



Select Board Minutes
Tuesday, January 3, 2023
7:00pm

The Select Board Regular Meeting was held virtually in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L.c.30A. S.20.

Select Board participants:

Rich Maiore, Erin McBee, Kara Minar, Don Ludwig, Charles Oliver

Town Department attendees:

Town Administrator Tim Bragan, Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro Executive Assistant Julie Doucet

Additional participants: None

Staff Report/Updates (Attachment A)

Harvard Ambulance Service fees for calendar year 2023

By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Oliver – aye, Ludwig – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to accept new rates.

Letter to State Senator/Representative/State Administration - working relationship with MassDevelopment

Don Ludwig drafted a letter but not everyone had seen it. They will take action at their next meeting. meeting

Devens water connection project

Town Administrator Tim Bragan learned from DPW Director Tim Kilhart the town has been selected to receive \$4.85 million in a 2% loan from the state revolving fund to connect to the Devens Water System. He reported the Water Commission will meet next week to discuss and if accepted the Select Board will need to formally vote to move forward.

Dept of Environmental Protection (DEP) issue regarding the town landfill

Bragan informed the board the town's landfill, where the recycling center/transfer station is located, was closed in the 80's. The DEP is being a process to officially close this landfill which will require monitoring requirements. These requirements must be in place for 35 years. He is working with Tighe & Bond to determine what exactly is required and to attain an estimate of cost. Once we have these investigation of funding sources can begin. He expects to have an update in February.

Warrant article to increase the Community Preservation Act (CPA) surcharge/Special Town Meeting

The board members discussed pros/cons to this approach and decided it makes sense to try this now since it has been 10 years since the last increase. They will take the lead on efforts to educate residents on why this is a good idea and what the funds can and will be used for. Due to timing requirements of a town meeting vote and vote at the ballot they will need to call a Special Town Meeting (STM) in February. Bragan will work to determine the best date in February to hold the STM. This will also accommodate the Planning Board overlay district article for the town center. They will also include the town center overlay district

Announcements - Erin McBee made a few announcements:

Council on Aging will hold a goodbye to the Hildreth House event on January 10th at noon.

Planning Board will meet on the January 9th for the continuation of their bylaw hearings.

Board of Health will be holding a meeting on PFAS in February

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50pm.

**Staff Report
January 3, 2023**

1. Local Legislation Updates:

- a. House Bill 4739, "An Act authorizing the town of Harvard to establish and enforce speed limits on certain public ways in the town", as you know was engrossed in the House and we are waiting on the Senate to act on it. As you can see, from a recent list of Senate activity, there has been no action on this legislation through the end of last week. We have been in touch with Senator Eldridge's office and former Select Board member Sklar place a call to help move this along. We are hopeful and still waiting to hear.

2. State Updates: (State House News Service)

- a. The State's Cannabis Control Commission is looking at a significant budget request for Fy24. Due to new rules and regulations the CCC is looking at a \$4.5 million increase in its budget. The current budget is \$19.22 million and its new request is \$23.7 million.
- b. State reserve revenues are creeping up once again and may reach the point whereby the state has to return money to the taxpayers once again. The law reads in part that if the close of the fiscal year ends with revenue in the stabilization fund of more than 15% of the budgeted revenues and other financial resources of the preceding year that the amount in excess of the 15% be transferred to the Tax Reduction Fund.
- c. The Mass. State Lottery has been buoyed by national draw games and without them revenues would be much lower. The most recent games helping with revenues include Mega-Millions and Power Ball. The lottery also intends on rolling out new scratch tickets to hopefully increase revenue.
- d. As an update to the Commonwealth Wind update at the last meeting, whereby it was reported they had filed to scrap the power purchase agreements with utilities back in May citing that current economic factors which include sharp rise of inflation and the war in Ukraine have significantly imperiled it ability to finance the project, and in the interim the Department of public utilities rejected the request and approved the power purchase agreements.

3. Personnel

- a. One of our Police Officers moved on to Bolton PD and we have appointed Eddie Coffin to replace him. You may know Mr. Coffin from working the elections at the voting site as he was one of our reserve officers. He will be formally introduced to the Select Board at your next meeting(17th).

- b. Marie is working to schedule final interviews for the Recreation Director Position and we hope to have someone on board sometime in February. There were 15 applications and of those 8 went through an initial screening. Marie has notified Five Sparks that we will be utilizing the two rooms in the basement of the old library for this new position. Marie will be meeting with Five Sparks and their SB Liaison later this week to answer questions and work out the details as we expect to have someone on-board within a month.
- c. Minute taker (aka 'Recording Secretary Planning and Zoning') position received 5 responses, eagerly anticipating the 'sample minutes' test (due by Friday), with a decision by Monday, 1/9.
- d. The Administrative Assistant for Land Use screenings will start later this week; the response has been lower than expected.

4. Notice, Reminders, and Updates:

- a. Annual Town Report are due to Julie by January 23, 2023. The Board needs to determine Citizen of Note as well.
- b. Almost every department has been affected by COVID in the past 3 weeks; there has been no change to the Town's COVID protocols, and we are encouraging everyone to make good decisions on masking and testing.