



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

Select Board/Sewer Commission Meeting Minutes

Date / Time / Location of Meeting
November 16, 2022; 6:00 p.m.
140 Worcester Street
West Boylston, MA 01583
Board Meeting Room 2nd Floor

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

Members NOT Present:

Invited Guests:
Jennifer Warren-Warren-Dyment-
Warren-Dyment Town Administrator
Faye Zukowski, Municipal Assistant

Others Present: Ken Cleveland, Emily, Heather Carlson, 508-450-4096, iphone

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Pledge of Allegiance

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:

- **August 17, 2022**

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to approve; Mr. Rucho second.
All in favor
Approved

**REVIEW AND VOTE TO APPROVE WARRANTS FOR THE PERIOD COVERING
NOVEMBER 3, 2022 through NOVEMBER 16, 2022: Town Payable Warrants FY2023-19 and
FY2023-20; Sewer Warrants FY2023-11; School Warrants FY2023-S9 and FY2023-S10; Payroll
Warrant FY2023-10 and MLP FY2023 #9**

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to approve; Mr. Rucho second.

All in favor
Approved

Kevin Duffy, DPW Director

- **Snow and Ice Policy**

Discuss at a future meeting.

- **Salt Reduction Grant**

Mr. Duffy explained this is a program with DCR with applications due in February and funds need to be spent by fiscal year end. He stated he would like to use these funds to upgrade and repair lighting to the salt shed to create a safer working location. He stated the old electrical infrastructure is not operational. He explained the grant is for \$2,588 and is approximately half the cost of the quote he received. He is seeking a vote of approval from the Board to accept the grant.

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to accept the grant in accordance with MGL Chapter 44, Section 53A; Mr. Rucho second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Salt Shed Update**

Mr. Duffy update the Board that they have been working with the insurance company to get the repair completed. He stated there was an issue with the structural support of the building and they are hopeful to be completed with all the work by Thanksgiving. The lighting will be completed following the construction. He stated this shed is the salt shed for the DPW use only not public work. Mr. Duffy stated they have a three-sided shed with sand for residents and it is located to the left of the DPW Garage and there is motion lighting also on this shed.

- **Update on Line Stripping**

Mr. Duffy gave an update on the line striping in town. He stated they have completed 384,000 linear feet with epoxy paint and 86,500 linear feet of water-based paint on roads that are in need of repair or will have improvements in the near future. He stated some roads had issues with some roads that had existing thermoplastic paint on Beaman and Century Drive, roadway width on Fairbanks and Upper Malden. He stated they have \$62,000 remaining in the ARPA fund allocated for the line striping. Mr. Rajeshkumar asked how the poxy paint from last year held up, Mr. Duffy stated is held up well but some gutter lines are covered by road debris. Mr. Crowley asked about the roads that are not wide enough to have a true center line, Mr. Duffy stated he is working with the line painting company to get it done corrected. Mr. Crowley asked about the roads with thermoplastic, Mr. Duffy stated those roads paint seem to be in good shape still and will evaluate next year. Mr. Rucho would like to know the percentage of the town that now has epoxy and requested a list of the streets completed last year and this year.

- **Update on Crosswalk Rapid Flashing Beacons**

Mr. Duffy explained in 2020 the Town received a grant to purchase eight new crosswalk beacons in the amount of \$49,000 through Winter Shared Streets Program. He stated the prior Director had ordered and an installer was chosen to complete the work. He stated he has had issues getting the installation completed by the contractor. Mr. Duffy explained he would like to move forward with converting the beacons to solar with the purchase of solar adapters. He explained this will require less work and impact for installation if they used solar. He stated the can use WRAP Funding to cover the additional costs. Mr. Crowley stated if the solar is going to be as constant as a hard-wired unit than the Board has no issues with this conversion. Ms. Warren-Dymont stated the grant award does state specifically to have hard wired so MassDOT was contacted and they

have no issues. Mr. Duffy gave locations to the Board of where they will be placed. Mr. Crowley asked when these will be installed, Mr. Duffy stated spring.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Holiday Schedule**

Ms. Warren-Dyment requested the Board to consider closing town hall on Friday after Thanksgiving. She stated the large majority of staff intended to take the day off. She is requesting to allow staff to use earned time and close the building. She polled surrounding towns and most are closed on Friday. Mr. Rucho would like to look at this for the future and thinks it has always been a skeleton crew. Ms. Pedone stated does not have an issue with the request and does not believe having a skeleton crew is safe. Ms. Warren-Dyment stated that if the Board does not approve, she will be forced to require at least one staff member from each department to work that day and be denied time. Mr. Rucho feels this is last minute and would like to review the Personnel Policy, Ms. Warren-Dyment stated this is not a personnel policy issue. Mr. Crowley does not have an issue with allowing people to use their time and close the building and this is a day that most people take off. Mr. Crowley would like to take a look at this going forward. Mr. Rucho wants to make sure the public is notified.

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to approve the plan as presented to close the building with staff using PTO or no pay for this year; Ms. Pedone second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Consider approving the following individual as Alternate Snow Plow Driver effective December 1, 2022 until May 1, 2023 at a hourly rate of \$20.71 pending completion of all pre-approval requirements.**
 - **Colin McKee**
 - **Ethan Boynton**

Motion Mr. Rucho moved to approve; Mr. Crowley second.

All in favor

Approved

Acknowledge donations to the Council on Aging from July 1, 2022 through September 30, 2022 in the amount of \$1,700 from local residents.

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to approve; Ms. Pedone second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Acknowledge donations to the Recreation Revolving Account from the Community Club in the amount of \$2,368.**

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to approve; Mr. Rucho second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Consider Approving Goals and Objectives for Town Administrator**

Mr. Rajeshkumar stated the Board met on November 5, 2022 for a Goal Session and thanked the public for submitting suggestions. Ms. Warrant-Dyment read the goals that were considered for the Town Administrator and many of the goals are broad. Mr. Rucho would like full list of goals and objectives added to the website. Ms. Pedone stated she wants to the clear some of these goals are not short term some may take years. Mr. Crowley wants to be clear

that the Town Administrator contract has goals attached to it and some goals may not be completed in this contract term.

- **Goal #1:** Improve Town Infrastructure
- **Goal #2:** Increase Transparency and Communications
- **Goal #3:** Recruit, Retain, Educate, and Engage Town Staff
- **Goal #4:** Generate New Revenue Sources, Decrease Burden on Taxpayers, and Improve Efficiencies.
- **Goal #5:** Improve Health and Safety of West Boylston Residents
- **Consider Approving Goals and Objectives for Select Board**
 - **Goal #1:** Ensure Polices and Bylaws are Current and Comprehensive
 - **Goal #2:** Increase Public Participation in Local Government
 - **Goal #3:** Develop Long-Term Strategic Plan for West Boylston Municipal Properties

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Winter Parking Ban**

Ms. Warren-Dymont stated she spoke with the Police Chief has no issues with shrinking the term of the Winter Parking Ban. Mr. Crowley stated there is not a written policy that the town can enforce. Mr. Duffed stated it makes sense to review the forecast and make a determination on how it may impact the holiday. Ms. Warren-Dymont stated a Board vote would put into effect a parking ban, Mr. Crowley stated they have never taken a vote in the past. Mr. Crowley stated an announcement has always been made that there is not overnight in street parking from November 15 until April 15 or during a snow event. Mr. Crowley would like to set a policy at a future agenda item.

***Motion** Mr. Crowley moved to that the overnight parking ban goes into effect December 1st to include all language as previously used if there is snow in forecast there is not parking in street during day as well; Mr. Frieden second.*

All in favor

Approved

- **Pierce Street Heavy Commercial Vehicle Exclusion**

Ms. Warren-Dymont stated the town explored and completed a traffic study. She stated MassDOT would need to approve and alternate route would require a letter from adjacent community as alternate route would travel through Worcester. She stated Jim Purcell and Kevin Duffy had conversation with Worcester and they would consider a letter for MassDOT but will charge the Town \$15,700 to cover the cost of data collection and assessment. Mr. Crowley does not believe the City of Worcester is going to allow for truck traffic to travel through their residential neighborhoods, Mr. Rucho agreed. Mr. Rucho stated every time this is a conversation the question is where will the trucks go. Ms. Warren-Dymont stated she heard from State Officials (Representative O'Day and Senator Chandler's Office) that they were contacted by some residents to see if they can assist in asking Worcester to waive or reduce the cost to the town, but has not heard back. Mr. Frieden asked if the study will possibly show there is not an impact due to already high volume of traffic existing. Mr. Rajeshkumar stated the Planning Board gives approval to businesses they have a condition for traffic of trucks. He stated the trucks are following the GPS and are not truck owned by the businesses located on Hartwell Street. Ms. Emily Miller Braxton and Gary Braxton of 95 Pierce Street asked state officials to review the request that may go before the MassDOT. Mr. Frieden asked how the GPS route would get changed, Ms. Emily Miller Braxton stated if a truck route is approved and trucks travel on street that is posted residents can report they can be fined. She believes eventually the GPS route would be updated. Mr. Gary Braxton is concerned with the interest of West Boylston and there is 5-10

trucks an hour all hours of the day. Ms. Pedone asked how we can modify the turn onto Pierce to now be easy for trucks. Mr. Duffy stated a profession design would need to be done if the town wanted. Mr. Duffy stated we need to be considerate of the towns trash vendor and school buses that use the road also. Mr. Crowley would rather spend town funds on an engineering study to redesign Pierce Street than to pay Worcester to complete a study to possibly give the town a letter. Ms. Warren-Dyment wants to be considerate that the town is not just pushing the traffic into the next street. Mr. Duffy stated in January a temporary sign was not enforceable and signed were damaged when new poles were installed and does not recommend reinstalling.

TOWN ADMINISTRATORS REPORT (May contain Departmental updates, community reminders and announcements, project updates, etc. No votes will be taken).

- 1. Tax Classification Hearing:** The Select Board will be holding the Annual Tax Classification Public Hearing on Wednesday, November 30th, at 6:05 PM. The Board will be voting to either keep a single tax rate or move to a split tax rate. The Assessors are determining final property values and will be presenting their analysis to the Board on November 30th.
- 2. Veterans Day Breakfast:** Last Friday the annual Veterans Day breakfast was held at the Senior Center. Veterans enjoyed a fantastic breakfast, comradery, and a few lucky folks walked out with gift baskets. A special thank you to Lisa Clark Viklund and the Senior Center volunteers, Jake Webb (VSO), and Select Board Chair Barur Rajeshkumar for helping to make this a special day for West Boylston's Veterans.
- 3. Beamon Memorial Public Library Earmark:** Thank you to Senator Chandler for securing a \$100,000 earmark in "An Act Relating to Economic Growth and Relief for the Commonwealth". Specifically, the funding is for "architectural, mechanical and electrical bid specifications for the installation of a new high efficiency air to water heat pump at the Beaman Memorial Public Library". As the Board is aware, a study has already been completed by RISE Engineering to look at the electrification of the heating/cooling system. The legislation is now sitting on Governor Baker's desk. Thanks also to Representative O'Day for his support of this project and to Interim Administrator Jim Purcell for advancing the request.
- 4. Affordable Housing Trust- General Land Area Minimum Calculation:** Last week, the Affordable Housing Trust voted to engage a consultant to update the Town's General Land Area Minimum (GLAM) calculation. The Town had previously calculated that it had exceeded the statutory minimum of 1.5 % (affordable housing exists on more than 1.5% of the total land area zoned for residential, commercial, and industrial uses).

DHCD recently changed the guidelines which guide the GLAM calculation and added the following language: *In calculating the eligible area of the underlying parcels, for any parcel less than or equal to one-half acre in size, MassGIS will include the entire parcel area; for any parcel more than one-half acre in size, MassGIS will include all impervious or developed open space land cover categories (which includes lawn areas) within GIS, as well as all areas within 50 feet of a building footprint regardless of land cover category, but will exclude all other land cover categories.* Accordingly, the AHT is updating the calculation to align with the current guidelines.

- 5. MBTA Communities Update:** As a reminder, the Town of West Boylston has been designated an "adjacent community" under the MBTA Communities categorization. The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) recently revised the compliance guidelines for multi-family zoning districts under Section 3A of the Zoning Act

(MBTA communities zoning). Following the release of the new guidelines, CMRPC hosted a webinar with DHCD which was attended by Vinny Vignaly of the Planning Board and myself. Technical assistance will be provided to help guide West Boylston through this process. The next step is for the Planning Board to meet with CMRPC and to work on the “Action Plan” which is due on January 31, 2023. West Boylston will be required to zone 39 acres of land where a unit density of 15 units per acre is allowed “as of right” and will need to reach compliance by December 31, 2024.

Mr. Crowley would like to know what funding could be off the table for the town if the town does not comply. Ms. Warren-Dymont believe large funding sources could be a possibility.

- 6. Green Communities Update:** West Boylston’s Green Communities Annual Report was recently submitted to the State through the assistance of CMRPC. Through this year’s funding, LED lighting was installed at the Fire Department, DPW, and three pump stations. We also had an HVAC upgrade at the DPW and grant management with CMRPC. We will now look towards the April 2023 grant round.
- 7. Shared Planner Discussion:** I am in very preliminary discussions regarding sharing a Planner with another community. CMRPC is facilitating the conversations to help determine if a match is possible.
- 8. Cannabis Law Update:** An Act Relative to Equity in the Cannabis Industry became effective on November 9th. Vice Chairman Chris Rucho and Patrick Crowley attended a webinar with a question-and-answer session hosted by the Select Board Association and KP Law. The webinar is available if Board members are interested. There are many questions that remain with the adoption of this new law and we look to future guidance from the Cannabis Control Commission.
- 9. Election Turnout:** West Boylston saw a strong turnout for the November 8, 2022 state election with 3,417 voters casting ballots. A special thanks to the Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk, and Election workers who allowed for a smooth and efficient election.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS/SELECT BOARD REPORTS:

- Mr. Crowley announced the annual tree lighting will be held on December 4, 2022 at 4 p.m.
- Mr. Crowley reminds residents to clear out around fire hydrants in the event of snow event.
- Ms. Pedone stated the Economic Development Board is looking at webpages of the town and they would like to update the list of small businesses and host a round table. She stated they have two opening on the Board and they meet once a month.
- Ms. Pedone stated SWAT is working on scheduling Town Wide Clean Up day.
- Ms. Pedone would like an update on the Facilities Person at a future agenda.
- Mr. Rajeshkumar would like an update on the Chef for the Senior Center at a future agenda.

Next Meeting on November 30, 2022 in place of the December 7th meeting and December 14th meeting in place of December 21st.

***Motion** Mr. Rucho moved to adjourn at 8:01 p.m.; Ms. Pedone second.*

Roll Call Vote

Mr. Frieden, yes

Mr. Rucho yes,

Mr. Crowley yes,
Ms. Pedone, yes
Mr. Rajeshkumar, yes
All in favor
Approved

Respectfully submitted,

Faye D. Zukowski, Municipal Assistant

Approved:

Barur R. Rajeshkumar, Chairman

Christopher A. Rucho, Vice Chairman

Marc Friedman, Clerk

Patrick J. Crowley, Selectman

Kristina Pedone, Selectwoman