



**TOWN OF BLANDFORD**  
Select Board

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

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**BLANDFORD SELECT BOARD**  
**December 19, 2022**  
**6:00 pm**

Meeting held in the Select Board Chamber, Town Hall

**In attendance:** C. Letendre, Chair-Zoom; 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**

None

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

None

**3. DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

*a. Highway Update-Dave Waldron:*

Snowstorm: Waldron reported 8-10" of snow with a lot of tree limbs down, especially on Beech Hill Road, so the clean-up continues, but no major issues.

Salt & Sand Ordered: Highway has ordered salt & sand in preparation for the winter season.

Tree Canopy: Letendre asked about the clean-up of these tree limbs. Waldron reported they are still working on this and he has been working with the Town Administrator to work on the tree canopy problems in Blandford, however, it is expensive to do this work but it is smart preventative maintenance and will save the Town money in the long-run.

*b. Town Administrator*

*i. Budget/Finance:*

1. *Updates from Finance Committee and Finance Team meetings of December 14:* Dunne organized the first finance meeting since this summer. The Committee undertook some Reserve Fund transfers for the Fire Sprinkler issues that we had to deal with this fall. There was talk of the FY24 budget schedule. The hope is to have 2 days when we have all the department requests: one day for the less complicated ones and one day for the more detailed department budgets. There will also be a joint meeting with the Town of Chester so that we can handle the Police budget.
2. *Updates from School Committee meeting of December 14:* Gateway had their

school committee meeting on December 14. The Water Department in Chester and other Hilltown communities have created a pipeline for students to become water operators through on-site training at local treatment plants and distribution systems. There will be a meeting for students and their parents at Gateway who wish to participate in that program scheduled for January 5.

ii. *Grants:*

1. ***ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan:*** *Draft facility reports from Institute for Human Centered Design received:* Draft versions of the ADA facility reports have been submitted by the Institute. Dunne is reviewing these and discussing the reports with relevant department heads.

iii. *Other Departments*

1. ***Treasurer: Assistant Treasurer-Collector Position Posted with closing date of January 5:*** is the position has been posted widely so we are hoping we will get a good number of candidates. Dunne will establish a screening committee in early January which will include Dr. David Hopson, Board of Assessors Chair, Sara Hunter, Treasurer, Eric Kinshurf, Accountant, Paul Martin, resident and one more resident.
2. ***Fire Department: Fire Chief Position Posting Updates:*** There will be a similar timeline for the Fire Chief posting. Dunne reached out to Chester as they will be looking for a Fire Chief at the end of the fiscal year, however, he has not heard anything back yet. The screening committee will include Fire Chief Mottor, Police Chief Dubiel, Adam Dolby, who is a member of the volunteer force and possibly two more residents.
3. ***Water Department: Emergency Phone Line set up and Gateway Water Treatment Operator In-Training parent meeting to be held on January 5:*** The Water Department emergency cell phone is set up. The emergency number will be posted to the website and will be available on all water bills.
4. ***Emergency Management Organization: Potential Rolling Brown-Outs for Eversource this winter:*** Eversource had a webinar last week which Chief Mottor and Dave Waldron attended. Essentially because supplies of natural gas are constrained this winter, there is the possibility for rolling brownouts. Eversource would decide to stop providing electricity to ‘town A’ for 6 hours on this day. We would always know in advance. This would be rotated and two contiguous communities would never have brownouts simultaneously. Eversource did not make it sound like this was a certainty; they just want the towns to be prepared. Letendre requested that this be discussed with Council on Aging. Dunne is meeting with the Director tomorrow.

iv. *Ongoing Projects/Issues*

1. ***Forest Stewardship Planning:*** *Update from Agricultural Commission meeting on December 12:* This project kicked off last week. A presentation was forwarded to the Commission. The Town has about 1,000 acres of town-owned forest. The idea for this project would be for the Agricultural Commission to put out a request for proposal for forestry services which would result in forest stewardship plans for individual Town-owned forested areas. Dunne is looking into funding options. The group will be meeting in January to discuss further.

4. **ACTION ITEMS**

- a. *Review and act on Warrant #12*

**MOTION:** T. Cousineau made a motion to approve Warrant #12 for payment

**J. Allen Seconded**

**C. Letendre Abstained**

**Motion Passes**

5. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a. *Eversource Staging Area on Shepard Road – Lease will not be renewed and will expire December 2023:* Eversource spoke to Dunne and stated they did not anticipate the community being this unhappy about the location when they initially spoke with the landowner. They have another location available so their lease with the Town of Blandford will only be extended one calendar year and will expire December 2023.

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. *Review All Department Expense Report through December 9, 2022 –* The Board reviewed this expenditure report and found no major problems.

7. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

Meeting adjourned at 6:26 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