed, we will again be pumping sewerage into Boston Harbor.

The Governor promised a "safety risk assessment" for the area. That never happened. FERC stated that they do not do safety in their siting process. The pipeline safety people (PHMSA) stated this is not a safety issue and we should not have placed the bridge near the gas pipeline. We asked Secretary Pollack (MaDOT) to meet with us 6 times including requests from State Reps and Senators. She refused. It doesn't take a lot of imagination to speculate on the potential of an " incident" at this location with the complete volatile Fore River industrial area surrounding the facility. We will be asking the Council to support a risk assessment for the area around the bridge. It was never done. We would like Braintree to help pay for an independent risk assessment but even then it would be tied up in courts and the plant would already be built. Mike Lang stated Mayor Kokoros asked to know how much this would cost. Mike Lang said a letter of support would not help. We do not have enough time.

Council voted to ask Mayor Kokoros to support funding a risk assessment.

Motion made by Councilor Mackin to ask Mayor Kokoros to support funding for a risk assessment

Motion: by Councilor Mackin to ask Mayor Kokoros to support funding for a risk assessment.

Second: by Councilor Connors

Vote: For (8 – Boericke, Connors, Flaherty, Hume, Mackin, O'Brien, Ringius, Sciascia),
Against (0), Absent (1 - Ryan), Abstain (0)

● **006 20 Council President: Jack McCarthy, Executive Director from the Mass School Building Authority**

Mayor Kokoros stated Jack McCarthy from the MSBA is here tonight. He has been very helpful in extending our opportunity to receive the \$31 million dollars for the South Middle School project. I thank him for all he has done.

Jack McCarthy stated the MSBA was created by a legislative act in 2004. We built a system fair and responsible to the tax payers. This process is complete and disciplined and safes money and to create educationally appropriate, cost effective schools. The debt exclusion is coming on a ballot in Braintree. I'm sure you will ask what happens if it doesn't pass? The MSBA policy is 10 days to tell us the vote failed,

tell us why you think it failed and tell us how you will remedy that. Generally there is no remedy and most of the time the project is over. The MSBA board approved a new South Middle School. You should approach this as an offer from them. You either accept it or reject it. Now if your project is out that is it until you decide to file an SOI again. We do not always allow towns in. We choose the most urgent and needy. You may not be chosen again. We have over 100 Statements of Interest that come in. We invited only 11 districts in. We say no to about 90% of applicants.

Council President Hume stated I agree this is a partnership. This plan for South Middle School is over 9 years in the making. If this debt exclusion does not pass we have no other way to get this \$31 million dollars that MSBA is just going to give us to build a new school. This project will address the space needs in all the elementary schools because the plan is to move 5th graders to the middle schools.

Senator Keenan and Senator Timilty were in attendance stating their role as legislators is to assist in making sure the MSBA has the funds it needs to meet the demands of municipalities and the local school districts. This year we (Senator Keenan, Senator Timilty, Representative Cusack) all voted to lift the cap and made more funding available to municipalities.

Representative Cusack submitted a letter to Council President Hume which was read into the record at the Town Council meeting on Wednesday, March 4, 2020. The letter from Representative Cusack summarized includes: ...I extend my sincerest gratitude to MSBA Executive Director Jack McCarthy for his leadership and collaboration with us on fixing our schools. Over the past five years, the MSBA has been a true partner with Braintree as we work to improve our school facilities...

...Through a collaborative effort and our hard work and careful planning, we received approval ahead of a large number of competing projects throughout the state. While East is nearly completed and the \$40 million in state aid secured, the \$31 million for South has yet to be secured by the town. In order to secure this funding, Mayor Kokoros and the Council have taken a different approach to funding South and have put the question to the voters for an approval of a debt exclusion.

I am hopeful that the debt exclusion will pass... It is vital that we take full advantage of the \$31 million grant and build a new South and complete our system-wide plan... It would be far too irresponsible to stop our plans before they are complete, reject the \$31 million in state aid and fail to meet the needs of our children.

I have been and will continue to be a strong advocate for state funding of all aspects of our education system including MSBA funding to provide our students, teachers and staff the 21st century learning environment they need to succeed.... All my best, Mark J. Cusack, State Representative

Dr. Frank Hackett, Superintendent of Schools stated the partnership with the MSBA is quite a process. Thanks to the MSBA we are having this conversation and to fulfill the comprehensive solution which will give us a new middle school but free up space in our elementary schools which is desperately needed.

OLD BUSINESS

- **002 20 Council President: Town Council Rules (O&R met 2/26 and 3/4 vote 3/17)**

Councilor Ringius, Chairman of the Committee on Ordinance & Rules stated the committee has been meeting to review the Town Council Rules. These rules are to which we govern ourselves at our meetings. Under **Rule Fifty-Six: Adoption of Rules**, These rules will be reviewed and adopted within 90 days after the first Council Meeting in every even year.

The Committee on Ordinance & Rules will continue to meet and review these rules and these rules will be adopted at an upcoming Town Council meeting.

- **20 031 Town Clerk: Call of the Election – March 28, 2020 or take up any action relative thereto**

Motion Read by Councilor Ringius:

MOTION:

CALL OF THE ELECTION – MARCH 28, 2020

UPON THE REQUEST OF THE TOWN CLERK, THE TOWN OF BRAINTREE, THROUGH THE BRAINTREE TOWN COUNCIL, IT IS SO ORDERED:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Town of Braintree is hereby required to notify and warn the inhabitants of said Town who are qualified to vote in the Local Special Election on Saturday, March 28, 2020 from 7:00am to 8:00pm, for the following purposes:

To cast their votes in the Local Special Election on the official ballot for the following ballot questions:

Question 1: New South Middle School, Question 2: Replacements of School Roofs, Question 3: Braintree High School Feasibility Study and Question 4: Enhancing School Security Measures

Motion: by Councilor Ringius to Approve Order 20 031

Second: by Councilor Connors

Vote: For (8 – Boericke, Connors, Flaherty, Hume, Mackin, O’Brien, Ringius, Sciascia),
Against (0), Absent (1 - Ryan), Abstain (0)

Councilor O’Brien stated for any information you need in regards to these ballot questions you can contact the Mayor’s office directly and his staff will provide the information to you.

NEW BUSINESS

- None

Councilor Ringius read the following referral to the Committee of Ways & Means:

Refer to the Committee of Ways & Means

- 20 035 Mayor: Motion to Accept Massachusetts General Law c. 59 s. 5C ½ (additional real estate exemption) or take up any action relative thereto

Motion: by Councilor Ringius to refer to the Committee of Ways & Means Order 20 035

Second: by Councilor Connors

Vote: For (8 – Boericke, Connors, Flaherty, Hume, Mackin, O’Brien, Ringius, Sciascia),
Against (0), Absent (1 - Ryan), Abstain (0)

Councilor Ringius read the following referral to the Committee of Ways & Means:

Refer to the Committee of Ways & Means

- 20 037 Superintendent of Schools: Statement of Interest (SOI) with the MSBA for Braintree High School or take up any action relative thereto

Motion: by Councilor Ringius to refer to the Committee of Ways & Means Order 20 037

Second: by Councilor Connors

Vote: For (8 – Boericke, Connors, Flaherty, Hume, Mackin, O’Brien, Ringius, Sciascia),
Against (0), Absent (1 - Ryan), Abstain (0)

Councilor Ringius read the following referral to the Committee on Personnel Issues:

Refer to the Committee on Personnel Issues

- 20 036 Council President: Re-Appointment Clerk of the Council or up any action relative thereto

Motion: by Councilor Ringius to refer to the Committee on Personnel Issues Order 20 036

Second: by Councilor Connors

Vote: For (8 – Boericke, Connors, Flaherty, Hume, Mackin, O’Brien, Ringius, Sciascia),
Against (0), Absent (1 - Ryan), Abstain (0)

Topics the Chair does not reasonably anticipate will be discussed

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Next Council Meeting scheduled on: **Tuesday, March 17, 2020 @7:30pm**

ADJOURNMENT

It was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:48p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Cimino, Clerk of the Council

Meeting Documents

- 007 20 Council President: Update on the Coronavirus
- 005 20 Council President: Compressor Station Update (Mike Lang – Presentation on 3/4/20)
- Letter submitted from Representative Mark Cusack
- 006 20 Council President: Jack McCarthy, Executive Director from the Mass School Building Authority
- 002 20 Council President: Town Council Rules (O&R met 2/26 and 3/4 vote 3/17)
- 20 031 Town Clerk: Call of the Election – March 28, 2020 or take up any action relative thereto
- 20 035 Mayor: Motion to Accept Massachusetts General Law c. 59 s. 5C ½ (additional real estate exemption) or take up any action relative thereto
- 20 037 Superintendent of Schools: Statement of Interest (SOI) with the MSBA for Braintree High School or take up any action relative thereto
- 20 036 Council President: Re-Appointment Clerk of the Council or up any action relative thereto