

Approved by Select Board:
October 30, 2023

**Minutes of the
Town of Belmont
OPEN SESSION
of the
SELECT BOARD
August 28, 2023**

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: November 16, 2023
TIME: 8:40 AM

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

Call to Order: Mr. Epstein called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

| Select Board Members | Present | Staff Members | |
|--|---------|---|--------|
| Roy Epstein, Chair | Yes | Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator | Yes |
| Elizabeth Dionne, Vice-Chair | Yes | Jennifer Hewitt, ATA/Finance Director | Yes |
| Mark Paolillo, Member | Yes | Jay Marcotte, DPW Director | Yes |
| Others Present | | Brandon Fitts, Recreation Director | Yes |
| Bill Lovallo, Belmont Middle and High School Building Committee, Chair | Yes | Jeff Hansel, Belmont Media Center, Director | Yes |
| Tom Caputo, Belmont Middle and High School Building Committee | Yes | James MacIsaac, Police Chief | Yes |
| Shawn Boilard, Belmont Resident | Remote | Kelli King, Human Resources, Director | Yes |
| Radha Iyengar, Land Management Comm. | Yes | David DeStefano, Fire Chief | Yes |
| Jack & Samuel Sy, Hanami | Yes | Ellen O'Brien Cushman, Town Clerk | Yes |
| Bruce Kozuma, Hungarian Society | Yes | Susan Peghiny, Recording Secretary | Remote |
| Roger Wrubel, Judy Record Fund | Yes | | |
| Gene Record, Judy Record Fund | Yes | | |

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS. Chair Epstein made the following announcements:

- Committee Vacancies
- Council on Aging – Rediscovering the T Event on September 1st.
- Council on Aging – Shifting Gears on September 1st.

COMMENTS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS

- Roger Wrubel reminded the Board that the Specialized Energy Code is supposed to be on the September Town Meeting Warrant. Mr. Epstein acknowledged this.
- Ron Sacco asked about making the Benton Street Library accessible. Mr. Epstein explained that this is being looked at. Mr. Sacco then suggested that the Historical Society might use the old Municipal Light Department building for their needs, which he spoke about. Ms. Dionne explained the situation with the building: It has mold and asbestos and has deteriorated to a sufficient degree that the HDC no longer considers it a high-priority preservation target.
- Lisa Pargoli asked why the Rink Building Committee awarded Skanska a contract while the Town is trying to hold them accountable for monies and overruns and a violation of the Open Meeting Law. She expressed concern about the cost of the rink. Ms. Dionne explained that the Select Board's has limited involvement in the construction of municipal buildings, as building committees are creatures of Town Meeting, appointed by the Town Moderator. Mr. Paolillo expressed his support for the Rink Building Committee and spoke about the cost and components of the Middle/High School and Rink projects. Mr. Epstein also expressed his support for the Rink Committee, and the architect for the project.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT. Ms. Garvin reported on:

- A. The Transportation Advisory Committee will meet on September 7th.
- B. Stormwater Rules & Regulations were taken off the agenda because the bylaws require a public hearing on the proposed changes.

ACTION BY CONSENT:

Introduction of New Probationary Firefighters Nicholas Volante and Joseph Brock: Chief DeStefano introduced Mr. Volante and Mr. Brock.

Oath of Office and Badge Pinning for Fire Lt. John MacDonald: Ms. Cushman administered the Oath of Office to Lt. MacDonald. Chief DeStefano then reviewed Lt. MacDonald's experience and qualifications.

Update on Belmont Middle and High School Building Project

Mr. Lovallo and Mr. Caputo provided an update on the project, including the challenges and how they were resolved. There were questions and some discussion about the status.

Mr. Caputo then outlined the next steps, including a punch list to finish the building and the accounting required for the State reimbursement. There was a discussion of the financial situation and issues.

Mr. Lovallo addressed the concerns previously voiced about the project using Skanska, and expressed support for the company. He thanked Skanska as well as the School Department, Facilities, and Public Works for their efforts to make this project successful. There will be a ribbon cutting next week, and a dedication ceremony in October. Mr. Paolillo thanked the Middle & High School Building Committee for their work.

Mr. Caputo provided an update on the rooftop solar panels, and explained the challenges this portion of the project has created and how they have been addressed. They expect to energize the panels in January 2024. It will be a 1.25MW system and will generate enough electricity for 1/3 of the facility's requirement.

Mr. Lovallo confirmed that 100% of the flat roof will be covered and explained the changes and accommodations that had to be made to complete the installation and maximize the production of the panels.

There was a discussion of the solar array.

Mr. Epstein asked about the status of the contingency, and Mr. Lovallo said he expects there to be about \$350,000 left but hopes there will be more. There was a discussion of the contingency, the final cost of the project, and the impact of this on the taxpayer burden.

Mr. Lovallo shared some photographs of the building and new fields.

Bill Anderson asked several clarifying questions regarding the finances which Mr. Lovallo answered.

Meg Moriarty, School Committee Chair, expressed her excitement that the project has been successful and also thanked many Town committees and the residents for their support of the new building.

Stephanie Liu (remote participant) asked some questions about the money allocated for West of Harris Field and expressed her displeasure with the situation.

Roger Wrubel asked if the Town has thought about who will work to qualify for Zero Net Energy Class D, and if the Town has been successful getting alternative energy credits for the Geothermal being produced. Ms. Gavin said there are personnel issues which have hampered the effort to get the credits, and Ms. Hewitt added that a consultant was hired to help gather data and get the geothermal walls certified. Mr. Wrubel spoke about the potential financial benefits available to the Town, which were discussed.

Discussion and possible vote on future use of American Rescue Plan Act Funds (ARPA):

Ms. Garvin provided some background information of the use of ARPA funds.

Ms. Hewitt provided a Summary of Approved ARPA Projects and explained that some can be recommended for reallocation mostly due to FEMA reimbursements that were received. She then reviewed the ARPA funds that are now available for reallocation. The total available for reallocation is \$642,899.20.

Because one of the areas providing funds for reallocation is stipends for employees who worked during Covid19, Mr. Paolillo made it clear that all commitments to employees will be or have been met and any reallocation will not affect this.

Grove Street Park Project: Mr. Marcotte explained the history of this project and why the request for additional funding is being made. There was a discussion of the project and the importance of the timing of the project to align with the growing seasons.

Mr. Fitts explained the work that had been done to identify the best solution for the fields.

A Motion was made to approve use of American Rescue Plan Act Funds (ARPA) funding for the Grove Street Park Project in the amount of \$70,000.00. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

A motion was made to approve the awarding of a contract to M.J Cataldo in the amount of \$939,612 for the Grove Street Playground basketball court and baseball field renovation project. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

White Field House Project: Ms. Garvin explained the history of this project and why the request for additional funding is being made and the benefits of using the funds for this purpose. She also explained how doing this project now will save the Town money in the future. She then explained the reason for the specific amount being requested.

There was a discussion of the project and the request, especially the issue of the transformer located in the basement of the building.

Larry Link, Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee, expressed concerns about final costs and transparency of the decision to undertake this work, given the original scope of work for the high school project. He asked who makes decisions about what capital projects are done each year. Mr. Paolillo explained that the Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee presents a list of projects to Town Meeting but that the Select Board had unilateral authority to appropriate ARPA funds for capital projects.

Ron Sacca spoke about Paul White and asked if the plaques located in the building could be given to Mr. White's family. Mr. Epstein referred Mr. Sacca to Ms. Garvin to follow up. Mr. Paolillo asked if there was a way to continue to honor Mr. White's sacrifice in the new rink, which was discussed.

A Motion was made to approve use of American Rescue Plan Act Funds (ARPA) funding for the White Field House Project in the amount of \$ 350,00.00. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

Discussion and possible vote on request from Belmont Media to sign letter of support for Bills H.74 and S.34 – an Act to Modernize Funding for Community Media Programing.

Mr. Hansel explained the reason for the bill and the benefits of its passage. Belmont could receive up to \$100,000 for the Town and \$100,000 for the Belmont Media if the bill is passed and the new fee structure goes into effect. There was a discussion of Belmont Media's loss of revenue and its downward trend.

There was a discussion of the potential success of the bill, and the future revenues of Belmont Media.

A Motion was made to approve the signing of a letter of support for Bills H 74 and S.34 - An Act to Modernize Funding for Community Media Programming. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

Accept donation in the amount of \$39,245.00 from Judy Record Fund for the maintenance of the Pine Allee on the Lone Tree Hill property.

Mr. Record explained the establishment of the fund in Ms. Record's name.

Mr. Wrubel said the check is actually for \$40,000 and explained the Pine Allee, how the funds would be used, and other donations the Fund has made to the Town. Mr. Wrubel said he hopes that there will be a land acquisition because they have funds to help with this. There was a discussion of the opportunities the fund can provide.

A Motion was made to accept the donation in the amount of \$40,000.00 from Judy Record Fund for the maintenance of the Pine Allee. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

Accept donation in the amount of \$1,500.00 from Shawn Boilard for the Special Programs Organized for Recreation Time (S.P.O.R.T) Program, in honor of Brian Moriarty, Special Olympic Athlete.

Mr. Boilard explained that he asked guests at this 50th birthday party to buy 50/50 raffle tickets with proceeds to go to a donation. The winner of the raffle also donated his portion. He then explained the process he used to choose which program/organization would receive the donation.

Mr. Fitts outlined the activities of the SPORT program.

A Motion was made to accept the donation in the amount of \$1,500.00 from Shawn Boilard for the Special Programs Organized for Recreation Time (S.P.O.R.T) Program. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

Discussion and possible vote to approve a new Common Victualler license for Hanami, 89 Trapelo Road, Belmont

Mr. Sy explained that they hope to open as soon as they receive the license and thanked the people who helped him through the process.

A Motion was made to approve the new Common Victualler license to Hanami, 89 Trapelo Road, Belmont. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

Discussion and possible vote to approve request from the Hungarian Society of Massachusetts for use of the Town Green at Wellington Station on Saturday, September 2, 2023 to host Hungarian Scouts Ceremony from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Mr. Kozuma reviewed the event that the Society is planning. There was a discussion of the logistics of the event.

A Motion was made to approve the request from the Hungarian Society of Massachusetts for use of the Town Green at Wellington Station on Saturday, September 2, 2023 from the hours of 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM contingent upon receipt of a Certificate of Insurance denoting Belmont as an additional insured. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

Police Chief Review

Ms. Garvin explained the process that was used for the review, pointing out that Chief MacIsaac received a 4.9 score (out of 5).

Ms. King shared the comments made by the Select Board that were received for the review.

Mr. Epstein said that the Board is delighted with Chief MacIsaac and spoke about the Chief's performance and methods.

Ms. Dionne spoke about the need to fund public safety and how Chief MacIsaac's work enhanced the community and avoided divisive issues.

Mr. Paolillo spoke about Chief MacIsaac's work with his employees, and that as a result they conduct themselves in a highly professional manner.

Chief MacIsaac spoke about working with his department and the goals and successes of the department.

Executive Session

A Motion was made to enter into Executive Session to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel; Belmont Police Chief, Belmont Fire Chief. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote. The Board will return to Open Session.

The Board went into Executive at 9:41pm.

A Motion was made to leave into Executive Session. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

The Board returned to Open Session at 10:23pm.

Discussion and possible vote to approve merit pay for Police Chief

A Motion was made to provide a 3% merit pay increase to Chief of Police James MacIsaac. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

Discussion and possible vote to ratify contract for Fire Chief

The contract discussions will continue and be acted on at a later date.

Discussion and possible vote to accept committee resignations:

- a. Vision 21 Implementation Committee – Aaron Pikcilingis:

A Motion was made to accept the resignation of Aaron Pikcilingis from the Vision 21 Implementation Committee. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

- b. Cultural Council – Karen Bauerle:

A Motion was made to accept the resignation of Karen Bauerle from the Cultural Council. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

- c. Community Path Project Committee – Kate Bowen:

A Motion was made to accept the resignation of Kate Bowen from the Community Path Project Committee. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

- d. Disability Access Commission – Michael Lanza:

A Motion was made to accept the resignation of Michael Lanza from the Disability Access Commission. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

Discussion and possible vote on committee appointments and reappointments

- a. Vision 21 Implementation Committee:

A Motion was made to appoint Allison Lenk to the Vision 21 Implementation Committee for a 1-year term to expire June 30, 2024. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

- e. MBTA Communities Advisory Committee:

A Motion was made to appoint Patrick Murphy to the MBTA Communities Advisory Committee for a 1-year term to expire June 30, 2024. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

- f. Disability Access Commission:

A Motion was made to appoint Richard Waruingi as a full member to the Disability Access Commission for a 2-year term to expire June 30, 2025. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

A Motion was made to appoint Karen Bauerle to the Disability Access Commission for a 3-year term to expire June 30, 2026. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

A Motion was made to appoint Kim Sliney to the Disability Access Commission for a 3-year term to expire June 30, 2026. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

A Motion was made to appoint Michael McNamara as an Alternate Member to the Disability Access Commission for a 2-year term to expire June 30, 2025. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

A Motion was made to appoint Aurora Sanfeliz as an Alternate Member to the Disability Access Commission for a 3-year term to expire June 30, 2026. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

Mr. Epstein asked if the makeup of the DAC meets the requirement to have a majority of regular members have disabilities and a member be an immediate family member of a person with a disability. Ms. Dionne confirmed that the Chair meets the immediate family member requirement, and Ms. Garvin said the other requirement would be looked into.

g. Massport Community Advisory Committee:

A Motion was made to reappoint Rachelle Reinhart to the Massport Community Advisory Committee for a 1-year term to expire June 30 2024. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

h. Zoning Board of Appeals:

A Motion was made to reappoint Casey Williams to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a 5-year term to expire June 30, 2028. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

A Motion was made to reappoint Andrew Kelley to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a 5-year term to expire June 30, 2028. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

A motion was made to reconsider the appointment of Andrew Kelly to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a 5-year term to expire June 30, 2028. The motion to reconsider was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

A Motion was made to reappoint Andrew Kelley to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a 1-year term to expire June 30, 2024. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

A Motion was made to appoint Dan Barry and Alexandra Danahy as Associate Members to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a 3-year term to expire June 30, 2023. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

Update on Special Town Meeting Warrant

Ms. Garvin advised that the Warrant will open on September 18, 2023 and close on September 25, 2023.

Approval of Minutes

December 14, 2022 Budget Summit III:

A Motion was made to approve the December 14, 2023 Regular session minutes. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 2-0-1 vote with Ms. Dionne abstaining.

January 12, 2022 Budget Summit IV:

Mr. Epstein made the following corrections:

- Page 2, second to last paragraph: Remove "so we don't damage our credibility outside of Belmont."
- Page 3, last paragraph should read: "Epstein said if you look at total Town spending over the FY17 to FY23, it was within Prop 2½ limits; however, during that time, the school side increased by 72 FTEs. Out-of-district costs added significantly to this increase. The challenge is to arrive at an override number that is both adequate and can pass."

A Motion was made to approve the January 12, 2023 Budget Summit minutes as amended. The motion was seconded and passed 2-0-1 vote with Ms. Dionne abstaining.

August 3, 2023 Regular Session:

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

August 7, 2023 Regular Session: The title incorrectly says "Executive Session" instead of "Open Session".

Ms. Dionne made the following changes:

- Chief DeStefano was in attendance.
- Corrected her vote on the restriping of the post office.

A Motion was made to approve the August 7, 2023 Regular session minutes as amended. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

Next Meetings & Upcoming Topics

- a. Wednesday, August 30, 2023 – 8:00 AM – Working Session – Community Path
- b. Thursday, September 7, 2023 – 7:00 PM – Public Input Session – Civil Service
- c. Thursday, September 14, 2023 – 7:00 PM – Public Input Session – Rink Operations
- d. Monday, September 18, 2023 – 7:00 PM – Regular Session
- e. Monday, September 25, 2023 – 7:00 PM – Regular Session
- f. Thursday, September 28, 2023 – 7:00 PM – Public Input Session – Budget Override

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 10:42pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Susan Peghiny
Recording Secretary