



SELECT BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES

MAY 20, 2024

7:00 PM

ACTON TOWN HALL, ROOM 204  
472 MAIN STREET

Present: Jim Snyder-Grant, Fran Arsenault, Dean Charter, David Martin, Alissa Nicol

Additional Attendees: Town Manager John Mangiaratti, Assistant Town Manager Thom Begin

**I. Regular Business**

**1. Resident Concerns**

Glen Cote, Strawberry Hill Road – discussed his confusion with transportation services in Acton, requested a general map of bus services, requests better communication regarding all transportation options

Terra Friedrichs, Mass Ave – expressed concern with results of MBTA zoning and her perception of possible evictions, requested the Town assist residents at 92B Willow Street, requested access to review the open space and recreation plan and to allow for public comment before approving

Scott Smyers, - commented on the recent override vote and his belief that it makes Acton less affordable and less diverse, during town meeting there was a bus that was delayed bringing in voters and he expressed concern with who hired and paid for the transportation, requested an explanation for the Town Moderator delaying a vote to accommodate the late arrivals, asked about the Town Meeting member participating remotely and the legal basis for that, and expressed concern about the operation of the iClicker system

**2. Chair Update/Town Manager Update/Members Minute**

Mr. Snyder-Grant noted the Memorial Day events occurring on May 27<sup>th</sup> in West Acton, members of the Board will be in attendance; recount of override vote is scheduled for May 21st in Room 204; a bench was installed on the Acton end of the Assabet River Rail trail honoring Tom Kelleher; reflected on his experience as chair and his attempts at making the Select Board more transparent, achieving environmental goals, felt his greatest strength as chair was fostering an environment of respect for all, appreciates staff's support and patience, commented on responses to Martin Benson regarding four concerns with three classified as technical questions and wrote an email to follow up on his requests for information, Mr. Snyder-Grant had admitted that he may had made a mistake in judgment and followed up on further request for information from Mr. Benson verifying that the investigation found that there was no connection between the 2

School Committee zoom bombings conducted by a out of state teen and the Save the Colonial Group.

Mr. Charter announced May 29<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM is the next Acton 250 Speaker series. Ms. Nicol noted the Board Of Health will host a Hazardous Waste Day on June 1<sup>st</sup> at the DPW, attended the Dawn's Pond ribbon cutting event at the Acton Arboretum, attended the unveiling of the Lexington Women's Monument event, attended the Exemplary Volunteer of the Year Ceremony on May 16<sup>th</sup> at Acton Memorial Library, noted the Acton Garden Club plant sale, the Acton Women's Club bake sale and the Acton Fix It Clinic occurred over the weekend and were all well attended; the Health Insurance Trust meets on Thursday and will provide an update at the next Select Board meeting. Mr. Martin noted the Acton-Boxborough High School students will graduate on June 7<sup>th</sup> and announced the Project Graduation event is looking for more parent volunteers and to visit the AB school page for more information and to sign up.

Ms. Arsenault announced the Historical Commission is about to implement the Archeological Bylaw adopted in 2022

## **II. New/Special Business**

### **3. Board Reorganization**

Mr. Snyder-Grant nominates Ms. Arsenault as Chair, Mr. Charter nominated himself for Chair, Ms. Nicol seconds both. Mr. Charter and Ms. Nicol voted Mr. Charter as Chair, Ms. Arsenault, Mr. Snyder-Grant and Mr. Martin voted for Ms. Arsenault as Chair. Ms. Arsenault voted in as Chair. Ms. Nicol nominated Mr. Charter as vice-chair, Mr. Martin nominates himself as vice-chair, Mr. Snyder-Grant seconds both nominees. Mr. Charter, Mr. Snyder-Grant and Ms. Nicol voted for Mr. Charter, Ms. Arsenault and Mr. Martin voted for Mr. Martin, Mr. Charter voted in as vice-chair. Ms. Nicol nominated herself as clerk, seconded by Mr. Snyder-Grant and unanimously approved.

### **4. Presentation of Acton 2020 Implementation Update**

Senior Planner Kaila Sauer presented the Acton 2020 updates based on several goals including preserve and enhance town character, ensure environmental stability, improve connections, provide more opportunities for gathering and recreation, support diversity and inclusion, preserve and enhance town-owned assets and services, and maintain and improve the town's financial well-being. Mr. Snyder-Grant questioned the process regarding items that have yet to be completed under the goals, Ms. Sauer indicated she would take direction from the Select Board on the priority of completion through the Board's goal setting. Mr. Snyder-Grant requested the plan be housed by the Planning Board and to approach the Select Board if there are any updates on progress. Ms. Nicol noted that she was unaware it was a 15-20 year plan and appreciates the update and clarification and noted disappointment it would not be taken up until 2028. Ms. Nicol also noted the MAPC has master plan templates that mirror a 10-15 year

span and expressed interest in sending along notes on the goals to the Planning Division. Ms. Nicol requested to review documents regarding the Commuter Rail Coalition, Regional Age Friendly Plan, asked about coordinating more closely with the School District regarding submission of reports such as sustainability, commented on the Habitat for All, the Economic Development Plan, and the concurrent MBTA Housing and South Acton Village Plan. Mr. Mangiaratti suggested that both the Habitat for All and the EDC Plan could contribute and build up the base of the next future plan. Ms. Nicol suggested the Select Board encourage the Planning Board to engage ownership of the 2020 Implementation Committee and take up items that have been shelved in the past.

5. Debrief Elections and Town Meeting

Mr. Mangiaratti discussed both events and believed both were conducted professionally, successful and thanked Town staff and volunteers for their efforts. Mr. Charter asked Mr. Mangiaratti for a response to a concern that a resident brought up during resident concerns regarding the security associated with use of the iClickers and remote participation. Mr. Mangiaratti clarified that the one request for remote participation was confirmed by the State and Town Counsel as a qualified exception, further clarifying that a recent ruling from the state allows remote participation for Town Meetings if the requester meets ADA accommodation requirements. Mr. Mangiaratti also discussed the security steps associated with use of the iClickers indicating that each unit has a unique ID that only records a vote once prohibiting users from voting multiple times on an item. He also clarified the late shuttle bus that was on their way to Town Meeting may have been delayed due to the satellite pick up locations. Ms. Nicol discussed Town Meeting turnout and the challenges associated with the level of participation at Town Meeting. She would like to see better directional signage at the polls directing voters, appreciated the availability to accommodate remote participation, and asked that presenters work toward improving accessibility, specifically attendees with vision impairment. Mr. Charter suggests coordinating with shuttle busses that the drop off and pick-up points not impede the handicap access points or ramps for people who cannot step off or climb a curb and recommended engaging with the Commission on Disabilities to perform a site walk prior to Town Meeting in the future. Ms. Arsenault commends the Town Moderator on her conducting Town Meeting. Mr. Snyder-Grant noted on the override vote passing by a small margin and suggested a discussion to create transparency and knowledge on the operating budget. He discussed the smooth operation of Town Meeting and noted the amount of residents that attended both session. He discussed the options for alternative ways of conducting a future Town Meeting if more than half of registered voters continue to participate. He discussed future remote participation requirements and accommodations. Ms. Nicol noted the Finance Committees request for the Select Board to form a (fiscal) task force and asked who should be considered for participation. The Board discussed this and it was suggested that they consider former Select Board

or Finance Committee members, but also suggested citizen participation with financial experience and encourage residents to reach out to the Select Board if interested in participating. Mr. Martin suggested to have a discussion on what the scope and structure will be before recruiting members.

6. Approve License Agreement with Concord Area Special Education (CASE) Collaborative for use of Fuel Depot

Mr. Mangiaratti noted Town Meeting approved funding for the new fuel depot and proposed CASE contract with the Town for the use of the fuel depot that will contribute to the capital improvement and ongoing maintenance costs. Ms. Nicol asked if CASE would be paying the Town for the purchase of fuel and Mr. Mangiaratti noted CASE coordinates ordering and payment of bulk fuel they use, which is stored in separate tanks from the ones the Town uses, and clarified that the Town pays for the infrastructure and maintenance.

**Ms. Nicol moved, seconded by Mr. Snyder-Grant to approve license agreement with Concord Area Special Education (CASE) Collaborative for use of Fuel Depot and approved 5-0-0**

7. Approve Letters of Support for One Stop Program Grant Applications

Mr. Mangiaratti briefed the Board about the many grants applied for every year, and noted that letters of support from the Board show support for these efforts to granting authorities which encourages the State to approve the grants. Mr. Mangiaratti is requesting 4 letters of support from Board members for the various applications moving forward. Ms. Nicol suggested edits to support letters for the Sewer Pump Station upgrades application, and the MBTA Inclusionary Zoning study application.

**Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Ms. Nicol to allow Chair to sign all four letters with appropriate edits and approved 5-0-0**

8. Approve Transfer of Management of the Conservation Land Located at 13 Arlington Street, Formally Known as 183 Newtown Road, and 180 Newtown Road to the Conservation Commission Subject to the Perpetual Conservation Restriction

Mr. Begin briefed the Board explaining that at the 2013 Annual Town meeting voters approved the Select Board placing a conservation restriction on the property, noting that Town Land Steward Ian Bergemann is working on finalizing the language on the Conservation Restriction. During his research, he found no formal vote by the Select Board to accept and place a CR on the property had occurred and requested the Board consider doing so.

**Ms. Nicol moved, seconded by Mr. Snyder-Grant the Select Board delegate the management of the Conservation Land at 13 Arlington St – formally 183**

**Newtown Road to the Acton Conservation Commission subject to the perpetual Conservation Restriction and approved unanimously 5-0-0.**

9. Approve Withdrawal from the Acton Health Insurance Trust Effective December 31, 2024

Mr. Mangiaratti noted the need to stagger the withdrawal from the Health Insurance Trust due to the number of retirees and current employees enrolled.

**Mr. Snyder-Grant moved, seconded by Ms. Nicol that the Board hereby clarify its prior vote on March 18, 2024 to withdraw from the Acton Health Insurance Trust effective December 31, 2024 so that: 1) the Committee's active participation in the Trust for purposes of providing health insurance to subscribers shall cease on June 30, 2024, 2) the Committee will remain a participating member of the Trust through June 20, 2026 for the sole purpose of administering and paying runout claims and other costs of the Trust; and 3) the Acton Health Insurance Trust shall be completely dissolved as of June 30, 2026 and approved unanimously 5-0-0**

10. Assign Board Member to Eagle Scout Court of Honor, May 31, 2024, Concord Scout House Acknowledging Kate deBlonk

Ms. Arsenault will represent the Select Board at the ceremony.

11. Assign Select Board Member to Eagle Scout Court of Honor, June 5, 2024, NARA Park Acknowledging Trinity Gabrielle Cameron, Madhav Kulkarni, Saket Suresh, Prakul Saxeena, Lina Lawande, Ari Shukla

Ms. Nicol and Ms. Arsenault will represent the Select Board at the ceremony.

12. **Consent Items**

**Ms. Arsenault moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to approve consent items 12-15, 17 and approved unanimously 5-0-0. Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Ms. Nicol to approve minutes from April 12 and 29 and note they will be reviewed for further edits and defer May 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> to June 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting and approved unanimously 5-0-0.**

13. **Meeting Evaluation**

Mr. Martin discussed Board liaison assignment and asked when the discussion would appear on a Select Board agenda. Ms. Arsenault indicated it would appear on the next agenda. Ms. Nicol commented that the meeting went very smoothly and noted the number of businesses that have made donations to the Summer Concert series including some that operate outside of Acton, and thanked Maura Haberman for her work soliciting donations. Mr. Snyder-Grant noted the smooth transition to the new chair, would like to talk about the gas leaf blower bylaw at a future meeting and also about forming a group that will look at the efficiencies on town spending. Mr. Martin asked if he should check back with the Finance

Committee about forming the committee and will coordinate with Ms. Arsenault about the structure of the committee.

**Ms. Nicol moved, seconded by Mr. Martin to adjourn and approved unanimously 5-0-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:18 PM.**

- May 20, 2024 Agenda
- Memo from Planning Decision Regarding Acton 2020 Comprehensive Community Plan Updates Dated May 17, 2024
- Presentation of Acton 2020 Implementation Update
- MOA with CASE Collaborative Regarding Fuel Depot Renovation
- Letters of Support for One Stop Program Grant Applications
- Memo from Land Stewardship Coordinator Regarding Vote to Delegate Management of 13 Arlington Street to the Conservation Commission Dated May 16, 2024
- Select Board Record of Vote – Health Insurance Trust
- Email from Ryan Shoemaker Invitation to Eagle Scout Court of Honor Dated May 3, 2024
- Email from Ryan Shoemaker Invitation to Eagle Scout Court of Honor Dated May 13, 2024
- Letter from Joseph Topol Requesting Constable Reappointment Dated May 6, 2024
- Eagle Scout Certificates of Recognition
- Memos from Maura Haberman, Event & Program Coordinator Requesting Accepting Donations:
  - May 3, 2024, Acton Ford for \$3,000
  - April 29, 2024, Acton Pharmacy for \$500
  - May 2, 2024 , AMB Countertops for \$500
  - April 29, 2024, Bursaw Gas for \$250
  - May 7, 2024, Generations Law Group for \$250
  - April 29, 2024, Great Spaces, Inc. for \$250
  - May 6, 2024, Huntington Learning Center for \$1,000
  - May 6, 2024, Kitchen Outfitter for \$500
  - May 2, 2024, KJ's Café for \$250

- May 6, 2024, McGovern Auto Group for \$3,000
- April 29, 2024, Open Door Education for \$500
- Mat 2, 2024, Pedal Power Bike & Ski for \$250
- May 3, 2024, Revolution Yofa & Fitness for \$500
- May 6, 2024, Romano Pizza and Pasta for \$170
- May 3, 2024, SquashWest for \$250
- May 6, 2024, The Bees Knees British Imports for \$1,000
- May 10, 2025, Worker's Credit Union for \$1,000
- One Day Alcoholic Beverage License Applications:
  - Top of the Hill Gang, Inc. NARA Park, July 14, 2024
  - Jacqueline Scanlon, NARA Park, June 8, 2024
  - House Rabbit Network, NARA Park, August 11, 2024
  - Carnegie Mellon University, NARA Park, July 21, 2024
  - Meeting Minutes, April 12, 29, May 6, 7, 2024
  - Email from Jim Snyder-Grant for Committee Appointment Dated May 17, 2024