



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
SELECTBOARD

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

**TOWN OF BLANDFORD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES
JANUARY 8, 2018**

1. OPEN SESSION 7:07 p.m.

Adam Dolby, Cara Letendre, William Levakis in attendance.

Meeting is recorded.

2. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

MOTION: A. Dolby made a motion to accept the Board of Selectmen Minutes of November 13, 2017 as amended.

C. Letendre seconded the motion.

All in favor.

MOTION: A. Dolby made a motion to accept the Board of Selectmen Minutes of December 11, 2017.

C. Letendre seconded the motion.

All in favor.

3. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE

a. Sarah Hunter: Treasurer updates

b. Eric Kinsherf: Accountant updates

Sara Hunter and Eric Kinsherf updated the Board on the status of the closure of FY 2017. Eric is planning on closing the books by February 9 and on submitting a balance sheet at that time. He is in need of a better understanding of certain items on the cash receipts and is looking into that. Sarah discussed the stabilization account and in the purchase of the Firetruck suggested using the stabilization account versus borrowing until free cash comes in. It will save the Town money and it is anticipated there will be enough free cash to cover it. If not, a loan can be made at that time. One hundred fifty issues have been found, 120 of which have been researched and remedied. Continued work on the others moves forward. Eric Kinsherf advised he is of the opinion 2018 will flow better and be accomplished within 3 months with a September closure. Margit Mikuski mentioned the COA accounts were out of balance when the previous accountant left and would like to be sure that is resolved. Eric will review this.

c. **Broadband update and contract**

Adam Dolby discussed the status of the broadband project. Blandford was awarded their grant from the Commonwealth of slightly over one million dollars, a very favorable grant. Goal is to have fiber optics pass 100% of the houses in town and there is a meeting scheduled at Town Hall Tuesday, January 9th at 10:00 a.m. with Westfield Gas and Electric to walk through the project plan. Initially it was to be approximately an 18 month project but due to the poor performance of Verizon and Eversource, 6 months is being built into the project. There are plans that the Commonwealth will be meeting with Verizon and Eversource to address concerns.

Question was raised as to who would be authorized to release funds. Adam advised he has the standard contract from the Commonwealth and the Select Board can designate individuals to release funds. At this point in time it will be the Select Board who will be authorized to release funds and they will be individually named.

d. **PVPC: Marijuana By-Law: TJ Cousineau**

As the Town voted to allow the sale and growth of marijuana, it has to come up with a bylaw. The PVPC is working on a generic bylaw the Towns can tweak. Whatever the Town comes up with, it will require a Town vote. If the Town doesn't come up with a bylaw to regulate marijuana, it will default to the state. Mr. Cousineau stated there will be zoning issues as to location and permitting. It is suggested going forward the Town should look at the PVPC generic bylaw in preparation for insertion on a warrant for an upcoming town meeting.

e. **COA: Margit Mikulski**

Margit Mikulski presented two new members for appointment to the Council on Aging. To finish Edna Wilander's term she is presenting Mary Mangini. She is also recommending Heidi Taberman for an appointment on the Council.

MOTION: A. Dolby made a motion to appoint Mary Mangini to the Council on Aging for completion of the term ending in 2019.
B. Levakis seconded the motion.
C. Letendre abstained.

MOTION: A. Dolby made a motion to appoint Heidi Taberman to the Council on Aging for the term of 2018 – 2021.
C. Letendre seconded the motion.
All in favor.

Margit Mikuski, Chair of the Council on Aging discussed the ongoing space issue the COA is having. They are running out of storage and with addition of the maintenance of files for recordkeeping there is a higher demand. She discussed space in the Library for storage which could possibly be shared by COA and the Library. Library and COA will work together on this. Other areas will also be looked at as well.

Moving to another subject, the Town of Russell effective June 30th will no longer be in the consortium and won't be using their space for consortium meetings nor will their accountant be handling the state incentive grant. A new town will be required to take the lead position

especially as relates to the state incentive grant. Something will need to be set up by July 1 and she inquired to the Board as to whether Blandford might like to entertain being the lead town. Adam mentioned on this same subject, it would be good to consider opening a dialogue between the consortium and Hilltown Ambulance as they have increased their services (paramedic) and their desire to be more creative with new services. Eric Kinsherf will be contacted to obtain a quote from him for the accounting portion of this endeavor.

f. Akuity Contract

The Town Administrator reported that Akuity will maintain their contract with the Town at the current amount on a monthly basis. As to the purchase of the new server, it will come out of the Capital Expenditure account. She will be reviewing the ongoing cost and what is in the budget for this line item.

g. Update Selectmen's Secretary title

Relative to a discussion with the Selectmen's Secretary who is has requested the Select Board review this current title the Town Administrator is requesting the assistant to the Select Board's title be changed from Selectmen's Secretary to Administrative Assistant.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to change the title from Selectmen's Secretary to Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator.

A. Dolby seconded the motion.

All in favor.

h. RFP Tax Collector/Treasurer
Tabled.

i. Flag

Town Administrator advised Doug Emo will be color guard for the flag. Doug will have responsibility for managing the raising and lowering of the flag. This will be all Town flags and a volunteer position and can be revisited at a later date.

There will be no Board Meeting on Monday, January 15 due to the Martin Luther King holiday.

4. ACTION ITEMS

a. COA appointment: Mary Mangini
Appointment made. Please refer to 3.e.

b. DLTA proposal via PVPC

The Town Administrator outlined the DLTA proposal specifically with the outsourcing of accounting and financial functions. An eye toward a regional approach to include assessors, conservation and planning and to coordinate with fire and police, especially when it comes to equipment will be looked at. This needs to be reviewed further and it is suggested a request be made to the PVPC to come up with a plan and it would be helpful to do a study on this as well.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve request for DLTA assistance for regional/outsourcing model by contracting with a qualified firm through the PVPC to meet our financial needs.

A. Dolby seconded the motion.
All in favor.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve and allow Adam Dolby to sign request for DLTA assistance for regional/outsourcing model by contracting with a qualified firm through the PVPC to meet our assessors, concom, planning and building capital improvement plans.

A. Dolby seconded the motion.
All in favor.

5. NEW BUSINESS

- Adam Dolby presented the Town Administrator's letter of resignation to the Board. Her last day will be Friday, February 9 and she will work with the Board to ensure a seamless transition with day-to-day operations and on-going projects.

MOTION: A. Dolby made a motion to accept Angie's letter of resignation.

C. Letendre seconded the motion.
All in favor.

- Mary Kronholm presented a Calendar of Events which should be posted on the Town website and also will be posted on the board in the Select Board office. All Boards should be aware, or have a copy of this calendar.
- Byam Stevens, Chair of the Arts Council came before the Board to discuss coordination of various events of town councils and commissions. There is something on the website but it is not easily accessed and he is suggesting a template be used for uniformity. There have been overlapping functions causing some confusion.. The Arts Council is willing to put out a memo to all departments, commissions, cultural organizations within the town and request they use a template for the activity in presenting it to the webmaster for posting so there is some control as to how it is done. He is suggesting the notice would be through email and hard copy to every department and the Arts Council is willing to pick up the tab.

The Arts Council is redefining their mission statement in order to keep state money in the Town for cultural events.

- Due to the purchase of a new fire truck the rating for insurance purposes should be changed and it will be looked into.
- There are concerns about highway people who get hurt and the procedure to calling in to the supervisor. There should be a look at the policy and a look at union contracts covering this.

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pursuant to MGL C30A, §21. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.

MOTION: To enter into Executive Session in accordance to G.L. c. 30A, §21, and adjourn meeting thereafter, by A. Dolby

Roll Call Vote taken

A. Dolby- yes

C. Letendre - yes

W. Levakis-yes

Meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m. to Executive Session.

Submitted by: Karen Shaw, Administrative Assistant to the Board

Adam Dolby – Chair

Cara Letendre - Clerk

William Levakis – Member