



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
Select Board

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

MEETING MINUTES
BLANDFORD SELECT BOARD
August 07, 2023
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-Absent

1) EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a) Examination of the Select Board Meeting Minutes of June 15, 2023

MOTION: J. Allen made a motion to approve the Select Board Meeting Minutes of June 15, 2023, as written

T. Seconded

C. Letendre Abstained

All in Favor

b) Examination of the Select Board Executive Session Meeting Minutes of July 12, 2023

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Executive Session Meeting Minutes of July 12, 2023, as written

J. Allen Seconded

All in Favor

2) AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION / PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. ***Blandford Fair – Matt Ripley:*** Mr. Ripley is the new President of the Blandford Fair Association. He joined the Select Board to talk about the upcoming Blandford Fair Labor Day Weekend, September 1 – September 4. His updates for the Board included:

-Beer Garden: Skyline Brewing will apply for a ‘one-day’ liquor license for the four days. The company will set up a closed-in beer garden area which will require fair attendees to remain in the enclosure while consuming alcohol.

-Fencing: Ripley reported the replacement fence has been ordered. In the meantime, temporary fences will be installed.

-Painting: Outside painting has been done and they are hoping to work on the preservation of the buildings.

-Windows: The Fair received a donation for windows, which have been ordered for the Agriculture Building. These windows will be in keeping with the historic character of the Hall.

-Police Coverage: Ripley reported they are going to stay with the State Police this year as time is short, but the Fair is interested in talking to the Blandford/Chester Police regarding coverage for next year.

-New Barn to Dedicate to Shepard Family: Ripley is working with the Historical Commission to remove the barn that is currently on the Shepard Farm property. The Fair Association has been granted permission to take down the newer of the two barns and rebuild it on Blandford Fair property and dedicate this to the Shepard family. In barter 'payment' for the barn, the Fair would be willing take down the older of the two barns that is falling down and remove it from the property at no cost to the Town.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to move to Unfinished Business 4a. Linda Barnard – Shepard Farm.

T. Cousineau Seconded

All in Favor

2) DEPARTMENT REPORTS

a) *Highway Superintendent – Dave Waldron*

-Salt & Sand Bids: These bids will be in around September 01, 2023. Waldron is guessing the price will go up by then.

-Logging – Phase 2: The logging on Beulah Land Road should be completed in a week or so.

-Russell Stage Road: Waldron is working on trees and large rocks on the side of this road. Northern Tree will be called to take care of removing the problem trees.

-Beech Hill Road: Beech Hill will be closed until August 18, 2023.

-South Street Culvert: The price for this culvert today would be \$33,000. Waldron reported he is working with Dunne on possible use of Chapter 90 monies.

-Cobble Mountain Road Culvert: The price for this today would be \$120,000; Waldron reported he and Dunne on possible use of Chapter 90 monies.

b) *Town Administrator*

i) *Misc: Foreclosure on Russell Stage Road property:* Dunne reported on the Town's foreclosure on a property for back taxes on Russell Stage Road that has been approved by the Land Court. Dunne will contacting Town Counsel regarding options for offering it to the abutters, noting it is a 'sliver' of property (.78 acres; property valued at \$40,000) that is not buildable.

ii) *Grants: Local Hazard Mitigation Plan through ARPA*

Dunne reminded the Board of the ARPA funds that were dedicated to purchasing a generator for the Town Hall. It was determined the generator in place does not need to be replaced, just updated so this vote to use ARPA funds for the generator was rescinded, however, some of these funds will be used for the design phase of upgrading electrical so that backup power can be secured. Dunne further explained that roughly \$20,000 in ARPA funds were awarded to the Municipal Light Board for their project. As it stands today, MLB does not need these funds. The Town received a grant for their Backhaul Southern Cluster project that creates redundancy in the overall fiber system, so it is more dependable. Therefore, MLB no longer needs the \$20,000 awarded from ARPA funds. Langmore believes this \$20,000 from ARPA should still go to MLB. The Town Accountant was of the opinion that this should be returned to ARPA funds. Dunne stated what we need to update our hazard mitigation plan which will allow the Town to apply for more grants and Federal funding.

iii) *Porter Library Patio Project*

Tighe & Bond has completed the design unfortunately, there have been a lot of holdups. The project is finally ready to go out for price quotes. This project is paid for by a Commonwealth Places grant.

iv. Digital Sign

Dunne met with the Library Trustees, and they are on board with putting the digital sign on the Porter Library property.

3. ACTION ITEMS

a) *Review and act on amendment to intergovernmental agreement with Springfield Water & Sewer Commission*

Dunne explained that the existing agreement allows Springfield Water & Sewer to maintain the public roads that are gated and no longer accessible. This amendment would provide for material to be used on Julius Hall Road and at the Long Pond Conservation Area for a trailhead. This has been forwarded to Town Counsel for review.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the amendment to the Intergovernmental Agreement with Springfield Water & Sewer Commission pending review by Town Counsel

T. Cousineau Seconded

All in Favor

b) *Review and act on Fiscal Year 2024 Contract for Professional Town Planning Services with Pioneer Valley Planning Commission*

This is the Annual Planning Board contract with PVPC that the Planning Board needs for the more technical questions around solar and marijuana projects.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2024 Contract for Professional Town Planning Services with Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

T. Cousineau Seconded

All in Favor

c) *Review and act on Select Board Summer Meeting Schedule conclusion date*

The Board agreed to return to regular weekly meeting of the Select Board as of September 11, 2023

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) *Linda Barnard - Shepard Farm Discussion:* Barnard met with the Select Board to speak about the Blandford Historical Commission's investigation into the Shepard Farm home. The Commission hired a historical expert to look at this building. They were given a good idea of what was left in the building of historic value. They will remove doorknobs and such to repurpose at least some of the history of this building. The Blandford Fair will be removing one of the barns and re-building it on Blandford Fair property. Once reconstructed, this barn will be dedicated to the Shepard Family. At this point, the Historical Commission will step away from Shepard Farm. The Commission noted that the consultant from PVPC hired to preserve as much of this property as possible has done an excellent job including the history in their on-going plans. The Board agrees this is a good conclusion to this long-standing project.

5. NEW BUSINESS

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Meeting adjourned at 6:38 pm

TABLED ITEMS:

- a. Request from the Building Commissioner to consider seeking appropriate authorization to amend existing unregistered vehicle bylaw*
- b. Police Office Safe*
- c. PC Replacement Plan*

*NOTE: Audience participation/public comment is welcome only when acknowledged by the Chair and limited to two minutes. Participation/public comment is only limited to Blandford residents who may comment on agenda items only.

**NOTE: Agenda may include items not expected 48 hours before the meeting.

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

Cara Letendre, Chair

Jeff Allen, Member

Theodore Cousineau, Member