



Town of West Newbury
Select Board
Monday, December 6, 2021 @ 7:00pm
381 Main Street, Town Office Building
www.wnewbury.org
Open Session Meeting Minutes

Open Session: Open Session was called to order by Chairperson Parker at 7:26pm

Participation at the Meeting:

Richard Parker, David Archibald, and Wendy Reed; *Select Board Members*
Angus Jennings, *Town Manager (remote)*
James Blatchford, *Town Clerk*
Sgt. Michael Dwyer, *West Newbury Police*
Kelly Scott
Fred Chanania, *Tree Committee*
Bob Janes, *Historic Commission*
Deborah Hamilton
Ann O'Sullivan
Doreen Crowley
Patricia Reeser
Richard Baker
Kevin Bowe
Leisa Mingo
Leigh Stoecker
Mary Joyce-Acosta
Stephanie Frontiera, *Town Accountant*

Announcements:

- This meeting is being broadcast on local cable TV and recorded for rebroadcast on the local cable channels and on the internet. Meeting also accessible by remote participation; see agenda for details.
- Regional Vaccination Clinics, ages 5-11. December 6, 13, 20.
- Holiday Tree Lighting and carols – Thursday, December 9th at 6:30pm – Training Field – All Welcome!
- Thank you and best wishes to outgoing COA Director Theresa Woodbury for 16 years of service!
- Call to Boards/Commissions/Committees and Town Departments for FY21 Town Reports!
- Call for volunteers: current opportunities at <https://www.wnewbury.org/volunteer>
- Reminder to subscribe for emailed Town news/announcements at <https://www.wnewbury.org/subscribe>
- Acknowledgement of Comcast price increases (see pages 5-6 for details)

Regular Business

A. Recognition of employee efforts to support Pentucket Arts Foundation Terror Trail

Parker stated that John Elwell submitted a letter of recognition commending the Police and Fire Department employees for their assistance in maintaining a safe environment for all the participants of the fundraiser (see exhibit A page 7 for details). **No motion was made at this time.**

B. Request for waiver of 15-day waiting period, appointment of Sydney Lathrop as Part-Time Dispatcher

Sgt. Michael Dwyer appeared before the Select Board in person for this request. Dwyer discussed Lathrop's current position as dispatch supervisor in Maine and prior experience as a dispatcher in West Newbury training (see exhibit B page 8 for details). Dwyer stated it was anticipated that Lathrop would move back to the area in February. **Parker made a motion to waive the 15-day waiting period for the appointment of Sydney Lathrop effective through June 30, 2022. Archibald seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

C. Applications for Committee appointments:

a. Kelly Scott – Tree Committee

Kelly Scott appeared before the Select Board in person for the requested appointment. Scott discussed the importance of trees and tree preservation in the community. Fred Chanania appeared before the Select Board remotely and stated the Tree Committee had voted unanimously to recommend Scott for appointment. **Parker made a motion to appoint Kelly Scott to the Tree Committee. Archibald seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

b. Robert Belmont – Historical Commission

Bob Janes appeared before the Select Board in person to recommend Robert Belmont to be appointed on the Historical Commission. Janes stated there were currently four members on the Historical Commission. **Parker made a motion to appoint Robert Belmont to the Historical Commission effective**

immediately and effective through June 30, 2023. Reed seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).

c. Richard Baker; Kevin Bowe; Doreen Crowley; Deborah Hamilton; Leisa Mingo; Ann O’Sullivan; Pamela Shaffer; Leigh Stoecker – Affordable Housing Trust Bylaw Committee

Parker stated eight people had volunteered to serve on the Affordable Housing Bylaw Committee but only five volunteers would be needed to serve on the committee (see exhibit C.c pages 9-12 for details). Parker stated the Select Board was looking for one member from the Planning Board, one member from the Select Board, one member with financial background, one member with legal experience, and one member from the community with an interest in affordable housing. The Select Board clarified that the committee members would serve a limited term effective through April 30, 2022 and would be responsible for writing the Affordable Housing Bylaw.

Deborah Hamilton, associate member of the Planning Board, appeared before the Select Board in person for appointment as the requested representative for the Planning Board.

Ann O’Sullivan appeared before the Select Board in person and stated interest in serving on the committee. O’Sullivan discussed prior financial experience, as well as, prior experience in the Affordable Housing Bylaw process. O’Sullivan stated the application of interest would be withdrawn if new individuals within the town that could provide a fresh prospective requested to be involved.

Doreen Crowley appeared before the Select Board in person and discussed experience as a construction estimator that could be helpful on the committee. The Select Board discussed how Crowley’s skill set could be valuable on the Affordable Housing Trust once established.

Patricia Reeser appeared before the Select Board in person and stated prior legal background of 40 years. Reeser stated that application of interest would be withdrawn if new individuals within the town requested to be involved.

Richard Baker, Chairperson of the Board of Assessors, appeared before the Select Board in person and discussed experience monitoring real estate transactions and property evaluations as a helpful skill for the committee. Baker informed the Select Board that serving on the Affordable Housing Trust was of more interest than serving on the Affordable Housing Bylaw Committee.

Kevin Bowe appeared before the Select Board in person and discussed prior experience in state government and private institutions. Bowe asked to withdraw the request from consideration due to the wealth of talent that had applied for appointment and stated interest in serving on the Affordable Housing Trust once established.

Leisa Mingo, Chairperson of the Housing Authority, appeared before the Select Board in person requesting the at-large appointment. Mingo stated the Housing Authority and Affordable Housing Bylaw Committee had similar goals but the committee would focus on the town instead of the county.

Leigh Stoecker appeared before the Select Board in person requesting the at-large appointment. Stoecker discussed interest in land use and the importance of affordable housing within the town.

Reed volunteered to represent the Select Board on the Affordable Housing Bylaw Committee. **Parker made a motion to appoint Deborah Hamilton for the Planning Board representative, Doreen Crowley as the representative with financial background, Leigh Stoecker as the member at-large, Patricia Reeser as the representative with legal experience, Wendy Reed as the Select Board representative.** The Select Board stated that any assistance from Ann O’Sullivan, although O’Sullivan was not officially appointed, would be welcomed. **Reed seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

d. Mary Joyce-Acosta – Council on Aging, or Affordable Housing Trust Bylaw Committee

Mary Joyce-Acosta appeared before the Select Board remotely. Joyce-Acosta discussed 18 years of experience in the human services field and elder services. **Parker made a motion to appoint Mary Joyce-Acosta to the Council on Aging. Archibald seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

D. Liquor License Renewal applications – West Newbury Pizza Company and West Newbury Food Mart

The Select Board and Blatchford discussed the annual renewal process and requirement of the Select Board to approve the renewals on an annual basis as the Licensing Authority (see exhibit D pages 13-14 for details). **Archibald made a motion to approve the retail alcohol license for West Newbury Pizza Company for Wines & Malt with the expiration date of December 31, 2022. Parker seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

Archibald made a motion to approve the package store retail alcohol license for West Newbury Food Mart for all types of alcoholic beverages with the expiration date of December 31, 2022. Parker seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).

E. Consideration of proposal to remove (or remove and replace) two interpretive signs regarding Native Americans (at Indian Hill and Garden Street; and on Turkey Hill Road)

Parker stated the topic had been discussed 5 weeks prior but no action had been taken at that time. The Select Board reviewed the letters of support to remove the signage that had been received (see exhibit E pages 15-19 for details). **Parker made a motion to remove the two interpretive signs regarding Native Americans at Indian Hill and Garden Street and on Turkey Hill Road to be removed from the right of way.** Parker stated the Historical Commission would propose different signage in the future. **Reed seconded.** Janes stated the Historical Commission had voted to remove the signage and had discussed creating more appropriate replacement signage for the historic location. The Select Board discussed the importance of committees completing the process of where their charge lies before a decision is made by the Select Board. **Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).** The Select Board stated that once appropriate wording was proposed and recommended by the Historic Commission, the Select Board would review and make a determination of approval for the installation on the right of way.

Janes addressed the Select Board and stated a large 150yr old map of the town and Essex County had been donated to the Historic Commission and West Newbury by Kelly Scott. Janes suggested the map could be hung on the wall outside of the Hearing Room. The Select Board viewed a picture of the map and stated the determination of where the map would be placed would be discussed at a later time.

F. Discussion of proposed work scope/budget from Lynne Spencer re Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Bldg.

The Select Board reviewed the proposal received from Lynne Spencer of Spencer Preservation Group (see exhibit F pages 20-33 for details). The Select Board and Jennings discussed the proposal, the cost associated with the services, and if there was a prioritized list of steps within the proposal received. Discussion continued concerning the current zoning limitations, the memo from the Building Inspector concerning the distinction of the property as non-conforming, and sanitary disposal options for the property. Jennings stated the importance of the zoning component and how that would lend to a market for the building. The Select Board agreed that identifying zoning possibilities for what businesses could be allowed would determine if there was a market for the building to pursue. The Select Board discussed presenting the proposal to the CPC and the need to move forward if options were to be presented to residents at the Spring Town Meeting. **Parker made a motion to bring this to the CPC December meeting. Reed seconded.** Jennings stated the form and brief narrative for CPC would be completed. **Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).** Jennings briefly discussed the abutters to the property desire for a buffer between the building parking lot and the residence.

G. Review/approval of Sullivan's Court trail easement

The Select Board reviewed the trail easement document and land plan map (see exhibit G pages 34-51 for details). The Select Board requested a more accurate depiction of where the water line was located within the plans. **This item was tabled until a more detailed location of the water line could be determined.**

H. Request for authorization to pursue MMA designation as Cyber Aware Community

Jennings explained the cyber training modules would be created by MMA and administered to all staff at no cost to the town (see exhibit H pages 52-55 for details). The Select Board briefly discussed the importance of cyber security. **Reed made a motion to pursue MMA designation as Cyber Aware Community. Archibald seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

I. Approve Letter of Intent for Municipal Vulnerability Program (MVP) Action Grant

Parker stated the Municipal Vulnerability Program Action Grant had not been pursued the prior year as more detailed information was needed in order to be awarded the grant (see exhibit I page 56 for details). Parker stated that the Climate Change Resiliency Committee would discuss topics for the action grant they wished to apply for this year at the meeting on Wednesday. Parker stated this topic would be brought before the Select Board in the following weeks. **No motion was made at this time.**

J. Discussion of FY23 budget policy direction

The Select Board and Jennings reviewed the FY22 budget policy direction and discussed edits to be made for the FY23 budget policy direction (see exhibit J pages 57-61 for details). Archibald discussed the rising cost over that last year and suggested increasing the expense budget to 2.5%. The Select Board and Jennings discussed the ARPA funds and determining the allocation toward a specific project. Discussion continued surrounding whether the funds should be used for a water project or if use on a different project would be a more substantial benefit for the town.

The Select Board agreed to remove #2 (budgeted specific impacts of COVID-19) and #6 (transfer of funds to support the Middle Street Bridge project) from the policy direction for FY23. The Select Board briefly discussed continuation of #10 (Free Cash transfer to reduce the tax rate) at the Fall Town meeting. Jennings briefly made note that the budget for Whittier Vocational High School would have a significant increase as the student enrollment had risen from 9 to 14 student.

The Select Board discussed how to build in the potential wage changes to the budget upon the completion of the wage and compensation study. Town Accountant, Stephanie Frontiera, appeared before the Select Board remotely and discussed how an account within the General Fund could hold the appropriated funds. The Select Board, Jennings, and Frontiera discussed whether the funding should be listed as a line item

or presented as a warrant article. It was decided to propose this as a warrant article as it would not be a reoccurring item in the budget each year. Jennings stated the revisions would be made to the policy direction and brought back before the Select Board the following meeting. **No motion was made at this time.**

K. Update on Middle/High School project

Reed stated the exterior work had been completed and the project was proceeding at a good pace within the budget that had been set (see exhibit K pages 62-77 for details). The Select Board discussed that ledge was anticipated to be uncovered which could result in an additional cost for demolition. Parker discussed a letter from West Newbury Wild & Native which addressed planting smaller native trees to the landscape, as opposed to larger trees, and the response from the landscape architect. The Select Board discussed this topic and decided the Building Committee could examine the cost differentials and make a determination as the group had the authority over the building budget. **No motion was made at this time.**

L. Meeting minutes: August 30, 2021

The Select Board noted clerical errors to be corrected (see exhibit L pages 78-89 for details). Jennings advised the Select Board to mark a copy of the minutes for correction and a staff member would complete them. **Parker made a motion to accept the minutes as marked. Archibald seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

Town Manager Updates

M. Update on interim staffing plan for Senior Center/Council on Aging; and proposed Senior Center repairs

Jennings informed the Select Board that Assistant Clerk, Christine Marshall, would be providing coverage for the Council on Aging office Monday-Thursday 8:30-12:30pm (see exhibit M pages 90-95 for details). Jennings stated that Marshall had six years of experience working with the Council on Aging in Andover and would provide coverage until a new director was in place. Jennings reviewed the structural issue of the skylight within the Senior Center and the intent to pursue a short-term fix that would make the space safe. **No motion was made at this time.**

N. Vendor contract, Wage Classification Study

Jennings stated a proposal had been received from the Collins Center but a sign contract was not in place at this time. **No motion was made at this time.**

O. Vendor contract, Page School/Pipestave/Main Street safety audit

Jennings stated the signed contract provided in the packet reflected changes from the original proposal which included the addition of a weekend traffic count (see exhibit O pages 96-101 for details). Jennings stated the audit would be completed by June. **No motion was made at this time.**

P. Update on 2021 paving work: status complete/remaining

Jennings stated information regarding the paving was included in the packet and the work was moving right along (see exhibit P pages 102-105 for details). **No motion was made at this time.**

Q. FY21 Green Communities Annual Report; initial work toward Greenhouse Gas Inventory

Jennings thanked Parker for all the work put into the Green Community Annual Report (see exhibit Q pages 106-112 for details). **No motion was made at this time.**

R. RFP issued to engage surveyor for Cortland Lane right-of-way

Jennings stated an RFP had been issued with a submission deadline of December 20, 2021 (see exhibit R pages 113-121 for details). **No motion was made at this time.**

S. Follow up meeting assignment; placing items for future agendas

It was stated that the Personnel Committee and the MBRTA would be discussed at the following meeting on December 20, 2021. **No motion was made at this time.**

Parker made a motion to adjourn. Archibald seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain). Open Session adjourned at 10:38pm.