



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
Select Board

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

MEETING MINUTES
BLANDFORD SELECT BOARD
March 27, 2023
6:00 pm

Meeting held in the Select Board Chamber, Town Hall

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

Meeting Open at 6:03 pm
Meeting is recorded

1. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a. Examination of the Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2023

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to Table the meeting minutes of March 16, 2023

J. Allen Seconded

All in Favor

2. *AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION / PUBLIC COMMENT

None

3. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

a. Town Administrator

i. Budget/Finance

1. FY23 **Reserve Fund** Transfer Plan: Dunne is meeting with the Finance Committee Wednesday, March 29, 2023, to review and act on proposed Reserve Fund transfers including \$5,000 to Town Hall Utilities, \$2,000 to Library Expenses, and \$5,000 to Highway Vehicle Fuel. There is also a need to address a gap in the Vocational Education budget as one student accepted right at the start of the 2022-2023 school year. Dunne is proposing an \$18,000 transfer out of the Reserve Fund but will let Finance know that this may be addressed through other actions (e.g., a Year-End Transfer, Free Cash, Town Meeting article, etc.) if this amount seems high for the limited funds available in this account. Dunne also mentioned that just today he received notice from Hilltown Community Ambulance of a new Non-Public Ambulance Trust Fund assessment and that Blandford's assessment for FY22 was roughly \$4,000. Letendre suggested that this be addressed after the Select Board meets with Hilltown Community Ambulance Association next week and hears their budget proposal.

ii. Grants

1. District Local Technical Assistance: **Shared Conservation Agent** grant awarded: PVPC will provide technical assistance for the process of creating a shared Conservation Agent potentially with the Town of Hampden. Dunne is meeting with PVPC and the Town Administrator of Hampden next week after which he will connect with Dick Gates, Chair of Conservation.
2. **Local Hazard Mitigation Plan** Update application submitted: An application was submitted for this plan. The last plan was completed in 2016 and expired in 2021. Speaking with MEMA, if the Town want the Town Hall electrical work done to enable backup power in such a manner that the space could serve as an emergency shelter, this is the route to take before applying for funding.

b. *Town Clerk*

1. Mary Kronholm joined the Board to discuss:
 - a. **Opting out of Early Voting:** Assistant Town Clerk, Kronholm and Town Clerk, Jemiolo have decided to opt out of in-person early voting for the local election as the Town has already received over 100 applications for early by-mail ballots.
 - b. **Change Early Voting Hours for Local Election June 10, 2023:** The Town Clerk is requesting that the hours be changed from 10:00 am–4:00 pm to 10:00 am–2:00 pm.

MOTION: J. Allen made a motion to change the voting hours for the Town of Blandford’s Early Voting Hours for the Local Election on June 10, 2023, from 10:00 am-4:00 pm to 10:00 am – 2:00 pm.

T. Cousineau Seconded

C. Letendre Nay

Motion Passes

- c. Appoint Doris Jemiolo, Town Clerk, as Constable so the Town Clerk’s Department will be able to post meeting warrants in a timely manner. Letendre mentioned some of the roadblocks she may be facing with this process. The Town Clerk will work with Town Counsel.
- d. Sue Racine – Election Warden: Girard is currently Deputy Warden however, when she is not available, this extra position will allow us to have a full election staff.

4. **ACTION ITEMS**

- a. Review and act on **Warrant #19** for Payment

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve Warrant #19 for payment

T. Cousineau Seconded

All in Favor

- b. Review and act on **PVPC Financial Invoice #21** for payment

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve PVPC Financial Invoice #21 for Community Assistant Program
T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor**

- c. Review and act on three-year service agreement with Changing Environments d/b/a **Soofa Signs** for solar-powered digital sign with cloud-based content management system in the amount of \$20,000

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to table the agreement with Soofa Signs until the agreement is reviewed by Town Counsel.
J. Allen Seconded
All in Favor**

- d. Review and act on **Conway School of Landscape Design** proposal for student project at Shepard Farm with an initial fee of \$6,000: Dunne reported the initial cost from the school was \$17,000. Dunne spoke to the Historical and Conservation Commissions about helping to cover this cost. The Historical Commission decided they did not want to provide any funding towards it. Dunne spoke to the Conway School and they lowered their fee to \$12,000 with an initial payment of \$6,000. Dunne spoke to the indemnification of the School under the agreement and that the only real concern was a student entering the farmhouse given its condition. J. Allen inquired about what this would do to stabilize the building. Dunne said this does not include the building and is instead focused on deciding what can be done with this property in the way of trail systems, signage, trail heads and generally creating a vision that everybody can look to going forward. Dunne is working with the Conway School and Town Counsel to finalize an agreement.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to table the proposal from the Conway School of Landscape Design for student project at Shepard Farm until the April 10, 2023, Select Board meeting.
T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor**

- e. Review and act on Fiscal Year 2022 contract amendment for **Fiscal Year 2024 accounting** services with Eric Kinsherf in the amount of \$33,000

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the contract amendment for Fiscal Year 2024 Accounting Services with Erik Kinsherf in the amount of \$33,000
T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor**

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Review and act on updated correspondence to **Maple Lane** residents regarding winter 2023-2024 snow and ice removal by the Town. Dunne explained that he had updated the letter per the discussion at the last Select Board meeting. Kronholm brought up a discussion she had with a Maple Lane resident who said that they already make annual improvements to the road and that Waldron may have been unaware as a relatively new Highway Superintendent. Letendre said that

the letter simply formalizes that and asks residents to meet with Waldron to discuss needed improvements.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a.* Review **All Departments Expenditure Report** for period through March 20, 2023

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to table the All-Departmental Expenditure Report
T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm

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

Cara Letendre, Chair

Theodore Cousineau, Member

Jeffery Allen, Member