



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
SELECTBOARD

Blandford Town Hall
1 Russell Stage Road, Suite 1
Blandford, MA 01008

**TOWN OF BLANDFORD
Board of Selectmen Minutes
October 2, 2017**

1. OPEN SESSION 7:00 pm:

Present were Adam Dolby, Cara Letendre and William Levakis

2. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a. Minutes of July 11, 2017 meeting

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the minutes of Emergency Meeting of July 11, 2017.

W. Levakis seconded the motion.

All in favor.

b. Minutes of July 11, 2017 meeting

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Selectmen Meeting of July 11, 2017.

W. Levakis seconded the motion.

All in favor.

c. Minutes of September 5, 2017 meeting

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Selectmen Meeting of September 5, 2017 as amended.

W. Levakis seconded the motion.

All in favor.

3. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE

a. Jennifer Sharrow, USDA Loan Specialist with the United States Department of Agriculture, Office of World Development presented to the Board how her organization could offer assistance either through a loan (present interest rate of 3.5%) or possible grant (not to exceed \$50,000) with infrastructure or other projects. A. Dolby outlined a current proposed project the highway garage building at one location could be adapted for the Fire Department and a building could be built at the site of the other highway garage thereby having one location. W. Levakis inquired if there were any grants currently available and was advised predevelopment grants can be available but the time line for this current period is about finished and focus should be on the next period. Ms. Sharrow went into the procedure on how to apply for a loan or grant.

b. TA role and expectations

The TA role and the Board's expectations were briefly discussed and an email authored by A. Dolby listing goals and ideas will be recirculated and this matter will be revisited at the next meeting.

c. Town Hall hours of operation

It is the goal to establish Town Hall office operating hours. Feedback will be requested and this will be formulated. The item will be tabled to the next meeting. W. Levakis would like to review a listing of presently scheduled hours.

d. Staff supervision

Tabled.

e. FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Town has received formal approval from FEMA thereby qualifying it for a grant. It is planned to apply for a generator for the Town Hall building and on the next interval, get a backup

generator which would enable the building to serve as a shelter. W. Levakis advised the proposal for the generator should include the transfer switch and any other parts that would make it deemed fully installed. This can be a substantial amount of money.

f. Failure to elect

Town Administrator presented to the Board the portion of the Mass. General Laws, Part I, Title VII, Chapter 41, §10, Failure to Elect, Procedure to Fill Vacancy, Notice.

g. Town Administrator advised of her attendance at the MMA meeting on October 6.

h. Union : Town Administrator had a meeting with the Union for the Water Department and a petition will be coming up for the union to be allowed to form uncontested. A contract will need to be negotiated.

i. Eric Kinsherf Update – will be at the October 16th meeting with his proposal. He will discuss options for training and the fees pertaining to this.

4. ACTION ITEMS

a. Unibank Note Renewal Sale: Clark Rowell

Sue Streeter, Town Treasurer, presented to the Board in conjunction with Clark Rowell a synopsis of the 4 bids received for the Note renewal. Unibank came in with the lowest rate of 1.3%, the others being Easthampton Bank at 1.36%, Peoples Bank at 1.48% and Eastern Bank at 1.50%. It is proposed to renew for \$269,193.

Discussion: The question was raised as to possible FEMA money to pay down the loan. The amount in question is \$378,000 and a determination needs to be made as to what portion may have gone to Unibank. This will be reviewed by Unibank and the Town and a portion of the workup may be amended.

MOTION: A. Dolby made a motion to bond renewal with Unibank not to exceed \$269,193 at the rate of 1.3% or less.

C. Letendre seconded the motion

All in favor.

b. Resignation of Water Commissioner: Bill Levakis

MOTION: A. Dolby made a motion to accept the resignation of William Levakis effective 9/21/17.

C. Letendre seconded the motion.

All in favor

Discussion: Mary Konholm advised W. Levakis's resignation needs to go to the Water Board as well.

A. Dolby was called away for an emergency Fire call at 8:20 p.m. C. Letendre took the Chair.

c. Regional Finance Director: Hilltown Collaborative Initiative for Community Compact

The Board will need to sign off to join the application for a grant for a Finance Director.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion for the Town of Blandford to participate in the Regional Finance Director position funded through the next round of the Community Compact Efficiency and Regionalization program.

W. Levakis seconded the motion.

Discussion: Mary Konholm questioned what the difference is in participating in this grant and what Eric McVey accomplishes. Work with Eric is not community compact. This will fund a Finance Director whose work will be comprised of budgeting, tax rate strategy, management,

monthly financial process and a segment on training of staff and technical assistance. Some position functions may overlap but there is need for the all the facets.

All in favor.

d. Appointments

The Appointment List was presented to the Board. Constables were pulled due to the method of appointment for them. Eric McVey was listed as an alternate to Wired West Delegate and cannot serve due to his position on the Finance Committee.

Sue Racine cannot serve a third term on the Arts Council.

A printed list of reappointments is attached to the minutes.

Discussion: In response to the question as to why Constables were not listed on the reappointment list it was stated it is not pursuant to M.G.L. which sets the procedure. The process to appoint constables follows a separate procedure which was supplied by legal.

e. Water Department audit fund reallocation

Water Department funded an audit that was not performed and is due this amount. There is a need to reallocate this to the Water Department.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to move \$5,000 from the General Fund of FY 2016 back to the Water Department fund.

W. Levakis seconded the motion.

All in favor

Discussion: W. Levakis suggested going back to previous years to determine if other money is owed. It was decided the time involved and any money due would cancel out any possible gains.

f. Appointment of new chair tabled

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PRIOR MEETINGS

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Staff working hours

Tabled.

b. Highway and Water department staff usage

Tabled.

c. Blandford Fair: Bruce Wyman advised the board of an upcoming event, a Truck Pull, to take place on the Blandford fairgrounds. It would be a daytime activity and the same as what takes place at the fair. He advised the State Police would police the event which was questioned by W. Levakis who inquired as to why the local police weren't going to be used. Mr. Wyman advised the State Police was privately funded and that is why they were being used. Mary Kronholm questioned the need for an event license and/or a special permit and Bruce Wyman advised he felt all requirements have been met. It was decided, however, a hearing be requested before the Zoning Board of Appeals. A. Dolby expressed his support of this type of function and C. Letendre suggested he fill out an application for a special event. It is determined a Fire Department truck is not required to be on hand per the Fire Chief.

7. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. **Gateway Meeting Announcements**

Meeting Announcements were reviewed.

8. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, sec. 21(a)(1) - To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss

the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual.

MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION 8:59 p.m.

Summary: To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual.

Roll Call In

C. Letendre yes

W. Levakis yes

Employee, Sue Streeter, has requested an Open Meeting

Sue Streeter called to Board.

Go into session to discuss complaints or charges brought against you Sue, as Treasurer. T.A. issued a letter to Sue – there was an incident that occurred at a meeting ... Sue Streeter reading directly from the complaint.

A. Dolby entered the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

A. Dolby reviewed that purpose is two-fold and has been discussed in the past. That the process should be looked at as more coaching. There is a strain on the relationship between the two – TA and Treasurer. Should be looked at by a third party maybe. Is the relationship repairable and what steps the Board should take.

The Board would like a review of the context around the delivery of this letter and a look at where these two individuals were at that time and where they are now.

W. Levakis advised he believed for the Treasurer's position there is no probationary period.

Sue Streeter read the Complaint and also presented a time-line of her perception of the events.

Both Angeline Ellison and Sue Streeter were asked if they felt their lines of communication and their working relationship were repairable. They are open to working towards a repair and working towards a more effective communication. It is proposed that communication be in email form with a copy to the Board of Selectmen and the Selectmen's Secretary. It is to be revisited in one month at which time Adam will ask both individuals to discuss where they are and will proceed from there. The Selectmen's Secretary will alert the Selectboard Chair when the one month period has ended.

Motion to close the Executive Session at 9:50 p.m.

Roll Call Out

Adam Dolby – yes

C. Letendre – yes

W. Levakis – yes`

Adam Dolby made a Motion to go into Executive Session to discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual and not to reconvene.

D. Letendre seconded the Motion.

All in Favor

Roll Call In 9:57 p.m.

A. Dolby- yes

C. Letendre – yes

W. Levakis-yes

Submitted by: Karen Shaw

Adam Dolby – Chair

Cara Letendre - Clerk

William Levakis – Member