



TOWN OF BLANDFORD  
SELECT BOARD

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

**MEETING MINUTES  
BLANDFORD SELECT BOARD  
March 08, 2021  
6:00 pm**

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, Member, absent until 6:30 pm~~; T. Ackley, Member-Absent; J. Garcia, Town Administrator

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

*a. Examination of the Meeting Minutes of March 1, 2021*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to table the Meeting Minutes of March 1, 2021 until the March 15, 2021 Select Board meeting.

T. Ackley Seconded  
All in Favor

*b. Examination of the Meeting Minutes of February 8, 2021*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to table the Meeting Minutes of February 8, 2021 until the March 15, 2021 Select Board meeting when E. McVey is available

T. Ackley Seconded  
All in Favor

Update: Eric McVey joined the meeting in progress at 6:26 pm.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to accept the Meeting Minutes of February 8, 2021 as written  
E. McVey Seconded by necessity (via phone conference)  
T. Ackley Abstained  
All in Favor**

*c. Examination of the Executive Session Meeting Minutes of February 8, 2021*

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to table the Executive Session Meeting Minutes of February 8, 2021 until the March 15, 2021 Select Board meeting when E. McVey is available  
T. Ackley Seconded  
All in Favor**

Update: Eric McVey joined the meeting in progress at 6:26 pm

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to accept the Executive Session Meeting Minutes of February 8, 2021 as written  
E. McVey Seconded by necessity (via phone conference)  
T. Ackley Abstained  
All in Favor**

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

None

**4. ACTION ITEMS:**

*a. Proclamation – Rick Barnard years of Service*

Rick & Linda Barnard joined the Select Board meeting. Letendre read the proclamation presented to Rick Barnard for his years of service and many volunteer positions he has held over the years

*b. Review and Take Action on Contract between the Town and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission for technical assistance with Main Street area Historical inventory work*

It was explained that this contract is to start the process of inventory work of approximately 120 properties in Blandford which will include North Street and the Fairgrounds.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the contract between the town and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission for technical assistance with Main Street area Historical inventory work  
T. Ackley Seconded  
All in Favor**

*c. Review and Take Action on Contract between the Town and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission for technical assistance with Shepard Farm area Historical Inventory work*

Garcia explained the focus will be on the Shepard's Farm area and this is in the Historical budget. The process hiring a consultant to assist the Historical Commission to determine existing documentation location, perform survey work, prepare national register criteria statement, and finalize the form based on the comments from the Blandford Historical Commission.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to accept the contract between the Town and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission for technical assistance with Shepard's Farm area Historical Inventory work  
T. Ackley Seconded  
All in Favor**

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to move to Unfinished Business b. Discuss Shepard's Farm  
T. Ackley Seconded  
All in Favor**

*d. Review and Receive Communication from KP Law Regarding rate increase for FY22*

Garcia explained that this notice presented was sent to the Select Board regarding the rate increase from Blandford's Town Counsel, KP Law. The current rate in FY20/21 is \$190 per hour; FY21/22 will be \$200 per hour and this will be reflected in the budget.

*e. Review and Take Action on Position profile/job description for the Highway Superintendent position*

Garcia presented the job description drafted for the search for the new Blandford Highway Superintendent which was drafted with the assistance of the current Highway Superintendent, the Blandford Fire Chief, and others. Garcia explained that his mission was to put as much information about the Town budgets, road conditions, etc. so a potential Highway Superintendent can have a better look at what the Town has to offer and to ensure the applicant knows the Town will be working and cooperating closely and supporting this position. Hopefully, this will attract strong candidates. Letendre commented this job description looks very professional. Ackley commended on the driver's license requirements and made some suggestions. Garcia will investigate this and move forward with posting.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the position profile/job description for the Highway Superintendent position with a possible amendment.  
T. Ackley Seconded  
All in Favor**

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

*a. COVID-19 Update*

The COVID-19 Update has been tabled.

*b. Discuss Shepard's Farm*

Mick Brennan joined the Select Board to continue the conversation about Shepard's Farm. Garcia explained the need to get all the options for this property on the table so the Board is better equipped to make an informed decision. Shannon at PVPC is drafting some thoughts for submitting the document 'An Expression of Interest' for the grant for the Board's review. We will revisit this topic next week.

*c. Baystate Health – Better Together Grant*

This is the agreement between the Town and Baystate Health for \$25,000 that will help cover the costs to get a coordinator to work with the elderly in town to assess what their digital barriers are and help them navigate through those barriers including affordability, so we make sure all seniors in town access high speed internet.

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve the contract between the Town and Baystate Health in the amount of \$25,000 contingent on approval from Town Counsel  
T. Ackley Seconded  
All in Favor

*d. Host Community Agreement – Pudding Hill Farm, LLC*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Host Community Agreement with Pudding Hill Farm, LLC  
T. Ackley Seconded  
All in Favor

**6. NEW BUSINESS:**

*a. Review All Department Expense Report*

The Board reviewed the All-Department Expense Report and found no problems

*b. Request Information Pursuant to Section 308 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C.S 1318), Docket No. CWA-308-R01-FR21-49*

Water Superintendent, Gordon Avery explained this is a notice from the Clean Water Act which was a communication problem with the DEP on how to send these reports and this has been cleared up

*c. Grant Awarded for Residents 65+ to pay for the \$99 Broadband Hook-Up*

Garcia reported that the Town received a grant for \$17,200 from Massachusetts Council on Aging association specifically to cover the one-time \$99 connection fee for residents over 65. McVey asked how we will get this information out to residents. Garcia mentioned we will be hiring, as part of the grant, a coordinator that will communicate with the individual households to determine what their digital barriers are.

*d. Firearms Trade-In – Chief Weidhaas*

**MOTION:** T. Ackley made a motion to allow the Chief Weidhaas to discard firearms that have been turned into the Blandford Police Department  
C. Letendre Seconded  
All in Favor

**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*

*b. Review and Take Action on Temporary COVID-19 Leave Policy*

Meeting adjourned at 6:56 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

---

Cara Letendre, Chairman

---

Eric McVey, Clerk

---

Thomas Ackley, Member