



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
SELECT BOARD

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

JOINT MEETING MINUTES
with BLANDFORD SELECT BOARD and
FINANCE COMMITTEE
December 28, 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 6:04 pm Meeting is recorded Meeting held virtually/Zoom

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

2. EXAMINATION OF THE MEETING MINUTES:

a. Examination of the Meeting Minutes of December 14, 2020

MOTION: T. Ackley made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of December 14, 2020 as written
E. McVey Seconded
All in Favor
C. Letendre Abstained

3. *AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION/PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

4. ACTION ITEMS:

a. Take action on proclamation for Reeghan Morawiec of her service as the Project 351 Ambassador to the Town of Blandford

Reeghan Morawiec of Chester Road joined the Board to be awarded a Proclamation of appreciation from the Select Board for her volunteer service to the Town by collecting 850 pounds of non-perishable items to be donated to the Huntington Food Shelter and to be shared with area town residents.

b. Review and take action on contract with Tech Roofing Service, Inc. for gutter replacement at Porter Memorial Library

Library Trustee, Mary Kronholm had previously presented 3 quotes for gutter replacement on the Porter Memorial Library in which the Board decided to proceed forward with the quote from Tech Roofing Service, Inc. A contract between the Town and Tech Roofing was presented for review and was vetted by Town Counsel. The contract amount was for \$5,880. Garcia reported that the work will not be done until March 2021.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the contract with Tech Roofing Service for gutter replacement at Porter Memorial Library.

E. McVey Seconded

All in Favor

c. Review and take action on quotes submitted for carpet replacement at the fire office side of the old town hall building.

Fire Chief Mottor explained the need for the replacement of the carpet in the Fire Department Office at the old town hall building reporting that it has holes, it is lifting up, it is the lowest grade contract-quality carpet and is laid on an old backing that does not avoid moisture, therefore it is all peeling up. The decision to replace this carpet with carpet tiles is so the tiles can be replaced individually in case of damage instead of the entire carpet. Garcia reported this will be taken out of Capital Funds. McVey noted that this is a building that the Town owns and must maintain. Garcia will draft a contract and present it to the Select Board for approval at the next meeting on January 11, 2021.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the quote from Carpet Warehouse, not to exceed \$7,000, for carpet replacement of the Fire Department office side of the old town hall building.

E. McVey Seconded

All in Favor

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PRIOR MEETINGS:

a. COVID-19 Update

Girard joined the Board and presented the latest COVID update which was read by Letendre.

-Out of the red for 3 weeks

-It is reported that the State program which Girard receives her information from is frequently not current which is a real problem for towns.

-The original December 31 deadline for flu vaccines for students has been pushed to February 28, 2021.

-There is conflicting information about the COVID vaccine. It is certain the vaccine will be dispensed in phases. First responders in larger populated areas will receive the vaccination first and smaller communities will receive in the second phase. The general public will be in the third phase. Fire Chief Mottor reported that the requirements for the first phase require groups of 200+ first responders which clearly will eliminate most of Western Massachusetts. He reported that Agawam has offered to host a clinic for surrounding small town in order to meet these requirements.

-The COVID relief program is still assisting residents that need food assistance. Garcia will make sure it is posted on our website, townofblandford.com, if you need food assistance.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to move to 6d. Discuss budget strategy to help meet Board of Health needs as it relates with the use of revolving account/s, jointly with Finance Committee.
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. Review and receive Bridge Inspection Reports from Mass DOT

The Board received a report from the MA Department of Transportation reporting on their inspection of the bridges on Blair Road, Hiram Blair Road and North Blandford Road. Garcia reported that there is nothing the town needs to act on at this time. The report notes that all bridges in Blandford pass inspection with minor problems and repairs identified at some of the bridges that we can incorporate in our capital planning efforts going forward.

c. Budget Planning Parameter Overview – Town Administrator

Garcia presented his preliminary budget strategy for Fiscal Year 21/22. Lombardo and Smelcer, Finance Committee Chairman and member, joined the Board to discuss the details of the new fiscal year budget. The Finance Committee will begin scheduling appointments with the individual departments. There was a discussion about the overgrown shrubs in Veteran’s Park. It was decided that this area should be cleaned up.

**MOTION: E. McVey made a motion to remove the overgrown shrubs at Veteran’s Park
C. Letendre Seconded
All in Favor**

d. Discuss budget strategy to help meet Board of Health needs as it relates with the use of revolving account/s, jointly with Finance Committee

The Board of Health is currently working with 2 revolving accounts: Bags Revolving Account and Perc Test Revolving Account. The BOH is asking that the two accounts be renamed to more accurately reflect the use of these accounts. The Boards discussed the need and proper use of Revolving Accounts. Garcia advised the Board that these changes need to be brought to Special Town Meeting in February for approval of these changes. Girard and Hartley explained to the Board that the Transfer Station’s number of decals purchased and required pick-ups from Waste Management cannot be budgeted easily because the more recyclables and trash brought in, the more pick-ups they need from Waste Management. After much discussion, it was determined that the Board of Health and Transfer Station need these accounts to remain as revolving accounts. Letendre summarized that the Bags Revolving Account will be renamed as Demo Revolving and the Perc Test Revolving will be renamed as Board of Health Inspections Revolving.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to move to 4a. Take action on proclamation for Reeghan Morawiec for her service as the Project 351 Ambassador to the Town of Blandford.
E. McVey Seconded
All in Favor**

e. Preliminary overview of capital projects/requests – jointly with finance Committee

The Board reviewed the capital request from the Fire Department and the Highway Department. Chief Mottor was present to explain his 5-year forecast of what the Fire Department will need to purchase/replace. Garcia mentioned that we budgeted for capital expenses for FY20/21 \$350,495 and the total expended so far is \$19,304. Garcia reported a list of remaining capital projects that are outstanding for this current fiscal year. The Highway Capital request included a highway over-the-guardrail mower. There was a discussion about the fact the Town shared this vehicle in the past but this option will soon no longer be available. McVey suggested that we look into outsourcing a company to take care of this mowing instead of making such a large capital investment. Garcia will request that the Highway Superintendent look into a lease option as well as an outsourcing option.

f. Discuss warrant plan for Special Town Meeting – jointly with Finance Committee

The Board reviewed the articles drafted for the Special Town Meeting. The date of the meeting is tentatively February 1, 2021. Each article was reviewed and critiqued. Garcia is still working on including other articles and will send any changes to Town Counsel for vetting. The Board will review the updated draft at the January 11, 2021 meeting.

g. George Millard Road – E. McVey

Eric McVey was on George Millard Road, a dirt road, and is hoping that the road can be fixed instead of putting money into the road year after year only for it to wash out. Ackley explained that he has been working on this problem without much success as it is believed that this is being caused by a resident driveway culvert. The Highway Superintendent will be contacted to discuss a possible resolution.

h. Quote for HP Maintenance Contract – J. Martin

J. Martin presented the new quote from Hewlett Packard to renew the maintenance contract on the main HP LaserJet in the main copy room. The quote is for full maintenance for 1 year @ \$599 and 2 years @ \$1,139. McVey questioned the age of the LaserJet. Martin reported that the copier is new 1 year ago as it had to be replaced when it broke down.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the HP LaserJet Maintenance Contract for 2 years in the amount of \$1,139 to be taken out of the Office Supply account.

E. McVey Seconded

All in Favor

i. Chief of Police Candidates – Garcia

Garcia reported that the search for the Blandford/Chester Police Chief has begun and the group is ready to start interviewing. He reported that they have received 11 applications; 5 of which have met the minimum qualifications. The 5 applicants were invited in to submit response to scenario questions, which narrowed the field down to 4 of which are being scheduled for preliminary interviews. The final interviews will be conducted with the Chester and Blandford Board of Selectmen at a joint meeting.

j. Congratulations to Blandford Volunteer Firefighter, Jacklyn O'Brien

The Board congratulated Jacklyn O'Brien for completing the Firefighters EMT course to become Volunteer Firefighter I/II and entry-level hazmat technician for the Town of Blandford. Ackley reported that her next plan is to return to school to become a paramedic.

7. OTHER BUSINESS, IF ANY

None

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 8:09 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