



TOWN OF BLANDFORD  
Board of Selectmen, Minutes  
November 16, 2015

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

**Open Meeting:**

7:03 p.m. Mr. Dolby called meeting to order, provided notice that meeting may be recorded.

**Posted Agenda Items:**

1. Highway Superintendent: Updates
  - a. Actively prepping trucks, sanders and the salt shed for this winter.
    - i. Goals set for snow and ice will stay on my list for a while as they are weather permitting.
  - b. Power outage this week. We worked at the site until the police relieved us.
  - c. Tractor Trailer stuck in utility wires, helped to remove
  - d. Tree down on Nye Brook Road, removed
  - e. Shut the water off and drained the pipes at the highway garage for this winter. Will drain the water heater tomorrow.
  - f. Clearing ditches: borrowed a piece of equipment from Huntington to fit on the grader and clear ditches. Will continue to clear as time allows.
  - g. Mowing: had been told to pass on the mower when it was Blandford's turn in early summer and to focus on pothole patching. The mower then broke and was stuck in one location for a while. We have done what we can for now. We don't have the funding in part-time labor to do more.
  - h. Pothole Patching: from 7/27/2015 to 10/7/2015 we have spent \$19,000 on material to patch potholes. (If we include the WRAP \$ from the Spring we have spent about \$40,000) There are still some spots remaining, Chester Road and Herrick Road are at the top of the list. The roads are falling apart and we don't have the funding to keep up with them.
  - i. Meeting with Tree Ward to mark hazardous trees this week in preparation for winter.
  - j. Snow Fence: helped enormously last year. Will be contacting residents whose property the fences will be installed and installing them before the ground freezes.
  - k. Chapter 90 Money: working on price plan for next year.
  - l. Need to lobby for Chapter 90 money for our roads at Superintendent Meetings. We are going to have to split the funding with RAIL.

- i. Mr. Levakis offered to attend meetings.
- m. Herrick Road: complaints from residents about state of road. Several potholes and needs draining work as it floods and freezes in the winter.
  - i. Mr. Curry spoke with Mr. Tiburski from Eversource. Will get a contractor quote on patching cost and forward to Mr. Tiburski. Mr. Curry estimated that it is about 2 days of work. Eversource has already repaired the culvert at the end of the road.
  - ii. Mr. Montanaro: would like to see Mr. Curry contact the residents who have made complaints to respond whether we can address the complaints or not. Mr. Curry agreed.
  - iii. Mr. Montanaro – working to improve lines of communication doesn't seem to be working.
    - 1. Mr. Curry – I speak with Mr. Dolby and Mr. Levakis on a regular basis.
    - 2. Mr. Dolby- it is part of our job as the Selectboard to defend you so it helps us to know what your plans are. We can see that you get frustrated if you don't have your goals stack ranked, you get pulled in several directions.
    - 3. Mr. Dolby- asked Mr. Curry to put together a list of 5 priorities for a month for the Selectboard and the residents. We have asked for that and we need to figure out a way to get there. If you have to deviate from the list due to anomalies, that's fine, just please record incidents. We will publish/post the list. Otherwise no one appreciates what is happening. If a resident asks about something that is not on the list we can point out that it's not on our top priority list but we will get to it when we can. Mr. Curry agreed.
    - 4. Mr. Levakis- have to understand that Mr. Curry is working with a minimal budget and few employees.
    - 5. Mr. Montanaro- not asking for an ideal list, just a practical list. To demonstrate that you are working towards an objective.
    - 6. Mr. Dolby- I agree with Mr. Levakis, there is only so much possible with two full-time employees. We have a long list and we have to let people know that we are aware that there is an issue but we have limited money and man power. Show the public a plan and our priorities.
- 2. Beagle Club Road Plowing: the residents of Beagle Club Road submitted a letter to the Selectboard asking that the town plow the private road this winter.
  - a. Discussed limited funds. However the tax rate is the same for those residents.
  - b. Road is about 1/10 of a mile, Mr. Curry stated it takes about 15 minutes to plow but can be an issue when cars are parked on the road.
  - c. Question about liability. Board asked Cara to follow-up with Town Counsel.

3. Minutes: Mr. Montanaro motion to approve meeting minutes from November 9, 2015 as written, Mr. Levakis second, unanimous vote.

**Old Business:**

1. Mr. van Werkhoven: reminded Board that they were going to schedule a follow-up meeting with Mr. Curry regarding his work performance.
  - a. Mr. Dolby – we will work on scheduling that.
2. Special Town Meeting: Mr. van Werkhoven asked Board if Town Counsel would be present.
  - a. Mr. Dolby- in an effort to save money, counsel will be available via phone.
  - b. Town Clerk has voting slips printed in case we go to a ballot vote.
  - c. Mr. Levakis will send out reverse 911 reminders to residents.
3. Building Inspector: have received more complaints about lack of response to calls and not showing up for office hours. Board asked Cara to send a letter to Mr. Gould to attend next week's meeting.
4. Pay Freeze: Finance Committee- did not agree with pay freeze but recommended hold until after the Special Town Meeting.
5. Survey Regarding DOT property: will be posted online. Cara will put link on Facebook.
6. Exit Survey: Representative Pignatelli indicated that DOT will be replacing tolls with slip ramps, which are exits with Fastlane and without tollbooths.
7. GTAC Delegates: Town Counsel reported that it is ok for a member of the finance committee to serve on GTAC. Mr. Montanaro motion to appoint Linda Smith as a GTAC Delegate for a term of one year. Mr. Dolby second, unanimous vote.

**New Business:**

1. Quote from Westfield Evening News from Representative Pignatelli – “There is no sustainable model for the schools anywhere in the Berkshires”.
2. Excise Taxes Ms. Castro: discussed Ms. Castro's case, she owes excise taxes on a few different vehicles. One of which was transferred to a different owner awhile back and may be abated however the transfer paperwork was just received today. Typically have to pay the tax before it can be abated. However, the RMV is holding on giving Ms. Castro a new license until the bill is removed and she is due to go on a Make-A-Wish trip with her son next week and needs a license to fly.
  - a. Mrs. Masee offered to remove any fees she is able to.
  - b. Mr. Dolby asked Mrs. Masee to speak with Mrs. Wilander to see if we can make an exception.

9:13 p.m. 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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Andrew Montanaro - Clerk

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William Levakis - Member