



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

Select Board/Sewer Commission Meeting Minutes

Date / Time / Location of Meeting
June 15, 2022; 6:00 p.m.
140 Worcester Street
West Boylston, MA 01583
Board Meeting Room 2nd Floor

Members Present
Christopher A. Rucho, Chairman
Barur R. Rajeshkumar, Vice Chair
Marc Frieden, Clerk
Patrick J. Crowley, Selectman
Kristina Pedone, Selectwoman

Members NOT Present:

Invited Guests:
James Purcell, Interim Town
Administrator
Faye Zukowski, Municipal Assistant
Kevin Duffy, DPW Director

Others Present:

David Femia, Siobhan Bohnson

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Mr. Rucho congratulated Mr. Rajeshkumar and Mr. Frieden on their election to the Board.

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:

- **May 4, 2022 Regular Session:**

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

4-0-1 Mr. Frieden abstained

Approved

- **May 4, 2022 Executive Session for approval not release:**

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

4-0-1 Mr. Frieden abstained
Approved

REVIEW AND VOTE TO APPROVE WARRANTS FOR THE PERIOD COVERING MAY 4, 2022 TO MAY 18, 2022: Town Payable Warrants FY2022-46, Sewer FY2022 SE-28; MLP FY2022 #24.

Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar moved to approve; Ms. Pedone second.
All in favor
Approved

BOARD REORGANIZATION – SELECT BOARD & BOARD OF SEWER COMMISSIONERS:

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to have Kristina be the Chair; Ms. Pedone second.

Mr. Crowley chose Kristina due to being prepared and dives into items on agenda and asks appropriate questions and will make an excellent Chair. Mr. Rajeshkumar believes it is too early in her term to be the Chair.

2-3-0

Motion failed

Motion Mr. Frieden moved to have Raj be the Chair; Mr. Rucho second.

Ms. Pedone stated Raj has never shown interest in being the Chair in the past and interest is solely that she is wishing to be Chair. She does not feel comfortable with him being Chair. Mr. Crowley does not believe Raj is prepared for meetings and does not review the agenda prior to meetings. He feels Raj takes Facebook questions and gets them answers and is a great service to residents. He feels the role of the Select board is to set policy for the town. Mr. Rucho asks the questions about items in the agenda so the public is clear what is in the agenda and does not fault Raj for asking questions for the public. Mr. Rajeshkumar responded to the claims of Kristina and Pat and feels he is prepared for meetings and wants to resolve issues for residents.

3-2-0

Approved

Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar moved to have Mr. Rucho be Vice-Chair; Mr. Frieden second.

All in favor

Approved

Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar moved to have Mr. Frieden be Clerk; Mr. Crowley second.

All in favor

Approved

Mr. Rajeshkumar asked Mr. Rucho to Chair this meeting and he will take over going forward.

Consider Designating other Select Board Assignments for 2022-2023, below is the 2021-2022 listing:

- **Earth Removal Board – Mr. Kittredge**

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to appoint Mr. Frieden; Mr. Rajeshkumar second.

All in favor

Approved

- **TWPC – Ms. Pedone**

Motion Ms. Pedone moved to appoint Mr. Crowley; Mr. Frieden second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Upper Blackstone Water Pollution Abatement District (alternate) – Mr. Crowley**

Motion Ms. Pedone moved to appoint Mr. Crowley; Mr. Frieden second.

All in favor

Approved

- **MBTA – Mr. Kittredge**

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to appoint Mr. Frieden; Ms. Pedone second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Parks Facilities Committee – Mr. Rajeshkumar & Mr. Crowley**

Motion Ms. Pedone moved to appoint Mr. Rajeshkumar and Mr. Crowley; Ms. Pedone second.

All in favor

Approved

- **MWRA – alternate Mr. Crowley**

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to appoint Mr. Rucho; Mr. Frieden second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Affordable Housing Trust Board of Trustees – Ms. Pedone**

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to appoint Mr. Rucho; Ms. Pedone second.

All in favor

Approved

- **CMRPC alternate – Mr. Rajeshkumar**

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to appoint Mr. Rajeshkumar; Mr. Frieden second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Bylaws Committee – Mr. Rucho**

Motion Ms. Pedone moved to appoint Mr. Rajeshkumar; Mr. Crowley second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Economic Development Committee – Ms. Pedone**

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to appoint Ms. Pedone; Mr. Frieden second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Municipal Buildings Committee – Mr. Crowley**

Motion Ms. Pedone moved to appoint Mr. Crowley; Mr. Frieden second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Transportation Cmte. ex officio – Mr. Kittredge**

Motion Ms. Pedone moved to appoint Mr. Frieden; Mr. Crowley second.

All in favor

Approved

- **PEG Board – Mr. Rajeshkumar**

Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar moved to appoint Mr. Rucho; Mr. Crowley second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Town Beautification liaisons - Mr. Rucho & Ms. Pedone**

Mr. Rucho stated he is unsure what this committee does and would like to pass until they know what the committee does.

6:15 P.M. PUBLIC HEARING – Consider Amending Gateway Sign Policy L-15

Mr. Frieden read the Public Hearing notice. Ms. Pedone stated the amendments have been added and the changes are; renewal annually with a cost of \$500 for the front and \$300 for the back.

Mr. Crowley would like all policies updated to “Select Board” from Board of Selectmen. Mr. Rucho would like that completed on all policies and does not believe it needs to be voted as the town voted at Town Meeting to make the name change. Mr. Purcell suggested to have a public hearing to change all policies.

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to close the public hearing; Ms. Pedone second.

All in favor

Approved

Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar moved to approve the policy change for the gateway sign with front \$500 and back \$300 and instead of 90 days be one year and all instances of Selectmen to Select Board; Mr. Crowley second.

All in favor

Approved

6:25 P.M. PUBLIC HEARING – Consider Amending Sewer Use Bill Abatement Policy I-2

Mr. Frieden read the Public Hearing Notice. Mr. Crowley discussed they received a request from a commercial property for an abatement after a water break and under the current policy they are exempt from receiving an abatement. Mr. Crowley feels all rate payers should be eligible for the abatement procedure. Mr. Duffy, DPW Director agrees that it should be offered when the water does not impact the sewer system and agrees the policy should be amended. The Board discussed the changes that are needed in the policy and would like clarification on the wording second sewer meter in the current version of the policy from the Water District. Mr. Rucho would like to continue the Public Hearing to get clarification and vote at a future meeting. Sam Pierce owner of H.R. Prescott, he requested an abatement for his commercial property and asked about the sewer

bill that he has from this water issue they had. Mr. Crowley advised him to pay the sewer bill and once the public hearing is held and changes are approved, he should then submit the abatement.

***Motion** Mr. Crowley moved to continue the public hearing until June 29th meeting; Mr. Rajeshkumar second.*

All in favor

Approved

KEVIN DUFFY, DPW DIRECTOR:

- **Update on DPW Schedule of Tree Removal:**

Ms. Pedone would like to know what is the amount of money needed going forward and how many trees are on the list. Ms. Pedone discussed the list of trees but trees behind school were prioritized and budget for tree removal was used up. She asked why free cash was not used to cover what was spent and there is never enough money in the budget to cover the cost of tree removal. Mr. Purcell agreed the budget amount is not enough to cover tree removal in town. Mr. Purcell asked if this could be an ARPA expense for infrastructure. Mr. Purcell advised the cost estimates change very quickly. Mr. Rucho stated this can be added to a future meeting.

- **Street Repairs on Malden Street at corner of Goodale Street:**

Mr. Rucho stated this will be added to a future meeting.

PATRICK INDERWISH, CHAIR, PARKS FACILITIES COMMITTEE

- **Update on Mixer Field Project:**

Mr. Inderwish presented the Mixer Field Project to the Board and gave an overview of the project and explained what the uses of the fields will be. He gave examples of how the field can be laid out. He stated the town appropriated \$652,000 based on the estimate that was provided by the design team that worked on the Senior Center. He explained they have now run into challenges with cost of materials which was never anticipated due to pandemic and supply costs. Mr. Inderwish stated the committee has chosen field layout option 2 (presented in his presentation) and expects 8.6% increase in cost due to escalation. He explained there is an issue with a drainage structure that is creating a drainage issue on the site and they have asked the DPW to clean it and for any plans the DPW may have. He explained there is also a distribution box and guy wire including a pole that impedes the field of play on the site and they need answers before they can move forward with the project. Mr. Rajeshkumar stated when they worked on a design for the Senior Center, they never discussed creating a field for future build. Mr. Inderwish stated the parks Facilities Committee is inheriting a design defect and it is not under their purview to remove pole or correct drainage in the roadway. Mr. Rucho asked if the committee voted to request this to go before the Board to pay for the work that needs to be done to fix the issues at the site. Mr. Inderwish stated he has received two estimates and from the Municipal Light Board which two solutions for moving the pole. Mr. Frieden would like to see the cost rolled into the project costs. Mr. Crowley stated \$150,000 of funds have been earmarked for this project and Nancy stated these funds will be coming. Mr. Inderwish stated Representative O'Day explained it is in conference and not yet approved. Mr. Purcell explained how an earmark is handled and when to expect to hear. Mr. Crowley stated with the additional \$150,000, this project is feasible with the inflation costs. Mr. Inderwish stated the architect designers have come up with cost estimates and some items will need to be cut back or other options will need to be visited. Mr. Rucho asked if the committee has voted on which option to go with, Mr. Inderwish stated they voted on the design of option 2. Discussion on the drainage on the

field and the need to tie in to the road. Ms. Pedone would like to recommend the Parks Facilities Committee to vote on what they need from the Select Board. Mr. Inderwish explained they have been working on this project for some time and believes it is important to add recreation in this area, he stated there is no recreation on the other side of the reservoir for the community to enjoy.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Discussion on future Fireworks Displays in town (BR):**

Mr. Crowley explained the committee received approval from the Fire Chief to hold a bonfire and fireworks. He stated they may be able to have fireworks in the future but the committee has decided to wait on the fireworks and bonfire this year. Mr. Rajeshkumar asked if there will be fireworks, Mr. Crowley stated there will not be fireworks and most likely not a bonfire as they are only a group of four volunteers. Mr. Crowley explained the Banner Program that is being handled by the Celebrations Committee. Mr. Crowley solicited from the public any ideas for events and if anyone would like to volunteer.

- **Consider designating items as surplus:**

Ms. Zukowski explained she would like to solicit surplus items from all the departments to be deemed surplus and at their August meeting the Board can deem the items surplus.

- **Summer Meeting Schedule:**

June 29, 2022, July 20, 2022 and August 17, 2022

- **Consider voting on Signature of Authority for FY2023**

Motion Mr. Frieden moved to appoint Mr. Rajeshkumar or Mr. Crowley to be the signatory for the FY2023 warrants; Mr. Rajeshkumar second.

All in favor

Approved

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to authorize the Assistant Treasurer or Assistant Tax Collector as alternate signatories; Mr. Frieden second.

All in favor

Approved

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Hybrid Meeting Discussion:**

Mr. Rucho stated this meeting was held in hybrid for the first time and there were technical difficulties but they will be working on the issues.

- **Update on Municipality Software**

Ms. Zukowski stated they were waiting for the Planning Board's response if they would like to use the software and they voted in favor on June 8th. Mr. Frieden stated it will be important that town office wide it is utilized to be effective. Mr. Rucho stated the next step would be to approve the purchase once it is ready to go. Mr. Rajeshkumar gave an overview of how the software will be effective between departments. Mr. Crowley would like to know the cost for discussion at a future meeting.

- **Update on Pride Parks a/d/a Project**

Mr. Rucho would like to wait until the Committee has information to present to the Board.

TOWN ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

- Mr. Purcell gave an overview of his time he spends in the office and that he plans to be in the office Monday, Wednesday and another day. He held a department head meeting and met with everyone. He feels he has been caught up to date with town counsel and most matters of the town.
- Mr. Purcell state he has spoken to Mary Aicardi at the Collins Center to get the status of the ADA Compliance Review and believes it is being worked on and will stay on top of this project and will be sure to put a hold on the funds. Mr. Crowley stated Kim Hopewell of the Disability Commission will be contacting him to get a status update.
- Mr. Purcell stated the Affordable Housing proposals are due next week on Wednesday and will bring to the Board once received.
- Mr. Purcell stated he received a memo from the Board of Health and they are seeking Select Board input on the distribution of the next distribution of test kits. Mr. Rucho does not believe there is a current issue getting free tests kits at this time and plenty of places to get them. Mr. Rajeshkumar stated the Board of Health is getting the kits from the stated and they are asking the Select Board on how they want the kits distributed. Mr. Rajeshkumar would like them given to anyone that asks for the kits. Mr. Rucho would like to let residents know they are available online by mail. Mr. Rucho would like to thank them for asking for input but at this time they would like them given out to anyone that needs them.

MEETINGS, INVITATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None received.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS/SELECTMANS REPORTS:

- Mr. Crowley stated the Disability Commission met and would like to add to a future agenda the adoption of Chapter 40A, Section 22G which would add fines collected from handicap parking violations into a special fund. He would like this complaint passed along to the Town Clerk that the egress used for voting is not conducting to people with disabilities and would like the Town Clerk to review the travel for voting. He stated the Disability Commission would like to reserve space on the Town Meeting Mailer, He stated the Disability Commission voted on some bylaws for the town and will be submitting for a Town Meeting Article in the future.
- Mr. Crowley congratulated the Girls Softball Team for making it to the State Finals and is an amazing accomplishment and good luck for the games this weekend.
- Mr. Rucho stated the Town Administrator Search Committee met on June 13th and will be holding more interviews on June 22nd and will be coming to the Board hopefully soon. Mr. Crowley asked how many they plan to interview, Mr. Rucho stated they agreed to interview six.
- Mr. Rucho stated he revied correspondence from Representative O'Day that the earmarked have made it through the conference committee and are in the House now.
- Mr. Rucho also commented on the voting at the Senior Center stating the front of the building was locked and were instructed to use another entrance. He feels that if citizens come out to vote they should be able to walk around the entire facility.
- Mr. Friedman would also like to request the Town Clerk allow for the swearing in of candidates at the end of elections on same evening.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Consider entering into executive session under the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30a, Section 21(A), Part 2 to discuss strategy with respect to contract negotiations with non-union personnel and the Chair declares that an open meeting discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body.

Mr. Purcell asked the Board to pass over the executive session at this time.

- **Consider a possible Town Administrator Appointment of Fire Chief**

Mr. Purcell stated he will add this back onto a future agenda possibly on June 29th.

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to adjourn at 8:22 p.m.; Mr. Frieden second.

All in favor

Approved

Respectfully submitted,

Approved:

Faye D. Zukowski, Municipal Assistant

Christopher A. Rucho, Chairman

Barur R. Rajeshkumar, Vice Chairman

Patrick J. Crowley, Clerk

Marc Friedman, Selectman

Kristina Pedone, Selectwoman