



Town of West Boylston

140 Worcester Street, West Boylston, Massachusetts 01583

Select Board/Sewer Commission Meeting Minutes

Date / Time / Location of Meeting December 1, 2021; 6:00 p.m. 140 Worcester Street West Boylston, MA 01583 Board Meeting Room 1 st Floor
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Members Present Christopher A. Rucho, Chairman Barur R. Rajeshkumar, Vice Chair Michael J. Kittredge III, Selectman Kristina Pedone, Selectwoman

Members NOT Present: Patrick J. Crowley, Clerk
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Invited Guests: Nancy Lucier, Town Administrator
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Others Present:

PUBLIC COMMENT: This fifteen-minute period is an opportunity for the public to address their concerns and questions regarding town operations and programs to the Board. Except in urgent circumstances, any matter presented for consideration by the Board shall not be discussed in detail nor acted upon by the Board at this meeting. A scheduled time on a future agenda may be set at the Board's discretion. Complaints or criticism directed at staff, volunteers, or other town officials shall not be permitted. If we do not have Open Session items to discuss, other agenda items may be brought forward earlier.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

- **November 3, 2021 Regular Session:**

Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar moved to approve, Mr. Kittredge second.

All in favor

Approved

**REVIEW AND VOTE TO APPROVE WARRANTS FOR THE PERIOD COVERING
NOVEMBER 18, 2021 TO DECEMBER 1, 2021: Town Payable Warrants FY2022-21 and
FY2022-22; Town Payroll Warrant FY2022-11; Sewer FY2022 SE-13 & 14; MLP FY2022 #11.**

Motion Mr. Kittredge moved to approve; Mr. Rajeshkumar second.

All in favor

Approved

ANDREW FELAND – APPLICATION TO SERVE ON BYLAW COMMITTEE:

Mr. Feland introduced himself and his interest on the Committee.

Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar moved to approve; Mr. Kittredge second.

Vote 3-1-0

Approved

6:15 p.m. PUBLIC HEARING: RE: CLASSIFICATION HEARING IN CONFORMITY WITH M.G.L. CH. 40, § 56 TO ESTABLISH LOCAL PROPERTY TAX RATE OR RATES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022:

Ms. Pedone read the Public Hearing Notice. Ms. Lucier stated the Assessor has requested the Board continue this public hearing until next week due to staffing issues.

Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar moved to continue public hearing until December 8th at 6 p.m.; Mr. Kittredge second.

All in favor

Approved

DAN HIGGINS, REPUBLIC SERVICES – Options for Curbside Collection of Trash/Recyclables:

Dan Higgins, Municipal Sales Manager along with Brian Van Dam General Manager, Matt Apple, Operations Manager with Republic Service. Mr. Higgins discussed with the Board some collection program options. Mr. Higgins discussed the tons of waste during the periods of pre pandemic 2019 580.32 recycling tons and 1459.60 waste tons, November 2019 to October 2020 658.68 recycling tons and 1510.46 waste tons, and November 2020 to October 2021 517.50 recycling tons and 1480.24 waste tons. He stated the town continues to achieve a high waste diversion rate and the goal is to continue to increase that rate. Ms. Pedone asked about the increase and if it is residential only, Mr. Higgins confirmed. He explained the town currently has weekly PAYT bag refuse and single stream recycling with a manual collection program. He stated other options available are fully automated cart collection and semi-automated cart with overflow bags and recycling carts. He explained there can also be options added such as weekly or bi-weekly collection, service days 5 days a week or 4 days a week, cart size can vary 35,65 or 95 gallons. He explained the smaller the cart for waste and include a fee for the overflow bags and offer a larger recycling cart will help reduce the waste stream. The carts can be purchased by republic or the town. He stated the recycling costs and be adjusted annually or monthly and explained the town can enter into an agreement for five years. Ms. Pedone explained she has done some research on other towns and believes the automated pickup is most used, Mr. Higgins stated they are working toward getting all communities automated. Ms. Pedone would like to see what options would be available to the town, Mr. Higgins explained the options would have to be in the contract and not for individual households. Mr. Rajeshkumar stated the town now charges per bag, Mr. Higgins stated the town can decide how to charge whether it be in the tax rate or billed with utilities or use bag program. Mr. Rajeshkumar is concerned with how they will charge for having the bins. Mr. Rucho asked if they will force all town to become fully automated, Mr. Higgins stated they will not. Mr. Kittredge asked if there were any incentives to the towns to become fully automated. Mr. Van Dam responded that competitors have chosen not to quote if the towns are not looking for fully automated. Mr. Higgins would like to look at the options the town is interested in and work on a new contract for five years. He explained they will have to invest in some changes to support other options. Mr. Higgins stated the town currently has good diversion with their current trash plan. He stated they can always increase their efficiency but giving the town other options. Mr. Rucho stated the fairest way for the residents is pay as you throw versus a flat rate per residence. Mr. Rucho would like to know what the average price per residence is in other towns. Mr. Higgins stated each town is

different but he could work on something. Ms. Pedone stated her concern is the future and who will bid in the future and would like to look at options for the town. Mr. Rucho asked what the cost of the bins are, Mr. Van Dam stated the 35-gallon bin is approximately \$40 each. Mr. Van Dam stated residents cannot get the same quality bins as they can and do not recommend, they get them elsewhere as the quality will not be the same and could be damaged. Mr. Higgins stated their contract does not include automated pick up of the bins. Ms. Pedone discussed the increase of the contract annually; Mr. Higgins gave an overview industry challenges. Mr. Higgins explained in the next contract they would use the middle index pricing which is based on costs. Mr. Kittredge asked if this will need to go back out to bid if they wanted to make changes, Ms. Lucier stated no that they can make changes under this contract which is a five-year contract. Mr. Higgins provided information on commodity trends in recycling, and National Driver Shortages. Mr. Higgins stated Republic Service would like to approach July with a revision to the contract and include sharing the processing cost with the Town every month which is currently \$8.88 a ton and the town would get a credit versus the fixed cost. He stated they are getting a paid for the recycling items and they would like to share that with the town. Julianne deRivera of the SWAT Advisory Team stated they would like to see the town continue to minimize trash and saving the town costs. Duane Henry of the SWAT explained he lives at Angel Brook and the small totes do not fit in the garages there and cannot be left outside and this is a technical issue that the Board should consider. Ms. Pedone would like to know what options would be available to residents and leave the contract the way it is. Mr. Rucho stated if the SWAT feels there are need for changes than the Board can entertain negotiating the contract. Ms. Lucier stated the current contract is for five years with an additional five-year extension. Mr. Rucho would just like to be aware of costs to the residents.

POLICE CHIEF DENNIS MINNICH, SR.

- **Discuss Pierce Street Heavy Truck Exclusion:**

Chief Minnich stated residents have concerns with the truck traffic on Pierce Street and suggested a temporary solution until a truck exclusion is established. His solution would be to add a “No Left Turn” sign on the end of Pierce Street/Maple Street and at the other end of Pierce Street/Worcester Street add “Do not Enter” for trucks coming south. And if trucks are coming north on Worcester Street, they could take a right onto Pierce Street unless the Board would like a sign also installed. He feels this will divert the trucks to Route 140, Mr. Rucho asked what the issue will it be having all the trucks in the center of the town. Chief Minnich stated this will remove the trucks from the residential neighborhoods. Mr. Kittredge asked if it would be helpful adding signs directing them to Route 190. Chief Minnich stated the signs are cheap and the DPW can install.

Motion Mr. Kittredge moved to add the three signs as the Chief recommended with an update in a three to six months unless the Chief sees and issue prior; Mr. Rajeshkumar second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Discuss Parking Ban Language:**

Ms. Lucier stated at the last meeting this came up because there were not any snow concerns. Chief Minnich stated if a storm is coming most people park in their driveway, if a car is in the road the DPW will call and Police can issue tickets. He explained the Police give people verbal warnings prior to the storms coming, the tickets state November 15 until April 15. Chief Minnich stated they do not have a parking issue in town.

Mr. Rajeshkumar asked the Chief how the town is doing with speeders, Chief Minnich stated they still have the speed signs out on the poles around town. He stated he incorporates the statistics in his monthly reports. He stated when they receive speeding complaints, they place on of the speed signs

up to see what the speed issues are. Mr. Rucho stated this can go on a future agenda for discussion if the Board requests.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Consider signing Contract for Designer Services for the Mixer Field Project:**

Passed over

- **Request from Ganesh Wellness, Inc to extend their Host Community Agreement for Product Manufacturing by another year. It is due to expire January 6, 2022:**

Mr. Rucho stated the Sub-Committee typically reviews, Ms. Lucier stated she sent an email to sub-committee asking if they would like to have managers in to this meeting and did not receive a response. Ms. Lucier stated the Board had extended this agreement in the past. Ms. Pedone asked why they are requesting another extension, Ms. Lucier read the email received from Ganesh.

Motion Mr. Kittredge moved to approve the extension until January 6, 2022; Mr. Rucho second. Mr. Rajeshkumar stated he does not like that they send in a request but do not show up for meetings, Ms. Lucier stated she asked if they wanted her to invite them in and received no response.

All in favor

Approved

- **Consider reducing the quorum for Town Meeting (KP):**

Ms. Pedone stated there has been an issue getting a quorum in the past and would like to discuss possible reduction in the quorum number. Ms. Lucier gave the history on the reduction of quorum in the past. Ms. Pedone asked if there is anything that would prevent them from reducing the quorum again. Mr. Rajeshkumar is not in favor of reducing the quorum. Mr. Rucho asked when the quorum was reduced to 100, Ms. Lucier stated in 1991. Mr. Rucho explained Ms. Pedone can research and see what other towns have for a quorum. Ms. Pedone stated she is not opposed to putting this off and to see how the next town meeting goes. Mr. Rucho stated he does not ever remember postponing town meeting due to quorum until last town meeting but explains they typically wait for the last 10-15 people to show up.

- **Update on Fire Chief Grant Application for Equipment and Staffing:**

Chief Welsh updated the Board on the AFG grant application for equipment is due on December 6th for three sets of fire gear and a couple helmets and another PPE. He explained the grant is rated by the Fire Marshall's Office and high priority items received a higher score so he chose all high priority items. He explained the importance of having updated gear and PPE to be in compliance with OSHA and NFPA.

Chief Welsh updated the Board on the staffing grant which will open up in January. He has reached out to a fellow Chief for assistance with his application. He stated the Town of Webster hired a grant writer out of Texas for help with their grant application and were successful. He explained he plans to apply for two additional staff with the grant, which will allow for him to have three groups of three for staffing coverage. Ms. Lucier stated there is funding available to hire a grant writer, Chief Welsh stated he has the funding in his budget. Ms. Pedone stated she wanted to be sure the Chief did not need anything from them. Chief Welsh explained they were able to use CARES Funding to purchase seven sets of gear so each person had two sets, however they are still waiting delivery. He will work on sending his application over to the grant writer for assistance.

- **Update on status of transfer of Harmony HCA to Puregenics LLC:**

Ms. Lucier stated she spoke with Rob Fuller about the transfer, he stated he fully expects this transfer to occur around the first of the year. She explained he currently has fifteen employees working on inventory and ecommerce without any sales. Ms. Pedone stated until the transfer goes through, he cannot have employees working. Mr. Rucho stated if he wanted to pay employees to be there while they are not open, he can. Mr. Rucho would like to have Mr. Fuller in at the first meeting in January and would like to receive an update prior if possible.

- **Consider Voting to Approve Employment Contract Between George Tignor and the Town of West Boylston:**

Ms. Lucier stated this is a one-year contract extension with a 2% COLA for 19 hours per week.

Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar moved to approve employment contract; Mr. Kittredge second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Town Administrator Search Materials:**

Mr. Rucho stated the subcommittee will begin working on this and report back to the Board the first week of January.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

1. Report on Meeting with Representatives from the WooSox

I had the opportunity to meet with Dalton Bodreau, Steve Oliveira and Alex Richardson from the Worcester WooSox team. Parks Commission Chairman Jim Pedone joined me for that meeting. The WooSox want to connect with their neighboring communities and get involved. We discussed possible events, one of which included a spring time West Boylston Day event at Polar Park. It would be a day during which we could recognize all the elected and appointed officials of the town as well as the many volunteers who devote time to the town to make it a better place to live. We also discussed having a Scout Sleep Over night at Polar Park. Their mascot is available for town functions such as the Little League Parade. I have also provided them with a list of the non-profits in town so they could connect with them. I look forward to partnering with the WooSox and working with them on future events.

2. Update on Crosswalk Units

The bases for the 4 new hard-wired crosswalk units around the parks and playground have been delivered. Weather dependent, the Light Plant will be wiring them in. Then D'Ambrosia will come in and finish off the remainder of the installation. We received this grant award back on December 10, 2020 and I look forward to the weather cooperating so we can finish the project up.

3. Update on Celebrations Committee

I attended the November 16th meeting of the Celebrations Committee. It is their recommendation to have all members organize and coordinate all Celebrations in town. Their current membership designates that there are three members working on Memorial Day and two members planning and implementing other events. I intend to make that minor change to their Committee Origin sheet unless the Board feels otherwise.

The first event the Celebrations Committee is coordinating is the lighting of the Christmas Tree on the town common, which takes place this Sunday. These events are all made possible by the businesses who purchased light pole banners. Those funds will be used to pay for this and future town celebrations.

Mr. Rucho asked if the Bandstand Committee and the Celebrations Committee could be merged, Ms. Lucier stated they can have a conversation and discuss with the committee members.

4. Grant Update

The town received a MIIA Loss Control Grant in the amount of \$4,047.63. The funds will be used to purchase three flammable metal storage containers, two for use by the DPW and one for the Fire Department in addition to all new plywood for use by the Cemetery Division during burials.

The town also received notice that the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection has awarded us \$8,400 under the Sustainable Materials Recovery Program. The town earned 14 points for implementing programs and policies proven to maximize reuse, recycling and waste reduction. These funds have been used in the past to purchase mulch for the playground, handicapped accessible picnic tables made from 100% recyclable materials for the Reservoir Triangle Picnic Area, mailings for town meeting which included information about the Regional Recycling Center and our membership in the Regional Recycling Center.

Ms. Lucier thanked SWAT for their work on maximizing the points for the town.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

- **Concurrence on the appointment of Keith Wiley to the Insurance Advisory Committee as the designee of the school teachers effective November 22, 2021 for a term to expire on April 30, 2022**

Motion Mr. Kittredge moved to appoint Keith Wiley to the Insurance Advisory Committee; Mr. Rajeshkumar second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Concurrence on the appointment of Debora K. Goodwill to the Insurance Advisory Committee as the alternate designee of the school teachers effective November 22, 2021 for a term to expire April 30, 2022**

Motion Ms. Pedone moved to appoint Debora Goodwill to the Insurance Advisory Committee Alternate; Mr. Kittredge second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Concurrence on the appointment of George Tignor as Building Commissioner/ADA Coordinator effective December 13, 2021 for a term to expire on December 12, 2022:**

Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar moved to appoint George Tignor; Mr. Kittredge second.

All in favor
Approved

- **Concurrence on the appointment of Anna Mary Kraemer to the Affordable Housing Trust effective December 2, 2021 for a term to expire on June 30, 2023**

Motion Mr. Kittredge moved to appoint Anna Mary Kraemer; Mr. Rajeshkumar second.
All in favor
Approved

MEETINGS, INVITATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **December 5, 4:30 p.m. Tree Lighting Ceremony with Santa on the Gazebo Common**
- **December 1 through December 17 – Bring your letters for Santa to the Children’s Room and we will make sure that your letter arrives in Santa’s mailbox before Christmas. We have heard that Santa writes back to those children who leave their address on their letters!**
- **December 18th, 10:00 a.m. Festive Candy Cane Decoration in person at the Library. Please email beaman@cwmar.org no later than December 11 to reserve your spot.**

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS/SELECTMANS REPORTS:

- Ms. Pedone would like to remind everyone on behalf of Mr. Crowley to keep hydrants clear from snow.
- Mr. Rucho discussed the school not having issues with the Capital Investment Board, Ms. Lucier believes this is not an issue and will reach out to School Superintendent to be sure they are all set. Ms. Pedone asked if anything is sent back to the submitters from the CIB. Mr. Rucho would like to add to a future agenda the process of capital requests.
- Mr. Rucho provided the Board with an update the Town Hall repairs; first floors are open and the second floor is being worked on. He stated the punch list items are being worked on and is hopeful in the next couple weeks this will be completed.

Motion Ms. Pedone moved exit and to adjourn at 8:05 p.m. Mr. Kittredge, second all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved:

Faye D. Zukowski, Municipal Assistant

Christopher A. Rucho, Chairman

Barur R. Rajeshkumar, Vice Chairman

Patrick J. Crowley, Clerk

Michael J. Kittredge III, Selectman

Kristina Pedone, Selectman