



SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 22, 2024

SLADE BUILDING

Attendance:

Members Present: Jeff Williams – Chair, Katie Young – Vice Chair, Heather Munroe – Clerk, Peter Walker–Member, Kris Pareago - Member

Staff Present: Nathan Boudreau – Town Administrator,

Members absent:

Additional Attendees: Mike Stoll, Mark Kresge

Session opened at: 6:30 pm Chair Williams reminded everyone that the meeting is being recorded.

Open Session: No one here.

Announcements, Communications, Liaison Reports – Vice Chair Young stated that frozen assets is currently running. Forms for this event can be found at Giacomo's Gourmet Food, Stars & Stripes Diner, Pizza Palace, Country Trails & Plain View Farm. The deadline for this form is February 1, 2024. The Lion's Club meat raffle will be held on February 2, 2024 at the Rod & Gun Club beginning at 6:30 p.m. The Council on Aging is doing a Valentine's Day Luncheon on February 11 from 12- 2 p.m. This is a fundraiser for the Senior Center deck. Suggested donation is \$20.00 per person. They will be serving soup, lasagna, bread & butter and strawberry shortcake for dessert. Tickets need to be purchased prior to the event. The Hubbardston Scholarship Committee is having a Valentine's Roast Beef Dinner on February 17th at the Hubbardston Rod & Gun Club from 5 – 8 p.m. The tickets are \$15.00 for adults and \$8.00 for kids (8 and under). Please buy tickets in advance but there may be some available at the door. There will be an ice fishing derby hosted by the Rod & Gun club on February 24th from 7am – 2 pm. Please call the Rod & Gun Club to register. The event will take place at Bent's pond and Sawyer's Pond. Clerk Munroe added that the Library had a story time event on Saturday morning and was hoping to get the word out to others who may be working and can't bring your child to the weekday ones. Clerk Munroe hoped that if there was enough interest, that the library might be able to do story time on Saturdays once a month or so.

Open Space Grant Application Request - Mark Kresge came to the table and stated that he was following up on the board's November meeting where there was discussion regarding the remaining unexpended ARPA funds. The question was if the line item was set aside for seed money for a grant application for accessible trail out on Malone Road would still be available or if it would be allocated to something else. Over the past few months, Mr. Kresge has been coordinating with Nate and he put together a couple of grant applications under the MA Trails Program. The end result is that Mr. Kresge broke it up into two grants and using the \$16,000 that is available in ARPA, it would equate to \$116,000

if the grant's are approved for the Town. Mr. Kresge is here to make sure that the Select Board would be willing to continue to earmark that \$16,000 so that if the grant was approved, the money would be there to start the project. There is also a project for Flashing Beacons on Williamsville Road. Mr. Kresge is also looking for \$10,000 from the CPA which he said he won't know until Town Meeting.

Motion made to authorize Mark Kresge and Open Space Committee to apply for the State Open Space Grant as outlined tonight and further to ask the Town Administrator to continue working with the Finance Team to ensure the feasibility of utilizing town funds for the required matching portions to be reimbursed by K. Young. 2nd by P. Walker. Discussion: None. All in favor. Yes – 5. No – 0. Motion Passed.

Consent Agenda – There are Select Board Minutes from December 4, 2023 and December 18, 2023. Appointment of Marjorie Ondine to the Economic Development Committee as a member, expiring on June 30, 2024. There are resignations from Joanne Cormier from the QRSD School Committee effective 1/3/2024 as well as resignation from David Marsh of the Agricultural Committee effective on 1/4/2024 and David Marsh from the Open Space Committee effective on 1/4/2024.

Motion made to accept the Consent Agenda by K. Young. 2nd by P. Walker. Discussion: None. All in favor. Yes – 4. No – 0. Abstain – 1 (K. Pareago). Motion Passed.

New Business:

EV Charging Station Grant Opinion Discussion – TA Boudreau stated that he is bringing this up to see if there is a consensus among the Select Board that this is something they would like TA Boudreau to apply for or look into further. TA Boudreau did invite the Parks Commission members to attend and give feedback. There was some concern from Parks regarding parking at the rec field and one member did have questions but was unable to attend. Vice Chair Young stated that her concerns are parking, how is the electrical getting there and how much is this really going to cost in the long run. Even though the grant is free, there will be a cost. TA Boudreau explained that he happened upon a grant opportunity for \$400,000 for two electric charging vehicle stations if you had a spot that worked for them. The company looked into it and thought that Curtis Rec Field would be a good spot for them. It would be a no cost opportunity for five years. The town would make approximately \$10,000 annually give or take. Member Walker stated he is not interested in this right now. Vice Chair Young stated that there are too many unknowns/variables and is very cautious about this. Clerk Munroe asked if there is any plausibility that this would put the town in a better position to receive other grants because the town has this. TA Boudreau stated that there is a good probability. Clerk Munroe stated that there is no rush for this but it is something to keep in mind. Member Pareago stated that he could go either way with this but stated he feels there should be no action taken at this time. TA Boudreau stated that he would let the company know that the board is not interested at this time but to reach out in 6 months.

Acceptance/Signature Authorization Requests:

MEGA Grant for \$2,000 – TA Boudreau stated that MEGA is the Massachusetts Education Government Association. TA Boudreau applied for a grant to aid in training of staff members and applied for a meeting camera, a television and a meal for staff members. TA Boudreau would like to purchase the camera to be able to interact with people at home and this also opens more opportunities to have different trainings available for the staff. It is a reimbursable grant. This would also allow the town to livestream to social media.

Motion made to authorize TA Boudreau to sign and accept the \$2000 dollar MEGA Grant for technology upgrades on behalf of the town by K. Young, 2nd by K. Pareago. Discussion: None. All in favor. Yes – 5. No – 0. Motion Passed.

Cultural Council Grant for \$6,600 – This is an annual grant that the Cultural Council applies for each year. This helps with the Concert in the Park, painting at the library etc. TA Boudreau congratulated the Cultural Council on this grant.

Motion made to authorize TA Boudreau to accept the \$6,600 Cultural Grant on behalf of the Town of Hubbardston by K. Young. 2nd by K. Pareago. Discussion: None. All in favor. Yes – 5. No – 0. Motion Passed.

2024 Legislative and Budget Priorities - TA Boudreau stated that he has been sending out emails for the past month to ask for input to send to Representative Berthiaume along with Senator Durante who will be attending the next meeting to take part in a open forum. The community has been invited via the town website as well as Facebook. TA Boudreau stated that in the past, it has been easier to write the priorities out in a letter and send them ahead of time to the representatives, as this will be something they can go back to in the future.

Motion made to authorize TA Boudreau to send correspondence to Representative Berthiaume and Senator Durante on behalf of the town for any opportunities that may come along by K. Young. 2nd by P. Walker. Discussion: None. All in favor. Yes – 5. No – 0. Motion Passed.

Old Business:

ARPA: TA Boudreau stated that he recently heard from the company who was going to do a feasibility study for a public safety building and now knows what the number will be for that study. Since having that number, TA Boudreau will be able to determine how to pay the TEC bills that need to be paid along with the other bills which need to be paid from ARPA funding. TA Boudreau is hoping to include the Finance Committee in this to alleviate some of the burden on ARPA. There is a 15,000 match as part of the grant for the heat pumps that was awarded to the town for the library. Unfortunately, due to the boiler needing replacing, the Library Trustees are no longer able to match that grant as they have paid for the boiler so TA Boudreau will also be looking into how to fund that as well. TA Boudreau will have more information regarding these items at the next meeting.

TA Report: TA Boudreau stated he would like to start with the Compensation Survey and will not be doing a long presentation. TA Boudreau committed a lot of time to this study as he feels it is very valuable. As it stands right now, there isn't going to be an opportunity to take even baby steps towards the end goal of this survey. TA Boudreau stated that within the confines of the proposed budget, he will do his best as different variables come to light, ie the school and retirement, to try to implement some of the smaller scale increases. TA Boudreau asked that the Select Board read the report he put together and know that the investments the town makes in the staff now will pay dividends in the future. TA Boudreau also stated that while a COLA is a good thing, it is not a raise.

TA Boudreau then stated that he attended the MA Municipal Association (MMA) annual meeting on January 19th. This was a valuable opportunity to connect with fellow municipal leaders from across the

Commonwealth, learn about new innovations and best practices, and meet with vendors about potential services or partnerships.

The Quarter 2 Financial Report was released earlier this month available on the town website. Based on Q2 revenue collections and expenditures, Hubbardston remains on target with the FY24 approved budget. The proposed five year Capital Improvement Plan will be presented to the Select Board on February 5th. There will be a Legislative Delegation Public Forum with Senator Durant and Representative Berthiaume on February 5th during the Select Board Meeting.

Project Briefs: Gardner Road Communications Tower Project is set to release a request for proposal for a commercial carrier on the cell tower. Staff has been working on a comprehensive review of various municipal fees, permits, licenses and fines to ensure costs for provided services are accurately aligned with comparable communities. TA Boudreau has been supporting the Planning Board with the Marijuana Special Permitting process for existing establishments in Hubbardston. The new owners of the Pitcherville Road site is weighing options for residential or mixed use redevelopment of the property. There will be continued open dialogue as their plans progress. There will be a Hubbardston Citizens Academy beginning on February 26th and you can register on the website. It is an 8 week course which will provide residents an inside look at local government and Hubbardston. There needs to be at least 6 people registered in order to have this course. The 2024 Annual Census was mailed in early January and completing and returning these forms promptly helps ensure Hubbardston receives the full share of state aid funds. There is a Regional Trash and Recycling Survey in the census as well. TA Boudreau is working with Princeton and Rutland to look into regionalizing trash and recycling options for residents. Additionally, TA Boudreau coordinated with Emergency Management Director Judie O'Donnell with updating the Comprehensive of Emergency Operations Plan (COOP).

Chair Williams and TA Boudreau attended the retirement of Bob Beauregard of the Country Hen. Mr. Beauregard spent 28 years working with the town on various projects. The town wishes him a happy retirement. TA Boudreau also would like to thank Library Director Chris Barbera for going above and beyond this past weekend when the library's boiler stopped working. Director Barbera spent her weekend working tirelessly to monitor the building and the temperatures to ensure the safety of the building and coordinated with others to get the issue resolved as quickly as possible. The full TA Report can be found online.

Policies to Review: Select Board Rules - TA Boudreau stated that the Select Board Rules needed to be updated after a constituent brought up a couple questions. The amendments will be read into the record.

Suggested Amendment 1 – Would update the terminology, replacing Board of Selectmen with Select Board, replacing Selectman/Selectmen with Select Board Member(s), and replacing Chairman with Chair throughout the policy.

Suggested Amendment 2 – Would replace the entire “Order of Business” section with a more detailed agenda order, including separation of consent agenda items that could be approved together without discussion unless requested by a Board Member.

“Order of Business”

- Order of Business
- Call to Order

- Open Session
- Announcement/Proclamations*
- Presentations/Public Hearings*
- Consent Agenda:
 - Appointments and Resignations*
 - Wage Authorizations*
 - Minutes*
 - Additional administrative issues deemed noncontroversial*
- New Business
- Old Business
- Town Administrators Report
- Committee Updates
- Matters not reasonably anticipated
- Public/Press question and answer
- Executive Session(s)
- Adjournment

**All consent agenda items are subject to being removed for separate discussion at the request of Select Board Members.*

Suggested Amendment 3 – Would replace the “Select Board Action Items” section to detail the orderly process for introduction, questions, public input, discussion, possible amendments, and voting on agenda items.

- At the recognition of the Chair, the Town Administrator or the Sponsor of the item introduces and explains the item. Sponsor, Town Administrator, staff or others (as designated by sponsor or Town Administrator) provide additional explanation or information. Any Select Board member may make a motion or may second the motion.
- Select Board questions (no discussion at this time).
- Public input*
- Additional questions from the Select Board (not debate)
- Chair recites motion, if already made, or looks for motion.
- Select Board discussion.
- Amendments to motion (optional) and debate.
- Vote on motion (as amended, if applicable).
- The passage, adoption or enactment of any item requires three (3) votes (or a clear majority) for passage. In the case of a tie, the motion fails.

**Pursuant to G.L.c. 30A SS 20(g), the chair of a public body has discretion to decide whether to allow public comment during a meeting, impose restrictions like designating when comments are permitted, limiting time allotted to each speaker, preventing disruption of others, and removing noncompliant speakers.*

Motion made to adopt the proposed amendments to the Select Board rules as presented by K. Young. 2nd by K. Pareago. Discussion: None. All in favor. Yes – 5. No – 0. Motion Passed.

Matters not reasonably anticipated by the chair - Member Pareago asked if the Select Board knows the number of students currently attending Monty Tech? The Board did not know and TA Boudreau stated he would get those numbers to him.

Public/Press Comments/Questions – None .

At this time the Select Board will be moving into Executive Session and return to Open Session only to adjourn.

Motion made to move into Executive Session under G.L.c30A, ss21(a)(3) To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigating position of the public body. (New England Police Benevolent Association, Inc. Local 092 and town of Hubbardston Police Department) and return to Open Session only to adjourn by K. Young. 2nd by K. Pareago. Discussion: None. All in favor. Roll Call Vote: K. Pareago – Yes, P. Walker – Yes, H. Munroe – Yes, K. Young – Yes, J. Williams – Yes. Motion Passed.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Toni Walker
Executive Assistant