

Approved by
the Select Board on:

10/14/2021

BELMONT SELECT BOARD

REMOTE MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2021

7:00 PM

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: October 13, 2021
TIME: 2:38 PM

CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Select Board was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Adam Dash. Vice Chair Roy Epstein, and Mark Paolillo, along with Town Administrator Patrice Garvin, Director of Health Department Wesley Chin and Director of HR Shawna Healey.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- "Mend Belmont" forum will be held remotely on September 21st at 7 pm. The second forum on race and inclusion in Belmont.
- Belmont Light Forum on Time of Use Rates will be held on Sept. 23rd.
- Friends of Library book sale will be held on Sept. 26th from 11 am to 3 pm.
- The second Tanks Forum on September 28th will be held remotely at 7 pm.
- The first Belmont Indigenous Peoples' Day celebration will be held on October 11th.

Beech Street Center events:

- Senior Flu Clinic will be held at the Beech St. Center. Flu shots available September 23rd and October 12th from 11 am to 1 pm.
- Africa: Consummate Challenge seminar will be held on September 14th at 1:15 pm. Free of charge.
- End of Summer Celebration with the Bo and Bill Winiker Band will be held on September 24th at 1:15 pm.
- Better Balance with Fall Prevention Strategies, a virtual health education talk, will be held on September 14th at 11 am.

Call the programs and events line at 617-993-2976 to register for the above Beech St. Center events.

- The Mass. Cultural Council is seeking funding proposals for community-oriented arts and humanities programs. The deadline for applications is October 15, 2021. Webinar for applicants will be held on September 9th from 6 to 7:30 pm.
- Epstein called attention to the passing of two long-time Belmont residents who were models of service to the community. Mark Clark and John Malone were active as volunteers on committees in the Town of Belmont for 34 years and 46 years, respectively.

COMMENTS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS

Alison Lenk, Town Meeting member, reported that there was photo of overflowing trash cans at the Joey Park area. There have been issues with rats there. One suggestion is to add more trash cans and the other suggestion is not to have any cans and have carry in and out. The issue seems to be worse on long weekends.

Dash said the carry in and carry out was a failure. Epstein said this is also an issue at Grove St. Park. He wanted Jay Marcotte, Wes Chin and Jon Marshall to consider whether we should change our procedures.

Chi-Ting Huang said the new intersection near the high school is not working well. Her car has already been hit. People are going straight through the left turn lane and there is conflict. She knows Traffic Advisory Committee is looking at this, but she wants to make the Select Board is aware that the intersection needs four policemen in morning which is not a sustainable situation.

Epstein and Dash said they are aware of this issue and a group is looking at this.

Bill Anderson said he dropped his son off at school this morning and he feels the officers were doing a good job on keeping traffic flowing. He wants to remind people that the underpass tunnel proposed as part of the path project could help with the congestion. He also suggested that it might be a good idea to double up on cans on the weekend in Belmont Square.

Paolillo said that the plan we submit for the community path should include both the underpass and the path, but a phased approach could be implemented.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

a. Additional Select Board meeting: November 29, 2021 joint with Board of Assessors to approve the tax rate.

- Garvin said they plan to add another meeting in November for the tax classifications.

b. Community Compact Award Update

- The Town received \$55K in the Community Compact, \$25K for financial structure of the Town and \$35K for capital improvement. There has been discussion about looking beyond Collins Center and the plan is to involve the Long Term Capital Committee and Capital Budget Committee in choosing a consulting firm for collaboration.
- Two community grants for ADA accessibility and affordable housing were received two years ago. A one-year extension was just approved so projects could be completed.
- Paolillo asked about the financial structure issue. Is the Long Term Planning Committee getting involved with structural issue? Maybe we could work with another group besides the Collins Center. Garvin said she is willing to look outside the Collins Center for help on capital budget decisions.

c. Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program Award Update

- The Town received \$195K from the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program action grant. The plan is to use this funding, supplemented by sewer enterprise and in-kind services, towards total project costs of \$258,600 for collecting storm water flow data to update model, evaluate existing flooding condition, and develop recommendations for flood reduction.

d. FY 21 Enterprise Fund Retained Earnings Update

- Garvin reported that the Town received the FY21 Enterprise Fund Retained Earnings. There were \$2.8M retained earnings for water enterprise fund and \$2.9M for sewer enterprise fund.

Garvin will discuss this with the Town Accountant when he gets back from vacation to see what's generating the earnings.

ACTION BY CONSENT

COVID Update – Discussion and possible vote on amended mask mandate

Wes Chin, Director of Health Department reported that the Board of Health voted on two amended items:

1) Vaccine mandate for Town employees. Select Board will need to consult with Town Counsel on this decision.

2) When a breach of the mandate is reported, the Health Department will try to observe the violation, and if a violation is confirmed, then the Health Department would issue a written complaint. A second violation would result in a \$300 fine on the business. This puts the onus on the business rather than the individual. Enforcement was also extended to multi-family housing in common areas.

Chin said the current infection rate for that last two weeks for Belmont is 84 cases per 100,000. 50% are breakthrough cases. Belmont is at substantial risk level and the average age group for new infections is decreasing.

The Board of Health vote cannot implement without approval from the Select Board.

Garvin spoke to George Hall and she wants to get more info on the national vaccine mandate before a final decision about the Belmont vaccine mandate is determined.

Paolillo worries that businesses will have a hard time enforcing the mask mandate. The Board of Health does not have the ability to issue criminal complaints.

Epstein asked if the Board of Health needs to observe the actual violation? Chin said they need to see the actual violation to enforce it. Epstein feels it would be hard to enforce the mandate using this protocol. He thinks that school and Town employees should be subjected to the same enforcement rules. The Emergency Order last year included government buildings.

Epstein discussed that the Belmont incidence rate trended down after the week ending September 2 and September 9, 2021 and is close to what it was mid-April 2021, shortly before Gov. Baker ended the state of emergency order. He wanted to hold off amending the mandate.

Dash asked that the Board of Health attend the Select Board meeting on Sept. 20 to discuss the mask and vaccine mandate. Meanwhile, the current mask mandate will remain in place.

PUBLIC COMMENTS about COVID safety measures:

Judith Feinleib said that it is great that we are back to the April 2021 incidence rates. But we still need to take steps to keep people safe.

Discussion of the FY22 budget schedule

Dash said we may need to avoid dates when the Capital Budget and Warrant Committees are meeting. It is looking like it may be unlikely that we will need to have a Fall Town meeting, but we are reserving

the right to hold one if needed. Garvin gave the Select Board and the schools a tentative budget schedule. We are starting earlier this year so we can have more public meetings. The Financial Task Force will weigh in on the model once we get the Free Cash numbers.

Discussion and possible vote on a proposed Comprehensive Capital Committee

Jennie Fallon, Chair of the Long Term Planning Committee, said that the draft of the proposed bylaw was submitted by the Long Term Capital Planning Committee and the Capital Budget Committee last Spring but the committees have not yet met this Fall and therefore have not made much progress. She feels that all committee members from the two committees should be involved in this discussion and she would like to put the discussion of the draft off to a future meeting. She said that they are proposing that there be one committee only, as presented at the last Town Meeting. The recommendation is that the Capital Budget Committee be expanded to do the annual recommendations to Town Meeting for capital expenditures and to develop a five year plan.

Dash said this should be a Spring Town meeting issue. Ann Marie Mahoney, Chair of the Capital Budget Committee, said the Long Term Capital Planning Committee has not had a conversation with the Capital Budget Committee and this needs to be done to understand the nuances of the project. Then the Capital Budget and Long Term Capital Planning Committees can bring their recommendations to the Select Board for the Spring Town Meeting.

Epstein said there is a section on long term capital planning in the new Financial Policy document. The newly edited draft is now on the Town website. The Town Administrator's Office will send the relevant section to Fallon and Mahoney to review. Epstein said there is some urgency to adopt the policies this month in conjunction with the audit. Fallon said if the Select Board adopts it, then once the Capital Planning Committee reviews it, it could be still be amended.

Discussion and possible vote on Comprehensive Financial Policies for the Town of Belmont

Dash said that Epstein culled through the document and made many substantive and language changes that were very helpful. Tom Caputo gave Epstein credit for making appropriate and detailed edits. He said the Financial Task Force reviewed it carefully and they are comfortable with the changes. As Chair, he feels the modifications are consistent with what they wanted. This is a living document and each point can be taken up separately.

Epstein said he believes the document is in good shape and accurately reflects our current procedures. In a future revision we should review the policies to make sure they are consistent with existing bylaws.

Paolillo said he can't vote on it tonight, because he needs more time to review the new changes to the document. He feels there are substantive changes and he wants to go over them with Tom Caputo and needs more time to understand the changes.

The decision was made to table approval of the Financial Policy document until Sept. 20th.

Choose Select Board meeting dates for January 2022 - April 2022

It was agreed that the proposed calendar is acceptable so the proposed dates will be adopted.

Town Administrator Review

Shawna Healey, Director of HR, joined the group for the discussion of the annual review for Town Administrator, Patrice Garvin.

Shawna said that Garvin did a self-evaluation and the three Select Board members responded with their evaluation and gave her an overall rating of "4.178" out of "5" with a "5" being the highest rating.

Healey summarized the comments from Select Board member reviews.

Garvin thanked the Select Board and everyone she works with on a daily basis. She looks forward to meeting with the Board members individually to find ways to improve. Garvin replied that it is sometimes hard to rise above the criticism. She appreciates the committee members and the volunteer residents who bring enthusiasm to the Town.

Dash said the "4.178" rating out of "5" is similar to last year's rating. Dash reported that the Town Administrator's contract is not up this year, and that this is the standard annual review to determine a merit increase.

Paolillo thanked Patrice for her honesty in her comments on her areas of improvement.

Epstein clarified that he made a small mistake in his evaluation regarding the Town Administrator being able to work independently. He erroneously put N/A in this category and he would like to change it to a "5" rating.

Dash said that, per typical Select Board practice regarding employee reviews, public comment will not be taken on this matter.

Motion was made to enter 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; Town Administrator

Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Motion was made to return to public session. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Discussion and possible vote to ratify Town Administrator's contract

Shawna Healey summarized what was discussed during Executive Session:

The Select Board has decided to move ahead with a 1.5% merit raise for Patrice Garvin. Dash thinks that Garvin is the best Town Administrator that Belmont has had since he has been active in Town politics. It's important to reinforce that the Town Administrator implements the policies that the Select Board decides. The Select Board unanimously supports what she does for the Town.

Motion was made to accept the merit increase as stated by the HR Director. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

SELECT BOARD'S COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS

- Geoff Lubien is now Chair of Warrant Committee.

- The reformed High School Traffic Working Group is just getting starting and they will meet before end of month.
- High School Funding Group and Rink Committee will meet on Sept. 28th.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

a. August 18, 2021 – Regular Meeting

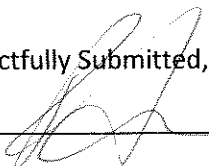
Motion was made to accept the meeting minutes from August 18th. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Motion made to adjourn was approved by vote of 3-0.

Next Meeting: Monday, September 20, 2021 at 7:00 PM

Tuesday, September 21, 2021 at 7:00 PM – Mend Belmont webinar

Respectfully Submitted,



PATRICE GARVIN, Town Administrator