



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
Select Board

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

MEETING MINUTES
BLANDFORD SELECT BOARD
October 30, 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 6:00 pm

1) EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) Examination of the Select Board Meeting Minutes of October 2, 2023

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to table the Select Board Meeting Minutes of October 2, 2023
T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor

2) AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION / PUBLIC COMMENT

George Reichert – Mr. Reichert expressed frustration with the audio quality of the Select Board meeting recordings.

Gordon Avery – Mr. Avery noted the Highway Laborer job posting had received few responses and recommended that the Town consider providing on the job training coupled with a contract. Dunne noted that under the current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) will cover Bay State Roads classes but not the necessarily licensing for the position. Letendre said that this will be discussed when the new CBA is negotiated. Dunne will discuss with the Highway Superintendent about reposting the position.

3) DEPARTMENT REPORTS

- a) Town Administrator

i) *Finance: FY23 closeout update*

-Finance Committee is working on the FY23 Closeout. Once done, the Department of Revenue can certify it. Once that happens, we will know what Free Cash is for FY23. Normally this happens earlier, however, there was an issue with some tax packets that held things up. Dunne is expecting this will be concluded by the end of November 2023.

ii) *Personnel updates: Town Administrator posting*

-*TA Posting*: The postings for a new Town Administrator has been sent to the Country Journal, Westfield News, Berkshire Eagle, on the Town's Website, LinkedIn. If there are other venues where this should be posted, please let Dunne know.

-*Town Administrator Transition*: Dunne is working on a 'turnkey' system listing the progress of items he has been working on so when the new person steps in, what is still in the works can be easily accessed and explained.

4) **ACTION ITEMS**

a) *Review and act on Fiscal Year 2024 Payroll Warrant #8 and supplemental*

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve Warrant #8 Payroll for payment

T. Cousineau Seconded

All in Favor

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Supplemental Warrant #8 for new salt vendor for Appalachian Salt for \$18,148.62

J. Allen Seconded

All in Favor

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve Supplemental Warrant #8 for the Water Department for Ford of Northampton vehicle purchase for \$40,092.

J. Allen Seconded

All in Favor

Avery provided the context for the Water Department vehicle purchase: repairs for the F-550 from the Highway Department were mounting and with trade-in value, the Water Department was able to get this new vehicle for roughly \$40,000. Allen questioned why a used vehicle was not looked at and Avery claimed that similar used vehicles are essentially the same price. Letendre noted that the vehicle was covered by grant funding.

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*

Dunne has been working with Town Counsel and City Point Partners, the OPM, on an updated contract to reflect additional funding authorized at Town Meeting. However, over the course of schematic design to date, City Point has noted that their "burn rate" has been significantly slower than anticipated and they believe they are ok with the contract amount for the time being.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to table the contract amendment with City Point Partners for owner's project manager (OPM) services through schematic design of the proposed Fire-Highway Facility Project until the next Select Board meeting.

T. Cousineau Seconded

All in Favor

c) *Review and act on letter to the Department of Recreation & Conservation (DCR regarding Shepard Farm barn removal*

Dunne reported that DCR visited Blandford to review the plan to remove the barn from Shepard Farm. They met with the Blandford Conservation Commission, Christopher Dunne and Nick Pietroniro, Blandford's Conservation Agent and the proposed removal of the barns was discussed.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the letter to the Department of Recreation & Conservation regarding Shepard Farm barn removal

T. Cousineau Seconded

All in Favor

d) *Review and act on letter regarding record of costs imposed on the Town of Blandford in Fiscal Year 2023 that are reasonably related to the operation of Pudding Hill Farm, LLC*

Dunne spoke to the proposed letter. With changes to state regulations regarding cannabis, host communities must now document any claimed impacts resulting from operators. Pudding Hill Farm essentially has no impacts and this letter states as much.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the letter regarding record of costs imposed on the Town of Blandford in FY23 that are reasonably related to the operation of Pudding Hill Farm, LLC

T. Cousineau Seconded

All in Favor

5) UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

6) NEW BUSINESS

a) *All Department Expenditure Report*

Tabled

b) *Springfield Water Intergovernmental Agreement - Dunne*

Springfield Water & Sewer Commission is proposing another IGA with Blandford. They will be undertaking logging on their property at the end of South Street and will be using a portion of this road to access their property. The Commission will provide a draft in the coming weeks.

7) EXECUTIVE SESSION

Meeting adjourned at 6:28 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