



Town of Bellingham

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

10 Mechanic Street

Bellingham, Massachusetts 02019

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February 6, 2023

The Selectboard meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Don Martinis. All Board members were in attendance and participating in the Arcand Meeting Room. Also actively participating in the meeting was Town Administrator Denis Fraine and Administrative Assistant Hilarie Allie. This meeting was accessible to the public either in-person or via the Zoom online option.

Cumberland Farms – Change of Officer Application

Attorney Tyler Henseler of Upton Connell & Devlin presented before the Board via Zoom and stated he was speaking on behalf of their client Cumberland Farms of Massachusetts, Inc. for a Change in Officer application. He stated the names of the officers that would be changing and explained there would be no operational changes or changes to the upper tier structure and that no beneficial interests would be changing. The Board had no questions for Attorney Henseler.

On a Grant/Sahin motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to approve the Change in Officer Application for Cumberland Farms of Massachusetts, Inc.

Paula Stuart – Community Opportunity Group

Paula Stuart of Community Opportunities Group, Inc. was recognized via Zoom and began by recapping the information presented at the Public Hearing held on January 23, 2023. At the January public hearing, two potential activities had been proposed for a Bellingham application: a continuation of housing rehabilitation program and accessibility improvements around Blackstone fields to remove barriers and improve access to disabled adults, especially those who are wheelchair bound, in order to be able to enjoy the recreational facilities, watch ballgames, etc. Public comments and suggestions for other possible activities had been solicited during and before the public hearing in newspaper notices and on the Town's website. The public was invited to submit written or emailed comments until January 27th. No other activities were proposed nor were any other comments received. Paula Stuart advised the Board that she would be asking them to take the following votes in order to proceed with filing the new application.

On a McNulty/Grant motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to submit an MCDBG FY 2022-2023 Grant Application in an amount not to exceed \$1.35 million to include two activities:

- a. Continuation of the Bellingham Housing Rehabilitation Program
- b. Accessibility Improvements to Blackstone Fields

On a McNulty/Grant motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to appoint Denis Fraine, Town Administrator as Environmental Certifying Agent (ECO).

On a McNulty/Grant motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to authorize the Selectboard Chairman and Town Administrator to sign all necessary documents required to submit the grant application.

COA Legislation

Mr. Fraine stated Josie Dutil, Senior Center Director, had asked Rep Soter to co-sponsor a bill that is supported by her Council as well as the Massachusetts Council on Aging. This new legislation calls for a few minor language changes and will not have any impact on Bellingham as it relates to our Senior Center. Mr. Fraine stated Rep Soter was looking for the Board's support and wanted to confirm there were no objections to this before he agreed to co-sponsor the bill. The Board had no objections to this and Mr. Fraine stated that he would email Rep Soter the same.

Norfolk County Retirement System

Mr. Fraine stated the Governor signed legislation authorizing retirement systems across the State to increase the annual COLA for FY24 from 3% to 5% for the coming year only. The COLA is only applied to the first \$18,000 of a retiree's pension. The Retirement Board has sent this out to all communities in Norfolk County for approval, and in the event 2/3's approval is received from member communities they will enact the increase. Mr. Fraine stated it won't impact the FY24 assessment but it will certainly be paid for down the road. Mr. Connor asked what the actual dollar amount impact would be for our community and Mr. Fraine stated he would find out before the Board acted on this. Votes must be received by June 30, 2023.

On a Sahin/McNulty motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to approve the January capital improvement, sewer, stormwater, trash and water abatement charges in the amount of \$2,129.46.

Gifts/Grants

On a McNulty/Sahin motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to accept the gifts and grants as listed herein, with said expenditures to be under the direction of the parties noted.

Fund#	Amount	From	For/Purpose	Spending Authority
6410	\$5000.00	Donna & James Malia	<i>General Donation</i>	Police Chief
6090	\$5000.00	Donna & James Malia	<i>General Donation</i>	Fire Chief

Under discussion Mrs. MacKinnon pointed out that the Malia family makes donations to the Police and Fire Department because they are very appreciative of their services.

Bid Award

On a Grant/Sahin motion the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to award Contract 2022-HSHR Harpin Street Handicap Ramp Construction to low bidder Richard F. D'Ambrosia, Inc. of Weymouth, MA. Their base bid was \$278,808 and their alternative bid was \$51,355. The Base bid will be covered by the CDBG grant and the alternative bid will be covered by the Town.

Mary MacKinnon, CFO – FY24 Revenue Projection Update

Mary MacKinnon, CFO, presented before the Board to provide a general overview of the Town's finances. The Board was presented their budget book binders and it was explained that what was being presented to them was a balanced budget that protects all core services with no reduction in staffing or services provided to the community. She further stated the budget includes funding for Selectboard supported initiatives including two additional police officers and two additional firefighters based on previous conversations with the Board. She stated the Town's overall budget for FY24, including the four enterprise funds and the general fund, is \$80.9M. This is an increase of 3.20% from last year. With regards to revenues, the overall budget presented to the Board is funded by the tax levy which increased by 4.15% (this includes proposition 2 1/2 percent, new growth of 1.19% and .46% of excess levy capacity that was unused), state aid estimate, local receipts and other miscellaneous funding sources. The FY24 budget demonstrates a \$2.6M increase in available revenues to support the FY24 operating expenses. Mary and Denis pointed out that this budget is contingent on various things such as State Aid and the formula the State will use for school choice. Mary encouraged the Board to reach out to her with any specific questions before the Budget Workshop which is scheduled for Saturday February 25th at 9AM.

On a Connor/McNulty motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hilarie J. Allie". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Hilarie J. Allie
Administrative Assistant