



**TOWN OF BLANDFORD**  
Select Board

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

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**BLANDFORD SELECT BOARD**  
**September 25, 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

Meeting Opens at 6:01 pm:

**1) EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

- a) Examination of the Select Board Executive Session Meeting Minutes of August 21, 2023

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve Select Board Session Meeting Minutes of August 21, 2023 as written  
**T. Cousineau Seconded**  
**All in Favor**

**2) AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION / PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**3) DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

- a) ***Highway Superintendent – Dave Waldron***

-Andrew Shannon, Highway Laborer: Waldron gave Andrew Shannon's resignation letter to the Select Board. Dunne will work with Waldron on posting the position.

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to accept a letter of resignation from Andrew Shannon from the Highway Department on effective October 9, 2023  
**T. Cousineau Seconded**  
**All in Favor**

-Russell Stage Road Water: The water has been tested for chlorine which would indicate that it is Town water but discussions will continue with the Water Department about to address this issue.

-Bike Signs: Waldron reported he spoke to the Department of Transportation. The DOT will be installing the bicycle safety signs on Route 23 and Waldron will work with them on location. They did not offer an installation date.

-Julius Hall Road: Highway is doing drainage work.

- Northern Tree: Northern Tree will be in town for the next week working on tree canopy Including Russell Stage.
- South Street: Waldron has his eye on a culvert on South Street that needs replacing.
- Waldron met with DEP and the contractors regarding the Gibbs Road culvert that is environmental mitigation for a solar project.
- Town Gas Pumps: The pumps will be down for a week as they are being cleaned.

b) Town Administrator

i) ***Finance: Committee meeting September 28 at 10:00am***

The last time the Finance Committee met they talked about condition assessments for Town properties which would entail making itemized lists of maintenance projects and major repairs. Dunne met with EDM, a firm that does these types of projects. Dunne also reached out to two local people; Bloomrose and John Piper, both suggested by George Reichert. There is no report back from Bloomrose or Piper yet. EDM is estimating it would cost around \$20,000 for an assessment of just the Town Hall. Dunne has a couple other firms he will reach out to as well and check into ARPA funding to see if that could work as a funding source.

ii) ***Grants: Community Compact IT – new municipal finance software to be submitted by October 13; Parkland Acquisitions & Renovations for Communities (PARC) – Watson Memorial Park in spring 2024***

Finance, Assessors, Treasurer, Tax Collector, and accounting talked about new finance software. The goal is to go to a cloud-based program. This would initially cost around \$60,000 and operations costs beyond that would be half of what the Town pays now so this would be a real cost saving to the Town. Our new Finance Committee member, Jackie Coury, has taken an interest in this project and is assisting with the grant application.

iii) ***Ongoing projects: Shepard Farm barn removal***

Representatives of the Union Agricultural Society (the Blandford Fair) joined the Board to discuss this proposal. It was agreed upon between the Fair Association and the Select Board that the Town would pay for the dumpster and the group from the Fair would remove the front part of the barn to the dumpster and the back part of the barn would be removed and reassembled at the Fairgrounds.

iv) ***Watson Park/Historical Commission***

Dunne met with Historical Commission members, Katie Milford, and Linda Barnard. There is a grant available called a PARC grant. Small Towns like Blandford can get up to \$100,000 for improvements. Dunne is working with Historical on this project to set priorities for possible improvements to Watson.

4) **ACTION ITEMS**

i) ***Review and act on letter of support for application to Community Compact IT – new municipal finance software***

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to submit a letter of support for application to the Community Compact IT – New Municipal Finance Software

**J. Allen Seconded**

**All in Favor**

***ii) Review and act on testimony in favor of S. 1599, An Act relative to the creation of the Massachusetts Public Safety Building Authority***

Dunne reported that this is a project our previous Fire Chief was working on. This legislation would create a similar entity to the Massachusetts School Building Authority but for municipal public safety buildings.

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion for the Town of Blandford to be in favor of S.1599, An Act relative to the creation of the Massachusetts Public Safety Building authority

**T. Cousineau Seconded**

**All in Favor**

***iii) Review and act on Fiscal Year 2024 Warrant #6 for payment***

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve Warrant #6 for payment

**J. Allen Seconded**

**All in Favor**

***iv) Review and act on request for additional trash barrel for Watson Park from Doug Emo***

Emo is the Watson Park groundskeeper and suggested we purchase a second trash barrel as he has been noticing rubbish in other parts of the park. Dunne will connect with the Historical Commission on this to ensure something aesthetically appropriate is purchased.

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve an addition Historically correct trash barrel for Watson Park

**J. Allen Seconded**

**All in Favor**

***v) Review and act on Snow & Ice Management Policy***

Dunne worked with Waldron on this project, and he explained the purpose of this policy including recreating an “FAQ” for the Highway Department’s policies. Additional benefits would include providing internal clarity on policies and transparency for residents on road ownership and bylaws. This will include state laws that need to be followed as well as Town bylaws. This policy will plan for severe winter weather and how the Town prepares for it. The Board discussed and tweaked some

of the language clarifying that the list of priorities in terms of roads does not constitute the actual routes used by snow plow drivers.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Snow & Ice Management Policy**

**T. Cousineau Seconded**

**All in Favor**

**5) UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**a) *Bicentennial Park maintenance***

The Board discussed the ongoing maintenance of Bicentennial Park since the Arms-Bicentennial Trust is low on funds. Dunne will investigate the cost of hiring an arborist to trim the tree in the park that is quite overgrown.

**b) *Russell Stage Road Water***

See Highway Department report.

**6) NEW BUSINESS**

**a) *All Department Expenditure Report***

Tabled

**7) EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

**Executive Session in accordance with G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(1) to discuss the reputation, character, physical condition, or mental health, rather than professional competence of an individual or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of or complaint or charges brought against a public officer, employee, staff member or individual.**

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to move into Executive Session in accordance with G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(1) to discuss the reputation, character, physical condition, or mental health, rather than professional competence of an individual or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of or complaint or charges brought against a public officer, employee, staff member or individual not to reconvene.**

**T. Cousineau Seconded**

**All in Favor**

**Roll Call Vote In: C. Letendre - Yes      T. Cousineau - Yes      J. Allen - Yes**

**8) EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- a) Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(1) To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition, or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual**

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 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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Jeff Allen, Member

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Theodore Cousineau, Member