



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
Select Board

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

**MEETING MINUTES
BLANDFORD SELECT BOARD
October 02, 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 Executive Session Meeting Minutes of August 21, 2023

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to table the Executive Session meeting Minutes of August 21, 2023
T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor

b) Examination of the Select Board Meeting Minutes of August 31, 2023

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of August 31, 2023, as written
T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor

c) Examination of the Select Board Meeting Minutes of September 11, 2023

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of September 11, 2023, as written
J. Allen Seconded
All in Favor

2) AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION / PUBLIC COMMENT

George Reichert expressed his concerns about the condition of the Post Office/Fire Training Center.

3) DEPARTMENT REPORTS

a) Highway Superintendent – Waldron

- Sperry & Russell Stage Road: Northern Tree Service will be working here for a week
- South Street: Will be shut down to take care of a culvert problem.
- Gas Pumps: The pumps are down for water in the lines.
- Andrew Shannon: Andrew's last day is October 6, 2023. We wish him well.

b) Town Administrator

i) Finance: Committee/Team meetings scheduled for third Thursday

The Finance Committee team will be meeting the third Thursday of each month.

ii) Grants/Projects:

-Community Compact Best Practices – Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and Asset Management

Dunne is working with a couple companies about property condition assessment processes. This will fill some of the gaps in our Capital Improvement Plan. The idea is to get a handle on the condition of our facilities. Dunne believes that this project can be done for under \$10,000.

-Urban and Community Forestry Challenge – Tree Risk Assessment

Dunne submitted a letter of intent to get grant funding for a windshield survey of trees that are hazardous to residents and a threat to power lines.

-Commonwealth Places – Porter Patio

Only one bid was received, and it was high so a request for extension was submitted.

-Regional Economic Development Organization (REDO) – Smart Town Crier

The delay in the patio project has knock-on effects for this effort which will have to wait until spring 2024 for completion as well.

-Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness: Resilient Dirt Roads - Meeting on October 04, 2023, regarding beavers and local bylaws

Dirt Roads: The core meeting team will meet on the 4th to go over next steps for this effort. Many of the beaver impoundments impacting our roads are located on Springfield Water & Sewer Commission property. One result of the project may be a regional RFP for flow device installation and maintenance.

-ARPA: Town Hall backup power – revised plan and site visit with Eversource on October 3: Peter Wozniak will be here with Eversource to look at a revised plan.

-Commission on Disability:

Dunne met with this committee last week to discuss the grant opportunities available. The grant applied for is for signage, door hardware and grab bars for our Town facilities. The recommendation from the MA Office of Disability was to submit as many grant requests for as many projects as we can.

a. Review and act on contract for Treasurer-Collector and Clerk Services

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the contract for Treasurer-Collector and Clerk Services with Mass Munifin, Sara Hunter for one year from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

J. Allen Seconded
All in Favor

-Highway Labor Position:

This position has been posted on the website and local newspapers.

4) ACTION ITEMS

a. Review and act on Fiscal Year 2024 Warrant #6 payroll

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

T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor

b. Review and act on contract amendment with City Point Partners for owner's project manager (OPM) services through schematic design of the proposed Fire-Highway Facility Project

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to table the contract amendment with City Point Partners until the next Select Board meeting.

J. Allen Seconded
All in Favor

c. Review and act on Amendment #1 to Agreement for Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) under M.G.L. c. 59, 38H(b) with DG Massachusetts CS, LLC f/k/a DG Massachusetts Solar, LLC for 12 George Millard Road

Dunne spoke about the DG Pilot Solar project agreement. In summary, the PILOT agreement with the company was unusual in that it included a date at which time payments would commence rather than starting only upon mechanical completion. That date fell in November 2020 and was missed. The company proposed an amendment to the agreement which was not executed by the Town. Fast forward to 2023, the Town proposed that they would execute the amendment contingent on receipt of the missed payment not already abated. That roughly \$75,000 payment was received by the Town recently. The Board of Assessors narrowly voted to collect interest. However, it is the opinion of Town Counsel that because it is a PILOT agreement rather than a personal property tax full stop, the terms of the agreement rather than Massachusetts tax law apply. If the agreement is so amended to waive all payments other than the amount specified that was previously due, interest would not apply. Dunne recommended moving forward with the agreement to put this issue behind us now that the payment had been received.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the amendment to the DG Pilot agreement for payment in lieu of taxes under M.G.L.c.59, 38H(b) with

DG Massachusetts CS, LLC f/k/a DG Massachusetts Solar, LLC for 12
George Millard Road
T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor

- d. *Appoint Christopher Dunne to the Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) Advisory Board for the term October 2, 2023, to June 30, 2024*

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to appoint Christopher Dunne to the FRTA (Franklin Regional Transit Authority) Advisory Board for the term October 02, 2023, to June 30, 2024
T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor

- e. *Appoint Cara Letendre to the Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) Advisory Board for the term October 2, 2023, to June 30, 2024*

MOTION: J. Allen made a motion to appoint Cara Letendre to the FRTA (Franklin Regional Transit Authority) Advisory Board for the term October 02, 2023, to June 30, 2024
T. Cousineau Seconded
C. Letendre Abstained
All in Favor

5) **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a) *Bicentennial Park Maintenance*

Dunne is actively looking for a landscape company to maintain the park going forward.

- b) *Request for additional waste receptacle for Watson Park from Doug Emo*

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the purchase of an additional waste receptacle for Watson Park.

T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor

- c) *Generator maintenance*

Dunne reported the company used in the past has gone out of business. He will reach out to Kinsley for potential pricing.

6) **NEW BUSINESS**

- a) *All Department Expenditure Report*

The Board reviewed the expenditure report and found no problems.

7) **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Meeting adjourned at 6:38 pm

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

Cara Letendre, Chair

Jeff Allen, Member

Theodore Cousineau, Member