



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
SELECTBOARD

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

**TOWN OF BLANDFORD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
March 18, 2019**

OPEN SESSION 7:00 pm

C. Letendre, Chairman; **E. McVey**, Clerk; **W. Levakis**, Member; **J. Garcia**, Interim Town Administrator in attendance.

Meeting called to order at 7:01 pm Meeting is recorded.

1. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

a. Examination of the meeting minutes of the Board of Selectmen meeting of July 23, 2019

MOTION: **C. Letendre** made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen and the Chester Board of Selectman of July 23, 2019 as written.

E. McVey Seconded

All in Favor

b. Examination of the meeting minutes of the Board of Selectmen meeting of March 11, 2019

Tabled until 3-18-19 meeting

c. Examination of the Executive Session meeting minutes of the Board of Selectmen meeting of March 11, 2019

MOTION: **C. Letendre** made a motion to approve the Executive Session meeting minutes with the Board of Selectmen of March 11, 2019 as written.

B. Levakis Seconded

All in Favor

2.*AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

None

3. ACTION ITEMS

a. Economic Development – Rural Policy Advisory Commission

The BOS met with Andy Myers (Chair of the Hilltown Collaborative) and Jeanne LeClair (shared Economic Development Director) to discuss regional economic development approaches. The discussion covered a range of issues including long term economic development; recognizing the growth of optimism; progress of the marketing plan development; the positive result of the town interviews of

‘who’s in the hilltowns’ person feature; continuing to market and develop a social media identity; the success of the ongoing process of website traffic, etc..

They discussed the changes moving forward. Gateway has expressed an interest in participating however, Montgomery is not going forward and Russell has not decided as yet. The budget has been lowered accordingly. C. Letendre voiced her concern about whether the towns can get the best out of this program if too many towns decide not to participate and she questioned how this would be monitored. For those who are already using the services and then opt out, do we not allow them to use the services? Cara suggested there should be a regional administrator position so the Hilltown Collaborative can keep an eye on the things that all the towns can share; i.e. the use of counsel. Our towns are frequently sending the same documents to separate law offices. This would be a great opportunity to share services and save money. The Andy suggested that the BOS put this in front of the voters at our annual town meeting and let the voters decide if they want to participate or not. They noted that it will be their responsibility to make that pitch.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to move to Action Item 3b. Pete Sparks – Julius Hall Road – gate issue.

**E. McVey Seconded
All in Favor**

a. Charles Benson Resignation from Recreation Committee

The BOS Administrative Assistant informed the Board that Charles would like to resign as Chairman but still maintain his member-status on the Recreation Committee. No action was necessary.

b. Pete Sparks – Julius Hall Road – gate issue

Pete Sparks requested a meeting with the Board of Selectmen. Pete explained the area of Julius Hall Road which is a dirt road that runs between Beach Hill and eventually ends up at the reservoir. At the end of the maintained section, there is a gate. Pete claims it’s a town road that continues down and runs into South Otis Road, which he claims is also a town road and is gated as well. The gate was initially posted as ‘no trespassing’. At some time the sign was taken down. Recently, a state police officer approached Mr. Sparks at his home asking if he went around the gate on his ATV. He admitted to it stating ‘it’s a town road’. The officer stated that he would be issuing a citation. Pete stated that he lives on this road and has not had a problem in the past. He now is required to appear in court to argue the citation. The Board of Selectmen requested that Pete join the BOS on 3-25-19 so the Board can gather more information in order to help resolve this problem. Joshua Garcia reported that a representative from Springfield Water will be present and the Board suggested that a representative from the Russell State Police Barracks be present as well.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to table this discussion until the 3-25-19 Board of Selectmen meeting.

**E. McVey Seconded
All in Favor**

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to move to Action Item 3d Vehicle Policy.

**E. McVey Seconded
All in Favor**

c. Time Clock Policy – B. Levakis

E. McVey noted his concern about Highway crews needing to punch in and out when most of the time they are on the road working and would have to make a separate trip to the town hall to punch in or out. Rene Senecal, Highway Superintendent, joined in the discussion. He made note to the Board that it is the supervisor’s responsibility to monitor the time of those he is responsible for. He does not believe with only 3 employees that a time clock is necessary. B. Levakis argued that this could be used as a tool to keep track of how long a particular job may take. Mr. Senecal noted that he’s been doing this for a long time and his routine is always to track time, hours, equipment and supplies in a separate ledger for each and every job. He reminded the Board that it is his job to monitor these hours and he assured the Board that he takes this very seriously. C. Letendre noted that what she is hearing is that the superintendent responsible for this department is stating that he does not think a time clock is necessary; therefore, she does not believe the town should spend money on a time clock.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to table the time clock policy indefinitely.

E. McVey Seconded

All in Favor

d. Vehicle Policy – B. Levakis

E. McVey reported that he disagreed with one section of the policy which states that town vehicles should not be used to pick up lunch orders on a daily basis. R. Senecal reported that he has not seen that happen. He reports that what does happen is when they are done with a job and are on their way back to the Town Hall, they will stop along the way to pick up lunch. The Superintendent agrees that town vehicles should not be used for a ‘lunch run’. Rene reported he will be monitoring these kinds of things going forward. He requested that he be given some time to review the policy and give his feedback. J. Garcia recommended that we take more time to review this with department heads, the union, etc.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to table the vehicle policy so it may be shared with all department heads.

B. Levakis Seconded for discussion

All in Favor

e. Review Revenue Turnover & Tax Enforcement Policies

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to accept the Revenue Turnover & Tax Enforcement Policies as written.

B. Levakis Seconded for discussion

All in Favor

f. Review Tax Recapitulation and Year-End Closing – J. Garcia

The Town Administrator presented the next step in approving financial policies. It will be distributed to the departments and reviewed at the April 8, 2019 BOS meeting.

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PRIOR MEETINGS

None

5. NEW BUSINESS:

a. MIIA - Fiscal Year 2020 Renewal Proposal

J. Garcia presented the renewal proposal from MIIA stating that the town insurance rates have gone down 2.6% and an additional 3% if we pay it by August. E. McVey made note that we can thank Joshua for this as he was the one that studied our vehicle inventory and got rid of the vehicles that should not have been on the insurance list.

b. The Town Clerk presented an up-date to the BOS

The Board and the town clerk discussed: The town elections and status of who is running; the need for a new embosser for the town seal; the update on the disposition of licensing dogs going forward; the status of use of the official Town Seal.

6. OTHER BUSINESS, IF ANY:

a. Performance Review Town Administrator, Joshua Garcia

C. Letendre opened the discussion about presenting the performance appraisal of the Interim Town Administrator that the BOS completed in executive session and reviewed with Joshua in executive session. The BOS presented the details of the categories to the public and in summary 2 areas of review where noted as 'meets expectation'. And in the balance of 8 other categories were notes as 'exceeds expectations'. Joshua Garcia was given a list of goals going forward. E. McVey reported due to the result of the evaluation, the BOS decided to drop the term 'interim' from the title therefore making Joshua the Town Administrator.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:17 pm

7. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pursuant to MGL C30A, S21. To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining.

None

*NOTE: Audience participation / public comment is welcome only when acknowledged by the Chair and is limited to two minutes. Participation / public comment is limited to Blandford residents and can only comment on agenda items.

**NOTE: Agenda may include items not reasonably expected 48 hours before the meeting. At any point, this meeting may go into executive section if the Board of Selectmen find it warranted.

Submitted by: Joann Martin
Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen

Cara Letendre, Chairman

Eric McVey, Clerk

William Levakis, Member