



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

Select Board/Sewer Commission Meeting Minutes

Date / Time / Location of Meeting January 5, 2022; 6:00 p.m. 140 Worcester Street West Boylston, MA 01583 Board Meeting Room 1 st Floor

Members Present Christopher A. Rucho, Chairman Barur R. Rajeshkumar, Vice Chair Patrick J. Crowley, Clerk Kristina Pedone, Selectwoman Michael J. Kittredge III, Selectman
Members NOT Present:
Invited Guests: Nancy Lucier, Town Administrator Faye Zukowski, Municipal Assistant

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:

- **December 1, 2021 Regular Session:**

*Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar moved to approve, Mr. Kittredge second.
4-0-1 Mr. Crowley abstained
Approved*

- **December 8, 2021 Regular Session:**

*Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar moved to approve, Mr. Kittredge second.
4-0-1 Mr. Crowley abstained
Approved*

**REVIEW AND VOTE TO APPROVE WARRANTS FOR THE PERIOD COVERING
DECEMBER 15, 2021 TO JANUARY 5, 2022: Town Payable Warrants FY2022-25, FY2022-26
and FY2022-18; Town Payroll Warrant FY2022-13; Sewer FY2022 SE-15 & 16; MLP FY2022
#13 & #14 and School FY2022 S12.**

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

All in favor

Approved

ROB FULLER:

- **Transfer of HCA issued to Harmony to Puregenics LLC**

Ms. Lucier stated she has not received back the signed Host Community Agreement (HCA). Rob Fuller owner of Harmony of Ma, Inc and Jeff Silva of Puregenics LLC explained the MA CCC has approved the transfer the change of control of the licenses and the transfer occurred on December 27th. Mr. Fuller explained Puregenics is in the process of taking over the property and adding inventory. Mr. Silva explained they have requested a final inspection from the CCC and are hopeful to open 30-45 days depending on the CCC. Mr. Crowley explained the Board approved the HCA and has not received the signed copy back. Mr. Rucho asked for clarification on who is running the business location, Mr. Fuller explained he is on site at all times. Mr. Silva stated they have a manager onsite and they will be in charge of the location, he explained all employees will remain the same for Puregenics LLC. Mr. Rajeshkumar asked for clarification on Mr. Fullers role, he responded that his business is next door and he can be available for emergencies with this property and he holds the mortgage with the property. Mr. Rucho stated he hopes they get it open soon as the town has lost revenue with them not being open.

CHRIS BERGLUND – Capital Investment Board:

Chris Berglund gave the Board an overview of the process the Capital Investment Board uses to make the recommendations for town meeting. He explained Nancy sends out the budget requests and capital requests to all the departments around the first of the year, once they receive the requests, they assign members of the committee to meet with the departments and discuss the budget and capital requests, the CIB then discuss at a meeting, they will then invite the departments to come in and discuss with the full committee, and decide if a how they could fund the requests and make recommendations to the Select Board.

Mr. Crowley stated he served time on the Capital Investment Board and any individual asset over \$250,000 would be a Debt Override with exception of Ambulance, Mr. Berglund stated it may be but they have not looked at anything that large in a long time. Mr. Crowley explained a portion of the ambulance receipts go into an ambulance reserved receipts account which is used to purchase a new ambulance and the rotation cycle on them are every five years. Mr. Berglund stated another part of the CIB is to be sure the correct funding sources are used with capital purchases. Mr. Rajeshkumar asked if there is an annual spending limit with the CIB, Mr. Berglund stated no it is as needed and is prioritized by the CIB. Mr. Rucho asked about a rotation of vehicles at the DPW and why is there not a way to put them into a rotation. Mr. Berglund stated Ray Bricault put together an inventory asset schedule. Ms. Pedone stated she has reviewed the policy and would like to see the annual process written out as it is not in the policy. Ms. Lucier stated in her packet that is sent out it has the process and explanation. Mr. Crowley would like the process in writing for new members or department heads understand. Ms. Pedone discussed the process of communication with the departments for more information or rejection of request, Mr. Berglund stated they communicate with the departments. Ray Bricault stated the process that is used has not been

changed in over a decade and agreed it would be a good idea to write out the process. Mr. Bricault discussed the process of reviewing the requests. Mr. Rucho asked why they follow the list for the police department but not the DPW, Mr. Kittredge stated the DPW equipment is very difficult to have a list and there are unknown factors with that kind of equipment. Mr. Rucho would like some rotation list for the DPW. Mr. Bricault stated they have discussed in the past researching a Salt Wash Station for the DPW, Mr. Rucho responded this should be a conversation with the Director. Ms. Lucier stated she will contact towns that have one.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE AWARD

This is the 15th year this municipal award has been given out. I would like to thank the members of the public who took time to submit nominations.

The 2021 Town Administrator's Commitment to Excellence Award is being presented to the Staff of Town Hall. February 3 will be the one-year anniversary of the flood at town hall caused by burst sprinkler head in the Selectboard's Meeting Room. The individual who submitted the nomination requested to remain anonymous. They stated that the Town Hall employees 'made it work' though the months of ripping out walls, waiting for contractors and the rebuilding of the offices. While dealing with noise they still had to physically open the door for citizens and other Town employees. They served the citizens and other departments on a consistent basis despite working in crossed conditions during a pandemic.

On a personal note, I couldn't be more pleased to have the staff recognized as their efforts on that day and for the days that followed as they were remarkable. Everyone rolled up their sleeves and worked together as we relocated staff, already dealing with COVID restrictions, to other available space. Our IT consultant did a remarkable job relocating computers and setting offices up with telephones. For almost an entire year the staff endured the challenge of working in very close quarters, the relocation of files to other available space within town hall and not necessarily in a convenient location. That, in addition to having contractors in and out of town hall during the rebuild, staff never complained and did everything they could to deliver the exceptional customer service, which they are known for, to the residents of our town.

It is my honor to present the 2022 Town Administrator's Commitment to Excellence Award to the Town Hall Staff for their resilience during a challenging year.

Nominations were received for: Sharon Emond, Recreation Director, Sheryl Keddy, Office Assistant for the Building Department; Barur Rajeshkumar Selectboard. I would like to congratulate each of the nominees and thank them for their outstanding service to the residents of the town

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Consider voting Selectboard designee to serve on the negotiating committee on the School Committee Negotiations Team:**

- **February 8 & 15 next meetings at 4:00 p.m.**

Ms. Pedone would like to not be on this committee due to a conflict, Mr. Crowley stated he is very busy this time of year and cannot commit at this time. Mr. Rucho is interested in serving this position as he has done in the past.

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

All in favor

Approved

- **Consider voting a Selectboard designee to serve on the PEG Board:**

Ms. Pedone recommended Mr. Rajeshkumar

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

All in favor

Approved

- **Consider voting a Selectboard designee to serve on the Economic Development Task Force:**

Motion Mr. Crowley moved to approve Kristina Pedone; Mr. Rajeshkumar second.

All in favor

Approved

- **Consider voting to approve the hiring of Arthur Ferreira for the position of Equipment Operator for the Department of Public Works, contingent upon a successful pre-employment physical with drug screening, at Step 1, \$21.38, and upon completion of probationary period may be moved up to Step 2, \$22.49:**

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

Mr. Rucho asked if this appointment is to replace a person, Ms., Lucier stated it was and this person comes to the town with many years of experience.

All in Favor

Approved

- **Update on COVID at home test kits:**

Ms. Lucier stated on December 17th the town accepted 1,080 rapid antigen test kits from MEMA. She explained on Monday December 20th she met with the Board of Health Chair Bob Barrell and the town nurse to discuss plan to distribute test kits. She stated the nurse's recommendation was to distribute to seniors and those with compromised immune systems. She thanked Bob Barrell for going around and distributing the kits to Elder Services for home health providers, Housing Authority, all group homes, West Boylston Food Pantry, Meals on Wheels Program, Senior Center and kits were also distributed to several municipal departments. She explained the remainder of the kits were left with the Senior Center for a first come first serve bases and today there were 30 kits remaining. Mr. Rucho asked if residents can receive them not only seniors, Ms. Lucier stated yes first come first serve. Bob Barrell stated they worked with the nurse and also the coalition to create a plan for distribution and that is what they did as quickly as possible before the Christmas holiday. Mr. Rajeshkumar and Mr. Rucho asked how many are left at the other locations in town, Ms. Lucier will find out and report back. Ms. Lucier stated the town received so many due to the jail having such high numbers of cases. Mr. Rucho asked how residents were notified that everyone could pick tests up at the Senior Center. Mr. Crowley stated test kits will be coming from the federal government to every house but would like the test kits picked up from locations and redistributed at the Senior Center. Mr. Rucho would like a post on the website to let residents know they can get them from the town. Ms. Pedone thanked Bob for delivering the test kits and that the town is working with the alliance. Mr. Crowley asked if at home test kits are being reported, Mr. Barrell stated this is the problem. Mr. Barrell stated

the nurse works with people that are positive for contact tracing and also protocol on quarantine and isolation and explained the protocols change daily.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

1. Cyberspace Grant

I am pleased to report that we applied to participate in the state's Municipal Cybersecurity Awareness Grant Program. We were approved, and I requested and been approved for 5 slots. Our application had to demonstrate a commitment to prioritizing cybersecurity awareness, a commitment to improving the community's cybersecurity posture, a willingness to collaborate and help gain a better understanding of cybersecurity posture, and a willingness to identify an individual who would oversee and monitor the program participation. The training will take place from January through May. It will consist of an Initial Cyber Assessment to ascertain the baseline of knowledge, two assignments will be given, each will take approximately 1 hour, a Final Cyber Assessment will be given to ascertain knowledge gained from the training and Phishing Campaigns will be sent out during each of the three sessions to test the users on recognizing phishing attempts. The Municipal Assistant will work with the Commonwealth and coordinate interaction with our IT vendor, if and when needed.

I am very pleased to be able to have our town participate in this training opportunity. I am told that it is a very worthwhile training for municipalities and our MIIA Account Representative is quite pleased as well and is giving us credits in the MIIA Rewards Program for this training.

2. Regional Recycling Center

On December 16th I attended the Wachusett Watershed Regional Recycling Center Town Representative Team meeting via zoom. Among other topics, we discussed the proposed FY23 budget, the Operations Manager's Report and the financial report. We also discussed the new proposed Agreement by and among the Wachusett Towns and Wachusett Earth day. It was decided to change the effective date of the three-year agreement to July 1, 2022 (previously June 2), to correspond with the beginning of the municipal fiscal year. In addition, it was agreed that the agreement would increase 2.5% in each of the three years. The primary reason for the increase is the hauler the Center uses for their dumpsters is increasing their costs as it is their contract renewal time. The Center was open 43 days last than last year as a result of offering two open days per week and two Saturday s per month and they took in 32 tons more in FY21 than in FY20.

3. RFP for Mobile Food Vendor Concession

I have updated the RFP for our Mobile Food Vendor concession opportunity at the Reservoir Triangle Picnic Area. The document was amended to allow the Selectboard, as the local licensing authority, to enter into a contract for up to three years with the selected vendors. Thus far we have received one submittal. Deadline to apply is 1:00 p.m. on February 1, 2022. The period of the proposal is April 2, 2022 through November 1, 2022.

Mr. Rajeshkumar asked if Nancy send out the RFP out to other people or only post on the website, Ms. Lucier stated a public notice is also published and she sent out to everyone that has a license. Mr. Rucho believe it has been posted and advertised well and if people are interested, they will apply.

4. Annual Sewer Rate Model Review

I reached out to Mike Schrader of Tighe & Bond to get a proposal for him to perform our annual Sewer Rate Model review. He has started on the work and will be in attendance at our February 16th meeting to make his presentation. Should a rate adjustment be recommended, it will give us sufficient time to schedule a public hearing and have any rate adjustments effective for the July 1, 2022 billing.

5. Cemetery Funds

I am very pleased to report that the funds we requested to begin building the new cemetery on Tivnan Drive were approved. Rep. O'Day included funds for the project in the \$4 billion-dollar COVID Recovery Bill. We will be getting \$130,000 for that project. The next step will be to work with Administration & Finance for the release of the funds.

Mr. Rucho asked who controls these funds when they come in and the project when it commences, Ms. Lucier was unsure. She gave an overview of the project and what had been proposed. Mr. Rucho asked if there is a plan created yet, Ms. Lucier stated a pin has been placed by a surveyor and a road in to the pin will be created. Mr. Crowley asked if any votes were taken at town meeting, Ms. Lucier stated there were none. Mr. Rucho would like clarification if the funds and oversight of the project will be controlled by the Cemetery Commission or through the Selectboard.

6. Juneteenth Holiday

Following the Board's vote to include the observance of the Juneteenth Holiday as an article on the May 16, 2022 Town Meeting warrant, and the request to see what other towns have done, I reached out to the STAM membership. I received 16 responses, all of which indicated that it was approved or going to town meeting for approval.

7. Playground Project

I am pleased to report that on this past Monday the DPW took delivery of the playground equipment for our Pride Park a/d/a Upgrade Project. The town already received the first \$75,000 payment. Once we receive our invoice, we will be able to process payment and request the second \$75,000 of the FY22 Earmark. Unfortunately, we did not receive the Municipal Americans with Disabilities Act Improvement Grant we applied for to work on Phase 2 of the project, however, there is another grant round that opens up in July so we should apply during that round as well.

Mr. Crowley asked if we received a reason for not being awarded the grant, Ms. Lucier responded she believes they receive so many grants but there was not any feedback. She is hopeful the town can apply again in July and be successful at that time.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

- Acknowledge the resignation of Michaun Fowler from the Board of Health effective December 14, 2021
- Acknowledge the resignation of Christopher Rucho as the Selectboard designee on the Economic Development Task Force
- Acknowledge the resignation of Meaghan Dos Anjos from Open Space Implementation Committee
- Acknowledge the resignation of Christopher Rucho as the Selectboard designee on the PEG Board
- Concurrence on the appointment of Thomas Mullin to the Board of Health effective January 8, 2022 for a term to expire on April 30, 2025

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

All in favor

Approved

- Concurrence on the appointment of Christopher Whelen to the Board of Health effective January 8, 2022 for a term to expire on April 30, 2025

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

All in favor

Approved

- Concurrence on the appointment of Richard Simmarano to the PEG Board effective January 8, 2022 for a term to expire on June 30, 2024

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

All in favor

Approved

- Concurrence on the appointment of Jay Given to the PEG Board effective January 8, 2022 for a term to expire on June 30, 2024

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

All in favor

Approved

MEETINGS, INVITATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- January 6, 9:00 a.m. – Cell Phone/Tablet Tech Help at the Senior Center – please call the Senior Center to register 508-835-6916
- January 1-31, Beaman Memorial Public Library invites you to join their winter reading challenge “Read for a Better World” – for more information visit the library website

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS/SELECTMANS REPORTS:

- Mr. Kittredge would like to have the DPW Director in to discuss possibly updating the snow policy. Mr. Rucho would also like to hear from the Director.
- Mr. Rajeshkumar would like an update on the Lee and Goodale Street water issue.
- Mr. Crowley discussed this morning icy road conditions, Ms. Lucier read an email response from the Director regarding this morning's road decision to pretreat.
- Mr. Crowley would like to discuss policy for setting the agenda for Select Board meetings and schedule a public hearing for February 2nd.
- Mr. Crowley reminds residents to keep hydrants clear from snow.
- Ms. Pedone reported back for the Town Administrator Search Process Committee, they have received back from a couple consultants and hope to meet within a week with those firms and be able to report back to the Board with a recommendation of a firm.
- Mr. Rucho would like an update from the Recreation Department on if they are planning anything and if the Director is still working. Ms. Lucier will request an update. Mr. Rajeshkumar asked if she could be invited into the meeting. Mr. Rucho requested an update from the Commission also.
- Ms. Pedone asked about Selectboard reports and asked if a Board member is a designee on Park Commission, Mr. Rucho stated there is not. Mr. Crowley and Mr. Rucho both stated that reports can be brought back to the Board anytime if the members are on other Committees.

***Motion** Mr. Rajeshkumar moved to adjourn at 7:41 p.m.; Ms. Pedone 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

Michael J. Kittredge III, Selectman

Kristina Pedone, Selectman