



**Town of West Newbury
Select Board
Monday, November 7, 2022 @ 7:00pm**
381 Main Street, Town Office Building
www.wnewbury.org
Open Session Meeting Minutes

Open Session: Open Session was called to order at 7:15pm by Chairperson Archibald

Participation at the meeting:

David Archibald, Richard Parker, and Wendy Reed; *Select Board Members*
Angus Jennings, *Town Manager*
Bob Janes
Elisa Grammer
Rob Phillips
Kevin Bowe
Sue Brown, *Town Planner*

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.
- Call for volunteers! Open positions on Boards/Commissions/Committees. See www.wnewbury.org/volunteer
- Reminder to subscribe for emailed Town agendas/news/announcements at www.wnewbury.org/subscribe

Regular Business

A. Proposed Maintenance Program for Town-Owned Cemeteries; and request to install Elmer Burnham plaque – West Newbury Historical Commission

Bob Janes appeared before the Select Board in person (see exhibit A page 3-20 for details) and proposed spring and fall clean ups to be completed at the Quaker Cemetery. Janes estimated the cost for spring and fall maintenance would be \$800-\$2000 annually. Elisa Grammer appeared before the Select Board in person and recommended the fall clean up to commence once the ground had frozen in an effort to minimally disturb the soil. The Select Board, Janes, and Grammer discussed if the expense would be part of the Historical Commission budget or another department. Grammer stated the Historical Commission did not have the funds available in the current year budget and discussed DPW involvement as the cemetery was town-owned. The Select Board members stated that if the expense could not be covered out of the DPW budget this year, the the maintenance would need to be put on hold until it could be built into the budget the following year. The Select Board discussed the approval needed through the Conservation Commission and the filing fees associated with the request. It was determined the Select Board would pay the filing fee of \$150 as the land was under the care and custody of the Select Board. It was also determined the Historic Commission would be required to file a request every 3 years with the Conservation Commission.

Grammer proposed displaying the Elmer Burnham plaque in the gazebo off Bachelor Street close to Burnham Field in order to shelter it from the elements. The Select Board discussed displaying the plaque in the dugout instead of the gazebo. Jennings informed the Select Board they could recommend the placement of the plaque in the dugout but Park & Recreation would have the final approval. Jennings stated that if the plaque was to be placed in gazebo, the Select Board could vote to approve that placement location. **Archibald made a motion to recommend the plaque be placed in the dugout. Parker seconded.** Jennings stated Park & Recreation would be contacted and asked to place this item for discussion on the next meeting agenda. **Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).** **Reed made a motion to approve the RDA for work at the Quaker Cemetery and have the Town Manager sign on the Select Board's behalf. Parker seconded.** **Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

B. Process/timeline for Soldiers & Sailors procurement process

Jennings reviewed the zoning amendment article that did not pass at the Fall Town Meeting and asked if the Select Board's intent was to move forward with the disposition process (see exhibit B page 21-32 for details). The Select Board and Jennings discussed if a Zoning Board of Appeals finding would be required prior to the disposition and the need for a completed Historic Preservation Restriction.

Rob Phillips appeared before the Select Board in person and requested to stabilize the building to ensure no further deterioration would occur. Phillips stated that any investment made by the town to secure the building would make the property more attractive to future interested parties. Phillips stated that the current economic challenges could delay potential parties from moving forward with disposition. Phillips expressed concern surrounding the building potentially collapsing if structural stabilization did not take place and a buyer could not be found to purchase the building in its current state.

Ann O'Sullivan appeared before the Select Board in person in support of stabilizing the building as this would allow the town additional time to figure out what to do with the building. O'Sullivan stated that the

Open Session Meeting December 19, 2022

Posted Agenda on 11/3/2022 at the Town Offices and the Town's Official Website www.wnewbury.org

Posted REVISED Agenda on 11/3/2022 at the Town Offices and the Town's Official Website www.wnewbury.org

zoning would need to be addressed before a buyer could be secured. O’Sullivan suggested stabilizing the building and revisiting what to do with the building in the following years.

Kevin Bowe appeared before the Select Board in person and stated that a municipal use of the building was unlikely. Bowe expressed concerns surrounding the suggestion for the town hold onto the property and to revisit disposition in the following years.

Archibald stated the issues concerning the purpose of the building, parking, and the substandard lot size would remain the same in the years to come. Parker stated the opinion that the town should move forward with the disposition process and historic preservation. Jennings informed the Select Board that the disposition of the building would be labeled as a surplus and the Assessor would be asked to provide value of the property. Jennings stated that if an interested party did not move forward with procurement, the town could revisit disposition the following year as all of the required templates would be place. Archibald stated the topic was not an easily solvable problem and the Board would need to move on to other topics listed on the agenda. **No motion was made at this time.**

C. Update from recent site visit with MassDOT regarding proposed Rocks Village Bridge signage

Parker reviewed the site visit conducted with Wayne Amaral, DPW Director, and John Gregg, MassDOT Traffic Operations Engineer, of the proposed crash bar signage placement (see exhibit C page 33-38 for details). Parker stated the signage would not be visible from the adjacent houses and it would take roughly 9 months for MassDOT to create the sign. **No motion was made at this time.**

D. Recent award of One Stop Rural and Small Town grant to support planning efforts relative to MBTA Communities legislation – review of potential scope, budget and staffing/division of labor

Town Planner, Sue Brown, appeared before the Select Board remotely (see exhibit D page 39-43 for details). Brown stated the awarded grant was reviewed but the scope had not been determined. The Select Board, Jennings, and Brown discussed if the town should accept the grant in the full amount and the need to educate the community on the state mandate. Jennings stated the deadline for the action plan was January 31, 2023. Brown informed the Select Board that by meeting the deadline the town would be in compliance until the end of 2025. Brown and Jennings discussed the risk to the Housing Authority funding if compliance was not met. The Select Board requested Planning Board input and discussed accepting the grant in the full amount. Jennings discussed concerns on entering into the contract with the state until community support was determined. Discussion continued surrounding contacting the state to see if a multi-phase approach where funds could be used in incremental amounts would be possible. **No motion was made at this time.**

E. Discussion of Select Board priorities for discussion with Planning Board at Nov. 15 Planning Board meeting

The Select Board and Jennings reviewed the list of ongoing projects for the Planning Board to prioritize. Jennings stated a clear direction of priorities would improve communication between the Select Board and the Planning Board, as well as, provide clear direction for the new Town Planner. **No motion was made at this time.**

F. Request to authorize submittal of Safe Routes to Schools grant application to advance/implement recommendations from Route 113/Page School/Pipestave intersection safety audit

Jennings requested administrative approval to submit the Safe Routes to Schools grant application and for the Select Board to sign a letter of support (see exhibit F page 44-50 for details). Jennings stated the only change to the original scope was the extension of the sidewalk past the recycling area. Jennings informed the Select Board the submission deadline was November 18, 2022. **Parker made a motion to authorize submittal of grant application. Reed seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).** Jennings reviewed the list of committees, organizations, and individuals that would be asked to sign a letter of support. Reed suggested to add a youth sports organizations or Park & Recreation to the list. Jennings stated a draft of the letter of support would be brought before the board once completed.

G. Discussion of Pentucket Regional Agreement; recap of School Committee “State of the School District” meeting held on November 1st

The Select Board discussed the projected 14% increase in cost for out-of-district special education tuition (see exhibit G page 51-130 for details) and the economic challenges the district would face. The Select Board members discussed the format of the School Committee “State of the School District” meeting and provided feedback. Archibald stated multiple financial topics should have been discussed instead of focusing on one topic. Reed wished the meeting had been more interactive and asked if there would be an opportunity to specifically discuss the regional agreement. Archibald suggested to seek West Newbury Finance Committee comment and the Select Board could add further comment as needed. With one clear message from the town, West Newbury could then meet with Merrimac and Groveland to create a unified message to bring forth.

Jennings stated the comments could be reviewed at the next Select Board meeting before approaching the other towns. **No motion was made at this time.**

H. Update and request for Board direction regarding proposed Whetstone Greenway project

Jennings gave a brief update and asked the Board if an area should be put aside for a future path to connect to the Follinsbee Lane neighborhood (see exhibit H page 132-162 for details). The Select Board discussed the new design and questioned why the design was more preferable as the construction cost would increase. Jennings gave a brief history of the project proposal brought before the previous Select Board and the CPC. The Select Board continued to discuss the changes in the design. It was decided to reach out to the Park & Recreation Chairperson for more information concerning the changes in the design. **No motion was made at this time.**

I. Review of proposed changes to FY23 staffing plan

Jennings explained this item would increase DPW support, include increased responsibilities, and to transfer funds from the Select Board salaries & wages into the Public Works salaries & budgets. **Parker made a motion to reduce the Select Board administrative hours from 22 hours to zero and increasing the DPW administrative hours from 15 to 34 hours per week. Archibald seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

J. Review employee requests for carry-over of unused FY22 vacation time until December 31, 2022 (cont'd from 10/24)

The Select Board reviewed the list of employee requests to carry-over unexpended FY22 vacation hours. **Archibald made a motion to carry forward the FY22 unexpended vacation hours through December 7, 2022. Parker seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

K. Review of request for early closure of Library on day before Thanksgiving

The Select Board and Jennings discussed how an early closure had been done in the past but had been announced that day. Discussion continued concerning how the early closure could be a union issue moving forward. **Archibald made a motion for the Town Manager to make the call for an early dismissal at his discretion. Parker seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

L. Request for approval of Dispatch Union contract

Items L, M, and N were taken together. Jennings reviewed the union contracts and stated the board had previously agreed to the MOU (see exhibit L page 163-182 for details). Jennings stated that one edit the Select Board had previously approved would be needed in each of the contracts and a finalized version would be made available once completed. **Parker made a motion to approve and sign the contracts when finalized version is available. Archibald seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

M. Request for approval of Police Union contract

See item L for details (exhibit M page 183-210).

N. Request for approval of Highway Union contract

See item N for details (exhibit N page 211-246).

O. Meeting minutes: October 25, 2021; October 3, 2022

Reed discussed clarification needed for the October 25, 2021 minutes and requested to strike one sentence (see exhibit O pages 247-252 for details). Parker abstained from voting on both sets of minutes. **Reed made a motion to accept the minutes from October 25, 2021 as amended. Archibald seconded. Motion unanimously passed (2 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstain). Reed made a motion to accept the minutes from October 3, 2022. Archibald seconded. Motion unanimously passed (2 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstain).**

Town Manager Updates

P. Update regarding Wage/Classification Study; process/timeline to finalize wage/classification study

Jennings stated the job descriptions had not been completed (see exhibit P page 253-254 for details) and recommended to place this item on the agenda for the special meeting the following Monday to discuss the descriptions, classifications, and comparable wages. **No motion was made at this time.**

Q. Updated report regarding West Newbury hiring/appointment authorities

Jennings stated the appendix had been updated and noted the Library Board of Trustees had delegated all appointments at the Library to the Library Director. **No motion was made at this time.**

R. Review of proposed updates to Capital Improvements Program

Open Session Meeting December 19, 2022

*Posted Agenda on 11/3/2022 at the Town Offices and the Town's Official Website www.wnewbury.org
Posted REVISED Agenda on 11/3/2022 at the Town Offices and the Town's Official Website www.wnewbury.org*

Jennings stated a draft had been circulated and the town was at a very good starting point (see exhibit R page 255-271 for details). Jennings informed the board it would be their decision which FY24 projects would be brought forward. **No motion was made at this time.**

S. Update from initial meeting of Page School Feasibility Study Working Group

Jennings stated a site visit was scheduled the following day (see exhibit S page 272-276 for details) and discussed creating a series of informational videos on the project. Jennings stated the working group would submit a recommendation for scope of work in December. **No motion was made at this time.**

T. Town Clerk report regarding October 24, 2022 Special Town Meeting

No update at this time.

U. Green Communities Annual Report submitted on November 4, 2022

Parker discussed the energy updates made to the Town Office Building and difference they had made to decrease the energy usage (see page 277-278 for details). **No motion was made at this time.**

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

The Select Board and Jennings discussed placing the Mill Pond design project, the pricing for the electronic vehicle stations, an update from the Police Chief with an annual report/statistics for the town, and an update on the Middle Street Bridge to an upcoming agenda.

Archibald made a motion to adjourn. Parker seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain). Open session adjourned at 10:23pm.