



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
SELECTBOARD

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

**TOWN OF BLANDFORD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES
December 11, 2017**

1. OPEN SESSION 7:02 pm

Present were Adam Dolby and Cara Letendre.

A. Dolby advised meeting is being recorded

2. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a. Minutes of November 6, 2017 and December 4, 2017 were reviewed.

MOTION: A. Dolby made a motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Selectmen meeting of November 6, 2017 as amended.

C. Letendre seconded the motion

All in favor.

MOTION: A. Dolby made a motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Selectmen meeting of December 4, 2017 as amended.

C. Letendre seconded the motion

All in favor.

Discussion by the Board regarding the signing of checks where it is noted that if this is accomplished in the capacity of Assistant Treasurer, it needs to be bonded. The Board will review with legal and revisit the next meeting.

3. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE

b. DLTA

Discussion was held in relation to the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) which is currently soliciting written requests from its member communities who are seeking to receive technical assistance under the Commonwealth's 2018 District Local Technical Assistant (DLTA) Program. DLTA funds is an annual grant established in the Massachusetts General Laws. For DLTA year 2018, this fund received an annual appropriation of \$2.8 million to be distributed statewide to regional planning agencies to support local regional planning and service projects. PVCP anticipates receiving an allocation of approximately \$250,000 for its staff to provide technical assistance to address eligible DLTA projects submitted by member communities. Proposed projects must fall into one of two categories to be considered eligible: 1) Planning Ahead for Housing (help to reach statewide housing production goal); and 2) Technical Assistance to advance identified community compact cabinet activities as well as municipal shared services projects.

All were in agreement this is a beneficial undertaking.

MOTION: A. Dolby made a motion to direct the Town Administrator to work with the community compact for DLTA grant applications.

C. Letendre seconded the motion.

All in favor.

a. Planning Board PVPC Contract

Richard Barnard of the Planning Board came before the Selectboard to discuss the solar facility and the involvement of the PVPC which is proposed will take control of the project. He submitted the contract for signature of the Board in order to go forward.

The solar company, Park Avenue Solar Solutions, will be charged a fee and it is requested a bank account be opened for this purpose. This has Conservation Commission approval, however, the Board will request a review by legal. Mr. Barnard advised he has been unable to locate any fee schedule for this type of project and advised the bylaws contain a provision to set a fee, but not the actual fee as it would periodically change.

There will be a public hearing in February at which time abutters will have an opportunity to comment.

The Board encouraged the Planning Board to reach out to PVPC, Larry Smith who they have been working with, to see if they would be willing to set a rate to handle future projects from application to completion versus Planning Board members going through specific training as they are on a volunteer basis and the PVPC works with this on a regular basis.

The Board is also requesting that someone from Conservation Commission come to the next Board meeting to further discuss this project.

As to the fee the Board made the following motion.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to set the commercial solar permit fee at 1% of project costs.

A. Dolby seconded the motion.

All in favor.

c. Flag Designee

Due to recent issues relative to flying the Town flag at half mast when appropriate it is requested Doug Emo be asked if he would be interested in taking on the responsibility and Town Administrator will be requested to follow up.

4. ACTION ITEMS

a. Vote of Board Positions

This is tabled.

- b. Town Hall Staff Working Hours
This is tabled.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PRIOR MEETINGS

Cara Letendre updated the Board on the recent MARS meeting she and Eric McVey attended where they also presented the budget. The towns discussed their operational budget struggles and capital plans as well as the school so everyone could be on the same page. There was also discussion of the school doing a green community plan which could have cost saving benefits.

MSBA Forgiveness is a program where schools not being used for schools could get a financial break as long as the buildings could be used for other municipal purposes. There would need to be a legislative change and the focus would be in that direction.

It was discussed to create two task forces to help change the perception that Gateway doesn't have a lot to offer. They are contemplating contacting a marketing specialist which could be an assist for this purpose.

Next meeting is January 4.

6. NEW BUSINESS

Eric McVey presented MARS invoices for payment.

A question was raised as to when repairs to Russell Stage Road were going to be started. Funds are required to initiate the repairs and it will be a project scheduled for next year. Attempts to patch will be made until the repairs can be made.

7. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Monthly ambulance activity was reported.

8. ADJOURN MEETING

A. Dolby made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

C. Letendre seconded the motion.

All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Submitted by: Karen Shaw

Adam Dolby – Chair

Cara Letendre - Clerk

William Levakis – Member