



# Town of Bellingham

## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

10 Mechanic Street

Bellingham, Massachusetts 02019

Tel: 508-966-5800 \* Fax: 508-966-4425

February 7, 2022

The Selectboard meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairwoman Cindy McNulty. 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.

### DHCD – Draft Compliance Guidelines

Mrs. McNulty welcomed Jim Kupfer, Town Planner, and Amy Kwesell from KP Law, both via Zoom, to discuss draft regulations for MGL 40A section 3A. These new zoning draft regulations state that any MBTA community should have at least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing (with no age restrictions) is permitted as of right and meets certain criteria. It states there must be a designated area of land where at least 15 units per acre with a minimum of 750 units on 50 acres of land can be built and it must be within .5 miles of a commuter station. Bellingham is considered an adjacent MBTA community and requires the same standards. DCHD is requiring communities to hold a meeting to serve notice about these new regulations. An action plan must be adopted by July 1, 2023 which will spell out a way in which zoning will meet these guidelines by the end of year 2024. Mrs. McNulty asked Mr. Kupfer if the Town has an area of land where this is possible. He stated there may be some areas of redevelopment as opposed to development on some underutilized pieces of property but he said the hurdle will be the density aspect. Ms. Kwesell reiterated that these are draft regulations and her firm feels most communities will have a hard time meeting the criteria of 50 contiguous acres. She believes most communities will end up doing this by way of an overlay district. Mr. Kupfer stated the Board can revisit this once the final regulations have been enacted and at that point can look at next steps.

### Police Department – Budget Review

Chief Daigle and Lt. Russell appeared before the Board to discuss their FY23 budget. Chief Daigle explained that the goal of this budget is to bring his man power back to 30 officers including a second detective position and possibly a second SRO in the schools. He stated his budget reflects putting in for five (5) new officers but two (2) officers are retiring so the department will basically gain three (3) new officers. He stated this will be a rebuilding process on the salary side including funding seven (7) full dispatchers once again. He stated on the expense side he will have to pay for the academy for the new officers and the department will lease a motorcycle again. The motorcycle is crucial for traffic safety.

Mr. Martinis asked why the department doesn't go to a centralized dispatch system and remarked that the additional cost of doing so might eliminate the cost of the constant turnover. Lt. Russell and Chief Daigle stated they have closed the gap on the pay

difference between working at a local station and working at a centralized dispatch by consolidating some steps and this seems to be working. Mr. Connor asked how many officers in general the Town loses on a yearly basis due to unforeseen reasons and if that number is 3-4 a year he would suggest the Chief's budget reflects funding for eight (8) new officers as opposed to five (5). Mr. Connor asked that they get back to the Board with those figures. The Board was in agreement that they do not want to skimp on public safety and as negotiations approach would like to see their salary be competitive with other area towns.

Mary MacKinnon, CFO – Borrowing Authorization / Snow & Ice Deficit

Mrs. MacKinnon stated that Fall Town Meeting authorized borrowing in the amount of \$5,041,175 for three (3) different projects. The projects included the purchase of the building located at 215 Depot Street for \$2.7M, road improvement projects for \$1.5M and a water standpipe rehab project for \$841,000. The Town conducted its issuance of debt and the winning bid was issued to an investment firm by the name of Piper Sandler with an average interest rate of 2% and a premium of \$385,000. After all costs the amount that was actually financed was \$4,765,000. Mr. Connor asked what, after this, is the Town's short term debt obligation. Mrs. MacKinnon stated there is no short term debt outstanding.

On a Martinis/Connor motion the Board unanimously voted 4-0 to authorize the sale of \$4,765,000 general obligation bonds dated February 17, 2022, as outlined in the document entitled "Vote of the Board of Selectmen dated February 7, 2022", as prepared by bond counsel and provided to each board member, and further, to authorize all related documents as presented and we waive full reading of these documents.

On a Grant/Martinis motion the Board unanimously voted 4-0 to authorize the Town to deficit spend for snow and ice operations for Fiscal 2022 as allowed by MGL chapter 44 section 31D.

Capital Improvement Committee Interview – Jack McCarthy

Mr. McCarthy introduced himself to the Board and stated he is a recent resident of Bellingham having built a house and moved here 2.5 years ago. He stated he raised his 3 boys in Holliston and that he and his wife are empty nesters now and he felt the need to give back to the community. He spoke to Mrs. Grant previously regarding the Capital Improvement Committee and with his background in managing massive capital budgets he thinks this would be a good fit. Mrs. Grant agreed with this. The Board thanked Mr. McCarthy for coming in and stated his appointment would be considered in March when all other appointments by the Board are made.

Brian Norton – Conservation Commission – Cont'd

Last week the Board discussed the fact that they had received a letter from Mr. Norton back in July stating he needed to relocate out of the Town of Bellingham and was hoping to continue to serve on the Conservation Commission. The Board approved this request with further review of his resident status in six (6) months' time. Currently Mr. Norton still resides in Franklin and stated in his updated letter that he needed to sign a one (1) year lease but was still planning to move back to Bellingham at the end of the lease and was hoping the Board would extend his request to stay an additional six (6) months. At that time Mrs. Matthews spoke on Mr. Norton's behalf stating he is a reliable member of their Board and she would be concerned if this request was not granted as the Commission is already down a member. With all Board members in attendance, Mrs. Grant made a motion to extend Mr. Norton's membership on the Conservation Commission until June 1<sup>st</sup>. The motion was seconded by Mr. Martinis and the motion carried with a 3-1 vote with Mr. Connor opposing. Mr. Connor also questioned the terms of the members on the Conservation Commission. Mrs. Allie said she would look into this before re-appointments are voted on.

On a Grant/Martinis motion the Board unanimously voted 4-0 to approve the November abatements in the amount of \$6,228.66

On a Grant/Martinis motion the Board unanimously voted 4-0 to approve the December abatements in the amount of \$3,587.57.

On a Grant/Connor motion the Board unanimously voted 4-0 to approve the January abatements in the amount of \$1,985.26

Gifts/Grants Acceptance

On a Grant/Martinis motion the Board unanimously voted 4-0 to accept the gifts and grants as listed herein, with said expenditures to be under the direction of the parties noted:

Amount	From	For/Purpose	Spending Authority
\$800,000.00	Department of Housing and Community Development	MA Community Development Block Grant Program	Town Administrator
\$6000.00	Anonymous	Items/Equipment for Firefighters	Fire Chief

New Business

Mr. Martinis questioned why the Town didn't have a Bylaw concerning food trucks. Mrs. Allie stated food trucks were permitted through the state. Mr. Martinis stated he would still like to create a Bylaw to monitor food trucks in Town. Mr. Fraine stated he would ask Town Counsel if they had some example bylaws the Board could review.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Fraine stated they have been working hard on the redesign of Hartford Ave. W.S. Development has paid for the engineering from the southbound ramp at 495 to the Arrowhead intersection. A meeting is planned for Wednesday February 16<sup>th</sup> with the residents of Hartford Ave to discuss these roadway improvements as well as the easements to their properties.

The Town has been awarded an \$800,000 Community Development Block Grant which will allow the continuation of the Housing Rehabilitation program as well as provide handicap accessibility improvements for sidewalks in areas that were identified as low and moderate income areas of Town.

Mr. Fraine stated an update will be provided in March to the residents of Taunton Street but the engineers came back with some information on the stop signs and the assessor's office has been working on the area of concern where the beavers are causing havoc.

Mr. Fraine requested an executive session to discuss contract negotiations with various bargaining groups which are all up at the end of June. All members of the Board were polled with all voting in the affirmative.

On a Grant/Martinis motion, the Board unanimously voted 4-0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 PM with no further business to be discussed at the conclusion of the executive session.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Hilarie J. Allie".

Hilarie J. Allie  
Administrative Assistant