



Select Board Minutes

**Tuesday, September 17, 2019 at 7:00pm
Town Hall Meeting Room, Harvard, MA**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chair Alice von Loesecke in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Select Board members Kara Minar, Rich Maiore, Lucy Wallace and Stu Sklar were in attendance as well as Town Administrator Tim Bragan, Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro and Executive Assistant Julie Doucet.

Protective Bylaw Amendments

Planning Board Chair Erin McBee and Community & Economic Development Director Chris Ryan came to review their proposed amendments for the Special Town Meeting (STM) in October. They highlighting the overall goal and key elements. Ryan detailed the definitions being added (125-2) and updated the fire protection section to be inclusive of the entire town (125-39). Ryan revised the small, medium and large scale commercial uses in an effort to provide easier interpretation. He will eventually include performance standards. In section 125-52, Ayer Road Village Special Permit – Ryan explained he is trying to create opportunities for complementary building that coordinates with the community. This approach is the first step toward form based coding. He is interested in recreating a village center with mixed uses and more pedestrian ways connected by open space.

Ryan has also worked on the addition of a Rural Life Preservation Special Permit (section 125-58). He explained the intent is to insure the preservation of significant elements of rural and historical landscapes while allowing limited and appropriate types of commerce that are intended to facilitate that preservation and contribute to the economic base. This would allow opportunities for rural tourism where large parcels can be costly to maintain and are under threat of development.

The Select Board members offered input on the amendments. Maiore said perception and communication are the key elements to focus on for the Rural Life Preservation to be successful. Von Loesecke highly recommended the Planning Board finalize language to avoid handouts at the STM. The Planning Board is holding two information nights at the Harvard General Store on Friday, Sept 20th and Friday, Sept 27th.

Public Communication

Jennifer Finch, Codman Hill Road, asked about the traffic signals not working in front of the school and where the mobile speed signs are.

Minutes

On a Wallace/Maiore motion, the board voted unanimously to approve minutes of 8/27 & 9/3, as presented.

Town Administrator Report

Bragan announced events being held at the Harvard Unitarian Universalist Church.

The Harvard Water Department had another failed test of well #5. Well #5 is off-line currently. One of the next steps is to bring in a company to super-chlorinate the well to see if it can kill the bacteria. This is being scheduled. If this does not work then we will find out from DEP what we will then have to do next.

Bragan announced 15 applications were received for the Means Tested Senior Exemption Program and are currently reviewing them.

The Moderator re-appointed Mark Buell to another three year term and promoted Raymond Marchica from an Associate position to a full member, replacing Charles Oliver, for three years. The Moderator is currently looking for two people to serve as Associate members on the Finance Committee.

The Assistant Town Administrator, Marie Sobalvarro, has finished and submitted the application for the disabilities grant to get hearing enhancement system for the upper town hall meeting room. We will need to adopt MGL Chapter 40, section 8J (see attached) at the STM as well.

DPW Director Tim Kilhart and Bragan met with Alan Vadala from North Turf and discussed what needed to be done to finish the Ann Lees Field. Three quotes have been solicited and so far North Turf and New England Sports Turf have submitted quotes, more are expected. All contractors agreed that the project can be completed and ready for play by the spring season (March, 15, 2020). This will cost an estimated \$27,560 and does not include getting the fencing done (raising the backstop and putting cages around the benches).

The Finance Committee met last week and made the necessary changes to their portion of the FY2021 budget document. They also reviewed the most recent recap sheet and determined that they would like to see the surplus funds (\$62,374) be put towards reducing the impact of the Means Tested Senior Exemption Program. This would be in line with their earlier stance when we just had the Governor's budget numbers and a surplus of \$69,064 back in February and early March.

Bragan referred to the document in the Select Board packets from the Economic Development Director, Christopher Ryan, summarizing the discussion at the Ayer Planning Board regarding the Ayer Open Space Subdivision (Previously Known as Pond View) along with his thoughts. On another matter Ryan has informed Bragan that Harvard received its MVP designation letter.

The Harvard Energy Advisory Committee (HEAC) along with Marie Sobalvarro are working with Colonial Power Group and Dynegy to roll out the Community Aggregation Program here in Harvard. They are working on public meeting dates, mailings and public information pieces. This should all be happening later this month and into October. Bragan announced residents will receive an official document in the mail that has the Town's seal (a drawing of Old Library) on it and you will not have someone come to their door or call them to sign them up. There are other companies that are trying to get people to sign up for other energy programs and this is causing confusion. He advised residents to not sign up for anything ahead of the town's mailing as it will make you ineligible for the town's program and pricing.

Bragan announced Free Cash has been certified by DOR and there is \$1,291,845 in the general fund and \$56,823 in the Sewer Enterprise fund. This is the earliest we have had FC certified and it is completely due to our new Finance Director.

Capital requests

Bragan asked if the board members had any additional capital requests. The only item they discussed were possibly more portable speed signs however they asked for an update on the ones we currently have.

Easement for Hildreth Elementary School project

Bragan reported the School Committee has voted on the utility easement for the school project. On a Wallace/Maiore motion, the board voted unanimously to grant license for work to be done at the school. Bragan said the easement itself will be voted on at the Annual Town Meeting.

Community Preservation Committee appointment

On a Minar/Maiore motion, the board appointed Michelle Catalina to the Community Preservation Committee.

Fiscal 2021 Budget Memorandum

The board members made minor revisions to the document.

Ad hoc Committees

Bragan suggested the board members consider disbanding ad hoc committees that have completed their charge such as the Old Library Accessibility Committee (OLAC) and Housing @ Hildreth House. He received push back on this from Wallace and Maiore. Wallace explained the OLAC members were under the impression they would follow the project through until the punch list items have been satisfied. Bragan said with most other town projects such as the Town Hall renovation town administration would take over at this point. With the Housing @ Hildreth House, Bragan understands it has been determined the site is not viable for this type of development. Wallace said the Chair Rick Maiore placed the committee on hiatus anticipating more information after the Fire Station study is completed. Sobalvarro noted the Fire Station is not even on the capital plan. Minar made a suggestion to consider changing the committee to simply senior housing instead of being tied to a specific site. Maiore prefers hearing from the committees before making any decisions. No action was taken.

Town of Ayer water/sewer request

After receiving information from the Community & Economic Director Chris Ryan who attended a recent Ayer Planning Board meeting the board members agreed to send a letter. On a Maiore/Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously to have Chris Ryan draft a response to the Town of Ayer Planning Board including conducting a traffic impact study, elements from Ryan's email, impact on wetlands/conservation land and Shaker Village have letter reviewed by Tim Bragan before sending.

Energy Advisory Committee resignation

On a von Loesecke/Minar motion, the board voted unanimously to accept resignation of Eric Broadbent and send letter of thanks. The board members acknowledged the incredible service Broadbent gave to the town which benefited the town as a whole.

Announcements

Wallace announced a ribbon cutting ceremony will be held at the old library on Monday, October 7th at 5:30pm. public new front entry.

Minar announced the Energy Advisory Committee has received a \$150,000 grant through the Green Communities program.

**** On a Sklar motion, the Board voted unanimously by a roll call vote:

(Sklar – Aye, Wallace – Aye, Maiore – Aye, Minar – Aye, von Loesecke – Aye) to enter into executive session at 8:50pm, as authorized by Chapter 30A, Section 21.3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. The Board will reconvene into open session only to adjourn. ****

The meeting was adjourn at 9:05.

Documents referenced:

Draft Bylaw Amendments – dated Sept 2019

Easement of HES project – license dated 9.4.2019

CPC Catalina volunteer form – dated 9.4.2019

Draft budget memo – dated 10.15.2019

Town of Ayer request – Ryan email – dated 9.11.2019

Broadbent resignation letter – dated 9.12.2019