

Approved By the Select Board:

February 6, 2023

Select Board Meeting

Monday, January 9, 2023

Hybrid Meeting

7:00 PM

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: May 8, 2023
TIME: 2:39 PM

CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Select Board was called to order by Chair Mark Paolillo. Vice Chair Adam Dash and Select Board member Roy Epstein (remote) were present, along with Town Administrator Patrice Garvin and Assistant Town Administrator/Financial Jennifer Hewitt.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- DPW Cardboard Drop-off event, January 14, 2023 at 8 am to 1 pm. \$5 per car.
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Breakfast will be held January 16, 2023 (Virtual). Key note hosted by the Human Rights Committee: Understanding and Resisting Hate in New England. Free event.
- Chinese Lunar New Year Celebration will be held on January 11, 2023 at the Beech St. Center. Sponsored by COA and Belmont Chinese American Association. Call 671-993-2970 to register.
- Harvey Leonard, Jan. 17, 2023 at 1:15 PM at the Beech St. Center. Call 617-993-2970 to register.

COMMENTS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS

[NONE.]

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

- January Bulletin – updates on departments. Available on Town website.
- Thank you letter to Cityside Subaru from Belmont Fire Department. Chief DeStefano thanked Cityside Subaru for offering their building for Fire Department training.
- Town Hall Building update – Patrice Garvin said she asked Dave Blazon, Director of Facilities to work on a safety plan on 24/7 basis. Dave Blazon said he looked into solutions for safety in the Town Administrator office. Doors are being reinforced and closed circuit tv and remote lock system is being installed.
- Letter to Boards, Committees and Commissions -- Patrice displayed the letter to the Town Board and Committees about the understaffed departments. Epstein suggested adding that department heads as Town liaisons to Board and Committees should attend meetings at their discretion to the extent they have time available and they should not feel compelled to stay until the end of long evening meetings.

Town Moderator – Request to call January 30, 2023 Special Town Meeting (STM) to be held by remote participation

Mike Widmer said he is planning to hold the January Special Town Meeting virtually due to the rise in COVID rates. He said he expects this to be the final virtual Town Meeting.

Motion was made to conduct the January 30, 2023 Special Town Meeting by remote participation. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Vote to sign the January 30, 2023 STM Warrant

Garvin said there is only one Article on the STM sponsored by the Board -- to transition the Town to an appointed Treasurer/Collector as recommended by the Collins Center Report. The Article requires a majority vote.

Paolillo said in order to process from the Treasurer position from elected to appointed, the Article will need to be approved by Town Meeting, and if it passes, then it will be put on the Spring Annual Town Election as referendum.

Epstein said it would be helpful to have time at the STM to describe the progress of MBTA Advisory Communities Committee. Widmer agreed to add the issue to the STM. Epstein asked about deadline date for amendments to Article. Widmer said that the minimum would be three business days before the meeting. Widmer said he would communicate that deadline to the Town Clerk's office. Garvin said there may need to be a snow date for people on the staff who are attending in person.

Ellen Cushman said February 3rd is the deadline for Articles for the STM ballot. Deadline for amendments should be January 25, 2023, but Town Moderator is responsible for that decision.

Judith Feinleib, Town Meeting member, pct. 6 said there are unknowns about people who will be on the ballot. It was explained to her that If someone is elected and the voters decide to change to an appointed Treasurer, then the elected Treasurer will serve until the Town Administrator appoints a new Treasurer.

Motion was made to sign the January 30, 2023 STM warrant as presented. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Discussion and possible vote on request from the Library Building Committee to designate members as Special Municipal Employees

Bob McLaughlin joined the meeting about the need to designate a Special Municipal Employee position on the Library Building Committee. He said if the position is added then anyone on the Library Building Committee would be able to take on the role of a voting member.

Ellen Schreiber suggested that other Boards and Committees could designate Special Municipal Employees if they find a need. Paolillo said they will consider this.

Bob McLaughlin said the reason for the request is because Christina Marsh, current member of the Library Building Committee foresees conflicts for some of the votes and they will need someone to

replace her when conflicts are identified. Epstein said since this is a specific hardship, he would be happy to grant the status to the Library Building Committee, but that doesn't mean that there is a need to extend this to other committees.

Motion was made to designate the members of the Library Committee as Special Municipal Employees. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Update by the Municipal Skating Rink Building Committee

Jay Marcotte joined the group. Patrice Garvin said one compressor needs to be replaced next year. Marcotte, said that in warm weather the rink requires two condensers and compressors to freeze the ice. One condenser may need to be replaced.

The Select Board talked about the timing for the debt exclusion for the skating rink and Ellen Cushman responded that the Early Voting Period will be 3 or 4 days before the April election and mail-in ballots go out three weeks before the election.

Tom Caputo and Bill Lovallo from the Municipal Skating Rink Building Committee said the committee has a number of meetings scheduled and there will be tweaks to design. The Building Committee will meet next week and will come back on January 23rd for an update. There are a number of Public Forums in February and March.

Lovallo said we have gotten input from the community and the Select Board and we need to be clear about what is in the overall plan. He clarified that the committee is not doing the field, parking or White Field House. They are doing site work for a safer drop off, but that is all the site work being done. He confirmed that they are focused on building a new facility for skating.

Motion was made to lay the update from the Rink Building Committee on the table for the National Grid public hearing. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING

Public Hearing -- 8:00 PM-- National Grid Grant of Location for WO #1342590 - To install and maintain approximately 220 feet of new 12-inch Plastic main in Trapelo Rd, from Waltham town line to Mill St. Belmont

Mary Mulroney, representative from National Grid, joined the public hearing. She said National Grid needs consent from the Select Board to install the new main.

Jay Marcotte said they are working to coordinate this with Waltham.

Dash asked how long the project will take. Mulroney said that National Grid plans to work on it during hours of the day when there is lighter traffic. The project is mainly in Waltham and the Belmont portion from the culvert will only take up to two weeks. Abutters have been notified.

Mulroney said the paving plan is to leave the roads in the same condition as they find them.

Arthur O'Brien, Town of Belmont Permit Coordinator, joined the group. He said he had asked National Grid to repair curb to curb. This request goes on the permit. He will issue another permit when they finalize the date stipulating this requirement.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

NONE.

Motion was made to approve the National Grid Grant of Location for WO #1342590 - To install and maintain approximately 220 feet of new 12-inch Plastic main in Trapelo Rd, from Waltham town line to Mill St. Belmont.

Motion was made to amend the motion and add that repaving would be curb to curb. Amended Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Motion was made to remove the update by the Municipal Building Committee from the table. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Update by the Municipal Skating Rink Building Committee (cont.)

Ted Galante, design architect said his team is currently working on making the design of the building more efficient. They have been studying this and will come back with drawings with a budget by February 6, 2023.

Discussion and possible vote on use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds for solar panels, school/town operating and capital

Meg Moriarty and Supt. Phelan joined the group to continue the discussion about the use of \$2M from ARPA funds for the schools.

Garvin reiterated the three options:

- \$2M over two years for schools to fund temporary positions.
- \$1.87M over two years -- with \$124K appropriated to Town positions.
- \$1.3M for one year to fund the school's temporary positions.

Supt. Phelan said that these options were discussed at the last Select Board meeting. Paolillo asked if the \$1.87M is enough to support all the positions. Phelan said he would make that work with re-categorization of positions.

Epstein said he hasn't received any information from the School Department with the different scenarios. He said he asked if the School Department could look at the staff exchange numbers and their savings. He feels that given the dire fiscal situation we are facing, it is worthwhile to look at this closer and then apply the staff exchange savings. Before committing ARPA funds for these positions tonight, he would like to see a written proposal from the School Department and integrate the numbers for staff exchange.

Paolillo feels that since these are one-time funds that he is willing to move forward with the appropriation of \$1.87M to accommodate the issues within the School Department because of the pandemic.

Dash said the schools need to complete their budgets and they need to know the amount they are getting now. Phelan said that they presented a clear picture of their needs in their general and federal fund budget at the December 6, 2022 School Committee meeting. The budgets are posted online. He said they have been trying to look at one-time positions for one-time funds.

Moriarty said that the School has been following what has been asked of them. Epstein said when the Select Board last discussed the ARPA money, Supt. Phelan was going to consider some number less than the 17 FTE positions. He appreciates the School Committee had meetings, but as of the last time the Board met, he thought they would hear plans for alternative staffing proposals.

Paolillo said there will be an opportunity to deliberate on the 2024 budget beyond the COVID positions. The general fund rollover, out of district costs, and mandates by the state to increase OOD costs by 14% have affected the budget. Supt. Phelan said he thought ARPA funds would be a separate discussion from the general fund.

Phelan said the \$1.876M will be used to prioritize their current list of positions and they are willing to re-evaluate to reduce some of the positions to accommodate the two year plan.

Motion was made to appropriate out of ARPA funds, \$124,000 towards the Town operating budget and \$1,876,000 towards the School operating budget for two years. Motion was approved by a vote of 2-0. Epstein abstained.

Update from the Belmont High School Building Committee

Bill Lovallo said they awarded 85% of the solar panels project. They took \$143K from the contingency budget for the panels project. The lowest bid was \$290,633 short. The committee asked the bidder to hold the price and they agreed.

Chris Doyle from the Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee said they had a meeting and they talked about \$1.4M being used for capital. For FY24, there is a total of \$ 9.4M in capital requests. They have not voted on the solar panels.

[Emergency Announcement was made by Paolillo that a shooting occurred on Olmstead Drive. Two victims being transported to hospital. Police Chief has informed us that the Police are there and that it was not a random shooting.]

Lovallo talked about the opportunity for Inflation Reduction Act money being used for the solar panels, but he said that money would not be available until FY24.

Epstein noted that the request for the remaining solar is cheaper, per watt, than for the project that could be undertaken with the existing Building Committee budget. It would save money for the town in present value terms to install the additional panels requested.

Bill Anderson, pct. 2 asked about the useful life of panels. Lovallo said the life is about 15-20 years. Anderson thinks that this is a good tradeoff.

Brian Iler is in support of granting the ARPA money to the Building Committee. He would like to see that the Select Board get a confirmation from the Building Committee to installing 100% of the roof project. He is asking for contingency funds to be used to get to that level.

Paolillo said they will appropriate funds for the 345 panels (85% of total project) tonight.

Motion was made to appropriate ARPA funds in the amount of \$290,633 for the purchase and installation of 345 solar panels on the Belmont Middle and High School to be expended by the Belmont Middle and High School Building Committee.

Motion was made to appropriate ARPA funds in the amount of \$1,137,214 towards the capital budget and expended at the discretion of the Select Board with the consultation and recommendation from the Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Discussion and possible vote on request from the Belmont Pan-Asian Coalition and the Chinese American Heritage Foundation to host the Belmont portion of the 3rd Annual Chinese/Lunar New Year Rolling Parade and related festivities on Sunday, February 12, 2023 from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Julie Wu, President of the Belmont Pan-Asian Coalition joined the group to talk about the 3rd Annual Lunar New Year Parade. Ms. Wu presented slides about the festivities. Last year's event was very successful. Ms. Wu showed a potential route for the parade. She will apply for the permit through the Town Administrator office.

Motion was made to approve the request from the Belmont Pan-Asian Coalition and the Chinese American Heritage Foundation to host the Belmont portion of the 3rd Annual Chinese/Lunar New Year Rolling Parade on Sunday, February 12, 2023 (rain date: Sunday February 19, 2023) and to close the "driveway" in front of M&T Bank and Moore St. from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm on Sunday, February 12, 2023 for the purpose of the motorcade parking and festivities. Town Hall complex to be reserved for parking. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Discussion and possible vote on request from the Farmers' Market Committee to hold the Belmont Farmers Market for the 2023 season from June 1, 2023 through October 26, 2023

Hal Shubin, Chair of the Belmont Farmer's Market Committee gave a quick overview of the 2023 season. He reported that the 2022 Farmers' Market brought in 700 shoppers to Leonard St. and they offer food assistance and senior discounts to local families.

Shubin showed slides about the market. He is asking to continue to use the larger space they have been using since 2019. He assured the Board that there has always been ample parking while market is going on and that every year they establishing better relationships with other organizations and merchants. He wants to add a day in November for a Thanksgiving special market, but he will need to come back to the Select Board at a later meeting to provide the details of that event.

Motion was made to approve the request from the Belmont Farmers' Market Committee to hold the 2023 Belmont Farmers' Market at the Claflin St. Municipal parking lot from June 1, 2023 through October 26, 2023 using the same footprint as the 2022 season. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Discussion to partner with the Belmont LGBTQ+ Alliance in the “Belmont Welcomes” initiative

Fran Yuan, President of the LGBTQ+ Alliance, and member Sharon Rich, joined the group to describe the “Belmont Welcomes” initiative.

Yuan described the program as a Townwide business and community partners initiative. The goal of the initiative is to help the business community learn about the needs of LGBTQ+ groups. The Alliance is currently working with youth at Middle and High Schools and they are starting to work with Elementary Schools. They want to make sure that LGBTQ+ students are welcome in Belmont. She said that Belmont Police have become partners. They are asking for support for stickers to be displayed in businesses. She asked if the Select Board could become a community partner. Patrice Garvin said that Town Counsel George Hall said the Town can support the organization but the organization can’t dictate the rules of that support. Garvin said there are rules required by unions and the Police and Fire Departments became partners before Town Counsel identified those rules. She said that she is asking that the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee recommend policy about the initiative.

Epstein asked for clarification about the e-mail in the packet. He said it sounds like the Select Board is being asked to be an official partner, but what was shown on the website is an agreement that involves the Town. Epstein said the Town could support businesses towards achieving these goals, but the Town should not get involved if there was a dispute about providing equitable benefits. Sharon Rich said that they are just asking for equal treatment without discrimination. After discussion, the Select Board agreed to partner with the “Belmont Welcomes” and Julie Wu said she will edit the website to state that stakeholders are partners, and the Town supports those partners.

Motion was made for the Town of Belmont to partner with the Belmont LGBTQ+ alliance in the “Belmont Welcomes” initiative. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Discussion and possible vote on Belmont’s MBTA Communities Action Plan

Rachel Heller, co-chair of the MBTA Communities Advisory Committee joined the group and showed slides about the requirements of the Action Plan. Ms. Heller gave an overview of the program under Section 3A and described the Advisory Committee role.

- Massachusetts municipalities are required to create zoning to allow multi-family housing.
- A non-binding action plan must be filed by January 31, 2023.
- Zoning needs to be in place by Dec. 2024.
- Belmont received a grant to retain the Metropolitan Area Planning Council to supply technical assistance.
- The zoning must allow at least 1,632 multi-family units.
- The state will review plans to make sure the zoning adopted by the Town Meeting is compliant.
- Public outreach is planned.
- Planning Board is responsible for zoning and hearings will be scheduled to discuss zoning plans.

Paolillo questioned whether we can be ready by June 2024 due to other Planning Board issues requiring immediate attention. It was noted that the program requires that zoning for 1,632 units, not that the units be constructed.

Motion was made to accept and endorse the MBTA Communities Action Plan as presented. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Possible vote on appointments, reappointments and acceptance of resignations:

a. Disabilities Access Commission - Appointment

Motion was made to appoint Richard Waruingi as an alternate member to the Disabilities Access Commission to term to expires on June 30, 2025. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

b. Economic Development Committee – Appointment

Motion was made to appoint Rui “Renee” Guo as Planning/Zoning Board member to a 2 year term to expire 6/30/2024 to fill the remaining term of Jeffrey Birenbaum. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

c. Housing Trust – Resignation

Motion was made to accept the resignation of Paul Rickter from the Housing Trust. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Executive Sessions –

a. To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares: SEIU Wage & Classification Study and International Association of Fire Fighters, Local 1637

b. Discussion and possible vote to ratify Memorandum of Agreement with International Association of Fire Fighters, Local 1637

Motion was made to move to Executive Session and return to public session after completion of the Executive Session. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Motion was made to leave Executive Session and join the public meeting. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Paolillo reported that Select Board members, Patrice Garvin, Town Counsel Brian Maser and Chief DeStefano had a discussion about the union contracts for the Association of Firefighters Local 1637. There are two separate contracts to ratify.

Garvin said the first agreement includes two MOAs that comprise the five-year contract. The start dates of the first MOA is July 1, 2020 and July 1, 2021. The two MOAs include a 2% COLA increase, increases to stipend for EMT and Paramedics of 1.5%, and addition of Juneteenth holiday and Indigenous People’s Day.

Motion was made to ratify the MOA of the International Association of Firefighters, Local 1637 from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2022 as presented. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

The second MOA start dates are July 1, 2022, July 1, 2023 and July 1, 2024. This MOA includes annual increases to COLA of 2% and increases of the EMT stipend (1.5% in first year and then 1% in subsequent two years). The change to a bi weekly payroll will create efficiencies. There is also an ARPA stipend of \$2000 the Board needs to approve.

Garvin said the Police contract is currently under negotiation and should be ready for ratification in a few weeks.

Motion was made to ratify the MOA for the International Association of Fire Fighters, Local 1637 from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2025 as presented. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Motion was made to appropriate \$100K from ARPA fund for stipends for EMT and Paramedics. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

SELECT BOARD COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS

[NONE.]

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. December 5, 2022 – Regular Meeting
- b. December 19, 2022 – Regular Meeting

Motion was made to accept the December 5, 2022 and December 19, 2022 regular minutes as amended. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Next Meetings:

a. Potential Topics:

- (1) MAPC Presentation on Net Zero Carbon Emissions

b. Next Meeting Dates:

- (1) Thursday, January 12, 2022 – 7:00 PM – Budget Summit IV
- (2) Thursday, January 19, 2022 – 7:00 PM – Public Forum – Elected/Appointed Treasurer
- (3) Monday, January 23, 2022 – 7:00 PM – Regular Meeting

Submitted by

Virginia Quinn

Recording Secretary

