



TOWN OF BLANDFORD  
SELECT BOARD

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

**MEETING MINUTES  
BLANDFORD SELECT BOARD  
November 30, 2020**

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L.C. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Blandford Select Board will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Members of the public who wish to listen to the meeting may do so by visiting either of the following options:

- **Zoom Video Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87116077710>
- **Meeting ID:** 871 1607 7710
- **Phone Dial In:** 1-929-205-6099, dial in meeting ID when prompted

No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted unless you are on the agenda ahead of time, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the Town of Blandford website a transcript or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

If you have any comment regarding items that are on the agenda, please forward to Joann Martin, Administrative Assistant, at [Selectboardadmin@townofblandford.com](mailto:Selectboardadmin@townofblandford.com) or 413-848-4279 x206.

**1. Open Session at 6:00 pm                      Meeting is recorded                      Meeting held virtually/Zoom**

**In attendance:** C. Letendre, Chairman; E. McVey (virtually), Member 6-7:00 pm; T. Ackley, Member

**2. EXAMINATION OF THE MEETING MINUTES:**

*a. Examination of the Meeting Minutes of November 16, 2020*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of November 16, 2020 as written  
T. Ackley Seconded  
E. McVey Abstained  
All in Favor

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

None

**4. ACTION ITEMS:**

*a. Receive final Pavement Management report and presentation from PVPC.*

Amir Kouzehkanani of Pioneer Valley Planning Commission joined the Board to present his overview of the Pavement Management report he drafted for the Town of Blandford. Amir reported on the existing pavement

conditions in Blandford. PVPC surveyed 34 miles of paved roads in the town and is pleased to inform the Board that the average overall condition of the roads in Blandford is 80 out of 100 which is 'extremely good news'. Working with other small communities, he reported he is pleased that Blandford has a Highway Department that keeps its roads in serviceable condition reporting that 38% of the roads are in good condition and 33% are in excellent condition which means over 70% of paved roads in Blandford are rated either as excellent or good which he reiterates is very impressive. Amir also presented a proposed budget plan going forward in order to keep our roads in good to excellent condition. Amir talked about a back-log of repairs that exists in all communities. The back-log of repairs for Blandford is just under five million dollars which is one of the lowest he has seen. The Board talked about the plan and budget process which will work as a tool to measure what is expected to happen in the next few years. Letendre and the Highway Superintendent talked about the repair of North Blandford Road and how the grant we submitted was denied. It was pointed out that this pavement management document will be of great value when re-applying for the grant in the spring for the repair of this road. This report will be posted on the Town of Blandford website.

***b. Review and take action on setting FY22 Local Receipt Budget***

Garcia distributed to the Board a list of local receipts which included estimates of what we anticipated the Town would raise in FY20/21 as well as what was actually collected by the Town. Sara Hunter, Town of Blandford Treasurer/Tax Collector, joined the Select Board for this discussion. It is recommended by Finance and the Department of Revenue that we revise our estimates to reflect closer to what we are actually collecting. Garcia noted the disparities in collections for meals tax due to COVID-19. The estimated receipts for the Town of Blandford was set at \$552,700 and the actual amount collected was \$794,439.

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

***a. COVID-19 Update***

Jennifer Girard, Board of Health, joined the Select Board to discuss COVID-19. We are having a spike at this time with 3 new cases. She reported that if we get any more cases, we will be back in the 'red'. She assured the Board that when she receives reports of COVID, she does not share names or addresses with the public. She only shares this information with the Blandford Fire Chief and the Blandford Police Chief. Girard receives her COVID information from MAVEN (through MA.gov) which tracks Infectious Diseases in Massachusetts. She is working with this organization as she is finding that cases being reported to her department are frequently late in arriving so it may not reflect what is actually happening in Blandford.

***b. Update – Logging Activities on Huntington Road – Senecal***

Senecal talked again about developing and mandating a check-list for any logging that is done in Town which should include requiring a transportation route for these logging trucks and having a mandatory and adequate bond required to protect the Town from damage of our roads. Senecal reported that he has spoken to the company logging on Huntington Road and has requested that they refrain from using our roads until they contact Senecal and work out the details.

***c. Library Gutter Replacement quotes – Kronholm***

Two quotes have been received so far. Kronholm is still waiting for one company to send in their bid. She will present this information at the December 14, 2020 meeting if available.

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

***a. All Department Expense Report***

Rene reported to the Board the Highway Department is ready for winter. They spent a lot of time upgrading equipment, sanders and plows. Rene reported he has spent 74.43% (\$11,165.86 of Plow Blades/Nuts/Bolts

Winter) account line item for snow and ice. There is a remaining balance of \$3,834.14. Rene explained to the Board there is one more job he needs done to be prepared and it's getting the Old-550 plow truck ready. The plow situation on the Old-550 is a 'make-shift' situation between two manufactures. Since what's done is not designed for the framing of the truck, Rene explained we would have to refurbish which can cost \$4,600 to \$4,800. He also mentioned that instead of refurbishing a make-shift situation, we can pay \$5,240 for a complete unit and replace it the right way. Rene explained we have two options: 1) with only \$3,834 left in the account, we can deficit spend \$1,413 as allowed for snow and ice or 2) he can spend what's left and supplement the remaining balance from one of his other budgeted highway account line items. The only concern Senecal shared about that option is that we would have to keep an eye on the budget as we get to year-end so we don't over-spend depending on the need between now and the end of the fiscal year as budgeted for. Rene suggested we go with option 1 since it's allowed and will give us flexibility with the other accounts and can balance later at year-end. It was reported that this was already discussed with the finance committee who had voted in support of the deficit spending strategy.

**MOTION: T. Ackley made a motion to allow the Highway Department to run in a deficit in the Highway Plow Blades/Nut/Bolts Winter account in order to purchase the new snow plow unit.  
C. Letendre Seconded  
All in Favor**

***b. Summary of Resilient Master Plan Meeting of 11-24-20***

Mary Kronholm reported to the Board that the first of many Master Plan Meetings was held on 11/24/20 via Zoom with Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Catherine Ratte and Kenneth Comia which included a summary of what the purpose is of this Resilient Master Plan for the Town, the appointment of a Chairman, Mary Kronholm and an Assistant Chairman, Joann Martin, introduction of meeting participants and a summary of future meetings. The next meeting will be held via Zoom on December 17 at 3:00 pm. The committee received a Survey to be filled out to use as a tool at future meetings to determine what direction the town residents want to move. Garcia added that the committee is working on a website available to all that will be the landing platform for information sharing of the master planning process and any documents related to the process.

***c. Maple Lane – Plowing and Salting Winter 2020-2021***

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to plow and salt Maple Lane this winter as we have done in the past.  
T. Ackley Seconded  
All in Favor**

***d. Belle Fleur Turkey Give-Away***

Letendre noted that many residents were very happy to receive a free turkey from this company. Garcia drafted a thank you letter to Belle Fleur for their generosity.

**7. OTHER BUSINESS, IF ANY**

**8. TABLED ITEMS:**

***a. Discuss creating a committee to research and provide recommendations for stipends for elected and appointed Town Boards, Commissions and Committees that exist per Town Bylaws.***

**9.\*\*MEETING ADJOURNED:**

Meeting adjourned at 7:46 pm

**10.\*EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

\*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 Select Board  
and Town Administrator

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Cara Letendre, Chairman

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Eric McVey, Clerk

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Thomas Ackley, Member