



TOWN OF BLANDFORD  
Board of Selectmen, Minutes  
October 26, 2015

**Attendance:** Adam Dolby, William Levakis and Cara Letendre - Secretary

**Open Meeting:**

7:00 p.m. Mr. Dolby called meeting to order, provided notice that meeting may be recorded.

**Posted Agenda Items:**

1. School Committee Regarding FY16 Budget: Michele Crane, Terri Garfield
  - a. Mitigation Money: currently with the senate.
    - i. Letter writing campaign: Darlene McVeigh drafted a letter for residents to send to Senator Rosenberg asking him to please consider putting the mitigation funds in the budget. Cara will get a copy on our website and Facebook.
    - ii. Does the School Committee have a contingency plan if mitigation funds are not approved?
      1. Mrs. Crane- we will have to go back to the table and see where our budget stands.
      2. Mr. Levakis- suggested developing a back-up plan now and looking at the available options
      3. Mrs. Crane- we have some ideas, we have been stuck in this holding pattern.
      4. Mitigation funding is only for one year. What about the next year?
        - a. Mrs. Crane- we have had 2 preliminary presentations on the FY17 budget thus far. We will be doing some general planning on November 18<sup>th</sup> at our next meeting. We have some tough decisions to make.
  - b. OPEB Trust Fund: School Committee has decided to put aside \$107,000 for this trust fund to start saving.
    - i. Mr. Dolby- poor timing in this time of crisis.
    - ii. Mrs. Crane- it is a practical move as it is a large part of the pending lawsuit. The money being put into that fund was money that was

unspent that was put aside for that purpose. We don't have to put money into the fund every year.

- c. Unfunded Mandates: The school Committee will vote on this at their next meeting.
  - d. Multi-Year Contracts: Discussion about Administrators and Business Manager with multi-year contracts.
    - i. Mrs. Crane: the contracts are reviewed annually and roll over every 3 years.
    - ii. Mr. Van Werkhoven: three year contracts really ties your hands
    - iii. Mrs. Crane: We believe in taking care of our employees and pay comparable salaries and reward good work.
    - iv. Mr. Van Werkhoven: yet now you can't reduce costs at the administrative level and have to cut at the teacher level.
    - v. Mrs. Crane: In 2014-2015 the Sub Finance Committee did not bring forward an official organized budget recommendation for the School Committee to vote on.
    - vi. Mr. Hopson: we can reduce or eliminate the multi-year contract, we would have to pay unemployment as we would anywhere else.
2. Highway Superintendent Updates:
- a. Mr. Curry asked that going forward all orders to the Highway Superintendent come from the entire Selectboard and not individual members. Mr. Dolby agreed that Cara would send Mr. Curry an email and/or letter on Town letterhead, however it will most likely not be signed. Mr. Curry agreed.
  - b. Cobble Mountain Road: A resident had complained about a very large pothole. It was patched back in September.
  - c. Second Division (second half of Nye Brook) Road:
    - i. Have the materials to do the job, concerned about pulling the employees off of other jobs.
    - ii. We do collect Chapter 90 funds on the road.
    - iii. Mr. Levakis: We have so many other roads at a higher priority
    - iv. Mr. Curry: The bridge on the road was re-decked not long ago.
    - v. The Police Department mentioned that if the road was passable it would cut the time from one end of town to the other.
    - vi. Selectboard asked Mr. Curry how much money we would lose if we dropped this road off of Chapter 90. Mr. Curry will follow-up
    - vii. Selectboard asked Mr. Curry for an estimate of how much time is needed to make the road passable as well as a cost including materials. Mr. Curry will follow-up.
    - viii. Selectboard asked Mr. Curry for his recommendation. He will follow-up.
    - ix. Herrick Road Drainage: will be working on this week.
    - x. Currently preparing trucks for winter.
      - 1. Mr. Levakis- would like to see this done earlier in the year.

2. Mr. Curry- we have been staying on task with the Selectboard's agenda. We are a 3 man team working on dealing with 20 years of neglect.
- x. Mr. Holmes will be out for 1 ½ weeks so the department will be short one man.
- xii. Russell Stage Road: there are a few things to firm up for Winter, some of the jobs will remain until Spring.
- xiii. New Plow: the current plow was purchased in 1999 and needs to be replaced, repair est. of \$1,400 - \$1,800 (Mr. Curry showed the Selectboard pictures of the damaged plow). Mr. Curry asked permission to purchase a one year old used plow for \$1,600 out of the snow and ice or capital fund. He plans to scrap or sell the old plow. Board agreed.
- xiv. Mr. Dolby: please make sure that you are painfully aware of the budget, you are entrusted with it. If you foresee any problems let us know well in advance
  1. Mrs. Smith (Finance Committee)- be aware that with the current budget scenario and possibility of no mitigation money we don't have any money to play with, no leniency.
  2. Mr. Dolby: There is no margin of error with this budget, no safety-net. Don't be afraid to push back to the Selectboard if you can't afford something. You know the budget.
3. Minutes: Mr. Levakis motion to approve meeting minutes of October 19, 2015 as written, Mr. Dolby second, unanimous vote.

**Old Business:**

1. BOH & Planning Board: presented the Selectboard with a narrative of the BaNash property conflict as well as copies of maps and permits. Mr. Cousineau will get their copies to the Board next week.
2. Survey MassDOT Property:
  - a. Mrs. McCann (Planning Board) sent her remarks and questions regarding the survey to PVPC and the Selectboard. The Selectboard agrees with her suggestions.
  - b. Mrs. McCann- doesn't believe we should do the survey. There is no access to the land and it is unclear as to what the State's roll is and if the Town will benefit.
  - c. Mr. Dolby will follow-up with Smitty Pignatelli to get these questions answered.
3. GTAC Endorsement Letter: Mr. Montanaro next week
4. Water Main North Street Bridge Status: Selectboard and Water Commissioners sending a response letter to MassDOT. Discussed last week.
5. Highway Mitigation: We received the go ahead from the risk assessor to complete the wall rehab work. Clayton Davenport will continue the work starting in mid to late November.

6. Foster Webster: (not present) responded to the Selectboard that he would clear the white pines at Shepard Farm for \$500 not the \$1000 that the Board had offered. Conservation Commission is fine either way. Selectboard – we made an offer take it or leave it.
7. Special Town Meeting: November 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Hopson is available.

**New Business:**

1. All Boards Meeting: will be in November or December and will be posted by the Selectboard.

9:04 Mr. Levakis motion to adjourn, Mr. Dolby second, unanimous vote.

Submitted by:  
Cara Letendre

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Adam Dolby - Chair

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William Levakis - Member