

Approved by The Select Board:

August 8, 2022

Select Board Meeting

Monday July 25, 2022

Hybrid Meeting

7:00 PM

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: September 15, 2022
TIME: 9:20 AM

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 were present, along with Town Administrator Patrice Garvin, and Assistant Town Administrator Jennifer Hewitt (remote).

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- There are a number of vacancies open for committee/board member volunteers. Applications can be submitted through the Town website.
- Purple Heart Day Ceremony will be held on August 7, 2022 at 1 pm at Veteran's Memorial at Clay Pit Pond.

COMMENTS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS

[NONE.]

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

- FEMA Training for Executive/Senior Officials

Patrice Garvin said that a half-day training is being planned for school and Town leaders. The training will be run by FEMA through the Fire Department.

- Letter of Support for ABLE Training for the Belmont Police

Chief MacIsaac announced that this is a free training for all ranks of Police Officers in Belmont. The training will be especially beneficial for junior officers. It will teach officers how to interject themselves into any situation where they observe excessive use of force and will empower them to speak up with ideas about improving operations. The program will utilize a "train the trainer" approach. MacIsaac said he plans to send a small number of officers to train and then they will come back and train other officers.

ACTION BY CONSENT:

Vote to sign MWRA Water Bond for \$500,000

Floyd Carman, Treasurer, joined the meeting to talk about the bond. He said this is an interest-free water bond. It's been set at the same amount of \$500,000 for at least 17 years. Carman said there are very few communities who take advantage of the bond because of the degree of administrative work required to continue it every year.

Motion was made to approve the MWRA water bond in the amount of \$500,000. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Update on the Belmont Youth Hockey Association

Karen McElroy, and Frank French Jr., Belmont Youth Hockey Association (BYHA) board members gave an update on the BYHA. Ms. McElroy reported that the BYHA was established in 1975 for Belmont children from the ages of 3-19 years and it is run by volunteers with a board of directors. The Belmont girls hockey participation is the fastest growing in the state. The Association serves as a pipeline to Belmont public school teams. There are currently about 500 youths registered. The Belmont rink is used by other communities and many other skating groups. The BYHA members showed a video presentation that included testimonies from residents and students about what the rink has meant to them and how important it is to refurbish the rink facilities.

Frank French said that the BYHA is trying to mitigate the tax burden of refurbishing the rink by undertaking a drive for private donations. The BYHA members are pleased that the Select Board is committed to moving the new rink construction forward. Reports have been showing the need for rink replacement for the past 20 years. Many public meetings have been held about the rink, the most recent on April 7, 2022. They said that significant feedback has been received by stakeholders and the design team from Galante Architectural Studios is willing to take into consideration much of this feedback.

Karen MacElroy said fundraising efforts have been extensive (donation website is located at Belmontrink.com). She reports that they have received \$625K in private donations in less than six months. Belmont Savings Bank has also pledged a \$1M grant if the debt exclusion is passed. MacElroy thinks that once the debt exclusion is placed on the ballot, there will be additional corporate contributions. The goal of the BYHA is to secure \$3M in donations for the project.

COMMENTS by residents on the BYHA update:

Fred Bouchard asked if they had explored sharing ice with the Belmont Hill School. Frank French Jr. replied that Belmont Hill has limited ice time available so that is not a viable option.

Bouchard also asked the approximate number of Belmont students who will be benefitting from this ice rink. Frank French replied that there are groups other than students who will be using the rink so it is hard to quantify the number of users and he expects that use of the rink would increase with the new rink.

Vote to sign the Warrant for the State Primary Election to be held Tuesday, September 6, 2022

Town Clerk, Ellen Cushman, joined the meeting. She said that the Select Board is mandated to approve the Warrant. She said there will be three ways to vote in the September Primary Election: 1) in person,

during election day, 2) in person in Town Hall, or, 3) by mail. The Light Department invoices will have more info about the options available.

Motion was made to approve the Warrant for the September 6, 2022 State Primary Election. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Vote to authorize the Police Chief to assign one Police officer per voting location to work election day detail for both the State Primary on September 6, 2022 and the State Election on November 8, 2022 as required by the new Votes Act

Ellen Cushman announced that the new VOTES Act requires the Select Board to assign police officers to all seven polling locations.

Motion was made that in order to fulfill the requirements of the VOTES Act the Select Board authorizes the Police Chief to assign police officers to work at polling precincts each election day, one officer per Belmont voting location, and further to authorize the Police Chief, at the Chief's discretion, to assign a police officer to the early voting location, during the early voting period, as needed, in consultation with the Town Clerk, Belmont's Chief Election Officer. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Discussion on proposed Small Business Working Capital grant fund

Paul Joy, Co-Chair of the Economic Development Committee, joined the meeting. This grant fund was discussed at the last Select Board meeting and Garvin was charged with reviewing the logistics of the program. The Select Board had reservations about the grant awards being assigned by a lottery, they preferred that the grants were reviewed and scored on certain criteria. Garvin said that grant announcements will go out on July 25, 2022 and deadline for grant submission will be September 15, 2022. Award recipients will be notified by December 2022.

All agreed that eligibility criteria have to be clearly delineated to ensure that the grants support small local businesses struggling due to COVID. Regional chains over a certain size will be determined by the number of locations. Since the program is local, the Town can decide to exclude banks and gas stations. Robert Hummel, Senior Planner, will be in charge of collecting the applications and Patrice Garvin and he will review the applications.

Motion was made to approve the COVID-19 small grant business program as discussed. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Public Hearing – National Grid Grant of Location for Work Order #1399914 - To relay 105 feet of 2-inch wrought iron (1930) and 115 feet of 2-inch coated steel (1964) and install 770 feet of 4-inch Plastic main in Brighton Street and Blanchard Road, from existing 2-inch Plastic main near Hittinger Street to Colby St. Install 1,000 feet of 4-inch Plastic main in Colby Street and Merrill Street, from Blanchard Road to Hamilton Road. Abandon 1,000 feet of 4-inch Cast Iron main in Colby Street and Merrill Street.

Jay Marcotte, DPW Director, joined the meeting. Map of the National Grid plan was displayed on the screen. Mary Moroney, Verizon representative, joined the group via Zoom. She said the work order involves replacing iron and steel mains with plastic main.

Marcotte said that the traffic management plan for this project was approved by Sergeant Garabedian, from the Belmont Police. The duration of the project could be up to four months. Mary Moroney

reported that if the grant of location is approved, then National Grid will apply for a permit from the Town with Mr. O'Brien and they will begin work as soon as possible. Marcotte said that this type of work is usually done after drop off and before pick up at the schools. National Grid will also be responsible for curb replacement.

PUBLIC COMMENTS about National Grid work order:

Ellen Schreiber asked how the construction traffic will interact with the High School building project. Chief MacIsaac said there is no access from the High School with this project, so it won't impact the traffic at the High School.

CLOSE THE COMMENTS SECTION

Dash said he had hoped this would have been done in the Summer, but he understands that the urgency of the project is tied to avoiding gas leaks and explosions.

Motion was made to approve National Grid Grant of Location for Work Order #1399914 - To relay 105 feet of 2-inch, wrought iron (1930) and 115 feet of 2-inch coated steel (1964) and install 770 feet of 4-inch Plastic main in Brighton Street and Blanchard Road, from existing 2-inch Plastic main near Hittinger Street to Colby St. Install 1,000 feet of 4-inch Plastic main in Colby Street and Merrill Street, from Blanchard Road to Hamilton Road. Abandon 1,000 feet of 4-inch Cast Iron main in Colby Street and Merrill Street. Vote 3-0.

Police Chief 5 Year Plan

Chief MacIsaac said when he was hired, he was charged with developing a five-year strategic plan. He said COVID hindered the public outreach needed to develop this plan and delayed its execution. He did a presentation of the new plan that will involve living documents that can continue to be updated, when needed. The plan is 18-pages long and can be found at BELMONTDPD.org.

The Chief read the new mission statement for the Belmont Police Department. He listed a series of Core Values for officers. The planning process for the five-year plan involved input from a series of large and small groups and incorporated the results of the citizens' survey, but the final decision remains with the Police Chief. The Citizen Survey consisted of 28 questions and elicited 540 responses. Chief showed a series of slides that included a list of the strengths and weaknesses of the Police Department. He said the Police Department now posts daily logs on the website.

SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis focused on employees and feedback from Town staff. The Chief spoke about the strengths and weaknesses of the department. He also read off the threats to the safety of the Town. He reported that body cameras will cost \$300K each, but they don't have technicians to work on the cameras right now, however he said there may be mandates soon issued from the state about cameras and then the state may supply subsidies to the Towns to purchase and maintain the cameras.

Objectives:

1. Increase diversity in department personnel. He said legislation was not passed yet that would allow residential preference for police officer candidates. We need to encourage the passage of the bill by contacting our state legislators.

2. Enhance the technological capacity in the department.
3. Increase public outreach and engagement
4. Traffic Calming and Enforcement
5. Improve Officer Wellness
6. Achieve Department Certification and Accreditation – hired a consultant with private donations to work with Lt. Daley to put policies together.
7. Improvements to Department Shooting Range – currently using Harvard MA range

Epstein asked about overtime. MacIsaac said there are certain officers who voluntarily choose to do overtime. The overtime budget was overspent from last year.

Dash said it's good to see the department thinking ahead strategically.

Paolillo encouraged Chief MacIsaac to come back to the Select Board if any funding support is required for the plans.

Discussion and possible vote on debt exclusion items for the November 8, 2022 General Election Ballot:

• Rink

Paolillo announced that the Select Board unanimously voted for the debt exclusion for the library. The rink vote was deferred until tonight. Mark Haley, the President of the Municipal Rink Building Committee joined the meeting, along with Frank French and Dante Muzzioli, members of the Rink Building Committee.

Haley said the Municipal Rink Building Committee voted to approve the following motions on the rink:

- 1) Voted to approve keeping the location of the new rink in the same current place parallel to Harris Field with a 10-0 vote (2 members absent). (The School Committee voted unanimously for the same location to be retained as well).
- 2) Voted for the program to accommodate lockers for Fall/Winter/Spring sports by a vote of 11-0 (one absent member). He said they are keeping a judicious eye on the cost estimates for this vote.
- 3) Voted to include solar panels by a vote of 11-0 (one absent member). They decided to keep the solar component above budget and evaluate again on a cost benefit analysis because they wanted to leave open the possibility that the \$2.2M cost could be transferred to solar panels for the Middle School, if necessary.
- 4) Voted to recommend to the Select Board that the project is ready to proceed this Fall 2022 by a vote of 9-2 (one absent member).

Haley showed a proposed budget for the rink, broken down into a low and high estimate. Base cost of \$17.3M includes High School locker rooms, storage, Harris Field locker rooms, rink, solar panels and demolition of White Field House. The total low estimate is at \$27.8M. Contingency and markup escalation brings it to the high estimate of \$34.7M. Haley said now that the architectural design is clearer, the next step will be estimating costs of plumbing, trenching, etc.

Dash said they received a lot of comments by email and otherwise. He feels the cost has been determined within an acceptable range. He feels that Mark Haley has answered questions Dash had about the scope of work and location of the new rink.

Haley said parking and fields are not included in the budget (only for design) and the Planning Board provided feedback and said the parking could be kept to 30 spaces in the Jug Handle area. Also providing a drop off area for students was considered necessary.

Dash thinks the project has been vetted enough and it's ready for a vote.

Haley said we could stay with the same schedule and push the debt exclusion vote to April 2023, but it's very important to keep funding the design so they could bid in March and have hard data to use for the debt exclusion vote. The group discussed concerns about this option because it would end up increasing the costs of the project.

Paolillo thinks this is ready to move forward for a vote in Fall 2022. He realizes the concerns of having two debt exclusions on the ballot at the same time, but he thinks fundraising may be stalled if we wait to vote until the Spring Town Meeting.

Dash said he agreed with having the library and rink debt exclusions placed on the ballot as separate questions.

Epstein said he largely agrees with Paolillo. The design is quite far along and the cost estimates for remaining design issues will be available before the November vote. He also thinks that construction of parking needs to be included in the plan.

PUBLIC COMMENTS on the debt exclusion for the rink

Judith Feinleib, Town Meeting member, pct. 6, asked for a breakdown of how much each of the projects will add to the bottom line of the taxpayer bill. She asked if the breakdown could include a range of home values, rather than an average cost. The Select Board agreed to do this.

Marcia Semuels, pct. 6, thinks both the library and rink projects are necessary. But she is concerned that public meetings have not the most recent plan. She also is concerned about the two members on the Rink Building Committee who did not vote. She would like to see the committee provide more detail on the cost estimates.

Haley said they have preliminary cost estimates based on costs from the end of May 2022. He said he has reviewed these costs in major detail and another member reached out to someone in the Boston market and the next phase will include more details based on this additional input. In September, he said that there will be more public forums on the rink.

Anne Paulsen is concerned the vote was 9-2 and that people on the committee expressed concern about the timing. She said that other projects have had much more community involvement. The rink is more than a hockey rink. Many other skaters use it. She feels there has been little attempt to involve the non-hockey group in the planning process. She thinks an April vote would be better because she does not want to see changes during construction, but she realizes the urgency.

Bill Anderson, Town Meeting member, pct. 2, thinks if we wait until April, we would have a clearer idea of the funding. He wondered how far off would that push off the start date?

Haley replied that he wants to start in March 2023 so they don't lose ice time and they are ready for school in September 2023. Haley said development will be 14 to 18 months and he is concerned with supply chain issues. Paolillo said they can't talk to contractors until they have approved funding.

Jessica Hausman, Town Meeting member, pct. 1, said she is leaning towards supporting the rink. But she feels fundamental questions haven't been answered yet, especially the source of funding for the operating costs.

Mark Haley replied that the new rink will use a higher level of kilowatt hours than the old rink in order to support the new equipment. He said if the rink is run properly it should cover operating expenses.

Epstein said there will be more detailed answers to these questions in a couple of weeks.

Melissa MacIntyre Town Meeting member, pct. 8, said she supports the rink because many of her friends use the rink. But she feels more communication with the public is necessary. Haley said that all Town Meeting members were notified of the public hearings since the new rink committee was convened. MacIntyre feels that the library may take precedence over the rink.

Lucinda Zuniga got up to say that she played hockey in the Town of Belmont 15 years ago. She thinks politics are coming up in the decision. She wants to go back to the basic matter that we need to replace a failing facility. She wants to put it on the ballot in November

Marie Warner thanked the Rink Building Committee for the presentation and the Select Board for their commitment. She said there was discussion of value engineering around Harris Field. She asked if they foresee further costs that could be shared with voters.

Haley said by September there will be a finalized conceptual design and costs for fields and parking. The original budget did not include the design of fields.

Bill Trablicy, Town Meeting member, pct. 7 wondered about how the concept of taxpayer fatigue will affect the voters. He asked if there is concern that the sequencing of the two projects will affect the override negatively?

Paolillo said that the Select Board is willing to take action to address operating cost issues and will work hard to identify different ways to offer services before the override bill is discussed.

Helen Bakeman, pct. 4, asked about the goals for private funding. Frank French, Rink Building Committee member, said they have raised \$1.6M in private money and their goal is to try to get to 10% of the build cost. Bakeman expressed concern about the lack of public input on the new design budget. She feels there have not been enough advance notices and weak attendance.

Dante Muzzioli from the Rink Building Committee replied that they were appointed at the beginning of June 2022 and they plan to have other public meetings. He said the Rink Building Committee has had three meetings per week and they are working hard to communicate information to the public.

Melissa MacIntyre wanted to clarify that she intends to vote on the rink and she will not be campaigning against it.

Dash stated that if the rink does not get approved by the voters, it may not come back for a vote for 10 years, and he is afraid the old rink will not last that long. He wants to make sure the rink passes, and he will vote for it, even though he's concerned about its success if it gets placed on the November ballot.

Motion was made that there be a question on the November 8th State Election ballot as follows: shall the Town of Belmont be allowed to exempt from the provisions of Proposition two-and-one-half, so called, the amounts required to pay for the bonds issued in order to pay for the costs of designing, demolishing, constructing, originally equipping, and furnishing the Belmont Ice Skating Rink located at 221 Concord Ave. in Belmont and all costs incidental or related thereto. Yes or no. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Discussion and possible vote on request from the Belmont Veterans Memorial Committee for two plaque installations

Michael Callanan, Co-chair of the Belmont Veteran's Memorial Committee requested, at no cost to Belmont, to recognize the groups who helped donate money for the commemoration. The plaques will be on the corner of Concord Ave. and Underwood St. placed on large granite stones. Mike displayed a picture of what the stones will look like with the plaques. The donors will be in three categories based on the amount of money donated. There are about 24 businesses and 50 family members who have donated.

Dash and Paolillo asked Callanan to inform the Historic District Commission about the project.

Motion was made to approve the request from the Belmont Veterans Memorial Committee to install two plaques at the corner of Concord Ave. and Underwood St., just inside the Belmont Veterans Memorial Park, pending consultation with the Historic District Commission. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Solid Waste & Recycling Committee Update

Jay Marcotte gave an update on the Solid Waste and Recycling Committee. He said that a report would be presented to the Select Board in the Fall.

Marcotte said they are in the final year of the waste management contract. There are two one-year extensions available. the contract includes a fixed cost for all recycling materials. He said that the Solid Waste Committee has held meetings since last Fall to familiarize people with the contract details. Rules have changed since the contract started and they are continually juggling organics and textile mandates from the state. He reported that Belmont received a high score on bin contamination in a random survey. Marcotte said they are looking for more ways to reduce waste. Extension costs for the contract should be less than prior costs because we now own the equipment. Marcotte said if we had to go out to bid, we would have to purchase new equipment because the new vendor cannot use the same equipment. Marcotte said they have a stockpile of bins and he is currently working on streamlining additional pickups.

Marcotte said he anticipates holding a cardboard event in the Fall.

OPEN JOINT SESSION WITH CABLE TELEVISION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Discussion and possible vote to sign Verizon Franchise Renewal Agreement

Mark Carthy, Chair of the Cable Television Advisory Committee (CTAC), called the meeting to order with a quorum of members (Chet Messer and Jonathan Birge).

Atty. Peter Epstein, counsel for the Cable Television Advisory Committee, and Paul Trane from Verizon joined the group to talk about the contract and regulatory issues associated with the renewal contract. Two documents need to be signed: 1) cable tv renewal license for 5 years; and 2) regulatory statement saying that the Select Board has approved the license based on the State of Mass. Regulatory requirements. The new contract follows up on the current license expiring July 30, 2022. New license goes to July 30, 2027. Financial terms agreed to were for three payments totaling \$250K in capital and the first payment will be made in 45 days and second and third payments would be effective on July 31st thereafter. He said they also looked at the current Comcast license from 2015 which was a 10-year contract. He noted that there is a new section called "termination" that says Verizon can terminate the renewal license in Year 3.

Mark Carthy said the language about termination is due to the insecurities of the industry. But they have arranged that the full amount of capital will be paid in the first three years of the contract.

Paul Trane said that the termination language reflects the state of the cable industry. Cable subscriptions have declined all over the state. Carthy said that subscriptions have gone down in Belmont, but he said that the committee makes sure that Belmont is getting the optimal value out of their contracts.

Dash asked about the renewal statement of Verizon providing "good quality" service. Mark Carthy said that CTAC undertakes an ascertainment process required by the regulatory agencies. He reported that generally Verizon has provided good quality service. Verizon also provided bill payment in convenient locations.

Jeff Hansel, Executive Director of the Belmont Media Center reported that he is satisfied with the contracts.

The Cable Television Advisory Committee recommended the Select Board sign the agreements.

Motion was made to sign the Verizon Franchise contract and the renewal agreement. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

The Cable Television Advisory Committee adjourned the meeting with a quorum of members.

CLOSE JOINT SESSION WITH CABLE TELEVISION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Possible vote on appointments, reappointments and acceptance of resignations:

MBTA Communities Advisory Committee

Motion was made to appoint Jeff Nealon from the Historic District Commission to the MBTA Communities Advisory Committee to a term to expire June 2023.

Other committee appointments will be deferred until the Select Board August 8th meeting.

SELECT BOARD COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS

Dash said he would like the Vision 21 Committee's work on refreshing the Town's master plan to be included in the agenda for the August 8th Select Board meeting.

Motion was made to go to Executive Session and not return to public session: 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; all unions. Motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Next Meetings:

a. Potential Topics:

- (1) Committee Appointments/Reappointments
- (2) Financial Organization Structure Review by the Collins Center (8/3)

b. Next Meeting Dates:

- (1) Wednesday, August 3, 2022 – 7:00 PM – Special Joint Meeting
- (2) Monday, August 8, 2022 – 7:00 PM – Regular Meeting
- (3) Monday, August 15, 2022 – 7:00 PM – Regular Meeting
- (4) Monday, August 29, 2022 – 7:00 PM – Regular meeting (tentative)
- (5) Monday, September 12, 2022 – 7:00 PM – Regular Meeting
- (6) Monday, September 19, 2022 – 7:00 PM – Reg