



Select Board Minutes
Wednesday, April 26, 2023
7:00pm

The Select Board Regular Meeting was held virtually in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, An Act Making Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2023 to Provide for Supplementing Certain Existing Appropriations and for Certain Other Activities and Projects, and signed into law on March 29, 2023, this meeting was conducted via remote participation.

Select Board participants:

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

Town Department participants:

Town Administrator Tim Bragan and Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro

Additional participants:

CoD member Toni Spacciapoli, Tree Warden JC Ferguson, 4th of July Committee Chair Anne Hentz, Park & Recreation Commission Chair Bob O'Shea, CPIC Chair Nate Finch

Commission on Disabilities present findings from a town-wide survey

Commission member Toni Spacciapoli reported the commission conducted a town-wide survey asking residents to identify obstacles which limit mobility or access to town buildings, public spaces and recreational areas. They have reviewed the results and identified many similarities with the findings in the Self Evaluation and Transition Plan. She highlighted areas in town lacking in accessibility, reviewed potential next steps and commission recommendations. Spacciapoli offered to meet with Town Administration and the Select Board to chair to discuss options moving forward.

Tree Warden proposals for planting and moving of trees

Tree Warden JC Ferguson explained last fall a declining maple located on the left side of the center town cemetery entrance between the Congregational church and the General Store. The tree was not in the cemetery property. It was dropping branches, posing a hazard to people who congregate in the area. Ferguson requested permission to plant a Green Mountain maple to replace the maple that was taken down. By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve planting of a Green Mountain maple to compliment the existing GM Maple to the left.

In addition, Ferguson explained several American Hornbeam trees were planted as part of the Town Hall project. The one at the little island near the very end of Elm St. separating Elm St from the parking lot is under severe distress and will die soon. It is a difficult location for anything to thrive due to the heat of the summer and the snow that tends to get piled on it during winter. He asked to move this tree to the little island at the top of Old Boston Turnpike near where it meets Oak Hill Rd. By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve move of the trees as indicated.

4th of July Committee Fireworks update

Chair Anne Hentz has served as Chair of the committee for the past 10 years. She explained to hold the fireworks at Fruitlands the hurdles that came up each year to accommodate the Trustees became too difficult. They dictated when the event could be held, eliminated BYOB, increased the rental cost and finally wanting to partner with the town to hold the event so they could receive half the profits.

Hentz explained the profits are what makes the event possible for the next year. In addition, Hentz said the overall cost of the fireworks as well as the event becoming too large for Harvard to manage also attributed to the decision to not hold the fireworks this year. She said the parade and events on the common will still happen. She encouraged residents to volunteer to keep these 4th of July traditions alive. The Select Board members better understood the challenges the committee members have been faced with and will help with planning for next year. They thanked Anne for all her efforts over the years to make this event happen.

Minutes

By a roll call vote, McBee- aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Mairoe, the board voted unanimously to approve minutes of 2/7, 3/21 & 4/4, as presented.

Staff Report/Updates (Attachment A)

Discussion with Capital Planning & Investment Committee (CPIC) on funding of the heavy-duty vehicle for the Department of Public Works

At the last SB meeting member Charles Oliver questioned borrowing instead of utilizing capital funds to purchase the vehicle. Town Administrator Tim Bragan had Finance Director Jared Mullane investigate the additional cost to the town to purchase through a borrowing. CPIC Chair Nate Finch explained the rationale behind this decision made by CPIC. Bragan said based on projections the capital fund could absorb this cost without an enormous impact on funds available for other smaller needs. Finch said CPIC will meet before town meeting for the committee to discuss this. Charles Oliver was interested in voting on this funding change now. The Select Board decided to vote on this prior to the town meeting to allow CPIC an opportunity to discuss as well.

Discuss steps for Bob O'Shea to serve as interim Recreation Director

Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro acknowledged the work being done in preparation for the upcoming beach season by Bob O'Shea as the candidate to fill the Park & Recreation Director position is unable to start until the end of August. She explained O'Shea has submitted the required disclosure for the Select Board to approve allowing him to take on this role while he continues to serve on the Park & Recreation Commission. Bob O'Shea stated he is willing to be employed by the town as the interim Park & Recreation Director until the new hire can start. The Select Board members expressed their gratitude for all Bob has done to make offerings possible at the beach this summer season. By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve 20B disclosure.

MVP Action Grant to protect 39 acres of land on Littleton County Rd

Harvard Cons Trust member Peter Dorward explained this letter of support/commitment will be submitted with the grant application. He explained the CPA approved \$200,000 toward this purchase. He indicated the Harvard Conservation Trust will purchase the property and the town will place a conservation restriction on the property. He said if the grant is awarded the town will receive 75% reimbursement of expenses paid on this project. By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Ludwig -aye, Maiore -aye, the board voted unanimously to support the letter and application for the grant.

One day entertainment license requests for Carlson Orchards

Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro shared the 30 days requested for entertainment. Town Administrator Tim Bragan confirmed the one-day entertainment licenses are legal to be granted. Chair Rich Maiore confirmed the days of the week and times are within the conditions for entertainment previously established by the Select Board.

By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar -aye, Ludwig -aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve the one-day entertainment license requests for Carlson Orchards.

Annual entertainment license for Fivesparks

Sobalvarro reminded the board this is different district therefore an annual entertainment license can be granted. By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar -aye, Ludwig -aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve the annual entertainment license for Fivesparks.

Board of Registrars appointment

By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar -aye, Ludwig -aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve Bob Coit’s appointment to the Board of Registrars.

Harvard Climate Initiative Committee MVP grant request

Kara Minar said this request is not in competition with the previous request. This has a focus on bylaw updates for related to our climate action plan. By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar -aye, Ludwig -aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, approve letter for HCIC’s grant application.

Select Board Reports

Erin McBee reported noticing the new right to farm signs up around town.

Kara Minar said the School Committee inquired if the Select Board may have funds to assist with electricity in the shed at the Anne Lee softball field and for removal of dumpsters there. Rich Maiore suggested they put this request in writing. In addition, she noted the School Committee is expecting an y increase by the state on the per public costs be allocated to the school department portion of the budget.

Kare Minar reported the Energy Advisory Committee will be coming to a Select Board meeting in June to discuss their photovoltaic strategy.

Erin McBee confirmed the applicant for the overlay district on Ayer Road withdrew with the intent to come back in the fall. The board members agreed an ad-hoc/working group committee would be a good approach to assist in vetting potential issues with the proposed language. They will address at their next meeting.

Tim Bragan announced the fall town meeting will likely be held on Saturday October 21st based on recommendations form the Planning Board.

Rich Mairoe suggested the Select Board members hold their next meeting on May 9th instead of May 2nd and then again on May 23rd. All agreed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50pm

Documents referenced:

CoD presentation – dated 4.26.2023

Tree Warden presentation – dated 4.26.2023

O’Shea disclosure – dated 4.5.2023

Cons Trust & HCIC MVP grant letters – dated 4.26.2023

Carlson Orchards Ent License requests – dated 5.1.2023

Fivesparks Ent License request – dated 2.17.2023 (delay in action due to building safety cert requirement)

Coit vol form – dated 4.19.2023

**Staff Report
April 26, 2023**

1. Miscellaneous updates:

- a. It is that time of year again as the Board's Strategic Planning Session will soon be upon us. Board members need to start thinking about your top three items and get them to Marie, Julie, and myself so we can piece together the agenda by the end of May. Currently the meeting is scheduled for the first meeting in June (Tuesday the 6th) unless the Board chooses another date.
- b. Marie and Julie did great work with FinCom and Jared to get the book to the printer and has just come back and will be available at Town Meeting. They are also available on-line at the town website as well.
- c. Municipalities have until the 18th to respond to the National Opioid settlement in order to secure their funding for the latest settlement that included CVS, Walgreens, Walmart and others. We have done everything we need to and both Jared and I are staying on top the settlements, legislation and funding requirements.
- d. The League of Women Voters, here in Harvard, have graciously donated two additional poll pads to assist with town elections and town meetings. They have also agreed to purchase electronic voting equipment for Town Meeting to help with counting votes and moving the meetings along. They have worked with the Moderator and Town Clerk on these initiatives.

2. State Fiscal Notes of Interest: (State House News Service)

- a. State House will be looking at the April receipts closely as they are concerned about a "slow recession" and the possible impact on the fiscal 23 state budget projections. Currently the state is ahead of its original revenue calculations. The Lottery surpasses half a billion dollars in March and was buoyed by a rebound in sales of scratch tickets.
- b. The House has come out with its budget and is looking at a big spending increase as well as tax relief. The Cherry Sheet was adjusted down by ~\$13,000 but the Senate usually increases funding and we are not worried. The House added Capital Gains and Business cuts to their \$1.1 billion tax relief plan. The house also added on-line lottery sales to the state budget. They hope this will help the lottery compete with on-line gaming that recently exploded on the scene in Massachusetts.

- c. Standard and Poor's has upgraded the state's general obligation bond rate from AA to AA+. This rating increase is based on the historic savings and budget management practices.
- d. There is a difference of opinion between the House and Governor Healy regarding Income surtax spending. This will be something to watch when the Senate weighs in on their plans. These are the funds from the new millionaire sur-tax, which will start being used in the FY24 State Budget. The Legislature has also exempted this tax revenue from impacting the tax ceiling that would trigger tax refunds again.
- e. Governor Healy announced plans for more money (\$100 million) for municipal climate planning.

3. Police:

- a. The Police Department responded and/or initiated service calls for 583 calls from April 1, 2023 until April 24, 2023. They continue to respond to traffic issues and complaints with a visible presence for deterrence of speeders.
- b. Drug Take Back Day was a success and they delivered three boxes and 70 pounds of medication. Since October 2013, they turned in 1419 pounds of unused drugs. The Chief would like to recognize Pat Natoli for her wonderful work in organizing and managing this program every year.
- c. The Police Chief thank Tim Kilhart and his crew for the installation of new traffic poles for Still River Road and Bolton Road. There is an installation day of May 16th for the transition of the older portable radar units to permanent mounts.
- d. The Police Department recently completed an active shooter training at the Bromfield School during school vacation. Such training is crucial in ensuring the safety of students and faculty in the event of an active shooter situation. By conducting these drills, law enforcement personnel can familiarize themselves with the school layout, practice communication strategies, and develop effective response plans. However, the unfortunate reality is that such training has become a necessary precaution in today's world. School shootings have become far too frequent, and it is imperative that police departments are prepared to respond quickly and effectively to protect innocent lives. While it is a sobering reminder of the world we live in, these trainings ultimately serve as a critical tool in safeguarding our communities. This was our first hands-on training for the department in active shooter scenarios.

- e. The work on the new Automated Fingerprint Identification System Grant is continuing with the State and Paul McKenzie from CM Geeks. DMH Electrical installed all the site work for the connections and are working with RMS for final licensing and installation. The system is expected to be installed by end of June, 2023. Also, this month all the new electronic citation systems were installed in police vehicles through a state funded grant at no cost to the department. All officers were also trained in the use of the new system.
- f. The Police Department completed all of its mandatory annual training with the final portion of CPR and First Responder Training. CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) and First Responder Training are both crucial skills that can help saves lives in emergencies. They also re-certified all officers in the hands-on use of AEDs (Automatic External Defibrillator) and Naloxone (Narcan).
- g. Detective Fortunato and Dusty the assistance Dog showcased the values of the Harvard Police department at the Autism Awareness Touch-A-Truck Event at Shrewsbury Police! The Chief couldn't be prouder of the unwavering commitment displayed by all officers in spreading awareness about autism and other developmental disorders. Seeing the community come together and embrace the experience was truly heartening. Congrats to Detective Fortunato, Dusty, and everyone involved in this event - their hard work is noticed and appreciated!
- h. The Police Chief is working with the School Department and Massachusetts Workplace Safety and Health to review school crossing procedures, signage, traffic signals, crosswalk markings, high-visibility clothing and other conditions and provide feedback. This is all a free service and will help with any issues in this area.

4. Notice, Reminders, and Updates:

- a. Just a reminder that appointments are coming up and the updated list is attached. There are currently 6 new volunteers and we are looking for more as well.
- b. National Grid has applied for a pole hearing on Fairbank Street, which will take place either at your next meeting or the first meeting in May.
- c. The Townwide Cleanup and Garlic Mustard pull will be May 4th to May 7th.