



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

## **Select Board/Sewer Commission Meeting Minutes**

**Date / Time / Location of Meeting**

January 4, 2023; 6:00 p.m.  
140 Worcester Street  
West Boylston, MA 01583  
Board Meeting Room 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Hybrid with Zoom

**Members Present:**

**Barur R. Rajeshkumar, Chairman**  
**Christopher A. Rucho, Vice Chairman**  
**Kristina Pedone, Selectwoman**

**Members NOT Present:**

**Patrick J. Crowley, Selectman**  
**Marc Frieden, Clerk**

**Invited Guests:**

**Jennifer Warren-Dyment, Town Administrator**  
**Faye Zukowski, Municipal Assistant**  
**Kevin Duffy, DPW Director**

**Others Present:** Ken Cleveland, David Femia, Neil, Rich Bard Paduarde, Lacey McIntosh, and Ellen Dunlap

### **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

#### **Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Rajeshkumar wished everyone a Happy New Year.

**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:**

- **October 17, 2022**

*Motion Mr. Rucho moved to approve, Ms. Pedone second.*

*All in favor*

*Approved*

- **November 2, 2022**

*Motion Mr. Rucho moved to approve, Ms. Pedone second.*

*All in favor*

*Approved*

- November 5, 2022

*Motion Mr. Rucho moved to approve, Ms. Pedone second.*

*All in favor*

*Approved*

- November 16, 2022

*Motion Mr. Rucho moved to approve, Ms. Pedone second.*

*All in favor*

*Approved*

- November 30, 2022

*Motion Mr. Rucho moved to approve, Ms. Pedone second.*

*All in favor*

*Approved*

**REVIEW AND VOTE TO APPROVE WARRANTS FOR THE PERIOD COVERING  
DECEMBER 15, 2022 TO JANUARY 4, 2023: Town Payable Warrants FY2023-25, FY2023-26  
and FY2023-27; Sewer Warrants FY2023-SE15, FY2023-SE16; Payroll Warrant FY2023-13,  
School Warrant FY2023-S12 and MLP FY2023 #13.**

*Motion Mr. Rucho moved to approve, Ms. Pedone second.*

*All in favor*

*Approved*

**6:05 PM PUBLIC HEARING: Continued Hearing from December 14, 2022: Amendment of  
Policy G-3 Emergency Plan for Ice Control and Snow Removal.**

Mr. Rucho stated the policy was updated from last meeting, Ms. Warren-Dymont responded the operation items were removed but wanted to keep a policy to have different priorities and also address the private roads. She stated Emergency in the title was removed due to the policy being more involved than emergency. Mr. Rajeshkumar asked about Howard Avenue, Mr. Duffy stated this road has never been on the policy as it is too narrow for the town equipment. Mr. Rajeshkumar believes the Board added this street at a previous meeting and would like confirmation. Ms. Pedone asked for clarification on changes, Ms. Warren-Dymont provided. Ms. Warren-Dymont provided and update to the fire hydrants that the West Boylston Water District owns the hydrants and in terms of responsibility for clearing the hydrants the town could create a bylaw that requires residents to clear hydrants in front of property but there is no legal responsibility by the residents. She stated if resources are available DPW may assist in clearing them. She stated if there is a fire the Fire Department will clear hydrants in emergency. She stated the Fire Chief may send forward an article to create a bylaw in the future. Mr. Rucho has concerns with a bylaw in place with elderly. He asked about the hydrants that are not in front of homes. Ms. Warren-Dymont stated there is no legal obligation for anyone to clear the hydrants. Mr. Rajeshkumar stated there has never been an issue in the past thankfully. Ms. Pedone asked about the Repairs Priorities to DPW Garage and feels this is the discretion of the DPW Director. Ms. Warren-Dymont stated Kevin wanted to remove this section but she felt inclined to keep so if there ever is a question

why are other town vehicles not being repaired this would clarify. Mr. Rucho stated this policy is for Snow and Ice and feels this is operational. Mr. Duffy stated they do not have any issues prioritizing the repair of vehicles. Mr. David Femia feels the Director can prioritize and manage. He asked how many private roads are in town, Mr. Rucho stated there are seventeen.

*Motion Mr. Rucho moved to close the Public Hearing, Ms. Pedone second.*

*All in favor*

*Approved*

*Motion Mr. Rucho moved to approve the policy removing Repair Priorities DPW Garage , Ms. Pedone second.*

*All in favor*

*Approved*

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Discussion on North Main Street Sidewalks:**

Ms. Warren-Dymont stated Representative James O'Day and Senator Harriet Chandler were successful in the earmark for \$200,000. She stated this earmark is specifically for the reconstruction of the existing sidewalks and to connect the sidewalk network to the DCR parking lot at the Central Mass Rail Trail. She explained they will have to expend the funds by the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Kevin Duffy has a proposal and plans to enter into agreement with Gill Engineering for technical specifications and engineering design services. He explained once the town has the design documents, they will connect to the DCR parking lot. He stated they will need to prioritize based on costs. He stated they may be able to use Chapter 90 funds for any remaining areas if they are not able to get it all done with the \$200,000. He stated they should have everything out to bid in February and contracts in March and construction beginning in April. Mr. Rucho asked where the sidewalks are proposed, Mr. Duffy stated cost will determine how much gets done from North Main Street to the Rail trail Parking Lot and any remaining funds can be used to repair the existing sidewalks on North Main Street. Ms. Warren-Dymont stated working with Gill Engineering will allow for the Town to see how much they can get done. Mr. Rucho asked where the sidewalk ends now, Mr. Duffy said the North Main Street sidewalks end where Beaman Street meets North Main Street.

- **Select board Member Constituent Office Hours**

Ms. Warren-Dymont stated this is a Select Board goal for office hours outside of a public meeting for residents to come in. Mr. Rucho would like to do a couple months and see how it goes, Ms. Warren-Dymont asked if they would like to have the first five so that each Board member hosts office hours. Ms. Warren-Dymont suggests 6pm to 7pm and suggested the conference room across from the Municipal Assistants office.

## **APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS:**

- **Acknowledge resignation from James Marinelli from Finance Committee and Capital Investment Board.**

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

1. **Worcester Regional Retirement Board COLA Increase:** Governor Baker recently signed a bill to allow local retirement systems to increase the Cost-of-Living Adjustment ("COLA") for FY23 an additional 5%. The Worcester Regional Retirement Board met on December 20, 2022 and voted to raise the COLA from 3% to 5%. The question of whether to increase the COLA will now go to the municipal member units. In

order to pass, two-thirds of member municipal groups will need to vote in the affirmative. The Town has not received any formal notification of the vote since the December 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The COLA would be applied to the first \$16,000 of every pension. A 2% increase would cost the Town of West Boylston approximately \$25,600 additional.

2. **Capital Requests:** Request forms for FY24-FY28 capital projects have gone out to Departments and are completed requests are starting to come back in. On December 19, 2022 I met with the Finance Committee and Capital Investment Board to discuss, amongst other items, capital requests. At the Fall Special Town Meeting, the Town voted to appropriate \$617,086 to fund capital purchases in addition to \$395,000 to purchase a new ambulance. Some of these purchases were already slated for FY24, but were advanced due to supply chain issues. Free cash remaining after the Special Town Meeting is \$656,896.
3. **Finance Committee/Capital Investment Board and other Board/Committee/Commission Vacancies:** The Finance Committee currently has three vacancies. This Committee is critically important as we enter budget season in advance of the Town Meeting. If anyone is interested in servicing on the Committee, they are encouraged to complete a volunteer application. A revised volunteer application coupled with a complete updated list of vacancies can be found on the Town Administrator's page on the website.
4. **Municipal Buildings Committee:** Through a Special Act, a five-member Municipal Buildings Committee in the Town of West Boylston was established. The Board is comprised of the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, the Chairman of the Board of Library Trustees and two registered voters appointed by the Town Administrator. This Committee has control over the Municipal Buildings Fund and can expend funds without further appropriation for the maintenance, repair, or capital improvement of any municipal building. The current fund balance is \$56,313. If anyone has interest in serving on this committee, especially if they have experience in construction or the trades, they are encouraged to complete a volunteer form.
5. **Affordable Housing Trust Update:** The Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) met on December 21, 2022 to hear a presentation from Branded Realty Group III, LLC regarding their proposed project at 235-245 West Boylston Street. A meeting has been scheduled for January 9, 2023 at which the AHT will vote to decide which, if any, LIP proposals they will recommend to the Select Board.
6. **SAFE and Senior SAFE Grants:** The West Boylston Fire Department has been awarded \$3,781 through the Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) grant program and \$2,077 through the Senior Safe Program. These grant programs help to supplement the work that is conducted by the Fire Department to promote fire prevention.
7. **IRS Mileage Rate:** The IRS has increased the Standard Mileage Rate for 2023 by 3 cents per mile. As of January 1, 2023, the new mileage reimbursement rate is 65.5 cents per mile.
8. **Eversource Work on Route 140:** I am pleased to announce that Eversource has reported to the Town that "in-roadway" work on Route 140 has concluded for the time being. Restoration work will begin on the roadway in the Spring.

Mr. Rucho asked when they are back for reconstruction they will be completing full reconstruction and not just the area they dug up, Mr. Duffy stated it will not be a full curb to curb. He explained Route 140 is not under moratorium but he plans to work with them on the reconstruction. He would like to be sure it gets repaired correctly and completely. Ms. Pedone asked if they will be completing any other projects in town, Mr. Duffy stated they wanted to complete more work but work will not be commencing at this time. He explained their work is all replacement of ageing infrastructure.

9. **Christmas Tree Drop Off:** A reminder to residents that Christmas trees can be dropped off at the DPW through January 13, 2023. Please ensure all decorations, including tinsel have been removed from the tree prior to drop off.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS/SELECT BOARD REPORTS:**

- Update on MBTA Communities
- Mr. Rucho would like to receive a list of grants applied for and what was received in the last year. He would like what has been applied for this year and presented at a future meeting. Ms. Warren-Dymont stated she will be able to get the grants received but not sure about what was applied for. Mr. Rucho would like an ongoing list going forward.

***Motion** Mr. Crowley moved to adjourn at 6:56 p.m.; Mr. Frieden 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,

Approved:

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Faye D. Zukowski, Municipal Assistant

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Barur R. Rajeshkumar, Chairman

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Christopher A. Rucho, Vice Chairman

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Marc Frieden, Clerk

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Patrick J. Crowley, Selectman

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Kristina Pedone, Selectwoman