

August 7, 2023

Minutes of the  
Town of Belmont  
**REGULAR SESSION**  
of the  
**SELECT BOARD**  
**July 17, 2023**



**RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK  
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: August 18, 2023  
TIME: 10:00 AM

To view the recording of the meeting, please click [HERE](#).

**Call to Order:** Mr. Epstein called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

Select Board Members	Present	Staff Members	
Roy Epstein, Chair	Yes	Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator	Yes
Elizabeth Dionne, Vice-Chair	Yes	Peter Struzziero, Director, Belmont Public Library	Yes
Mark Paolillo, Member	Yes	Dana Bickelman, Director, Council on Aging	
		Brandon Fitts, Director, Recreation Department	Yes
Others Present			
Elizabeth Gibson, Benton Library	Yes	Binod Rijal, Beer & Wine Applicant	
Claire Colburn, Chair, Library Building Committee	Yes	Thomas Gatzunis, CHA Consulting	Remote
Kathleen Keohane, Library Trustee	Yes		

## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Committee Vacancies: Mr. Epstein reviewed the vacancies on Town committees.
- Council on Aging – Ice Cream Socials: Fridays in July and August at 1:00pm.

## COMMENTS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS

- Mary Kennedy, Town Meeting Member spoke about vegetation growth on Concord Avenue that is impacting traffic and the bike path.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Timeline for FY2025 Budget: Ms. Garvin reported on a meeting of Department Heads and others that looked at a timeline for the budget. The goal is to have the majority of work done by the end of this calendar year. She also shared goals and ideas that were identified at the meeting. There will be a public meeting in September to discuss needs, fiscal constraints, etc. to educate the community about an override. There was a discussion of the budget, timeline and plans.

Bill Anderson, Town Meeting Member, asked Ms. Garvin what level of Free Cash she would be comfortable with. Ms. Garvin said there will be a preliminary number soon and explained what impacts this number.

## Discussion on Fall Town Meeting Articles

Ms. Garvin explained that an update to the Vision 21 zoning was changed so it could be included in the Fall Town Meeting.

Ms. Dionne provided an update on a discussion she had with a Planning Board member about signs which the Board discussed.

There was a discussion about allowing hotels in Belmont.

Mr. Paolillo recommended a public forum for the Civil Service issue, which was discussed.

There was a discussion of whether Town Meeting should be 2 or 3 nights, with the Board supporting 3 nights given the important issues that need to be considered.

There was a discussion of other items that might come before the Fall Town Meeting.

## **Discussion and possible vote to approve a town-wide yard sale.**

Mr. Struzziero and Mr. Fitts reviewed the proposal for the yard sale which was discussed.

There was also a discussion of the Library Book Sale which will be held the same day as the yard sale.

*A Motion was made to approve the request for a Town-Wide Yard Sale on September 23, 2023 from 9:00am to 3:00pm with a rain date on September 30, 2023. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

## **Discussion and possible vote to approve Memorandum of Agreement on possible temporary use of Everett C. Benton Library**

Mr. Epstein explained the proposal to use the Benton Library as a Children's Library while the new Belmont Library is being constructed. Ms. Gibson explained how the Friends of Benton Library worked, and Ms. Garvin explained the intent of the MOA. Facilities and DPW will maintain the building while Belmont Library is using the building. There was a discussion of the MOA, temporary use of the building, and the condition of the structure. Ms. Gibson explained why the Benton Library thinks this is a good collaboration.

There was a discussion of extending the license agreement, and how to proceed. The Board expressed concern about signing an agreement so far in the future when the current members may or may not be sitting on the Board.

Raymond Cameau, Oakley Neighborhood Association, supported the Board signing the license extension and explained why. He then expressed concern about the increase in traffic and parking in the area if the Town uses the Benton as a temporary children's library.

Judith Feinleib, Benton Library Board Member, reviewed the history of The Benton Library. She expressed her disapproval that the Benton is not being mentioned specifically as returning to the building after the temporary use. She feels it is essential that this be specified given the Benton's care for the building.

Mr. Epstein said the MOA specifies that the Benton Library would resume functions at the end of the Belmont Library's temporary use. There was a discussion of this issue.

Brook Herren, Prebel Gardens Road, expressed concern about increased traffic in the neighborhood and asked if other facilities have been considered.

There was a discussion of the hours of the Children's Library versus the hours of the Benton Library. Mr. Struzziero said the library would be open 9:00am-7:30pm Mon-Thu, 9:00-5:00pm on Friday, 9:00am-1:00pm on Saturday. Regarding the increased use of the Benton Library, he said they would be restricted by the Fire Code to 50 people at the most. Mr. Struzziero said they are meeting the minimum from the State for providing Children's Services and explained what would happen if the hours were reduced. There was a discussion of the library hours and usage.

Mark Caperini, Indian Hill Road, expressed concern about increased parking and traffic if the Children's Library is moved there temporarily. He asked that a solution that doesn't require additional traffic to the area.

Andy McClurg, Oakley Road, expressed concern about the increased traffic and parking if the Children's Library is moved there temporarily. He asked that a 4-way stop sign be installed at the intersection by the library to help slow traffic.

There was more discussion about using the Benton for the Children's Library during construction of the new library.

Resident Sue, Essex Road, expressed concern about potential damage to the curbs with extra people parking in the neighborhood.

Gretchen McClain, Benton Board, expressed support for the Children's Library using the Benton and spoke about the benefits to the Benton and the community from this use.

Diane Musey, Old Middlesex Road, reviewed the history of saving the structure and the establishment of The Friends of Benton. She expressed her lack of support for moving the Children's Library to the building.

Ms. Keohane reviewed the process that was used to identify the Benton as the best option for the Children's Library.

Mr. Epstein suggested the Board wait on a decision in order to give stakeholders time to possibly identify another location, review the State regulations regarding providing children's services, and reconsider hours of operations.

Ms. Keohane will hold a meeting with the neighbors to educate them about the search process and take input about the use.

**Discussion and possible vote to allow the Belmont Public Library to use land in front of the Underwood Pool along Concord Ave for temporary parking.**

Ms. Garvin explained the history of the parcel under discussion and the restrictions on the use of the land.

Mr. Gatsunas explained that this conversation is about the construction phase of winter of 2024 through late spring/early summer of 2025. He explained the planned use of the new parking lot as a lay-down area, and the golden bowl area for contractor parking and trailers (if necessary). He reviewed how these areas might be used, pointing out that they would keep contractors and materials out of the neighborhood.

There were several questions and discussion about the proposal. There was a discussion of access to the culvert behind the new library.

Angus Abercrombie, Town Meeting Member, expressed concern about the number of construction vehicles that will have conflict with the bike lane and general traffic and activity around the site. Mr. Gatsunas explained how the site would be used. Mr. Abercrombie then asked if there was an effort to ensure that construction workers are not arriving when students are going to school. Mr. Gatsunas said they generally start at 7:00am.

*A Motion was made to approve the request from the Belmont Public Library to use land in front of the Underwood Pool along Concord Ave for temporary parking contingent on there being direct access to the culvert behind the library. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

**Discussion and possible vote to approve an Entertainment License for Comella's Restaurant, 11 Brighton Street, Belmont.**

Ms. Garvin reviewed what an entertainment license allows and explained that abutters were notified. The request was discussed.

*A Motion was made to approve a new Entertainment License to Comella's Restaurant, 11 Brighton St., Belmont, MA. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

**Discussion and possible vote on request for a one-day liquor license (beer and wine only) to Binod Rijal on July 22, 2023 from the hours of 5:00 to 10:00 PM at the First Church in Belmont, UU.**

Ms. Garvin said her office looked at these types of fees in nearby towns and reported that Belmont's fees are lower than others. There was a discussion of the alcohol rules and regulations.

*A Motion was made to approve the request for a one-day liquor license (beer and wine only) to Binod Rijal on July 22, 2023 from the hours of 5:00 to 10:00 PM at the First Church in Belmont, UU for a religious ceremony. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

**Discussion and possible vote on committee appointments and reappointments:**

a. Land Management for Lone Tree Hill (Correction):

Mr. Epstein reiterated his request that anyone on a Board for 10 years or more step aside so other residents can have an opportunity to serve.

*A Motion was made to reappoint Radha Iyengar to the Land Management for Lone Tree Hill Committee for a 3-year term ending June 30, 2026. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

*A Motion was made to reappoint Carl Solander to the Land Management for Lone Tree Hill Committee for a 2-year term ending June 30, 2025. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

b. Cable Television Advisory Committee:

*A Motion was made to reappoint Jonathan Birge to the Cable Television Advisory Committee for a 3-year term ending June 30, 2026. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

c. Conservation Commission:

There was a discussion of the length of service of the members seeking reappointment and whether or not to appoint a new member.

*A Motion was made to reappoint James Roth to the Conservation Commission for a 1-year term ending June 30, 2024. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

*A Motion was made to reappoint Margaret Velie to the Conservation Commission for a 3-year term ending June 30, 2026. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

d. Constables:

Mr. Epstein pointed out that a Constable does not have to be a resident of Belmont.

*A Motion was made to reappoint David Benoit as a Constable for a 3-year term ending June 30, 2026. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

*A Motion was made to reappoint Donna Feely as a Constable for a 3-year term ending June 30, 2026. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

e. Information Technology Advisory Committee:

*A Motion was made to reappoint Jonathan Birge to the Information Technology Advisory Committee for a 3-year term ending June 30, 2026. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

f. Permanent Audit Committee:

*A Motion was made to reappoint Robert Keefe to the Permanent Audit Committee for a 3-year term ending June 30, 2026. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

g. Board of Registrars:

There was a discussion of how candidates are proposed.

*A Motion was made to reappoint Robert McGaw to the Board of Registrars for a 3-year term ending June 30, 2026. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

*A Motion was made to reappoint Stephen Shestakofsky to the Board of Registrars for a 2-year term ending June 30, 2025. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

h. Historic District Commission:

*A Motion was made to reappoint Drew Nealon to the Historic District Commission for a 3-year term ending June 30, 2026. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

*A Motion was made to appoint Komal Mahajan as a Full Member to the Historic District Commission for a 3-year term ending June 30, 2026. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

## **Approval of Minutes**

### June 15, 2023 Regular Session:

*A Motion was made to approve the June 15, 2023 Regular session minutes. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

June 22, 2023 Joint Session with the School Committee: In the votes to withdraw funds discussion and vote, Ms. Dionne corrected the amount to read \$672,891.00.

*A Motion was made to approve the June 22, 2023 Joint Session with the School Committee minutes as amended. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

**Next Meetings & Upcoming Topics**

- Monday, August 7, 2023 – 7:00 PM – Regular Session
- Monday, August 28, 2023 – 7:00 PM – Regular Session
- Monday, September 18, 2023 – 7:00 PM – Regular Session
- Monday, September 25, 2023 – 7:00 PM – Regular Session

**Adjournment**

*A motion was made to adjourn the meeting of the Belmont Select Board Committee, and the motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:08pm.*

Respectfully submitted by,

Susan Peghiny  
Recording Secretary