**Board of Selectmen Meeting**

**3/27/19, 5:30pm, Rhodes Building**

**Present:** Selectman Agoglia, Selectman Pearson, Selectman Ribeiro, Bill and Kathy Martell, Geoff Hudson, and Susannah Carey.

**Open:** Selectman Pearson opened at 5:31pm.

**Changing Town Clerk Position from Elected to Appointed-Discussion with Town Clerk, Kathy Martell**

In the Fall 2018 a citizen petition was presented about this topic but the item was not added to the warrant at that time. The Board of Selectmen have added onto the Annual Town Meeting warrant the Act Establishing an Appointed Town Clerk is brought by the Board of Selectmen; language from town counsel.

Board of Selectmen expressed interest in this act mainly due to the small pool of eligible residents able to perform as Town Clerk. The Board feels this would be in the best interest of the Town. The act would enable the current Town Clerk to serve the rest of her term until May 2020 as the first appointed Town Clerk of Pelham. The current trend in Massachusetts is municipalities moving from elected to appointed positions. The Board of Selectmen stated the appointed position would report to the Selectboard.

Kathy Martell, current Town Clerk, does not share the same perspective as the Board of Selectmen changing from elected to appointed. Kathy stated that this is a conflict of interest for Selectman Pearson because Pearson supported the Fall 2018 citizen’s petition to change Town Clerk to appointed. Kathy noted she has volunteered additional hours working during Elections; ballots, paperwork, absentee ballots, testing ballots, set up, take down, tallying results, or any problems that present themselves. Additional time was also volunteered for grant writing & working with Selectboard Administrative Assistant for Town Website and Laserfiche grant; the Town was awarded both grants. Kathy continues to be flexible and works with residents’ schedules outside of her regular hours coming in on Saturdays if needed. Kathy also noted that attending Town Clerk conferences has offered her invaluable information and training opportunities keeping her up to date on laws and State statutes.

An appointed position in her opinion may not work as a team player and only as an individual and may not give the same care to the position a resident would, may not stay in the position as long as the current elected 3-year term prompting additional interviews/searches for candidates, and also may not work extra outside ‘normal hours of operation.’ Reasons why Kathy feels people work as Town Clerks relate to liking the job and finding the work interesting, enjoying interactions with people, and wanting to stay in Town.

The Town Clerk is concerned with decisions made for the good of the town, hours that may be changed for that position, reporting to supervisor when taking days and/or morning/afternoons off whether expected or not with appointments.Bill Martell, Finance Committee member, expressed concern if the appointed person elects benefits and what that increase would look like for the Town, which currently are no incurred with the current elected Town Clerk.

Board thanked Kathy for sharing her thoughts on this subject.

Motion to adjourn, unanimously approved at 6:01pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Susannah Carey