



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
Select Board

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

MEETING MINUTES
BLANDFORD SELECT BOARD
Monday, April 22, 2024
6:00 pm

Meeting held in the Select Board Chamber, Town Hall

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

1) EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a) *Examination of the Meeting Minutes of March 25, 2024*

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of March 25, 2024, as written.

J. Allen Seconded

All in Favor

2) AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION / PUBLIC COMMENT

George Reichert – Suggestions for the Select Board

3) DEPARTMENT REPORTS

a) *Highway Department*

-Dirt Road Project

Angela Panaccione from PVPC. joined the Select Board to talk about the Western MA Unpaved Roads Climate Resiliency Project Grant. Angela explained to the Board the many parts to this project. Ninety percent of PVPC's part has been completed and on google drive This grant expects a monetary match however, Angela believes she can get a 'zero match' so the Town won't have to worry about match tracking. The Road Study has been completed and presented to the Town to Christopher Dunne.

Letendre suggested we put Dirt Roads on our agenda for next week and invite Paula Bilodeau who was the Dirt Road Project Liaison. Panaccione will send all the pertinent information on a flash drive.

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to support the Western Massachusetts Unpaved Roads Climate Resiliency Project.

T. Cousineau Seconded

All in Favor

-Flag Discussion – Waldron reported he is still waiting for the bucket truck to be repaired.

-MA Works Grant: Waldron reported he worked with Ira Brezinsky, PVPC, on the MA Works Grant which was informative. Waldron has asked the Select Board and Mike Szlosek, Town Administrator to write letters of support. Waldron also asked for letters of support for Beech Hill and Gore Roads.

-Tighe & Bond: Waldron reported he is still waiting for Tighe & Bond to send the scope of work for the bridge.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to move to New Business c. Historical Commission
J. Allen Seconded
All in Favor**

b) Town Administrator

-Contractor Authorized Signatory – Cara signed the authorized signatory for Town Administrator Mike Szlosek.

-Annual Town Meeting Discussion – The Annual Town Meeting will be June 3. The budget is not complete, but Szlosek hopes it will be posted by May 20. Szlosek reported he has not received GRSD transfer student numbers only the cost per student for Smith Vocational is \$20,847 per student; Westfield Tech is \$21,075 per student.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to open the annual town meeting June 03, 2024
T. Cousineau Seconded
All in Favor**

-Sprinkler Bid – Szlosek received 2 quotes; 1 for the main pump which is leaking but it is currently function and the cost would be \$5,600. The second bid is \$16,000 to get the entire system up again. The total would be \$21,000 to the complete job. Szlosek will meet with the Finance Committee. Cousineau asked about the certification of the tank. Szlosek reported that is a separate job for \$5,600 for the Certification. Szlosek will look for the funds for this and this is not covered by insurance as this is regular maintenance. Allen would like to get a price on a new pump, have the certification done and replace the controls. Allen would prefer not to spend on a pump that is that old. Allen is recommending we hold off on the certification until a new pump is installed.

-Building Committee update – J. Allen updated the Select Board about the latest Fire Building meeting and noted they agreed on 1) Building the Fire Department building first, 2) Allen mentioned the cost of a sprinkler system in the fire station stating he doesn't think this is needed and because of the size of the building being 7M sf or less, this is not necessary 3) it was decided the salt shed is the most logical location 4) opted for a steel building with 4-foot concrete walls the larger doors 5) no module design flat roof building. We are at the stage where we can look at blueprints to get an idea what the cost will be and hopefully, we will have something at the Annual Town Meeting in 2025.

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve \$15,115 for the controls with Encore Fire Protection
J. Allen Seconded
All in Favor**

**MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve \$15,115 for the controls with Encore Fire Protection
J. Allen Seconded**

All in Favor

-MIA Property & Casualty: Szlosek reported the property and casualty insurance has only gone up 1%. For some reason we budgeted only \$75,000 but the policy was \$95,000 and this will have to be addressed on the floor of the meeting. This will look bad on the budget because we were under-budgeted.

-Hazard Mitigation Plan Update – Tabled

-Hilltown Community Ambulance – Tabled

-Aubrey Hultay – Referendum Question:

4) ACTION ITEMS

a. *Approve Warrant #20 PAYROLL for payment*

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve Warrant #20 Payroll

J. Allen Seconded

All in Favor

b. *Approve Warrant #21 Accounts Payable for payment*

MOTION: C. Letendre made a motion to approve Warrant #21 AP

J. Allen Seconded

All in Favor

c. *Aubrey Hultay, Gateway District Student – Turnpike Referendum Question*

Aubrey spoke to the Select Board about adding a referendum to the Warrant for the next special or annual town meeting. She presented this referendum to the Board. Town Counsel will vet this.

5) NEW BUSINESS

a) *All Departmental Expenditure Report* - The Board reviewed and found few problems and made suggestions to the Town Administrator for year-end transfers.

b) *Jungle Gym Donation* - Adam Goniska, a Blandford Resident, donated a playhouse to the Town of Blandford. This will be given to the Porter Memorial Library for their new patio thanks to a state grant which will be open in June 2024.

c) *Historical Commission – Linda Barnard; Watson Park Gazebo* – Barnard joined the Board to discuss the condition of the Gazebo in Watson Park. The Historical Commission believes it is a liability as the stairs are rotting. She is suggesting we use the grant funds from the American Disabilities Act. Letendre pointed out the use of the ADA grant is not for this purpose, but the gazebo should be repaired. Szlosek confirmed that the ADA Grant funds cannot be used for this purpose, however, we should still have the steps repaired.

d) *Bicentennial Park* – Jeff Allen will donate his time to repair the wall on the west side of the park.

e) *Earth Day Clean Up* – C. Letendre will look for volunteers to clean up the area outside of the MA Pike.

6) EXECUTIVE SESSION

Meeting adjourned at 7:39 pm

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

Cara Letendre, Chair

T. Cousineau, Member

J. Allen, Member