



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
Select Board

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

**MEETING MINUTES
BLANDFORD SELECT BOARD
August 22, 2022
6:00 pm**

Meeting held in the Select Board Chamber, Town Hall

In attendance: C. Letendre, Chair; J. Allen, Member; T. Cousineau, Member; C. Dunne, Town Administrator.

Meeting Open at 6:00 pm
Meeting is recorded

1. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a) Examination of the Select Board Meeting Minutes of June 6, 2022

MOTION: T. Cousineau made a motion to accept the Meeting Minutes of June 6, 2022, as written.

C. Letendre Seconded

J. Allen Abstained

All in Favor

b) Examination of the Select Board Meeting Minutes of June 13, 2022

MOTION: T. Cousineau made a motion to accept the Meeting Minutes of June 13, 2022, as written

C. Letendre Seconded

All in Favor

2. *AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION / PUBLIC COMMENT

a. Blandford Fair – Bruce Wyman

Wyman joined the Board for his annual visit to update the Board on the Blandford Fair events. The Town awarded the Fair funds from the Regional Economic Development Organization (REDO) program to repair the fence which Wyman reported would probably not be completed until the spring of 2023. The current state of the Fair and plans for the upcoming events on Labor Day weekend were discussed. Given the parameters on the grant funding, Letendre asked that the Fair provide at least a quote before the dispersing of funds from the REDO award.

b. Historical Society – Chips Norcross

Pliny (Chips) Norcross joined the Board to update them on the White Church's 200th Anniversary plans throughout the weekend of September 2, 2022, through September 6, 2022. Events are to include concerts, a parade and the sale of Historical Society t-shirts.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to move to New Business c. One Room School House
T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor**

3. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

a) Highway Department

N. Blandford Road Shimming: Waldron reported the shimming on N. Blandford Road will begin. Waldron is now looking for pricing for line painting.

Playground Paving & Basketball Court: Waldron firmed up a few of the details but still does not have a 'start date' for the paving.

Catch Basins: Catch basins are done on Russell Stage Road and Chester Road.

Diesel Gas Tank: Waldron reported the tank has excess sludge and needs to be cleaned. He will reach out for quotes.

Storm Damage Funding: Waldron is requesting that the ARPA funds received from the state by the Town for storm damage suffered in July 2022 be put into an account for his department to utilize, as necessary.

b) Town Clerk – Approve 2022 State Primary Warrant

The Town Clerk presented the 2022 State Primary Warrant which lists all offices subject to election. The Select Board approved the warrant.

c) Town Administrator

1. Budget/Finance: Finance Committee Update

Dunne has submitted a schedule of quarterly meetings with the Finance Committee which he hopes will continue to solidify their role. Dunne presented a list of potential candidates for the Finance Committee.

2. Grant updates:

i) ADA Transition Plan

The Community Development Block Grant-funded ADA Transition Plan project kicked off a couple of weeks ago. Dunne will send a questionnaire to all relevant departments later this week documenting current practices/issues with respect to access for people with disabilities.

ii) Mass DOT rural roadway departure funding

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) announced that they are dispersing funds to address rural roadway departures (i.e., cars going off the road). Blandford has two eligible locations based on MassDOT's data, and as such will likely be receiving variable speed radar signs to help remind drivers to slow down. These signs will be portable and the Highway Department will use them to help reduce vehicle speeds in problem spots.

3. Other Departments:

i) Board of Assessors: Request for Proposals (RFP) and Part-Time Administrative Assistant Position

The Board of Assessors put out an RFP last week. Our current consultant, Regional Resource Group, Inc. (RRG) will likely be the only respondent based on past RFPs. The idea is to transition to more of

an in-house arrangement rather than having RRG send their clerks in. Blandford would hire an assessor clerk and RRG would take care of training that person. This will hopefully save money going forward. Letendre mentioned this situation was problematic in the past but is hoping there is good oversight of this position. Dunne mentioned that Dave Hopson, Chair of the Board of Assessors, is on-board with this as well.

ii) Chester-Blandford Police Department: Meeting with Chief Dubiel

Dunne spoke with Chief Dubiel about the issues the residents are concerned with in town. He spoke to the Chief about the planned quarterly meetings with Chester for the coming year. Chief Dubiel was present at the meeting and Letendre welcomed her and introduced her to the rest of the Board.

iii) Board of Health: Stipend expended amount on All Department Expense Report

Dunne reported to the Select Board that the expended stipend amount for the Board of Health discussed at the previous meeting was an error on the part of Town Accountants and has been corrected.

4. Ongoing project updates:

i) Open Space & Recreation Plan Finalization

This is a project that Garcia was working on which was nearly complete but only received conditional approval from the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs (EOEEA). Because of the turnaround time to get comments back from the Commonwealth, the Town no longer had a consultant for this project by the time we received notice of conditional approval. To get this Plan full approval, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) has agreed to take over the technical assistance and help the Town address outstanding comments from EOEEA.

ii) Shepard Farm Update

Dunne met with the Building Inspector to assess the condition of Shepard Farm. Dunne is reporting that building has a lot of challenges. In particular, it was observed during the walkthrough that one of the basement walls has collapsed. Forgue believes it would take approximately \$40,000 address this issue. Shannon Walsh from PVPC is continuing to work with UMass or the Conway School to create a student project in the next 6 months so we can hopefully find a use for this building. Letendre would like to see the decision about Shepard Farm go to the Town Meeting to see if the residents want to preserve this building.

iii) Town Common Rehabilitation

Dunne spoke with GZA about the status of the Town Common project. They will present renderings for the Town Common redesign. Allen expressed his opposition to the idea of reconfiguring North Blandford Road to allow for Veterans Memorial Park and the Common to be connected. Letendre said the proposed reconfiguration reflects DOT specs for modern roadway design.

4. ACTION ITEMS

a) Review and act on FY23 Professional Town Planning Services contract with Pioneer Valley Planning Commission - \$7,500 (hourly rate of \$99.82)

Dunne presented the FY23 contract for the Planning Board with PVPC for technical assistance ready for the Board's signature.

b) Review and act on Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)

Chief Mottor presented this plan as the first step in the Town's preparation of a comprehensive approach to emergency incidents. The material presented is fairly high-level and the Town can change the content at any time as long as we record these changes.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan as revised.

**T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor**

c) Approve Warrant #3 for payment

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve Warrant #3 for payment

**T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor**

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PRIOR MEETINGS:

a) Town Administrator FY23 SMART Goals

The Board reviewed the FY23 Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-Based (SMART) Goals for the Town Administrator. The Board approves these goals for use at the Town Administrator's annual performance review, to occur next in June 2023.

b) Finance Team FY23 SMART Goals

Dunne presented SMART Goals for the Finance Team for FY23 for the Board to Review and approve.

c) Russell Pond Usage

Letendre reached out once again to the Town of Russell to see if they would be willing to sell discounted passes for Russell Pond to Blandford Residents with the Town of Blandford picking up the difference. Letendre reported that once again, the Town of Russell declined to enter into any kind of an agreement based on their discussions with their Town Counsel. Letendre suggested the Blandford Recreation Committee take the lead by organizing this process of selling these passes at a discounted price which the Town will absorb. We will investigate this for 2023.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a) Materials for Town Administrator's Six-Month Review to be held on September 12, 2022

The Board is in receipt of Christopher Dunne's six-month review materials for the meeting on September 12.

b) All Department Expenditure Report

The Board reviewed the expenditure report and found no problems.

c) One-Room School House – Nye Brook Road – Linda Barnard

Linda Barnard, Historical Commission, joined the Board to talk about the old schoolhouse (1835) on Nye Brook Road. She is wondering if the Town is interested in preserving this building and if there are any grants out there that could help with this. Barnard is willing to donate this building to the Town with a suggestion to move the building to the Town Commons area. Letendre asked Dunne to research this to see what it would take to ready the building plus the cost of moving. Dunne will look into grants.

d) Return to Regular Select Board Meeting Schedule

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to return to weekly meetings for the Select Board as of September 12, 2022
J. Allen Seconded
All in Favor

7. OTHER BUSINESS, IF ANY:

8.*EXECUTIVE SESSION:

None

Meeting adjourned at 7:44 pm

Submitted by Joann Martin
Administrative Assistant to the Select Board
and Christopher Dunne, Town Administrator

Cara Letendre, Chair

Jeff Allen, Member

Theodore Cousineau, Member