

**Harvard Select Board
Strategic Planning Session Minutes
Hildreth House – 15 Elm Street
Wednesday, June 21, 2023 – 1:00pm**

Rich Maiore, Vice Chair Erin McBee, Kara McGuire Minar, Don Ludwig, Charles Oliver

Town Administrator Tim Bragan, Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro, Finance Director Jared Mullane and Executive Assistant Julie Doucet were in attendance.

The Select Board discussed their initiatives/goals for the coming year. The following topics were listed on the planning session agenda.

Improve Public Engagement

They discussed and decided to move the Town Meeting to the first Saturday in April, hold a volunteer appreciation event, outreach at local town events, and utilize Next Door/town website/social media as communication tool.

Financial

- Discussed importance of early collaboration to address any override. Budget letter will go out in September. Finance Director Jared Mullane will investigate override options.
- Discussed next steps for rental properties, Bromfield House sale and long-term leasing for the Old Library.
- The board will move forward with a Real Estate Transfer fee policy and prepare the required Home Rule Petition.
- Room Tax (Air B&B, VRBO) – nothing definitive was decided.
- Increase marijuana licenses – nothing definitive was decided.
- Starting a Film Commission – nothing definitive was decided.

Operational changes

Discussed the pros/cons on merger of Fire and EMT and agreed to develop criteria for making a decision, solicit input from the Finance & Capital Committees and set a timeline for decision.

Trash/Recycling

All agreed investigation into the Transfer Station vs. town wide pick up and/or improvements to increase usage will be a goal for the coming year.

Playing Fields will continue as a top priority; completion of the needs assessment, identify parcels for fields, develop timeline for field development and support application to CPA.

Green Initiatives

Continue to support HEAC/HCIC goals; invest in solar PV projects/Investigate Stow Road gravel pit for a PV lease.

Other Priorities

- Improve infrastructure reliability (internet & electricity) nothing definitive
- Review Devens Strategy – nothing definitive – all agree important
- Prioritize accessibility issues and get to work on solving them will be a goal in the coming year.
- Preserve natural flora – eradicate Japanese knotweed & save Willard Farm – nothing definitive
- Work with the MAHT on housing production plan, focus on affordability, utilize legislators will be a goal in the coming year.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00pm.