



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
Select Board

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

MEETING MINUTES
BLANDFORD SELECT BOARD
April 25, 2022
6:00 pm

OPEN SESSION 6:00 pm

Meeting held in the Select Board Chamber, Town Hall

In attendance: C. Letendre, Chairman; T. Ackley, Member-Absent; T. Cousineau, Member; C. Dunne, Town Administrator.

OPEN SESSION 6:00 pm

Meeting held in the Select Board Chamber, Town Hall

1. 2. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a. Examination of the Meeting Minutes of March 14, 2022

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of March 14, 2022, as written
T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor

b. Examination of the Meeting Minutes of March 21, 2022

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of March 21, 2022, as written
T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor

c. Examination of the Meeting Minutes of March 28, 2022

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of March 28, 2022, as written
T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor

3. *AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION / PUBLIC COMMENT

None

4. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Municipal Light Board – Langmore

Peter Langmore joined the Select Board to request that his department be notified whenever Eversource asks for a Pole Hearing as it effects the Municipal Light Board as well. Dunne will be sure he is informed.

Highway Department – Waldron

a. Flat Bed Quote from Sarat Ford: Waldron received a quote from Sarat with the condition that this purchase is based on approval of funding. Sarat Ford is agreeing to these terms. The order is in process in the amount of \$99,640 which includes everything.

b. Quotes for North Blandford Road Culvert Pipes: Waldron met with two companies, and he would like to get this work done soon. Cousineau asked Waldron how many culverts need replacing on North Blandford. Waldron said twelve but only seven can be done right now because of Conservation restrictions which have to be followed to avoid run-off problems. Cousineau was concerned that the Town would replace this road only to dig it up to replace the remaining culverts. Waldron explained these culverts would be slip-lined to avoid digging into the new road. North Blandford Road Consultant, Rene Senecal agreed that this would be the right move.

c. Springfield Water: Waldron has contacted a drone business which can provide aerial footage that will help the Town assess the beaver flooding situation on Gibbs Road, Blair Road, and Cobble Mountain Road. This will cost approximately \$500. The Board would like to take the funds from the Reserve Fund.

d. Draft Bid Packet for FRCOG: Waldron noted that Sara Hunter, Treasurer will have to be involved in the road bond process.

e. Letter from Resident – Mr. Needham: Needham explained that many years ago which the road was refinished, the contractor at the time pulled the culvert and replaced it with what is currently there. Waldron believes this was during Brad Curry’s time as Highway Superintendent. He will have a conversation with him. Letendre stated that we will then speak to Town Counsel and see what our current bylaws are.

f. DOT Traffic Route 23 – Belle Fleur Project: Waldron spoke with DOT regarding the curb cut at that location which has a dangerous curve. The gentleman from DOT stated he would never have agreed to a curb cut in that area if it was not safe. DOT has requested Belle Fleur do a ‘line of site’ clearing in that area.

g. Culvert Grant: Waldron has been working with Dunne and PVPC regarding the culvert grant for Middlefield, Chester, and Blandford to explore prioritizing which culverts on dirt roads need the most attention due to the impact of climate change.

5. ACTION ITEMS

a. Belle Fleur – Canna Dash Holdings Host Community Agreement

This Host Community Agreement has been vetted by Town Counsel and reviewed by the Select Board. Dunne reported one or two minor changes. Attorney Blake Mensing, Belle Fleur, joined the Board to discuss the changes. The subject of vehicle access to their property was discussed. Mensing mentioned that Belle Fleur will be installing a convex mirror on that corner for increased safety.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Canna Dash Holdings Host Community Agreement as written

T. Cousineau Seconded

All in Favor

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PRIOR MEETINGS:

a. Leah Bacon – Exercise Classes

Leah stated she has met with her insurance company which does cover the Town Hall if she started an exercise program here. She is reporting that she has received a great response to this program. She spoke to the Board about the numerous ways this program can be managed in order to ensure the best turnout possible. Letendre is suggesting a Revolving Fund be set up so Leah can start her business sooner than later and going forward the Town will investigate grant possibilities.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. Town Administrator Report

Budget Process:

Dunne has processed a narrative of the final draft budget for Blandford's Finance Committee. The next joint meeting will be May 3, 2022.

Capital Improvement Plan:

Dunne spoke with the Collins Center. The goal is to launch the project in September. At that point, the Collins Center will connect with Town departments to record their capital assets and future capital asset spending to have a Capital Improvement Plan for the Town by March 2023.

DLTA Water Project:

Dunne met with Gordon Avery, Water Superintendent regarding hiring a joint water operator for shared services with the Town of Chester. The project is progressing and the next meeting with Chester will be held on May 12, 2022. PVPC is assisting with this project.

HR Shared Services:

The human resources shared services project is also being undertaken by the Collins Center in a joint effort with PVPC. The Town received a questionnaire from the Collins Center which Dunne is working with other staff to complete. The next meeting for the project will be May 4, 2022.

ARPA Funds:

Dunne is compiling a list of requests paid to date and forwarding to the Town Accountant. Dunne will meet with the finance team and Select Board to form a strategy for the remaining funding.

Procurement Training:

Dunne will be doing Procurement Training May 10-12.

Town Property Mowing:

An RFP will be put together for mowing of Town properties. Letendre will get the list of properties that need mowing and seasonal clean up.

Water Department Waste Disposal:

Gordon Avery, Water Superintendent, is looking for a new waste disposal company as the current rates are going up quickly. Dunne will do some market research on waste disposal options.

Belle Fleur:

Dunne reported that the Belle Fleur, Canna Dash Holdings Community Host Agreement has been approved by the Board and forwarded to Town Counsel for distribution.

Competitive Power Ventures:

Dunne returned to the issue of the solar firm that is interested in developing a site near Long Pond. TJ Cousineau, Dick Gates, and a representative from Competitive Power Ventures met on April 13. This solar array is large and will require a hook up into a sub-station and then transmission lines. Conservation's concerns are that DEP has guidelines about not using forested land for solar. The company is looking for a contingent real estate agreement for the right of way across town property that sits on North Blandford Road as connecting to the transmission lines via that property is a prerequisite for the project. The company will be required to meet with the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and the Zoning Board of Appeals before going forward.

Cobble Mountain Road:

Dunne, Waldron, Rene Senecal and Cara Letendre met with the legal team working on the Cobble Mountain Road issue with Springfield Water & Sewer. Dunne provided a timeline of events and will follow up with the Board.

20 Woronoco Road Sale Inquiry:

The Town has owned this property since 1998. The value is \$121,000 and the building on the property is condemned. The Town Administrator was contacted by a party interested in purchasing this property which is located between the Russell town line and Cobble Mountain Road on Route 23.

b. All Department Expenditure Report

The Board reviewed the current expenditure report. Due to the severe rise in utilities, oil, gas, electricity, and propane several of the utility accounts are over budget and will require potential increases in FY23.

d. Funding Feasibility Study – Highway Building

A feasibility study to be undertaken by Weston & Sampson to assess the cost of demolition vs. renovation of the current Highway garage is estimated at \$7,000. The Board is asking that the project’s steering committee move forward with this study. Ackley will present the quote for this study for signature.

d. Inspector of Animals - Donovan

This position is vacant as of February 28, 2022. Teresa Donovan is Blandford’s current Animal Control Officer and is qualified to serve as the Town’s State Inspector of Animals. She has presented her draft budget for this position to Finance. Finance believes the request is a bit high. Donovan believes that not all of the duties required of this position were carried out in the past so previous funding levels do not fully reflect the needs of the Animal Inspector position. She will need to start from scratch and visit all homes that have animals and create a new data base from there.

8. OTHER BUSINESS, IF ANY:

a. Spring Clean-up – Ladies Landscaping

Dunne will be in contact with them to see when they will be here for this clean up. Mary Kronholm reported however that this company is no longer in business. As such, Dunne will put together a bid solicitation.

b. Spray Town Properties for Ticks

This would include Watson Park, Town Hall property, hillside across from Town Common and spraying the borders. The quote received is \$1,920 for each application done every 45 days. Dunne will look in to getting a second quote.

9. *EXECUTIVE SESSION:

None

Meeting Adjourned at 7:40 pm

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***
- d. PC Replacement Plan***

*NOTE: Audience participation/public comment is welcome only when acknowledged by the Chairman and limited to two minutes. Participation/public comment is only limited to Blandford residents who may comment on agenda items only.

**NOTE: Agenda may include items not expected 48 hours before the meeting. At any point, this meeting may go into executive session if Selectboard finds it warranted.

Submitted by Joann Martin
Administrative Assistant to the Select Board

and Town Administrator

Cara Letendre, Chairman

N/A
Thomas Ackley, Member

Theodore Cousineau, Member