



**Select Board Minutes**  
**Tuesday, December 19, 2023**  
**7:00pm**

The Select Board Regular Meeting was held virtually in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, An Act Making Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2023 to Provide for Supplementing Certain Existing Appropriations and for Certain Other Activities and Projects, and signed into law on March 29, 2023, this meeting was conducted via remote participation.

**Select Board participants:**

Rich Maiore, Charles Oliver, Don Ludwig, Kara Minar, Erin McBee

**Town Department participants:**

Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro, Executive Assistant Julie Doucet, Firefighter/EMT Jason Cotting

**Additional participants:**

HCIC Chair Ellen Leicher, MAHT Chair Arielle Jennings, Bonnie Heudorfer, Amy Nutt

**Climate Initiative Committee status report**

Chair Ellen Leicher came to share Climate Action Plan implementation and educational highlights. She spoke about various grant opportunities that are available. Included in the report were ways the Select Board can assist in implementation of the Town Climate Resolution, HCIC membership structure, HCIC liaisons on other committees and support the adoption of the Specialized Stretch Code, tree learning erosion control code and wetlands protection update of the code. She will submit a specific request form the committee for a change in membership and at an upcoming Select Board meeting the specialized stretch code will be discussed in more detail.

**Municipal Affordable Housing Trust presentation of the draft Housing Production Plan**

MAHT Chair Arielle Jennings and volunteer Bonnie Heudorfer came to present the draft plan. They acknowledged the yearlong effort it took to complete this plan. They are confident the plan as drafted will strategically guide the town to develop low to moderate income housing. They expect the town can meet the 10% goal. The plan includes a summary of strategies that are especially important. By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve the plan as amended.

**Minutes**

By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve the 11/21 minutes, as presented.

**Staff Report/updates (Attachment A)**

**Annual license renewals**

Executive Assistant Julie Doucet confirmed all license holders are in good standing for renewal. She reported a couple of license holders have remaining requirements to meet and Sorrento's Pizzeria has decided to forgo the ability to allow carry-in beer and wine for patrons. Charles Oliver By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – abstain, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve all licenses but the General Store.

By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – abstain, Maiore – aye, the board voted to approve license for the Harvard General Store. Oliver does business with the General Store therefore he did not vote on this motion.

#### **Harvard Ambulance Service rates for Calendar Year 2024**

Firefighter/EMT Jason Cotting came to request the accepting of the new rates for 2024.

By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve the new rates.

#### **Memorials Policy**

By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve the amended memorial policy.

#### **Special Event Request from the Bromfield School PTO**

PTO member Amy Nutt has been working with Sargent Callahan on the event details. All proceeds from the Running to Class Winter 1-Mile Fun Run and 5K will benefit the PTO's for Hildreth Elementary and Bromfield schools. She is hopeful this will become an annual event.

By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve the special event permit with a weather date to be determined if necessary.

#### **Select Board Reports**

Erin McBee reported the Planning Board is seeking guidance on the master plan next steps and would like to attend an upcoming Select Board meeting. She said the board has completed a first draft on the C district plan and are vetting feedback from the MBTA survey.

Don Ludwig reported the Finance Committee has met with all town departments and is currently waiting for response from the school department on their budget questions.

#### **Executive Session**

By a roll call vote, Minar–aye, Oliver – aye, McBee– aye, Ludwig – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to enter executive session at 8:50pm as per MGL 30A Sec. 21.2 To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30pm.

Documents referenced:

HCIC update – dated December 2023

Housing Production Plan – dated 2024-2028

Annual licenses – 2024

HAS rated – 2024

Prohibit Memorials Policy – dated December 2023

Special event application – dated 12.14.2023

## **Staff Report**

### **December 19, 2023**

#### ***Building/Facility Related:***

- The Town landfill project: Moving along; engineers from Tighe and Bond have filed the initial report with the State's DEP, and we're awaiting their response and next steps.
- COA Solar: National Grid's distribution engineer approved the project to move forward without the additional (2 year) study, required the project be downsized slightly to 40kWAC. This will be discussed at the PBC, and in a follow-up call with Solect.
- DPW: Wesson & Sampson have costed/re-costed, and tomorrow the PBC will see preliminary plans and discuss bid (add/deduct) alternate structuring.
- Town Clock: Production should be complete by mid-January; panel is ready to be delivered. Many thanks to David Kendall for coordinating the electrician, steeplejack, etc.

#### ***FY24 Operations:***

- The Land Use and Building Departments moved up to Hildreth House today and will be unpacking tomorrow. The move was successful.
- MART Drop and Ride to Littleton train station continues to be used; MART Director Bruno Fisher relayed that there were 8 trips last week, still positive compared to other communities.
- The Water and Sewer Commissioners will be sending out letters to all of the customers who are delinquent in paying their bills and will, if necessary, shut off residents' water. Customers owe from \$514 to \$1,900+.
- UMass Collins, HFD, HAS, and Town administration will be meeting in January for the 'official' kick off regarding the HFD/HAS merger.
- Finance: The tax rate has been set (\$14.90), free cash has been certified (\$1.36M), and Town counsel is preparing petitions for a vetted number of properties for tax title.
- COA: Last week 96 meals were served for their Holiday Luncheon, and they hosted the Girl Scout Holiday Tea for the first time \*at\* the COA.
- Police: They are on track to surpass 10,000 calls in CY2023, one of the busiest years on record (791 service calls in the past 30 days). Additionally, the Department has secured two additional grants, one for new cruiser laptops (Byrne Grant for Executive Office of Public Safety), and one for the Chief's traffic enforcement mobilization (Municipal Road Safety Program), which will be covering officers' overtime for the expanded traffic enforcement mobilization through December.
- The Library encourages last-minute shoppers to check out the Friends' ongoing booksale, happening in their lobby.
- Fivesparks has proposed a utility cost-sharing addendum which has been informally reviewed and vetted; Town Counsel is currently reviewing and this draft will be sent post-counsel-review, and on the 1/9 agenda for the Board's discussion.
- Town Hall will close at 1PM on Thursday for staff to celebrate Christmas together and the COA and DPW will close at 1PM on Friday for the same purpose.

***FY25:***

- The CPIC, FinCom, and CPC are all working toward having their recommendation done in accordance with the schedule set in place earlier this fiscal year. Budgets have been submitted, questions and answers are flowing between the committees and departments. CPIC is rolling into their evaluation phase and will be making recommendations to the SB at the end of the month.
- FinCom will be meeting weekly in January (1/2, 1/9, 1/16); 1/9 is a discussion with the School and follow-up of options for FY25. (As of this moment, the recap reflects a \$1.26M deficit)
- Three important budget/election dates to note:
  - Small financial warrant articles due to [jmullane@harvard-ma.gov](mailto:jmullane@harvard-ma.gov) by **January 5**
  - Ballot question language is due by **February 23** per the Town Clerk.
  - Nomination papers due to the Town Clerk by **March 5**

***State-related:***

- Last week the Governor shrugged off the need for mid-year budget cuts at this point and stated she and her staff will manage the situation.

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