



**TOWN OF BLANDFORD**  
Select Board

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

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**BLANDFORD SELECT BOARD**  
**October 17, 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 July 25, 2022**

**MOTION:** C. Letendre entertained a motion to approve the Select Board Meeting Minutes of July 25, 2022, as written for discussion

**T. Cousineau – So Moved**

**J. Allen Seconded**

**All in Favor**

**2. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION / PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**3. DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**a. *Highway Department Report***

**Winterizing:** Waldron reports all vehicles have tires changed for the winter

**Open House:** The Highway & Fire Departments are sponsoring an open house event October 29 from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm at the Highway Garage. All are invited to stop by.

**State Aid Reimbursement \$3,461:** The Board signed this paperwork for the Highway Department.

**N. Blandford Road:** Palmer Paving is done with raising the structures and paving will begin in 3 days.

**b. *Town Administrator's Report***

**a. *Finance/Budget***

**i. *Plan for FY22 Free Cash certified as \$780,067.00***

Town Accountants have certified Free Cash of \$780,067 which is \$250,000 more than anticipated. This means we will have more flexibility in our Capital account.

Highway/Fire Project: An estimate of \$180,000 has been received from Weston & Sampson for the schematic design for the Highway/Fire Garage. A decision will have to be made about how to continue to pay for the OPM (Owners Project Manager). \$120,000 was allocated in 2021 at Special Town Meeting. We have spent a fair amount of that fee to date. Depending on what is needed for this schematic design phase, Dunne has suggested transferring \$180,000 out of Free Cash for schematic design and then transferring \$75,000 out of Stabilization account that is specifically for building projects.

Library Project: \$35,000 has been set aside for a feasibility study as a first step. Dunne believes after speaking to other small towns about their experience, that this study can probably be done for under \$10,000. We need to decide whether an OPM is needed for this project.

Sheperd Farm:

The Board believes the residents should decide about this project at the Special Town Meeting November 14, 2022.

ii. Police Detail: Because of the work on North Blandford Road and unfunded mandates from the Legislature around our elections, we have some police details the Town needs to pay for. Our refund for Chester/Blandford Police services has been received in Free Cash so we will use those funds to pay for this.

iii. Gateway Regional Excess & Deficiency (E&D) certified as \$769,969.00: Gateway Regional School District has reported Excess & Deficiency of \$769,969.00. This excess & deficiency is the equivalent of receiving free cash.

iv. Town building water bills

What the Finance Committee budgeted for water bills is not keeping pace because the Water Department increased their rates after the budget was set. There will be an article at Special Town Meeting so we can transfer some funds.

b. Grant updates:

i. DLTA Shared Water Operator: updates from October 13<sup>th</sup> meeting

Dunne attended the District Local Technical Assistance meeting with Chester regarding the shared water operator. Most of the meeting was reviewing efficiency and regionalization grants the Towns could apply for if we move forward with Chester. We need to resolve 1) do the Board and the Water Department want to go forward with this joint venture? and 2) if we do move forward, will Blandford be the host community?

ii. Town Common Rehabilitation: Reconnecting Communities Pilot Application

An application was just submitted for funding from Mass DOT for their Reconnecting Communities Pilot Grant program. This is basically looking at communities that were divided by roads in some way (Mass Pike). We can use this to plan for the re-configuration of N. Blandford Road so this area is better connected.

c. Other Department updates:

- i. Agricultural Commission: forest management on Town properties  
Dunne and the Agriculture commission have been looking at town properties that might be right for timber harvest. A Request for Proposal will be put together for forest management services.
- ii. Hilltown Community Ambulance Association (HCAA) Calendar Year 2022 Q3 data  
Dunne presented a copy of the latest report from HCAA. There are no significant changes.

d. *Ongoing projects:*

- i. Shepard Farm: Conway School Site Visit  
The Conway School looked at the property and Dunne believes they will probably not push to make this a student project. Shannon Walsh, PVPC, is working on this.
- ii. Highway-Fire Garage: FAQs, open house, open letter, and Special Town Meeting  
Highway Superintendent and Fire Chief Mottor will hold an open house to give residents an opportunity to see what the Town has been working on. This will also be presented at the Special Town Meeting on November 14, 2022.
- iii. Request from A&M Logging for easement across Town property to access Brainerd property between the Turnpike and the ski area for three-month span.  
A&M Logging approached the Town asking for an easement across residential properties. Dunne will invite A&M Logging to the next Select Board meeting and will work on a contract to be vetted by Town counsel in the meantime. Dunne suggested that the Board decide whatever road is cut in there, do we want them to reseed it or leave it alone so it can be used again.

**4. ACTION ITEMS**

- a. *Review and act on Donation from Laurel Ridge to Blandford Fire Department of \$150.00*  
Chief Mottor received a \$150 donation from Laurel Ridge Camping Area.

**MOTION: C. Letendre entertained a motion to receive the \$150.00 donation from Laurel Ridge Camping Area to Blandford Fire Department**  
**T. Cousineau – So Moved**  
**J. Allen Seconded**  
**All in Favor**

- b. *Review and act on Warrant #7 for Payment*

**MOTION: T. Cousineau made a motion to approve Warrant #7 for payment**  
**C. Letendre Seconded**  
**All in Favor**

- c. *Review and act on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) fund requests totaling \$70,054.64:*
  - *Water Department - Long Pond Dam EAP - \$4,500*
  - *Water Department - Treatment Monitoring Upgrade - \$18,300*
  - *Water Department - Tree Removal / Dam Fence Line - \$11,854*

- *Water Department - Storage Building for Gas-Powered Equipment - \$10,000*
- *Water Department - Sample Pump Replacement - \$2,400*
- *Water Department - Filter #4 Sand Replacement - \$14,500*

Gordon Avery, Superintendent of the Water Department met with the Board to talk about his ARPA requests. Avery noted that he has firm quotes on some of these projects:

Long Pond Dam: Avery confirmed that the \$4,500 was an accurate amount for Long Pond Dam.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve \$4,500.00 out of ARPA funds for Long Pond Dam EAP.**

**T. Cousineau – So Moved**

**J. Allen Seconded**

**All in Favor**

Treatment Monitoring Upgrade: Avery reported this quote is accurate at \$18,300.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve \$18,300.00 out of ARPA funds for Treatment Monitoring Upgrade.**

**T. Cousineau – So Moved**

**J. Allen Seconded**

**All in Favor**

Tree Removal/Dam Fence Line: Avery reported this work has been done for \$11,854 therefore this would be a refund to the Department.

**MOTION: c. Letendre made a motion to approve \$11,854.00 out of ARPA funds for Tree Removal Dam Fence Line**

**T. Cousineau – So Moved**

**J. Allen Seconded**

**All in Favor**

Storage Building: Avery received a firm quote of \$8,200. Allen requested he received a second quote. **Tabled.**

Sample Pump: Avery reported the Department needs 3 of them @ \$911.00 so the new amount would be \$2,733.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve \$2,733.00 out of ARPA funds for Sample Pump Replacement.**

**J. Allen – So Moved**

**T. Cousineau Seconded**

**All in Favor**

Filter #4 Sand Replacement: Avery reported this will come to \$15,000. Letendre asked for assurance

from the Water Department that these ongoing projects will be built into the Water Department budget going forward.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve \$15,000.00 out of ARPA funds for Filter #4 Sand Replacement  
J. Allen-So Moved  
T. Cousineau Seconded  
All in Favor**

*Highway/Water Department – Raising North Blandford Road Structures - \$8,500.64*

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve \$8,500.64 from ARPA for raising N. Blandford Rd. Structures  
J. Allen – So Moved  
T. Cousineau Seconded  
All in Favor**

**5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

*a. All Department Expenditure Report*

The Board reviewed the expenditure report and found no problems.

**7. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm

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

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Cara Letendre, Chair

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Jeffery Allen, Member

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Theodore Cousineau, Member