



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**

January 31, 2022

6:00 pm

Topic: BOS Meeting 1/24/2022

Time: Jan 24, 2022 05:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84852916596?pwd=TkZKMkFwcWNsOHBJZ0lucENBR1hYZz09>

Meeting ID: 848 5291 6596

Passcode: 401105

One tap mobile

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.

OPEN SESSION 5:01 pm

Meeting held in the Select Board Chamber, Town Hall

In attendance: C. Letendre, Chairman; T. Ackley, Member; T. Cousineau, Member; C. Mitchell, Interim Town Administrator; J. Lombardo, Finance Committee-Absent; C. Smelcer, Finance Committee-Absent; Debbie Brodie, Finance Committee.

1. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

a. Examination of the Meeting Minutes of January 24, 2022

MOTION: T. Ackley made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of January 24, 2022 as written

C. Letendre Seconded

All in Favor

b. Examination of the Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2022

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2022 as written

T. Ackley Seconded

All in Favor

c. Examination of the Executive Session Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2022

Tabled until the February 07, 2022 Select Board Meeting.

2. ***AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION / PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None

3. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

a. Highway Update – Waldron

Dave Waldron, Highway Superintendent, met with the Board to report the Highway Department's weekly activity:

-Resident Culvert N. Blandford Rd.: Waldron spoke to this resident. The resident explained that he is on a tight budget. Waldron advised that he speak to the Select Board. There was a conversation about grants for these types of situations. Waldron gave the resident a completion date of May 1, 2022.

-Resident Snow Plowing: Waldron reported several calls from residents complaining that other residents in town are pushing the snow from their driveway onto other people's property. It is a state law, Ch 85 Section 7b, which states it is illegal to do that. Letendre suggested this be advertised in the Country Journal as well as posted on the Town of Blandford website.

-COVID Pay Relief: Highway has two employees who are eligible for COVID pay. Waldron has filled out the paperwork, sent it to the Town Treasurer, Sara Hunter, and she will present it to Town Counsel.

-Sperry Road: The property at the end of Sperry Road was sold. The current owner will not be logging this property. This resident will use this property for livestock.

-Springfield Water: Waldron had a conversation with Springfield Water regarding the beaver trapping on Blair Road. Their criteria for the trapper have changed. Letendre asked if Springfield Water expects us to pay for this as it is their property? Waldron's answer was yes. Letendre would like to have Blandford's Town Counsel look at these changes. Waldron would like to have a joint meeting with Springfield Water and their counsel and Blandford and their counsel. Waldron is afraid these beaver dams which are getting higher and higher will break through and flood our roads and there is nothing Blandford can do about it. Letendre wants the Board, Blandford's Town Counsel, and the Highway Department to meet to discuss these changes.

-OPM Meeting February 10, 2022: Waldron, Ackley and Chief Mottor will be attending to negotiate fee prices. They will also discuss the redesigned intersection.

-Culvert Replacement Municipality Assistance Grant: Waldron is working on this grant. He has submitted 2 culverts that need to be done and the grant is up to \$400,000.

-Grader: Ackley inquired about the position of the Town grader. Waldron said he thinks it will hold up for now, but it should be put on a capital plan for future purchase.

4. **ACTION ITEMS**

a. COVID19 Update

Letender reported that the numbers are up slightly so the Town Hall will remain closed to the public for one more week. Ackley asked to extend this until the end of February, 2022.

b. Approve Warrant #16 for Processing

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve Warrant #16 for payment

T. Ackley Seconded

All in Favor

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

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. Berkshire Ambulance Increased Fees – Mottor

Chief Mottor met with the Select Board to discuss the meeting he attended with Berkshire Ambulance regarding their operations. They are having issues with lack of employee attendance. The current contract dictates that 66% of the time, there will be a paramedic available. This is not happening at this time. They are proposing a 37% increase to the six hill towns they serve. Option A: Raise the yearly fee from \$29,984/year to \$40,954/year. Option B: They amend the contracts with all these communities to remove the paramedic service and run basic life support which would be EMTs. What this means is that any person with a heart attack or serious car accident when a paramedic is needed, would need to do an intercept with a larger town and the resident would be responsible for the bill. Chief Motter mentioned that the survival rate with paramedics is 10-fold; something you cannot put a value on. Motter believes this decision between the towns has to be a consensus. Letendre asked if there are any grants for small towns in a situation like this. This will be presented to the Finance Committee at the next Finance meeting. Letendre suggested we have a meeting with the six hill towns involved.

b. Town Administrator's Report – C. Mitchell

-Belle Fleur: There was a request made to the Town Clerk for information on what anticipated costs are to the Town for their host community agreement. The Town Clerk was in contact with the company and were told this is just a filing requirement however, we are not required to respond. Letendre asked that the information be forwarded to the Select Board for review.

-Wellness Grant: A \$5,000 grant was awarded to the Town for healthy snacks for employees, volunteers, and residents. J. Martin will take the responsibility for ordering and distributing.

-Christopher Dunne: He has not accepted the position as yet

-Canna Holdings LLC: Mitchell will invite this company to the Select Board meeting on February 7, 2022 to discuss a host community agreement and will join with their attorneys.

c. All Department Expense Report

The Board reviewed the expense report. Letendre spoke to the Fire Department and J. Martin will look into the COA line item that is higher than it should be.

d. Interim Town Administrator Contract

Letendre noted that Caleb Mitchell's contract is running out February 1, 2022.

MOTION: T. Ackley made a motion to extend Caleb Mitchell's contract as Interim Town Administrator through February 22, 2022

T. Cousineau Seconded

All in Favor

7. TABLED ITEMS:

- a. Request from the Building Commissioner to consider seeking appropriate authorization to amend existing unregistered vehicle bylaw*
- b. Shepard Farm Update*
- c. Police Office Safe*

8. *EXECUTIVE SESSION:

None

Meeting Adjourned at 6:46 pm

Administrative Assistant to the Select Board
and Town Administrator

Cara Letendre, Chairman

Thomas Ackley, Member

Theodore Cousineau, Member