



**Minutes of the
Town of Belmont
REGULAR SESSION
of the
SELECT BOARD
February 26, 2024**

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: March 20, 2024
TIME: 2:53 PM

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

Approved by the Select Board:
Monday, March 18, 2024

I. 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	Jennifer Hewitt, ATA/Finance Director	Yes
Mark Paolillo, Member	Yes	Glenn Clancy, Town Engineer	Yes
Others Present		Chris Ryan, Town Planner	Yes
Judy Morrison, Age Friendly Action Comm.	Yes	Matt Haskell, Budget Analyst	Remote
Jeffrey Liberty, Age Friendly Action Comm.	Yes		
Geoff Lubien, Warrant Committee	Yes		
Kimberly Selness, Website Renewal Comm.	Yes		
Wendy Murphy, Belmont Woman's Club	Yes		

II. COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS. Ms. Dionne made the following announcements:

- 2024 Multicultural Lunar New Year Festival and Rolling Motor Parade – March 3, 2024, 12:00-2:00 PM
- League of Women Voters: Candidates' Night – March 21, 2024 – 7:00 PM

III. COMMENTS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS

- Tim Duncan spoke about a mailing he received about what would happen if the override is not passed. Mr. Epstein said the mailing was not prepared by the Town, although the scenarios in it were potential actions that had been discussed if the override does not pass. There was a discussion of the financial situation and possible actions if the override is unsuccessful.
- Siobhan Gallagher expressed her concerns about services to seniors as well as her requests to meet with the Board to discuss her analysis of the proposed budget and what it would do to seniors in town.

IV. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

- A. FY2024 Complete Streets Funding Grant Award: Mr. Clancy announced that the town has received this award for crosswalk improvements, which he detailed. He went on to outline some of the requirements of the grant and when the work would be completed. There was a discussion of the work that might be done under this grant as well as grant opportunities in general.

Discussion and possible vote to approve Age Friendly Outdoor Space Guidelines

Ms. Morrison explained that Age Friendly was created by the World Health Organization and is a program to help seniors live easily and comfortably in their homes and communities. She then outlined who was involved in creating the guidelines and how they were created.

She went on to discuss the challenges of the aging population in Massachusetts and the goals of the guidelines and how they might be used. Ms. Morrison then went over the specific guidelines.

There were questions and discussion about the guidelines, what is possible, how to proceed, and recommendations for the guidelines.

A Motion was made to approve the Age Friendly Outdoor Space Guidelines as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

36 **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

37 *A Motion was made to enter Executive Session to conduct discuss strategy with respect to collective*
38 *bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position*
39 *of the public body and the chair so declares.*

- | | | | | | |
|----|----|-------------------------------|----|----|------------------------------|
| 40 | 1. | Retirement Board Open Meeting | 44 | 4. | Valentino 41-43 White Street |
| 41 | | Violation | 45 | 5. | Belmont Middle & High School |
| 42 | 2. | 91 Beatrice Circle Road | 46 | | Compleitive Litigation |
| 43 | 3. | Clark Lane | | | |

47 *The motion was seconded and passed unanimously 3-0 by a roll call vote. The Select Board will return to*
48 *Open Session.*

49 The Select Board went into Executive Session at 7:42pm.

50 *A motion was made to return to Open Session. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously 3-0*
51 *by a roll call vote.*

52 The Select Board returned to Open Session at 8:25pm.

53 **Discussion and possible vote on request to approve an accessible parking space at 45 Glendale Road,**
54 **Belmont**

55 Mr. Clancy outlined the application for the accessible parking space and determined that the conditions do
56 warrant the space. He then reviewed the situation at the home. There was a discussion of whether accessible
57 spaces allow overnight parking and what happens to these spaces when the building changes ownership.

58 *A Motion was made to approve the request for an accessible parking space at 45 Glendale Road,*
59 *Belmont. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

60 **Discussion and possible vote on date to open the Annual Town Meeting (ATM) Warrant and date to**
61 **close the ATM Warrant**

62 Ms. Garvin explained that this is part of the process for Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Epstein pointed out that
63 once the warrant is closed no more Citizen's Petitions can be accepted.

64 There was a discussion of managing Citizen's Petitions at Town Meeting.

65 *A Motion was made to open the Annual Town Meeting Warrant at 8:00 AM on Tuesday, February 27,*
66 *2024 and to close at 5:00 PM on Monday, March 11, 2024. The motion was seconded and passed*
67 *unanimously by 3-0 vote.*

68 **FY2025 Budget Update and Estimated Tax Impact.** Click [HERE](#) to see the document. For the Town Budget
69 Information Tab click [HERE](#).

70 Mr. Garvin explained that this is being presented because incorrect information was being distributed in town.

71 Ms. Hewitt reviewed the tax impact document beginning with FY24 starting points (although they will be
72 updated for FY25 so the numbers will change somewhat):

- 73 • The average single family tax assessment value in FY24 is \$1.6 million.
- 74 • Total Average Tax Bill will be \$17,057 in FY24.

75 She went on to point out that:

- 76 • Prop 2.5 would add \$379 to the average tax bill.
- 77 • Because of debt service rolling off, this number would be lowered to \$311.
- 78 • New debt will add \$201 to the bill.
- 79 • This makes the known increase \$513 before the override (which is a 3.01% increase).
- 80 • The projected impact of the proposed \$8,400,000 override is \$1,200 (for a \$1.6m home). This is an
- 81 additional 7% to the tax bill.
- 82 • The CPA surcharge would add approximately \$18 to the property tax bill for the average home if the
- 83 override passed.

Ms. Hewitt pointed out that the impacts would be different based on the assessment of a home. The document includes the impact for assessments of \$1M, \$2M and \$3M.

There was a discussion of the tax impacts presented, especially regarding the different kinds of housing in Belmont.

Ms. Hewitt explained that the second page of the document shows the information extended over a number of years to show how debt exclusions would not be felt all at once. It also shows that the percentage tax increase in FY26 will be 3.3% and in FY27 it will be 2.99%.

There were questions and discussion about the impacts and the document.

Ms. Garvin explained how dedicated revenue is mostly used for debt exclusion, not the operating budget. Misinformation about this has been seen in the community.

There was a discussion of the override, information that is being distributed, and the impact of no override.

Mr. Lubien said that for the previous override, residents could go to the Town website and enter their address to get information about the impact on their tax bill. He asked that this be reinstated.

Discussion and possible vote on the Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Belmont and the Homer House, 661 Pleasant Street, Belmont

Ms. Murphy explained the impact of a Planning Board decision that limited the ability of Town employees to park at the Woman's Club. The Board rescinded their decision but required that there be an MOU between the Town and the Woman's Club to allow parking at the site. There were some questions and discussion about the situation and MOU.

Mr. Paolillo said that he is a member of the Woman's Club Board but does not see a conflict of interest in this situation.

A Motion was made to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Belmont and the Belmont Woman's Club for parking at the Homer House located at 661 Pleasant Street, Belmont for a term of three years. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

Update on Website Renewal. Click [HERE](#) to see the document.

Ms. Garvin reviewed the history of the Website Renewal Committee and explained that there will be a request for funds later in this meeting.

Ms. Selness provided background information on the goals and work of the Website Renewal Committee as well as the issues they found with the existing website and what users said they typically look for, especially around community engagement.

There were questions and discussion of the proposal and how to proceed especially around the impact to staff.

Mr. Haskell provided details of the RFP, how that work would proceed, and the timeline.

Discussion and possible vote on proposal for Market Analysis and Fiscal Impact Assessment. Click [HERE](#) to see the document.

Mr. Ryan spoke about the factors he considered when preparing the analysis and assessment, why he did the Market Analysis along with the Fiscal Impact Assessment, and the goals of the efforts.

Ms. Dionne expressed her support for the analysis and assessment and the use of ARPA funds for it as well as how this would feed into an updated Master Plan and revised zoning bylaw.

There was a discussion of the proposal and next steps.

American Rescue Plan (ARPA) update and possible vote on new allocations. Click [HERE](#) to see the document.

Ms. Hewitt provided the update of how the ARPA fund had been allocated and the work being done to ensure that the funds are contracted before the funding expires on December 31, 2024. She reviewed items that are being reallocated, and why, and that there is \$255,000 is available for reallocation.

There were questions and discussion of ARPA allocations, funds available for reallocation, and how they might be used.

A Motion was made to use ARPA funds to fund the update of the website implementation for \$44,755. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

A Motion was made to use ARPA funds to fund the Market Analysis and Fiscal Impact Assessment for \$75,000. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

Discussion of Select Board Appointment of Fifth Member to the Belmont Contributory Retirement Board

Mr. Epstein explained the makeup of the current four-person Board and that those individuals chose the fifth member. He explained that the term of the fifth member just expired and that there was a deadlock to appoint the fifth member. In this situation, the Select Board must resolve the problem (per state statute) after 30 days. Therefore, the Board has scheduled a meeting for March 8, 2024 for this vote. In preparation for that vote, he announced that applications are being accepted for the position until Friday, March 1, 2024. He explained the process for applying for the position.

He added that the Retirement Board had held another election earlier in the day but the Town Accountant was not able to attend. The Retirement Board elected to renew the current fifth member (Thomas Gibson).

Mr. Epstein expressed his concern about the propriety of that vote, and the Select Board is considering challenging the vote because of the apparent disenfranchisement of the Town Accountant. The election was not posted on the Retirement Board's agenda.

The Select Board decided to accept applications for the position and to consider the challenge to the election on March 8, 2024.

Discussion and possible vote on request from Nancy McCabe for a One Day Liquor License (beer and wine only) for an event at The First Church, 404 Concord Avenue, on Saturday, March 9, 2024 from 6:30 PM – 10:00 PM

A Motion was made to approve the request from Nancy McCabe for a One Day Liquor License (beer and wine only) for an event at The First Church, 404 Concord Avenue, on Saturday, March 9, 2024 from 6:30 PM – 10:00 PM. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

Discussion and possible vote on committee appointments and reappointments:

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Implementation Committee

A Motion was made to appoint Karen Donelan to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Implementation Committee for a two-year term to expire June 30, 2025. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

A Motion was made to appoint Didier Moise to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Implementation Committee for a two-year term to expire June 30, 2025. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

There was a discussion of having the DEI Inclusion & Implementation Committee update the Select Board on their work.

- Shade Tree Committee

A Motion was made to appoint Barbara Becker to the Shade Tree Committee for a two-year term to expire June 30, 2025. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

Discussion and possible vote to accept the following committee resignations:

- Structural Change Implementation Committee

A Motion was made to accept the resignation of Vicki Amalfitano from the Structural Change Implementation Committee. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

Mr. Paolillo and Ms. Dionne thanked Ms. Amalfitano for her work, and there was a discussion of the work of this committee.

Approval of Minutes

January 22, 2024 Pre-STM, January 30, 2024 Regular Session & February 5, 2024 Regular Session:

A Motion was made to approve the January 22, 2024 Pre-STM session, January 30, 2024 Regular session, and the February 5, 2024 Regular session minutes as amended. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by 3-0 vote.

February 8, 2024 Budget summit IV:

A Motion was made to approve the February 8, 2024 Budget Summit IV minutes as amended. The motion was seconded and passed 2-1-0 vote with Mr. Paolillo abstaining.

Next Meetings & Upcoming Topics

1. Monday, March 4, 2024 – 7:00 PM – Regular Meeting
2. Friday, March 8, 2024 – 8:30 AM – Regular Meeting
3. Monday, March 18, 2024 – 7:00 PM – Regular Meeting
4. Friday, April 5, 2024 – 8:30 AM – Reorganizational Meeting
5. Monday, April 8, 2024 – 7:00 PM – Regular Meeting

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 9:55pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Susan Peghiny
Recording Secretary