



TOWN OF BLANDFORD  
SELECTBOARD

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

**TOWN OF BLANDFORD  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES  
All Board Meeting- Joint Meeting With Various Boards  
December 4, 2017**

**1. OPEN SESSION 7:03 pm**

Present were Adam Dolby, William Levakis and Cara Letendre.

A. Dolby advised meeting is being recorded.

**2. RECLASSIFICATION HEARING continued (joint meeting with Assessors)**

The tax rate was explained to the Board of Assessors by Stephen Jemiolo who also did a recap of the year advising the residential value went slightly up and the town experienced new growth of 1.4 million. The tax rate for 2018 will be set at 17.57.

**MOTION: A. Dolby made a motion per recommendation of the Board of Assessors to set a final tax rate at \$17.57/thousand for FY 2018.**

**B. Levakis seconded the motion.**

**All in favor.**

**3. JOINT MEETING WITH WATER COMMISSIONERS: Discussion of DEP mandate and employment authority**

Gordon Avery of the Water Commission reported to the Board DEP recommendations and future plans for the Water Department. He discussed the 7 items which were not in conformance with DEP recommendations and the several unresolved issues from the last survey. While some of the items have been addressed they are still working on the ones that haven't been resolved. The calibration on the master meter has been adjusted and there are plans to have a back-up meter fully calibrated should the master meter need to be sent out for recalibration. He discussed ph issues and advised water has passed all water samplings. While it is slightly higher than neutral at 7.5 ph, it is advantageous at that acidity. There will be a focus on maintenance such as flushing hydrants and running lines. Audits are performed every three years. It is expected next year to insert a line item for a couple laborers. Relative to day to day operations, reinstating the Superintendent's position will be reviewed in the future.

**4. ALL BOARD meeting to discuss budgets and elected official benefits**

Eric McVey recapped the procedure for FY 2018 budgets. All boards and elected officials were to receive the budget handout to be completed by them by February 1, 2018. For groups reporting to the Selectboard it is advantageous they be returned by mid-January. Others can submit via the Finance Committee mailbox. Finance Committee is suggesting scheduling

meetings on Thursday evenings with town officials, to get the budget set up. There are Selectboard goals that will be considered and focus should be placed on building stabilization funds, emergency response,

The Assessors Office voiced confusion relative to the present budget and what account bills are being paid with. Bills have been paid coded for a specific account and are not showing as coming out of that account. This is all being worked on by the accountant under contract with the Town.

Pertaining to benefits for elected officials, the statute was reviewed. Elected officials working in excess of 20 hours per week is eligible for health benefits. Less than 20 hours a week, the Board of Selectmen can allow or not allow eligibility. A. Dolby advised any decision set on this should be set by bi-law and not something ultimately decided by the Selectboard. A good item for the annual town meeting. This potentially has a high expense exposure.

**MOTION: A. Dolby made a motion that the Town does not allow health insurance benefits for elected officials working under 20 hours from now until annual town meeting until that is either changed or ratified by bi-law.**

**C. Letendre seconded the motion.**

**All in favor.**

## **5. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**MOTION: A. Dolby made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 23, 2017 Board of Selectmen meeting.**

**C. Letendre seconded the motion**

**All in favor.**

**MOTION: A. Dolby made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 27, 2017 Board of Selectmen meeting.**

**B. Levakis seconded the motion**

**All in favor.**

## **6. ACTION ITEMS**

a. **MassDOT Standard Contract Form for Blandford Agreement**

Agreement signed.

b. **Fire Truck contract**

Contract signed.

c. **Highway Truck agreement**

Signed.

d. **Elected official benefits**

Discussed under Item 4 above.

e. **Water Union negotiating Team: Town Administrator and a Water Commissioner**

There is not a need for a negotiating team.

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

Mary Kronholm advised of several tasks that need coverage at the Library. Trash removal and shoveling and will seek coverage. She also expressed concern over leaf removal.

It has been proposed the curtain in the gym be removed due to disrepair and this will be done.

Fire Chief expressed his thanks to all for the success of the Pancake Breakfast and the donations received.

**8. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Gateway Regional School District Meeting – Facilitated Discuss/Planning Committee 12/7/17.

**Adam Dolby made a motion to Adjourn the meeting.**

**B. Levakis seconded the motion.**

**All in favor.**

**Meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.**

Submitted by: Karen Shaw

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Adam Dolby – Chair

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Cara Letendre - Clerk

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William Levakis – Member