



SELECT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 21, 2024
7:00 PM

ACTON TOWN HALL, ROOM 204
472 MAIN STREET

Present: Fran Arsenault, Alissa Nicol, Dean Charter, David Martin, Jim Snyder-Grant
Additional Attendees: Town Manager John Mangiaratti, Assistant Town Manager Thom Begin,
Executive Assistant Lisa Tomy

I. **Regular Business**

1. **Resident Concerns**

Sudhir Prabhu, 12 Smart Rd – expressed interest in the town adopting a bylaw regarding keeping domestic chickens as his neighbor has a large number of chickens, including a rooster that creates noise that disrupts work calls, and noted surrounding towns that have regulations in place

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

Mr. Mangiaratti announced the Assessor's Office has hired a consultant to complete a required assessment of all properties in town that was approved at the 2024 Annual Town Meeting, and noted that 3 consultants will be approaching properties. Homeowners have the right to deny access, but doing so may jeopardize their ability to file an abatement. The COA van has expanded its service time to accommodate more residents throughout the day; the taxi program funding has been depleted, requiring the program to end on November 1. Mr. Begin announced the Nightmare at NARA event ends this weekend. Ms. Nicol announced that the two Boards of Trustees for Citizens' and Memorial Libraries decided to continue meeting jointly for the time being, and that the Governance Advisory Committee will have a recommendation ready to present to the Select Board by the end of the year; the committee was charged with public outreach about the proposed recommendation, so a public forum will be held on November 13 in Room 204. She noted the Health Insurance Trust was supposed to meet last week, is facing challenges with Blue Cross Blue Shield charging interest and demanding pre-payment for claims not yet submitted; the trust has made a pre-payment \$500,000, but BCBS is demanding another \$500,000. Mr. Charter announced that on 10/23 the Acton 250 speaker program will host Robert Gross, who will discuss Acton and Concord's Road to Revolution. Community

Preservation Committee applications are due on November 12 at Town Hall. Mr. Snyder-Grant presented a revised sustainability policy and hopes to bring this to the next meeting for approval. He announced that he will be a member of a panel organized by the Littleton Select Board on developing a climate action plan for the town of Littleton. Mr. Mangiaratti announced the DC fast chargers will be online at Veterans' Field at the end of the month, and Restaurant Week is running this week with 18 local establishments participating.

II. New/Special Business

3. Call a Special Town Meeting for November 25, 2024, and Vote to Close the Warrant

Mr. Mangiaratti noted the need for a Special Town Meeting to complete the acquisition of an open space parcel, and shared that the town was recently awarded a LAND grant in the amount of \$500,000 towards the purchase. A town meeting vote is required by the end of the calendar year to meet the LAND grant requirements. He noted the draft STM warrant included potential approval of two collective bargaining contracts that may be ready to vote on as well. Mr. Charter asked if any vehicle acquisition would be ready for an article on the warrant; Mr. Mangiaratti noted most likely not for November, but that it was still a work in progress. Mr. Snyder-Grant mentioned the gas powered leaf blower bylaw may be ready for this session or could wait for the Annual Town Meeting warrant. Mr. Mangiaratti noted that there will be a need to have a tax classification hearing right after the Special Town Meeting, and asked if the Chair would be interested in holding a Board meeting for this hearing at the conclusion of the special town meeting. The Chair and Board agreed with Mr. Mangiaratti's suggestion of holding the tax classification hearing after STM on the evening of November 25th. Mr. Martin suggested closing the STM warrant this Friday at noon.

Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Mr. Snyder-Grant to set a Special Town Meeting for November 25, 2024 at 6:00 PM at the Acton Boxborough High School Auditorium and approved 5-0. Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Ms. Nicol to close the warrant as presented in the packet on Friday, October 25, 2024 at noon and approved unanimously 5-0.

4. Approve Lease for Acton Food Pantry at 19-21 Maple Street

Mr. Mangiaratti updated the Board on the progress and status of the lease. One exhibit that still needs finalizing is in regards to the parking lot but should not inhibit the lease as presented.

Ms. Nicol moved, seconded by Mr. Martin to approve the lease for Acton Food Pantry as presented in the packet at 19-21 Maple Street and approved unanimously 5-0.

5. Approve Policy to Designate Town Manager and Select Board Chair as the Approving Authority for One Day Alcoholic Beverage License Applications

Mr. Mangiaratti outlined the reason for the draft policy to allow for some flexibility due to time constraints between Select Board meetings and time sensitive applications. The Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission allows for this by designation of the Local Licensing Authority. Mr. Martin asked about multiple day events such as Theatre III's license for shows on 6 different dates, technically not a "one-day" license. Ms. Nicol asked about the need to approve one day licenses at private locations such as clubhouses. Mr. Charter suggested that any questionable applications could be brought to the full Board for further discussion. **Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Mr. Snyder-Grant to approve the Select Board policy on one day alcoholic beverage license applications included in the packet and approved unanimously 5-0**

6. Consider the Role of Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) in the Stormwater Feasibility Study

Joe Robb, Chair of WRAC, summarized the presentation from the previous Select Board meeting. Mr. Robb highlighted the professional expertise that members of WRAC possess, and the five parts proposed for a Stormwater Feasibility Study; pros and cons of 2 sustainable funding mechanisms, evaluating Massachusetts enabling laws, meeting the MS4 requirements, and including public engagement. WRAC felt they were in position to complete 3 out of the 5 requirements independently, and requested assistance from Town Counsel and a consultant for the other two. He believes WRAC could complete this in a 3-4 month timeframe. Ms. Nicol pointed out that having a town committee take on the task is a better approach rather than fast-tracking the study with a consultant in light of the recent override and the debt exclusion override proposed for the Annual Town Meeting as residents may be resistant to yet another additional fee, and taking time to complete the study is ideal. Mr. Martin suggested including deliverables in the report, and noted that coordination with staff is critical, identifying specific tasks for WRAC and their role (advisory vs lead) in relation to the efforts of the current town staff working group.

7. Revisit the Wayfinding Designs Discussed at the October 7, 2024 Meeting

Mr. Charter had given additional thought to the design selected by the board, and Ms. Nicol's suggestion for a unified design for all signage, such as the town seal, and asked the Board to reconsider utilizing the town seal on all wayfinding signs. Mr. Martin indicated he is open to the idea, but would like to allow for the consideration of variations depending on size or shape of signs. Mr. Charter was open to different images on the signs, but prefers having the Isaac Davis Monument as the primary logo. Mr. Martin suggested having some mockups made, agreed with the monument as the primary image. Mr. Snyder-Grant would like to see town hall included. Ms. Arsenault would like something simpler than the wrought iron bridge on top of the signage. Mr. Mangiaratti noted he directed

Planning staff to put a pause on the online survey to allow for more input from the Board.

8. Discuss Request to Hunt on Commonwealth of Massachusetts Property Located on 96 Massachusetts Ave, 316 and 323 School Street

Nicholas Haley, the requestor, noted that any hunting on these properties requires approval from the Select Board. Ms. Nicol asked if the ammunition to be used is lead or non-toxic; Mr. Haley noted it is not lead and non-toxic. Mr. Martin noted hunting is a means or managing Canadian Geese, but concerned about the area as two parcels are farmed by Curcurbit Farm, and the other area is next to town fields with cricket club play and model airplane flying. The DCR requires a 500 ft distance from campsites, and there is very little area to meet this requirement on area 3; the hunter would need to check with Curcurbit Farm for the other two parcels. Mr. Charter suggested consulting with the leaseholder, noted the Police Chief commented that as long as all laws are followed APD does not have any concerns with allowing this request. Mr. Haley noted the times permitted are ½ hour before sunrise and ½ hour after sunset from mid-October to January. Ms. Nicol supports the request and noted parcel 1 would be the most appropriate. **Mr. Charter moved to approve the request to hunt on Commonwealth of Massachusetts property located on 96 Massachusetts Ave, 316 School Street and 323 School Street, and amended by Ms. Nicol to exclude 323 School Street, and seconded by Mr. Martin and approved unanimously 5-0.**

9. Update from Public Works Building Committee

Mr. Charter updated the Board on this project, noting the Committee is waiting on the cost estimates for the building design and the next meeting will be November 7 at 7 PM in room 204 and anticipates having estimates by then. He indicated he has been working with Town staff to address concerns raised at the last Committee meeting. He recently met with the DPW Director to discuss concerns raised by residents re: transfer station traffic. He has reached out to two residents with issues, and noted the Town Engineer is reviewing the traffic issues on Forest Road as well as stormwater runoff.

Ms. Nicol suggested having more exposure with the posters available for the public to view, and an open house at the Memorial Library, similar to what the Planning Division did for South Acton Vision and Action Plan and currently for Habitat for All project.

10. Update from Acton Leadership Group

Mr. Mangiaratti noted this topic will be kept as an ongoing topic on each agenda for any potential updates. There are none at this time.

11. Assign Select Board Member to Eagle Scout Court of Honor, November 20, 2024, Boardwalk Campus Acknowledging Ari Shukla, Charlotte Duhamel, William Barker, Aditya Sundarapandiyan, and Soham Sudhakaran

Ms. Arsenault offered to represent the Select Board at the event with Ms. Nicol in attendance as well.

12. Approve Amended Economic Development Committee Charge

Updates to the charge includes inviting non-resident business owners to join the committee as a member. **Mr. Snyder-Grant moved, seconded by Mr. Charter to approve the modified Economic Development Committee charge and approved unanimously 5-0.**

13. Consider Support of MBTA Northern Rail Tier-Fitchburg to North Adams

Mr. Snyder-Grant presented the history of creating improvement for options to extend the Fitchburg line and Senator Eldridge's request for general support from the board Ms. Nicol offered to draft a letter in addition to signing the Google document to stress support for the all-electric option and short travel times. Board members were in support of submitting a letter of support enhancing the northern rail tier. Mr. Snyder-Grant suggested signing on to the Google document and having the draft letter on the consent agenda for the next meeting.

14. Approve Plan for Perambulation of Town Bounds

Mr. Snyder-Grant outlined the history of perambulation and recently learned from the Town of Stow about the process of marking monument markings at town lines. He indicated that during this process, up to two people must be present, including a Select Board member. He noted paint must be applied on dry surfaces at a certain temperature, and suggested the Town GIS Office be involved with the markers. He also suggested other town staff help coordinate perambulation volunteer lists of interested residents. If the Board approves the plan, Mr. Charter and Mr. Snyder-Grant would be going out to survey the markers.

Ms. Nicol moved, seconded by Mr. Snyder-Grant to approve plan for perambulation of town bounds and approved 5-0.

15. Provide Input to the Chair Regarding the Upcoming Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Election of Board Members

Board members support tasking Ms. Arsenault with looking into possible candidates and to discuss at the next meeting on November 4th.

16. Consent Items

Mr. Martin held consent item 16. Ms. Nicol held consent item 19. **Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Mr. Snyder-Grant to approve consent items 17-18 and approved unanimously 5-0.** Mr. Martin noted the incorrect year listed in consent item 16, noting it should be January 5, 2025. Ms. Nicol asked why the appointment for the one year term of Town Counsel, which ended in June, was on

an agenda in October, and how often the Town Counsel appointment has historically gone out to bid. Mr. Mangiaratti noted that the Town Counsel firm has been engaged with the town for many years, and that Town Counsel's appointment should have been done this past June, but now have a system in place to avoid any future missed appointments and all reappointments will be conducted each year in June. **Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Mr. Charter to approve consent item 19 and approved unanimously 5-0.**

Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Ms. Nicol to adjourn and approved unanimously 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Documents Used

- October 21, 2024 Agenda
- Acton Food Pantry Lease for 19-21 Maple Street
- Select Board One Day Alcoholic Beverage License Policy
- Email from Nathaniel Ryan on Wayfinding Signage
- Email from Nicholas Haley Requesting Permission to Hunt in Acton
- Email from Ryan Shoemaker Requesting Select Board Member Attendance at the Eagle Scout Court of Honor
- Draft Economic Development Committee Charge Update
- Email from Michael Carr Requesting Support for MBTA Northern Tier Trail Line
- Draft Perambulation Plan
- Email from Eva Chenail Requesting Placement of a Menorah at 486 Main Street
- Conservation restriction 13 Arlington Street and 180 Newtown Road, Rear