



**TOWN OF BLANDFORD**  
Select Board

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

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**BLANDFORD SELECT BOARD**  
**Monday, March 25, 2024**  
**6:00 pm**

**Meeting held in the Select Board Chamber, Town Hall**

**In attendance:** C. Letendre, Chair; J. Allen, Member; T. Cousineau, Member; M. Szlosek, Town Administrator

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

*a) Examination of the Meeting Minutes of February 28, 2024*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve the joint Chester Select Board and Blandford Select Board meeting minutes of February 28, 2024, as amended

**J. Allen Seconded**

**All in Favor**

*b) Examination of the Meeting Minutes of March 04, 2024*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Select Board meeting minutes of March 04, 2024, as written

**T. Cousineau Seconded**

**All in Favor**

*c) Examination of the Meeting Minutes of March 11, 2024*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Select Board meeting minutes of March 11, 2024, as written

**T. Cousineau Seconded**

**All in Favor**

*d) Examination of the Executive Session Meeting Minutes of March 11, 2024*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve the Executive Session Select Board meeting minutes of March 11, 2024, as written

**T. Cousineau Seconded**

**All in Favor**

**2) AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION / PUBLIC COMMENT**

### 3) **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

#### a) ***Highway Department – Dave Waldron joined by Mark Boomsma, Tree Warden***

-**Gibbs Road**: Culvert is done, and the road has been raised about 1 ½ feet.

-**Tighe & Bond**: Engineers will be here next week to look at the water leak under the bridge on Russell Stage Road.

-**Gore Road**: Eversource Tree work will begin Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The road will be closed these days.

-**Blandford Road Tree Removal**: Northern Tree will do this work

-**Mack Truck**: Out to evaluate the plow head.

-**Mark Boomsma Report**: Spoke of the various areas in Town that need tree/limb pick up. Mark is suggesting he work with Highway in FY25 to develop a clean-up plan.

-**Ash Tree Removal Water Department**: Boomsma was asked about removing the ash trees from the access road to the Water Department. Mark does not believe there are enough ash trees on that road and suggests renting a bush whacker to remove the overhanging branches. Boomsma further stated that he would like the Select Board to consider whether the Town should pay for maintaining a road only used by the Water Department. Boomsma offered a video of the entire road. Jeff Allen will observe.

#### b) ***Town Administrator***

i) ***Pavement Management Study Meeting w/PVPC; Funding discussion***: Szlosek reported he and Dave Waldron met with PVPC. They have suggested the Town re-do the Pavement Management Program that was done 4 years ago under the direction of Joshua Garcia. The cost of doing this today would be \$16,000. Szlosek is asking if we want to spend Chapter 90 funds on this. Szlosek is recognizing the value of a report such as this as it helps prioritize roads, however this may not be a wise choice at this time. Letender asked if there are any grants out there for this. The Select Board would like to table this and talk about this again for FY26. Waldron will pursue grants next year and not use Chapter 90 monies.

ii) ***MIIA Property & Liability Plan***: Szlosek noted he and Select Board member TJ Cousineau met with MIIA to talk about the Town's property & liability plan. Their Mandatory recommendations are: Facility maintenance and water weather loss by mechanical failure prevention which would implement a formal written program that includes scheduled maintenance inspections and prioritization of corrective action for repairs due to the level of risk to our buildings and hatches and include protocols due to mechanical failures due to extreme weather, etc. Szlosek will investigate a grant for this process.

iii) ***MA DOT Travel Plazas***: Szlosek joined a meeting with MA DOT to discuss the processes these plazas go through as their leases expire every 25 years and this is what they are working on today. We can expect in the next year or two to see a lot of extensive work being done at the plazas.

#### c) ***Town Clerk***

i) ***Election Tabulator***: The Town Clerk is asking to give the Town Clerk's office a vote of support to present to the Finance Committee to purchase an Election Tabulator which will count the votes, eliminate many hours of labor, and will help cut the cost of our elections. It will read and count the ballots reducing the chance of errors. These machines are used throughout the commonwealth (Russell, Becket & Otis have this machine). Jennifer Girard, Election Warden, said it would be sad to have to stop using the old Cranker Box. TJ Cousineau suggested donating it to the Historical Society. She reported this would eliminate the need for votes to be hand counted on election days. The Quote is for \$6,780 and will be presented to the Finance Committee with the approval of the Select Board. Mike Szlosek will schedule a Finance Committee meeting.

4) **ACTION ITEMS**

a. *Approve Warrant #18 Payroll for Payment*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve Warrant #18 Payroll for payment  
T. Cousineau Seconded  
All in Favor

b. *Approve Warrant #19 Account Payable for Payment*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve Warrant #19 Accounts Payable for payment  
T. Cousineau Seconded  
All in Favor

c. *Approve Water Department use of Acct #015294.901 ATM 6/23 A12 Ash Tree Removal*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to table Ash Tree Removal  
T. Cousineau Seconded  
All in Favor

d. *Approve Contract for Porter Memorial Library Patio Project*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to approve the contract with Porter Memorial Library for the Patio Project pending extension of the grant.  
T. Cousineau Seconded  
All in Favor

e. *Appoint John Carrington – Hilltown Ambulance Association*

**MOTION:** C. Letendre made a motion to appoint John Carrington to the Hilltown Ambulance Association Board  
J. Allen Seconded  
All in Favor

5) **NEW BUSINESS**

None

6)

7) **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

Meeting adjourned at 6:36 pm

Submitted by Joann Martin  
Administrative Assistant to the Select Board  
and Mike Szlosek, Town Administrator

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Cara Letendre, Chair

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T. Cousineau, Member

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J. Allen, Member