



**TOWN OF BLANDFORD**  
Select Board

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

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**BLANDFORD SELECT BOARD and FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
**May 01, 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; J. Lombardo, Finance Chair; D. Brodie, Finance; K. Green, Finance

Meeting Open at 6:00 pm  
Meeting is recorded

**1. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

*a. Review and act on minutes for the Select Board meeting of April 3, 2023*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of April 03, 2023, as written

**J. Allen Seconded**  
**All in Favor**

*b. Review and act on minutes for the Select Board meeting of April 10, 2023*

**MOTION:** T. Cousineau made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of April 10, 2023, as written

**J. Allen Seconded**  
**All in Favor**

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

None

**3. DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

*a. Highway*  
None

*b. Town Administrator*  
*i. Finance/Budget*

**1. FY24 budget:** Dunne is waiting for our Accounting Department to go over the Draft budget that Dunne and the Finance Committee settled on. An edited Gateway school assessment is forthcoming and going from a .5% decrease to a 1% increase. Dunne is hoping to have this completed by the end of the week.

**2. Revenue Sources: Tax Title Auction:** Sara Hunter brought up the idea of a Tax Title Auction on those properties that are delinquent. Hunter is familiar with this process and will present how the process would work before the Select Board in the coming weeks.

ii. Grants

**1. Feedback on Rural and Small-Town Development Fund (One Stop for Growth) Expressions of Interest for Fire-Highway Facility and Shepard Farm:** Dunne was happy to announce that the Town's expression of interest for the Fire-Highway Facility project grant application in the amount of \$300,000 was confirmed to move forward by MassDevelopment. Dunne will submit a full application before June. He expects we will hear early fall whether it was granted or not. MassDevelopment indicated however that they would not fund a project at Shepard Farm and recommended that historic preservation grants be pursued for this purpose.

**2. New England Mountain Biking Association (NEMBA) grant for Shepard Farm:** Dunne submitted a grant application for this last month to help with the Conway School project.

iii. Other Departments

**1. Enterprise Funds: Indirect Cost Agreements:** Dunne is in the process of updating the Water Department's Indirect Cost Agreement. In working with the Town Treasurer, it was found that the Water Department indirect cost had gone up over the past couple years. Dunne is recommending to the Water Department that if they cover Town water bills for the time being, the indirect cost transfer would remain about level. This agreement will be presented to the Water Commissioners for approval.

The other piece of our Indirect Cost Agreements is Municipal Light Board. Dunne is working with Peter Langmore and is recommending the same agreement; if MLB pays for Broadband charges for the Town, they will not pay any indirect cost for now.

**2. Joint Fire Chief with Chester:** Dunne reported we will be meeting with Chester May 15 regarding sharing a joint fire chief position.

**3. Seasonal intern/labor from Gateway Water Internship program iv. Legislative Updates:** The Water Internship with Gateway is wrapping up soon. One of the Gateway students will potentially be working as a summer intern for the Water Department as a direct result of this program.

**1. House budget:** The money Blandford receives in payments-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) for state-owned land is level with the Governor's original budget. This is good news for the Town's budget as Blandford has a great deal of state-owned land.

#### 4. ACTION ITEMS

a. Review and act on **Year-End Transfers** recommended by Town Administrator

a. **Finance Committee/Select Board:**

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to adjourn at 6:40 the joint meeting to reconvene when Finance Committee members are able to join the meeting

**T. Cousineau Seconded**

**All in Favor**

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to reconvene the Joint Select Board and Finance Committee meeting at 6:55 pm

**J. Allen Seconded**

**All in Favor**

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to transfer \$12,000 from Acct #225450.005 Water Breaks & Repairs to Acct #225450.002 Water Department Utilities

**J. Allen Seconded**

**All in Favor**

**Finance Recommends and Approves**

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to transfer \$1,000 from Acct #225450.012 Water Equipment Repairs to Acct #225450.010 Water Department Utilities

**J. Allen Seconded**

**All in Favor**

**Finance Recommends and Approves**

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to transfer \$750 from Acct #225450.032 Water Waste Removal to Acct #225450.006 Water Department Training

**T. Cousineau Seconded**

**All in Favor**

**Finance Recommends and Approves**

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to transfer \$100 from Acct #225450.032 Water Waste Removal to Acct #225450.010 Water Office Expense

**J. Allen Seconded**

**All in Favor**

**Finance Recommends and Approves**

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to \$78 from Acct #015422.013 Highway Western Mass Mower to Acct #015422.012 Highway Rental Equipment

**T. Cousineau Seconded**

**All in Favor**

**Finance Recommends and Approves**

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to \$333 from Acct #015422.019 Highway Tree Canopy Work to Acct #015422.012 Highway Rental Equipment

**J. Allen Seconded**

**All in Favor**

**Finance Recommends and Approves**

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to \$2,000 from Acct #015151.000 Town Council to Acct #015192.009 Town Insurance

**J. Allen Seconded  
All in Favor  
Finance Recommends and Approves**

*b. Review and act on Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA) FY24 renewal for property casualty, professional liability, and workers compensation insurance in the amount of \$86,584 less dividends and credits.*

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the MIIA FY24 Renewal for property casualty, professional liability, and workers' compensation insurance in the amount of \$86,584 less dividends and credits.**

**J. Allen Seconded  
All in Favor**

*c. Review and act on appointment of Nicole Daviau to the Historical Commission for the term July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2026*

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to appoint Nicole Daviau to the Historical Commission for the term July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2026**

**J. Allen Seconded  
All in Favor**

*d. Review and act on appointment of Ryan Stafford to the Historical Commission to complete Janet Strausberg's term July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024*

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to appoint Ryan Stafford to the Historical Commission for the term July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024**

**J. Allen Seconded  
All in Favor**

*e. Review and act on appointment of John VanHeynigen as Electrical Inspector for the term July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.*

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to appoint John VanHeynigen as Electrical Inspector for the term July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024**

**J. Allen Seconded  
All in Favor**

*f. Review and act on appointment of Nathan Maynard to the Conservation Commission for the term July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2026*

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to appoint Nathan Maynard to the Conservation Commission for the term July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2026**

**J. Allen Seconded  
All in Fav**

*g. Review and act on grant agreement with Blandford Animal Hospital for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to cover COVID-related revenue losses in the amount of \$20,000*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Grant Agreement with the Blandford Animal Hospital for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to cover COVID-related revenue losses in the amount of \$20,000

**J. Allen Seconded**  
**All in Favor**

*h. Review and act on placement of question on the June local election ballot to cease assessing the farm excise tax on animals, machinery and equipment owned by individuals and non-corporate entities*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to accept the question on the June Local Election Ballot to cease assessing the farm excise tax on animals, machinery and equipment owned by individuals and non-corporate entities

**J. Allen Seconded for Discussion**  
**C. Letendre Nay**  
**T. Cousineau Abstained**  
**Motion Fails**

## **5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

*a. Review Taking Root Garden Design quote for FY24 maintenance of Bicentennial Park in the amount of \$1,755 and Watson Park in the amount of \$1,680.* Dunne spoke with Treasurer, Sara Hunter and Assistant Treasurer, Lynn Kane regarding the Town's overall trust funds. Essentially, there is something we can do to try to increase these trusts going forward. Dunne will reach out to the Division of Local Services for guidance on this subject.

*b. Review and act on Gateway Regional School District FY23 School Violence Prevention grant application*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve the letter of support for the grant application for Gateway Regional School District FY23 School Violence Prevention Grant Application.

**J. Allen Seconded**  
**All in Favor**

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

*a. All Departmental Expenditure Report for April 28, 2023:* The Board reviewed the All-Departmental Expenditure Report and found few problems. Minor problems will be addressed.

## **7. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Meeting adjourned at 7:02 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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Theodore Cousineau, Member

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Jeffery Allen, Member

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Janet Lombardo, Chair Finance

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Deb Brodie, Member Finance

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Kevin Green, Member Finance