

DATE: May 9, 2023
TIME: 2:42 PM

Minutes of the
Town of Belmont
Warrant Committee Meeting
Wednesday, April 12, 2023



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

Call to Order: Mr. Lubien called the meeting to order at 7:32pm. 14 voting members were present.

Member	Present	Member	Present
Geoffrey Lubien, Chair	Yes	Conor McEachern	Yes
Paul Rickter, Vice-Chair	Yes	Robert McLaughlin	Yes
William Anderson	Yes	Lynn Peterson Read	Yes
Tom Caputo	Yes	Laurie Slap	Absent
Christine Doyle	Yes	Matthew Taylor	Yes
Anne Helgen	Yes	Marie Warner	Yes
Staff		Jack Weis	Yes
Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator	Remote	Mark Paolillo, Ex-officio Designee, Select Board	Yes
Jennifer Hewitt, Assistant Town Administrator & Finance Manager	Remote	Meghan Moriarty, Ex-officio, School Committee	Remote
Others Present			
Roger Wrubel, Energy Committee	Yes	Brian Kopperl, Energy Committee	Yes
Christine Doyle, Chair, Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee.	Yes	Marty Bitner, Energy Committee	Yes

Comments from the Chair

Mr. Lubien discussed the Op Ed that he submitted to the [Belmontonian](#) and explained his thoughts and reasons about why he did this. He said he is looking forward to working with the new superintendent going forward. He also discussed the challenges of the budget process and the financial future of Belmont.

Energy Committee Warrant Articles Presentation

Article 10: Replace General Bylaw 60-310 with Specialized Energy Code: Mr. Wrubel explained the opportunity to opt in to the Specialized Code, what it is, and explained this citizen's petition. The Committee discussed the proposal and aspects of the article.

Ms. Garvin explained that if this is adopted the cost of building the library would go up by about 15-20% overall. She also expressed concern about what this would do to future growth, and pointed out that there is some ambiguity at the State level about this program.

There was a discussion of the proposal and its various impacts, especially regarding the new library and rink, and new growth.

Jack Dawley of Northland Residential: Explained that he has built a lot of homes in Belmont and asked the Committee to not support this petition. He explained how the proposed article will affect the projects he is currently working on.

Article 9: Authorizing 10 Year Terms for Town Leases & Procurement Contracts for Electric Vehicles, Buses and Trucks: Mr. Kopperl explained that there is a State grant to encourage electric school buses, and the process the Energy Committee has used to take advantage of it. He then explained why a 10-Year Lease is desirable and that the State limits municipal contracts to 3 years unless Town Meeting authorizes otherwise. The article provides flexibility but is not a mandate. He then outlined the benefits of an electric fleet.

There was a discussion of the article, the benefits of an electric fleet, and its impact on Belmont.

Ms. Moriarty said she believes the Schools will look favorably on this warrant article, and explained why.

Review and Discuss FY24 Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee Proposed Projects

Ms. Doyle reviewed the history of the creation, makeup, and goals of the Committee. She then reviewed the CCBC's funding sources, recommendations, and future plans.

Ms. Garvin told the group that there is a Warrant Article to rename & repurpose a capital stabilization fund that was originally created for some buildings that are being constructed, and explained how that would work and be funded. Ms. Doyle said the CCBC was supportive of this proposal in concept.

There were questions and a discussion of Ms. Doyle's presentation and the work and recommendations of the CCBC.

Vote on Community Preservation Committee Proposed Projects

The Committee reviewed the proposed CPC projects and their funding recommendations.

Motion: *Mr. Paolillo moved favorable action on the Conservation Fund CPC recommendation. Mr. Rickter seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.*

Mr. McLaughlin explained why he would be voting against the next recommendation regarding the affordable housing fund.

Mr. Anderson explained that he would vote for the affordable housing fund but asked that in the future they provide a more specific plan for how the trust will operate and how the money will be used to benefit the community.

Motion: *Mr. Paolillo moved favorable action on the Fund to Support the Creation of New Affordable Housing CPC recommendation. Mr. Rickter seconded, and the motion passed 11-1-2 with Ms. Moriarty abstaining and Mr. McLaughlin and Ms. Warner opposing.*

Motion: *Mr. Paolillo moved favorable action on the Grove Street Baseball and Basketball Reconstruction CPC recommendation. Mr. McLaughlin seconded, and the motion passed 13-1-0 with Mr. Anderson abstaining.*

Motion: *Mr. McLaughlin moved favorable action on the Library Historic Objects Preservation Plan CPC recommendation. Ms. Helgen seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.*

Motion: *Mr. Rickter moved favorable action on the PQ Park Basketball Court Replacement – In Kind CPC recommendation. Ms. Doyle seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.*

Motion: *Ms. Helgen moved favorable action on the Rejuvenation of Sherman Gardens CPC recommendation. Ms. Doyle seconded, and the motion passed 13-1-0 with Ms. Moriarty abstaining.*

Motion: *Mr. McLaughlin moved favorable action on the Belmont Womans' Club Window Restoration Installation Project for 3rd Floor CPC recommendation. Ms. Helgen seconded, and the motion passed 13-1-0 with Mr. Paolillo abstaining.*

Liaison Reports:

- A. **Town Administrator:** Ms. Garvin reported that Jennifer Hewitt has been appointed as the Interim Treasurer/Collector through the end of the fiscal year, when a permanent appointment will be made. She also reported that John Steeves has been appointed as the Parking Clerk, and that the health insurance rates were increased by 3%.
- B. **Select Board:** Mr. Paolillo reported on the Select Board's activities on Water & Sewer rates, parking fees and fines, possible increases in Town retirees COLA, the approval of a contract for the fuel tank replacement, and the change in the rotation of the Select Board chair and committee assignments.
- C. **Rink Building Committee:** Mr. Caputo provided an update on the status of the project.

- D. School Committee: Ms. Moriarty reported that the House Ways & Means numbers have just released new number and they looked good. She and Mr. Weiss then provided a summary of the School Committee meeting the previous night and the next steps to approve the budget.
- E. Library Building Committee: Mr. McLaughlin reported that they are planning a forum on April 25th and provided an update on the project.
- F. High School Building Committee: Mr. McLaughlin reported that are meeting the next day and said they are gliding to the end on a very thin contingency.

Approve minutes (if any), including all outstanding subcommittee or working group minutes.

February 9, 2023 Budget Summit: Mr. Weiss pointed out that the statement by Mr. Phalen that “*This will result in the loss of 20.6 FTE, and 9.1 FTEs*” should read “*This will result in the loss of 20.6 current FTEs and 9.1 requested additional FTEs that will not be hired*”.

Motion: Ms. Helgen moved to approve the minutes of the February 9, 2023 Warrant Committee meeting as amended. Ms. Doyle seconded, and the motion passed 13-1-0 with Ms. Moriarty abstaining.

March 15, 2023: Ms. Doyle clarified that the statement “*Ms. Doyle initiated a discussion of increasing services in District to reduce the Out-of-District costs*” should read “*Ms. Doyle initiated a discussion of shifting to LABBB in District to reduce the Out-of-District costs*”.

Ms. Warner’s name is misspelled.

Motion: Mr. Rickter moved to approve the minutes of the March 15, 223 Warrant Committee meeting as amended. Mr. Anderson seconded, and the motion passed 13-1-0 with Ms. Moriarty abstaining.

March 22, 2023: Ms. Warner’s name is misspelled.

Motion: Ms. Doyle moved to approve the minutes of the March 22, 2023 Warrant Committee meeting as amended. Mr. McEachern seconded, and the motion passed 13-1-0 with Ms. Moriarty abstaining.

April 6, 2023 Public Services Subcommittee:

Motion: Mr. Weiss moved to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2023 Public Services Subcommittee meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Public Comment – there was no public comment.

Adjournment

Motion: Mr. McLaughlin moved to adjourn the meeting of the Warrant Committee, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:55pm.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, 27, 2023 at 7:30pm

Respectfully submitted by,

Susan Peghiny
Recording Secretary