



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
SELECT BOARD

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

**MEETING MINUTES
BLANDFORD SELECT BOARD
December 14, 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 or 413-848-4279 x206.

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

In attendance: C. Letendre, Chairman Absent; E. McVey, Member; T. Ackley, Member

2. EXAMINATION OF THE MEETING MINUTES:

a. Examination of the Meeting Minutes of November 30, 2020

MOTION: T. Ackley made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of November 30, 2020 as written
E. McVey Seconded
All in Favor
C. Letendre is not present

3. *AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION/PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

4. ACTION ITEMS:

**MOTION: E. McVey made a motion to recess to enter following the following Public Hearing
T. Ackley Seconded
All in Favor**

a. Public Hearing: Establish the percentage tax share of taxes to be paid by residential and non-residential property owners for Fiscal Year 2021 pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 797 of the Acts of 1979 as amended.

Jeff Reynolds of Regional Resource Group and Steven Jemiolo, Blandford Town Assessor, joined the Select Board for the purpose of reporting the percentage of the Town's property tax levy to be borne by each major property class according to MA General laws. This information can be found on the Department of Revenue's gateway. Reynolds stated it looks like the tax rate will remain even at \$17.76 per thousand for FY21/22. This could change slightly depending on the Department of Revenue review. The Board of Assessors recommends that the Select Board adopt a residential shift factor of 1.0000 with a corresponding commercial/industrial and personal property factor of 1.0000 which basically means no shift.

McVey asked about the current solar projects in Blandford. Reynolds reported 2 of the 4 solar projects ongoing in town are now operational; 2 are still under construction but these tax rate and growth numbers do not include those numbers. The plan is as soon as the tax rate is approved and tax bills go out, PILOTS will be sent to the 2 that are currently running so next years' growth should be significant in helping the tax rate for next year.

MOTION: E. McVey made a motion to recommend that the Select Board adopt a residential shift factor of 1.0000 with a corresponding CIP factor of 1.000, thereby maintaining the relative shares of overall tax burden borne by the residential property owners in past years.

**T. Ackley Seconded
All in Favor**

MOTION: T. Ackley made a motion to close the Public Hearing.

**E. McVey Seconded
All in Favor**

b. Review and take action on appointing candidate Nate Maynard to the Conservation Commission

Nate Maynard is a new town resident. He has contacted the Board with an interest in joining the Conservation Commission to expire June 30, 2023. Mary Kronholm, Assistant Town Clerk swore him in.

MOTION: T. Ackley made a motion to appoint Nate Maynard to the Conservation Commission.

**E. McVey Seconded
All in Favor**

c. Review and take action on 2021 Alcohol Beverage Retail License Renewals

Garcia presented the 2021 renewal applications from the Blandford Country Club and The Blandford Country Store and a form completed by Garcia acknowledging Ski Blandford as 'failed to renew' since they did not submit a renewal application. Garcia reported to the Board that both the Country Club and the Country Store have included with their applications proof of liability insurance as well as a certification of compliance from the Fire Department. Garcia also included in the packet to the Select Board a memo from the Treasurer/Collector's Office reflecting an update on tax status with the Town.

**MOTION: E. McVey made a motion to renew the Blandford Country Club Liquor License
T. Ackley Seconded
All in Favor**

**MOTION: T. Ackley made a motion to renew The Blandford Country Store Liquor License
E. McVey Seconded
All in Favor**

d. Review and take action on letter requesting that Beagle Club Road, a private road in Town, to be plowed and sanded during the 2020/2021 winter season

**MOTION: T. Ackley made a motion to direct the Highway Department to plow Beagle Club Road for the 2020/2021 winter season.
E. McVey Seconded
All in Favor**

e. Review and take action on contract with Pioneer Valley Planning Commission for Professional Town Planning Services through their Planning Board Assistance Program

Garcia reported that the Planning Board reached out for assistance with the many solar and marijuana projects that are currently in process. This contract has been vetted by Town counsel.

**MOTION: E. McVey made a motion to approve the contract with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission for Professional Town Planning Services through their Planning Board Assistance program.
T. Ackley Seconded
All in Favor**

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PRIOR MEETINGS:

a. COVID-19 Update

Jennifer Girard presented a written update on COVID-19. The State is currently going back to Step 1, Phase III. Girard reported that Blandford is currently in the 'red' at this time. Ackley spoke with the Fire Chief in Blandford regarding vaccinations for our town volunteer firefighters. This will be taken care of by the State of MA. The plan is to do half of the crew and the other half at a later date in case there are any reactions so that the whole crew will not be tied up.

b. Update – Logging Activities on Huntington Road – Senecal

Garcia reported that this situation has been resolved to the satisfaction of the Highway Superintendent.

c. Library Gutter Replacement Quotes - Kronholm

Mary Kronholm presented 3 quotes to the Board. She reported that the Library prefers to install copper gutters to maintain the integrity of this historic building. The Board reviewed the 3 quotes. The Library Trustees recommend Tech Roofing Service.

MOTION: E. McVey made a motion to award the gutter work at the Porter Memorial Library to Tech Roofing Service for the cost of \$5,880 and advice the company to take out a Building Permit with the Town, as it is a government building, prior to beginning the work.

T. Ackley Seconded
All in Favor

MOTION: T. Ackley made a motion to send a letter of appreciation to Nicole Daviau, Porter Memorial Library Director for the hard work she dedicated to finding grants for the Library.

E. McVey Seconded
All in Favor

6. NEW BUSINESS:

a. All Department Expense Report

The Board reviewed the current all-department expense report and found no issues.

b. Pudding Hill Farm, LLC; Introduction

The key individuals from Pudding Hill Farm, LLC and their attorney joined the Board to introduce themselves. Their goal is to grow small-batch cannabis. This will be a very small operation which will be completely contained and secured and in full compliance with all state cannabis laws. Ackley asked if there would be any odor. The Board was told that this building will include a molecular filtration system with carbon filters with no exchange of air which is state of the art and will eliminate all odors. Garcia shared with the Board that their visit tonight with us is introductory and part of their quest to secure a Host Community Agreement as they proceed with their application process through the Commonwealth which requires a Host Community Agreement. Garcia said he has a draft from Town Counsel ready to share with Pudding Hill Farms under the direction of the Board.

MOTION: E. McVey made a motion to allow the Town Administrator to proceed forward with sending along a draft Host Community Agreement to Pudding Hill Farm, LLC to begin negotiating terms.

T. Ackley Seconded
All in Favor

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 7:12 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

Absent

Cara Letendre, Chairman

Eric McVey, Clerk

Thomas Ackley, Member