



TOWN OF BLANDFORD  
SELECTBOARD

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

**MEETING MINUTES  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
February 10, 2020**

**1. Open Session at 7:00 pm                      Meeting is recorded                      Meeting held at Town Hall**

**C. Letendre, Chairman; ~~E. MeVey, Clerk~~ Absent; T. Ackley, Member; J. Garcia, Town Administrator**

C. Letendre opened the meeting at 7:00 pm and announced the Public Hearing and requested all attendees add their name to the sign in sheet. She also asked the audience to note the Audience Participation sign in sheet if needed.

**2. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:**

***a. Examination of the Meeting Minutes of January 6, 2020***

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of January 6, 2020 as written.

**T. Ackley Seconded**

**All in Favor**

***b. Examination of the Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2020***

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of January 27, 2020 as written.

**T. Ackley Seconded**

**All in Favor**

***c. Examination of the Meeting Minutes of February 3, 2020***

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of February 3, 2020 as written.

**T. Ackley Seconded**

**All in Favor**

**3. \*AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION/PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Kurt Hanson of 140 Otis Stage Road re; seeking advice and direction of the sale of his property

**4. ACTION ITEMS:**

***a. Public Hearing – FY2020 Blandford Community Development Fund application.***

**In attendance:** Sonja Hutchins; Michael Hutchins; Paul Bilodeau; Don Bertram; Keith Robbins; Debi Robbins; Geoff Smith; Kurt Hansen; Chris Dunphy, PCPC

Christopher Dunphy, Principal Planner with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission joined the Board of Selectmen to talk to town residents about the development and administration of the Community Development Block Grant which is a federally funded through Congress to develop this block grant. The key grants resource will be sought to accomplish the following:

**-Housing Rehabilitation:** Financial Assistance will be made available to eligible homeowners for the rehabilitation of approximately 12 or more households throughout the town of Blandford. The average unit cost is estimated to be \$25,000; however, up to \$40,000 will be made available for housing units with special considerations (example – lead paint) and up to \$35,000 for all other units.

**-Blandford ADA Transition Plan:** This project will result in the hiring of a qualified consultant to prepare an ADA Self Evaluation and Transition Plan for the Town. The major components of the ADA planning project include the following: Self-evaluation process; facility site assessment of all town-owned properties to identify obstacles that limit accessibility to your home by granting this 15-year deferred payment loan so no payments will be made for 15 years. The letter of interest should be filled out and returned by March 6, 2020 and will be made available at the Town Hall.

**-Administrative Support and Services:** PVPC will provide administrative support, planning, advertising, training, printing, accounting, payments, etc.

Ackley noted that he worked on this program at one time and he stated that this is a fantastic program and he would encourage residents to reach out.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to authorize PVPC to prepare and submit on behalf of the town of Blandford the proposed FY20 Community Development Fund grant application to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development. The application will be approximately \$457,000 and not to exceed \$800,000 as detailed in the public hearing. Projects are to include a housing rehabilitation program and on Americans with Disabilities Transition Plan. Authorization for the Chairman of the Selectboard to sign all required forms, documents and authorizations pertaining to the proposed FY20 Blandford Community Development Fund grant application.**

**T. Ackley Seconded**

**All in Favor**

***b. Review and take action on letter of interest from Sonja Hutchins seeking to be appointed as an alternate member of the Zoning Board of Appeals***

Sonja Hutchins presented a letter of interest to the Board to fill the position of Alternate on the Zoning Board of appeals.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to accept Sonja Hutchins as alternate member on the Zoning Board of Appeals for the term of 3 years**

**T. Ackley Seconded**

**All in Favor**

***c. Review and take action on Indefeasible Right of Use (IRU) Agreement for Fiber Network Services between Town of Blandford and Town of Otis***

Garcia presented the Fiber network Services agreement that has already been sign by the Town of Otis and has been approved by Blandford Town Counsel. Peter Langmore reported on this program stating that construction will begin ‘soon’ on the Otis hut.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the IRU Agreement for Fiber Network Services between the Town of Blandford and the Town of Otis.**

**T. Ackley Seconded**

**All in Favor**

*d. Review and take action on contract between Town of Blandford and Northern Tree Services for post ice storm debris cleanup.*

Garcia reported that this contract has been approved by town counsel and appropriation was supported at Special Town Meeting on February 3, 2020.

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve the contract between the Town of Blandford and Northern Tree Service for post ice storm debris cleanup.

T. Ackley Seconded  
All in Favor

*e. Review and take action on the Annual Report to the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC) for Calendar Year 2019.*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Annual Report from the ABCC for 2019.

T. Ackley Seconded  
All in Favor

*f. Review and take action on letter to the MA Municipal Association's (MMA) Executive Director requesting that the MMA push the legislatures to support Bond Bill H4154 relative to raising library construction bond annual cap and authorizing additional bond for funding for new grant round.*

This bond is for rehabilitation construction work and the MMA's Executive Director's advocacy support in pushing legislature's in raising the cap on this bond bill.

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve the letter to the MA Municipal Association's Executive Director requesting that the MMA support Bond Bill H4154 relative to raising library construction bond annual cap and authorizing additional bond for funding for new grant round

T. Ackley Seconded  
All in Favor

*g. Review and take action on letter to the Co-Chairs of the Joint Committee of Economic Development and Emerging Technologies that they support Acts S.205 and H.365 relative to the Rural Policy Advisory Commission*

**MOTION:** T. Ackley made a motion to table this discussion until the February 27, 2020 Board of Selectmen meeting.

C. Letendre Seconded  
All in Favor

**5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PRIOR MEETINGS:**

*a. Municipal Light Board Update – Broadband: Peter Langmore*

Peter Langmore joined the Board to give an update on the Broadband progress:

1. Fiber Hut between Blandford and Otis has been completed
2. Signed the agreement with Westfield Gas & Electric for them to be the Town's internet service provider and network operator.
3. Signed a contract with the company that is going to do the fiber installation and they should be starting in the next couple of weeks.
4. Construction, stringing of the fiber, should start in late April in all the streets in Blandford by section.
5. Once the construction phase is done, another company will take care of bringing fiber directly to the homes.

6. Westfield Gas & Electric will have a question and answer session in Blandford for resident approximately May 2020.
7. The Municipal Light Board is working with the Blandford Finance Committee to determine the monthly cost
8. Hope to be operational in mid to late fall.

***b. Review and discuss Relay Power Agreement for the Town Hall to participate on local community solar program***

Account representative did not show up.

***c. Review and Approve Photovoltaic Solar PILOT Agreement with DG MA Solar, LLC: On-Going***

Garcia updated the board of the details of the DG MA Solar project, George Millard Road, is nearing their mechanical completion date. The income for the Town will be \$65,375 for the first year and an increase of 1% per year going forward. The first payment is expected August 1, 2020

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Photovoltaic Solar PILOT Agreement with DG MA Solar, LLC for discussion  
T. Ackley Seconded**

***d. Syncarpha Proposed Amendment; Chester Road***

Garcia reported that the original agreement was executed in February. It was suggested by Syncarpha, and agreed upon by Town Counsel, to amend the contract for executive for July 1 so it follows the fiscal year.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the amendment to the agreement for payment in lieu of taxes with Syncarpha as written.  
T. Ackley Seconded  
All in Favor**

**6. NEW BUSINESS:**

***a. Review Updated All-Department Expense Report***

The Board reviewed the current All-Department Expense Report. Letendre noted that she saw nothing of concern.

***b. 2019 Audit***

Garcia reported that the 2019 Audit will begin the week of March 30, 2020.

***c. Town Clerk – Annual Reports due February 21, 2020***

The Board of Selectmen was reminded that the Board of Selectmen Annual Report is due to the Town Clerk 2-21-20.

***d. King's Information System***

Garcia reported that King's Information Systems has completed their centralized record keeping. There is a dedicated room in the Town Hall which has a master list of all records held in the Town Clerk's office as well as an electronic data base to aid in searching for public documents.

***e. Town Clerk – Early voting***

The Town Clerk will be holding early voting on February 24 from 5-7 pm.

***f. Hilltown Collaborative Market***

Garcia presented a flyer from the Hilltown Mobile Market out of Northampton runs a Healthy Hampshire program including a mobile farmer’s market and they are trying to expand to Blandford. It’s a mobile market that brings food and vegetables from local farms to Town for purchase. There will be a community forum at the town Hall on March 18 at 5:30 pm. Representatives of this program will be present to have that dialog with the community. The Board is on board with this program. Letendre recommended we use Bicentennial Park for this event.

***6g. Hilltown Collaborative meeting is scheduled for March 24 from 6-7:30 pm at Carm’s Restaurant in Chester, MA.***

**7. TABLED ITEMS:**

*a. Reorganize Board of Selectmen*

*c. Review updated draft policies for personnel handbook – General Administration*

*d. Review draft policies for personnel handbook – Preamble; General Provision; Recruiting; Hiring*

*e. Review draft policies for personal handbook – Standards of Conduct*

*f. Ongoing review of Building Commissioner’s fee schedule*

**8. MEETING ADJOURNED:**

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to go into executive session pursuant to MGL C30A, §(a)(1) to discuss strategy with respect to collective litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government’s bargaining or litigating position not to reconvene.

**Roll Call in:** C. Letendre – Yes    T. Ackley – Yes    E. McVey - Absent

**9.\*EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

*Pursuant to MGL C30A, §21(a)(1) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government’s bargaining or litigating position.*

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

\*\*NOTE: Agenda may include items not reasonably expected 48 hours before the meeting. At any point this meeting may go into executive section if Selectboard finds it warranted.

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

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Cara Letendre, Chairman

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Absent  
Eric McVey, Clerk

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Thomas Akley, Member