



**Town of West Boylston**  
140 Worcester Street, West Boylston, Massachusetts 01583

## **Board of Selectmen/Sewer Commission Meeting Minutes**

<b>Date / Time / Location of Meeting</b> May 8, 2018; 6:00 p.m.; Police Department Meeting Room, 141 Sterling Street
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<b>Members Present</b> John W. Hadley, Chairman Christopher A. Rucho, Vice Chair Barur R. Rajeshkumar, Clerk Patrick J. Crowley, Selectman Siobhan M. Bohnson, Selectman
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<b>Members NOT Present</b>
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<b>Invited Guests:</b>
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**Welcome – Call to Order**

**Time: 6:00 pm**

### **CONVENE MEETING – 6:00PM:**

#### **Workshop review of Town Administrator's evaluation**

The workshop is being held, in according with the requirements of the Town Administrator's employment contract. It is to review the Town Administrator's evaluation and discuss how performance can be improved. Ms. Scheipers suggested going category by category noting that she is looking for better clarification of the comments the Board provided. Four of the five Board members indicated that the Town Administrator does not meet expectation and one gave a meets expectation. She is looking for better feedback for moving forward so that she meets the Board's expectations.

Category #1 Support and Service to the Board. Mr. Rucho said with the new PEG Board 'I have had some issues and have not received much help from the Town Administrator.' Ms. Scheipers would like to know what guidance he would like as Chair of that committee she asked is it working with you to establish an agenda. Mr. Rucho explained that there was an issue about having a public hearing or not and the email he received from Ms. Scheipers was a copy of the Policy on Public Hearings, I don't know if this fits on that. He expects the Town Administrator to answer those questions for him and he doesn't have the time to research that. Ms. Scheipers explained that at that point she had not seen PEG's policy to make that call. Mr. Rucho states that he called the AG's office and they said if you have a policy you should have a public hearing and that is what he suggested to the Board. Ms. Scheipers noted it is more helping with behind the scenes research.

One of the questions or comments Mr. Rajeshkumar made was you were saying that Facebook page is where you go to learn a lot of things that happen in town. There always will be Facebook comments made within the town. Ms. Scheipers asked is it possible that you could remind people to copy me and I could help to better respond, or are there other ways I could be more proactive in that.. Mr. Rajeshkumar - there are many instances you are saying these are all confidential. I cannot disclose to you even though you are a Selectmen. Eventually all the information will be discriminated and people know it and it will come to us and say you didn't know that. If you can say, it is confidential, we will keep it confidential. We do need to know. Example, one of the police officers, everybody knows the incident, and another officer was disciplined and that officer came to me and said you guys didn't know. What do we say to then. He understands it is a police thing but it is a personnel issue. Moving forward Ms. Scheipers understands the Board would like her to share as much as she can without going beyond the line. Mr. Rajeshkumar - at the end of the day people do ask us and we look like an idiot. With regard to the PEG Board Mr. Rajeshkumar states I know you wanted to do the PEG Board reorganization. This has been a year and a half and even after a few complaints from town residents, the job descriptions have not been done. Is it timing. We have to do the job descriptions. Ms. Scheipers states they have been reformatted along with all the other town job descriptions. Part of the delay was when PEG went to the Personnel Board. There was confusion about the scope of work. The job descriptions have been revised and they are in front of the Personnel Board now. We reorganize the PEG Board last July the reorganization has not been as effective as she hoped. Part of the problem we are having difficulty retaining good, competent people. Our PEG Coordinator just resigned, another challenge we will face. Mr. Rucho has comments about the PEG Board but he will talk to the Town Administrator. No other questions on Item 1. Mr. Crowley didn't have any issues on this, his questions were answered. Mr. Hadley states a few times we ask you questions and you didn't have the answers and I know you cannot have answers for everything. Mr. Rajeshkumar states when it goes to the agenda items he would like a little more review of the agenda items and given the correct information during to the meeting. We have one open meeting violation and when we have the sheet everybody has the sheet, and you referenced the wrong open meeting law complaint. The other was town meeting, the election date was mixed up. The town looks at the Board of Selectmen and the Town Administrator's office as inefficient. Ms. Scheipers agrees the posting of the warrant was an issue, she apologizes and she takes responsibility for that.

Category #2, Budget Preparation and Administration. Mr. Rucho made the comment that he feels like we are paying for a lot more services than in the past, rather than doing them in-house. Ms. Scheipers asked for clarification. Mr. Rucho notes that the last five months CMRPC is doing things for us, somebody else is doing the survey, we have to lower taxes and the budget is getting bigger every year and we are spending too much. In the last month in 15 emails you said town counsel was contacted. He does not recall getting town counsel involved with every issue we had in the past. Ms. Scheipers states there have been a lot of items that require town counsel review. Mr. Rucho doesn't disagree but he thinks the Town Administrator should be able to answer some of the question. Ms. Scheipers also noted a comment made by Mr. Rajeshkumar on no new grants to the town and we almost lost the sidewalk project grant. Since she took over we received the Green Communities grant \$145,000, \$10,000 for a Pavement Management Grant, \$15,00 for a Housing Production Plan, Complete Streets tier 3 sidewalk grant \$1.9 million, all above and beyond the regular grants the departments get. Mr. Rajeshkumar states what I mean is we could do better. On the sidewalk project,

Mr. Rajeshkumar voiced concern that those funds were almost lost. Ms. Scheipers noted that was before she came on board. Nancy saved it and finish the project before she came on board. Ms. Lucier offered to review the file with Mr. Rajeshkumar. Mr. Rucho asked the Town Administrator for a self-review. Under Budget Preparation the answer from the Town Administrator was working with an excellent team of financial staff. Mr. Rucho states that doesn't help me at all. I would like to hear what you thought. Maybe that is when you mention those grants. Ms. Scheipers replied that was the second self-evaluation you asked me to give you. Mr. Rucho pointed out that the second request was the one that answered the review categories. Ms. Bohnson, on the budget, I get concerned it takes me a little while to process numbers. When Mr. Crowley is asking question, I feel that you could have your hands wrapped better round the budget. I think you have done okay with it. She suggested quarterly updates on what happened that quarter, like a recap, so when we are looking at things it will help us bring it back to the bottom line. Ms. Bohnson likes to look at quarters. Her concern is when Pat Crowley asks a question I think it is a good question and my brain doesn't work that way. Ms. Scheipers understands the Board would like more details, quarterly, recap on where the budget is. Mr. Crowley knows Leslie does the executive summary of the budget. Maybe an expanded quarterly. This is a big picture this is where we are doing good.

Mr. Hadley had an issue with getting enough information from the Finance Committee or getting it too late. For town meeting we put the article on before we get their information. We need to communicate better with them. Ms. Scheipers thinks if you look at the chain of emails they have received regarding the informational requests. Mr. Hadley doesn't feel it is fair to the Board. Ms. Bohnson suggested working into it backwards once the town meeting is set and push back the date when the capital is due. Ms. Scheipers advised that the requests come in each September. Mr. Crowley suggested asking the Finance Committee and the CIB to start their budget process earlier. We have to ask CIB to start capital stuff sooner before they get to the budget. They will give you push back saying they want to see the overall budget. He thinks they are going to want to see the overall budget in conjunction with what they are going to be approving through capital funds. He thinks they will move up the vote. Mr. Rucho commented that the Board may decide not to put the item on the warrant. Ms. Scheipers will share with them.

Category 3 - Managerial Skills. Ms. Bohnson commented that there is an impression of lack of teamwork within the town, employees need to be listened to. Ms. Scheipers would like better clarification on this. We have our monthly staff meetings, which is a team oriented process. We talk about issues or concerns going on. Are you getting feedback from people that these staff meetings not satisfying them. Ms. Bohnson is hearing they do not feel they really have a voice and they would like to be heard – that's from a couple of people. Some say it is such a set agenda. Do you ask them for any items they want. Some of what we hear is that they do not have enough time to give their thoughts, or it is a jam packed agenda, or they are not getting listened to. It is frustrating and you need to figure out ways for it to work on both sides better. Mr. Hadley gave a did not meet expectations. A small office like the town of West Boylston has to be very people person and there is a lot of animosity in the office and they need more one on one. The number one issue is handing people in the office and it is not just some people and finding ways to communicate better with people Ms. Scheipers has to admit to being surprised to hear that people feel she is not responsive to department heads. She feels she is very responsible She will approach those individuals with a different style because it is not working for them. Mr. Crowley – over all, gave meets expectation, a little stoic, militaristic-type

regimented leader. He doesn't have a problem with that. Mr. Rajeshkumar feels the same thing too. Ms. Bohnson states in my line of work sometimes I am focused and somebody writes me an email and it is half a page and I reply with a quick sentence and I have to step back and say okay, this is how this person reacts, email and in person. Mr. Rajeshkumar, our town hall is a very small building. Small offices and staff I do not see all the offices are united. Some of the offices I can see a lot of tension. I do not know how you are going to relieve the tension. I do know there is tension. Ms. Scheipers knows of two instances.

Mr. Rucho states this location was set by the Town Administrator to meet here, the Town Administrator selected it and he thinks it should have been at town hall and he sent an email saying that. It was posted for the main conference room and he doesn't know if this is the main conference room, it is a training room. Ms. Scheipers states it was set by the Chair and I. Mr. Rucho in regards to your comments on managerial skills, you answer 'working on various personnel issues with department heads'. Mr. Rucho would like more information from Ms. Scheipers on these question. Ms. Scheipers states she did provide a lot more detail on this subject in the first self-evaluation she sent out.

Category 4 - Human Resources Management. Mr. Hadley asked if someone on the staff is having a problem with the Town Administrator or any discipline action taken, who is that individual to go to? Mr. Scheipers states the employee has the right to appeal to the Personnel Board per the Personnel Policy. Mr. Rajeshkumar asked why were cameras installed in the hallway without Board of Selectmen's approval. Ms. Scheipers advised that the cameras were installed to improve safety in our building, doors were not being locked. Mr. Rucho, Nancy and I met to discuss different ways to improve security and the cameras seemed to be the most cost effective approach. Since they have been up and every time the building is unlocked Nancy contacts that person and it is improving the situation. It is important to point out that Mr. Rucho did inform the Board at a meeting and the Board didn't raise any objections. Mr. Rucho worked with Nancy on the cameras and he oversaw the installation. Mr. Rucho states the question was the cost. It would have been much more expensive if we changed the locks. He thinks it is a great security for the employees and every building you work in today has cameras. Mr. Rajeshkumar states it looks to some of the town employees it was targeted because it is placed on the first floor. Mr. Rucho replies no one gets in the building without getting recorded. They are recorded on the first floor and no one gets to the second floor without being recorded. Mr. Rajeshkumar, asked the comments on the doors being unlocked do the police check the building? Ms. Scheipers states only if we have trouble locking the door. Mr. Rucho is sure when the drive by that they look at it. Ms. Bohnson asked the cameras, I do not think I was at the meeting and when we have inside cameras people get on the defense. If somebody comes in and gives Nancy trouble we do not have a camera to record it. Peoples' nature is why are they watching me during the day. Ms. Scheipers advised it was discussed at a staff meeting. Mr. Rucho noted that all the hallways are covered and if somebody goes to Nancy's office and gives her a hard time we could see them coming into the building. Mr. Rajeshkumar thinks they should be on every floor. Mr. Scheipers – the cameras are not being watched all day only if there are issues with doors being unlocked. Mr. Rucho feels that any office that takes in money should have cameras in the office. Ms. Scheipers noted that we explained that and it was discussed at a staff meeting. Ms. Bohnson feels it is human nature and if you are really feeling stressed about your position. Mr. Rucho states this is no different from them having town email or a phone. Everything the town owns can be used if there is an issue. Mr. Rajeshkumar agrees if it is unbiased it is fair, it seems it is one place. Mr. Rucho states if we had

unlimited money we would have new doors and locks. Mr. Rajeshkumar states people think why not there why only here. Mr. Hadley thinks if somebody has an issue with the Town Administrator this they should be able to come to the Board of Selectmen. He asked if it is a bylaw. Ms. Scheipers only goes to the Personnel Board when invited. Ms. Bohnson asked if somebody goes to them with a problem would it come to the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Scheipers advised that the Personnel Board would determine the appropriate action. Ms. Scheipers states if I discipline an employee and they are not happy, they can appeal to the Personnel Board if they feel it was improper and you, as my supervisor, would be informed of that. Ms. Bohnson thinks employees should be able to do that if they are having an issue. We are your appointing board and those kinds of questions should be allowed to come to us. Ms. Scheipers would ask that the board should tell them to come and speak with her about it if she is not aware of it, it isn't fair to them or to her.

#### Category 5 - Relations With the Media and Community

Mr. Rucho commented that the Town Administrator should attend community events and other town board meetings. Ms. Scheipers reports that she attends about three meetings a week and asked which boards do you feel I should attend. Mr. Rucho thinks Ms. Scheipers should go to different board meetings to see if they need anything from you. Ms. Scheipers states I have frequent communications with board chairman and if they feel I should attend their meetings all they need to do is ask. Mr. Rucho thinks she should attend to see what they are doing. Ms. Scheipers asked about a good number. Mr. Rucho doesn't know how many she should go to. Ms. Scheipers noted that there are those times of year when we are inundated with meetings. Is it still expected that when it is extremely busy that she just work through the chairman. Mr. Rucho if they are looking for money you should look to see if it was a committee vote on it. Ms. Scheipers I do attend community events when I am able to, Memorial Day, Rail trail birthday party, Smallest St. Patrick's Day Parade. Mr. Rucho replies, you are in the crowd. Maybe events more with the Town Administrator. The ground breaking you were there. He thinks she could be part in it. Ms. Bohnson if you are at an event make sure whoever puts it on they could introduce you. Some residents do not know who you are, Ms. Scheipers one comment was we are not getting enough coverage from the press. Mr. Hadley states we get nothing in the Telegram. Every other town is covered. Kristin of the Item newspaper states it will never happen, West Boylston is considered The Item's territory. Ms. Scheipers we have sent them press releases and they have not used them. Mr. Rucho adds this has been this way as long as he has been on the board. We called the Telegram on occasion and they would refer it to The Banner. Mr. Rajeshkumar – maybe Ms. Scheipers could talk to the computer person. We should have had some information on the town's website on the ground breaking. The Item did publish one article. Maybe we could have sent an email. Ms. Scheipers did sent the information out via the town's email notification system. Mr. Hadley states there was nothing on the website. Mr. Scheipers advised that one of the things that will happen with the change of IT vendor the departments will be posting their own information. She thinks it will be an improvement. Mr. Rajeshkumar – in the calendar, town calendar the meeting is posted and the agenda is not there. People have to go to the agenda under another location. Ms. Scheipers advised that we had a glitch in the software a couple of months ago and our IT vendor had it repaired.

#### Category 6 - Goal Setting and Achievement

Everybody but Mr. Crowley said the goals had not been achieved. We did not set them until last July and Ms. Scheipers thinks we are tracking well in the Town Administrator goals and the Board of Selectmen. She is disappointed with what the Board is saying on the status of the goals. Ms. Bohnson did put acceptable on that. She thinks she has stayed on target with that.

#### Category 7 - Dealing with Uncertainty and Changing Conditions

Several have mentioned the mistake with the special town meeting posting, which Ms. Scheipers states was absolutely a mistake she takes responsibility for. Mr. Rajeshkumar states it was a very important special meeting and the posting of the warrant should have been done earlier. The problem is now people are up in arms and they feel conspiracy was going on. Ms. Scheipers explained we have a set schedule we do for every warrant process and Nancy has the dates it needs to be posted. She asked do you think we should post it sooner. Ms. Lucier explained that we always post the warrant a minimum of 14 days prior to town meeting. For the May and October town meeting, we review and sign the warrants at a special meeting on the fourth Wednesday in April and the fourth Wednesday in September. We were supposed to meet on April 25<sup>th</sup> to review the May town meeting warrant and we had to put that off until April 30<sup>th</sup> and it was posted on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. We used to review and sign on the first Wednesday of the month being May or October and we bumped that back a week to give us an additional week for any last minute adjustments. Ms. Scheipers suggested amending the schedule. Mr. Rajeshkumar felt it could have been avoided.

#### Category 8 - Risk Management

Mr. Hadley and Mr. Rucho both commented that this is done by Nancy Lucier. Ms. Scheipers noted it is within her job description, the risk management work and dealing with the insurance company. She also chairs the Safety Committee. Ms. Scheipers likes to have an opportunity to show she is doing a great job meeting that requirement. Mr. Rucho thinks it should be taken off the review form. Ms. Scheipers agrees.

#### Category 9 - Personal and Professional Growth of the Town Administrator

Ms. Scheipers reports that there were concerns about lack of interest. Ms. Scheipers is a member of the Managers' Association, STAM, MMPA, MAPO, and a local regional managers group. She attends two or more professional development sessions every month and is not sure why it is being perceived as not met. Mr. Rajeshkumar was disappointed about the adult use of marijuana issue. He was at the MMA conference there were Town Administrators there who were very active on this. Grafton was there they drafted and passed the bylaw. It looked to him that Ms. Scheipers had no interest. There are meetings and he felt either you do not want to know it or are too busy. He thinks it is very important information for the towns people who think we are banning the use of marijuana. This applies to stores, growers, infusion. He thinks she should have more knowledge than the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Scheipers did attend a meeting in Shirley and gets regular emails from MMA, CMRPC and KP Law. She had the information. Mr. Rucho thinks we are late and we should have started earlier like other towns. Ms. Scheipers noted it was on the last town meeting warrant. Mr. Rucho thinks she should have told the Board we should have looked at other towns. We just put one article on the warrant and Mr. Rajeshkumar feels there is so much controversy we need to put out a lot of information. Ms. Scheipers is doing video sessions explaining the town meeting warrant.

Mr. Hadley is more concerned about meetings that affect the town and not professional development, he recommends more local meetings than state-wide meetings. Ms. Scheipers states she is careful in terms of choosing sessions. The ones she attends are pertinent to the town and on on-going issues. She feels she is doing a good job making that judgement.

Ms. Scheipers provided the Board with a list of accomplishments she has made for the town, some she had sole responsibility for but many were a team effort. A lot of work we do is a team effort. Hiring a new DPW Director, hiring outside auditor, recruiting young residents to be appointed to various boards/committees, developing an internship agreement with Assumption College for special projects, we achieved Green Communities status and we got \$145,000 in grant funds, proposed and applied for community Compact Status and received Complete Street Funds \$20,000 and \$15,000 for Housing Production. The Curtis TIF, according to Peter Milano of Mass Office of Business Development it was one of the fastest TIF project he had ever seen, coordinating with Steve Migridichian and the Congregational Church for the temporary home of the senior center, the expansion of 127 Hartwell Street. She developed the grant writer position and he is now working with the Friends of the Senior Center, she established a schedule for a closing out and reduce support of a consultant for Town Accountant services, in-house development of non-union job descriptions, retained AA bond rating,

Ms. Scheipers updated her goals. The first is a complete review and overhaul of all job descriptions. That has been completed and they are before the Personnel Board for reviewing and vote. The second goal is to develop a 5-year revenue and expenditure projections. A draft plan had been developed with the assistance of an intern from Assumption College, who needed to return to China. Ms. Scheipers continued to pull reports from DOR and she is hoping that will be reviewed by the Finance Committee prior to coming to the Board for acceptance. The third goal is to develop a Facility Manager position for FY19. A job description has been developed with the assistance of the School and the Library who believe this position is needed. The funds were inserted into the FY19 budget for the position. The last goal was complete review of Master Plan chapters. Thus far four were completed and we received public feedback on them. They are now working on five chapters and there will be a public forum this summer.

Ms. Scheipers thinks she has done a good job meeting goals and thinks we need to improve upon communications at all levels, She has a draft communications plan she will bring forward to the board, a tool to improve communication through the town. PEG Board reorganization, we have to continue work on this as we are having difficulty retaining qualified staff, we need to look at the wages and work for a group of volunteers. Mr. Rucho states we do have qualified staff doing a job on PEG. He thinks the staff we have is doing very good. Ms. Scheipers states it is the fact we have lost quality people due to wages. Mr. Rucho has spoken to many towns who still do not pay staff. Ms. Scheipers noted that the hiring of new IT consultant is underway, working with town department heads to review this. Key development in house process for staff to update town's website, it will be challenging for us to have the staff time to do it and the ability to do that. Rucho thinks it is going to be a challenge as the website is not real user friendly. Ms. Scheipers notes for most of the routine postings of minutes and agendas it is fairly easy to do. For changing out of documents it will require training and ongoing support of staff. Karen has been generous of her time with the staff over the past few year. Mr. Hadley will make a summary of the review and present it at the next Board meeting.

Motion to Adjourn at 7:12 p.m.: Mr. Crowley

Seconded: Ms. Bohnson  
Result: All in favor

Respectfully submitted,

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Nancy E. Lucier, Municipal Assistant

Approved:

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John W. Hadley, Chairman

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Christopher A. Rucho, Vice Chairman

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Barur R. Rajeshkumar, Clerk

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Siobhan M. Bohnson, Selectman

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Patrick J. Crowley, Selectman