



## Board of Selectmen

Date of Meeting: Monday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Time: 6:30 PM – 7:43 PM  
Members Present: Chair Jamie Underwood; Selectmen Matt Mecum and Seth Ridinger;  
April Steward, Town Administrator; and Special Town Counsel, Brian Faulk

The meeting commenced at 6:30 PM.

Financial Warrants were signed in agreement.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The meeting will be livestreamed from the *Zoom Application*.

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85105632377?pwd=clJQN0ZPNFFrMWV5aGN6NzhMLzFMUT09>

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### *Confirming Member Access:*

April Steward, Town Administrator recited the following:

Members, when I call your name, please respond in the affirmative.

- Seth Ridinger: Yes
- Jamie Underwood: Yes
- Matthew Mecum: Yes

Staff, when I call your name, please respond in the affirmative.

- Special Town Counsel: Brian Faulk: Yes

### *Introduction:*

April Steward started off the meeting by stating the following: Good evening everyone. This Open Meeting of the Board of Selectmen is being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth due to the outbreak of the "COVID-19 Virus."

In order to mitigate the transmission of the COVID-19 Virus, we have been advised and directed by the Commonwealth to suspend public gatherings, and as such, the Governor's Order suspends the requirement of the Open Meeting Law to have all meetings in a publicly accessible *physical* location. Further, all members of public bodies are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely. The Order, which you can find posted with agenda materials for this meeting allows public bodies to meet entirely remotely so long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting. Ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law. This meeting will feature public comment.

For this meeting, the Board of Selectmen is convening by video conference via Zoom App as posted on the Town's Website identifying how the public may join. Please note that this meeting is being recorded, and that some attendees are participating by video conference. Accordingly, please be aware that other folks may be able to see you, and that take care not to "screen share" your computer. Anything that you broadcast may be captured by the recording.

#### Meeting Materials

All supporting materials that have been provided members of this body are available on the Town's website unless otherwise noted. The public is encouraged to follow along using the posted agenda unless The Chair notes otherwise.

#### Meeting Business Ground Rules (Jamie Underwood)

We are now turning to the first item on the agenda. Before we do so, permit me to cover some ground rules for effective and clear conduct of our business and to ensure accurate meeting minutes.

- I will introduce each speaker on the agenda. After they conclude their remarks, the Chair will go down the line of Members, inviting each by name to provide any comment, questions, or motions. Please hold until your name is called. Further,
  - Please remember to mute your phone or computer when you are not speaking.
  - Please remember to speak clearly and in a way that helps generate accurate minutes
- For any response, please wait until the Chair yields the floor to you and state your name before speaking.
- If members wish to engage in colloquy with other members, please do so through the Chair, taking care to identify yourself.

#### For Items with Public Comment:

After members have spoken, the Chair will afford public comment as follows:

- The Chair will first ask members of the public who wish to speak to identify their names and addresses only.
- Once the Chair has a list of all public commentators, I will call on each by name and afford 3 minutes for any comments.
- Finally, each vote taken in this meeting will be conducted by roll call vote.

### **Vote to re-organize the Board:**

Jamie mentioned that normally whoever is up for re-election next will take over the Chair role and whoever would be second would become Vice-Chair, and the newly elected person would become the Clerk.

Seth Ridinger made a motion to nominate Matt Mecum as the new Chair of the Boylston Board of Selectmen, himself as the Vice-Chair, and Jamie Underwood as the Clerk. Matt Mecum seconded. Voted all in favor. Matt: Yes, Jamie: Yes and Seth: Yes.

Jamie congratulated Matt on becoming Chair and turned the meeting over to him. Matt thanked Jamie for his leadership over the past year. Seth thanked Jamie as well and congratulated Matt on his new role.

### **Approval of meeting minutes: 04/20/2021:**

*Seth Ridinger made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from 04/20/2021 with one revision (On page 8, Paragraph 4 - Parcel of Land at 85 Sewell St it was stated 35 acres and it should be 30.5 acres). Jamie Underwood seconded. Voted all in favor.*

### **Town Administrators Report to the BOS:**

1. *Cool Science:* A young artist from Boylston has been selected as a Cool Science honoree. The Cool Science Team will be holding a Virtual Art Exhibition Celebration to honor the youth and their artwork on Wednesday, June 23rd at 6:30 PM. If you would like to attend the virtual meeting, please let me know and I will RSVP on your behalf. There is additional guidance available which I have provided for you in your packet.
  - a. Matt and April attended the meeting last year.
2. *Annual Town Meeting Warrant:* Most of the last two weeks I have been wrapping up the warrant and sending the warrant and Annual Town Report to the printers. Both are back in house and ready to be sent out. The warrant for annual town meeting will be mailed out this week. Residents should be anticipating receiving them by this weekend.
3. *American Rescue Plan Act:* The Commonwealth of MA has issued more guidance on ARPA funds. I have included the information in your packet. The funds need to be used by the end of calendar year 2024 and can be used to help replace lost public sector revenue, which may be a growing problem for municipalities over the next several years.
  - a. Does not look like we can use this for the radio project.

### **Building Inspectors Report to the BOS:**

*Building Inspector reports were reviewed:*

- More roof repairs than normal
- When material gets back to where it is, Tony believes there will be a flood of people reaching out for permits. A lot of material is on backorder currently

No questions from the board.

### **Town Planners Report to the BOS:**

CMRPC would like to come and make a presentation on the Rapid Recovery progress and get some public comments on their initial phase of research, data collection and review of the public survey.

The MVP Program provides a grant to municipalities to complete vulnerability assessments and develop action-oriented resilience plans. It addresses issues we are confronting to climate change issue. Once you get the initial designation, it makes us eligible for other pools. Paul asked the board if they will endorse his application to move forward with this program. Matt stated that it sounds like a great idea. Jamie asked for Paul to draft the letter and Paul agreed.

April stated that this committee will be more of an internal steering committee instead of residents.

No further questions from the board.

### **Vaccine Update:**

Matt stated the numbers as of last Thursday were slightly over 70% have had at least one shot and 90% of residents over 75. If you would like to get an appointment you should reach out soon. The goal is always just to make sure that vaccines are accessible for the residents of Boylston and believes that we have been successful in that.

### **Discussion and possible vote to approve a sign on town property:**

Matt explained that a landscape company on Elmwood Place asked if they could put a sign out front on the road. Typically, this would go before the Planning Board, however this would be located on Town property, where the You Inc Sign was. We thought the best way to go about it would be to bring it before the Selectboard for approval. Jamie mentioned that this would be supporting local businesses and thinks it is a good gesture. Matt suggested that there be some parameters and have it fit on the existing sign structure. Seth questioned if this would be an issue since it's a private business' sign on town property, and stated if approved, it needs to conform to our sign bylaws. Since the business has no frontage and is renting town owned property, the board realizes their request is distinctive. Special Town Counsel Brian Faulk stated that it is fine.

*Jamie Underwood made a motion to allow a sign to be erected on the existing poles at Elmwood Place for a business that is up past the Highway Barn on the left, be in regulations of zoning enforcements, and to allow space for another possible sign for the Flagg House when it does get rented. Seth seconded. Voted all in favor. Matt: Yes, Seth: Yes, and Jamie: Yes*

### **Discussion and possible vote on Cross Street/Linden Street Intersection:**

Seth mentioned he spoke with the Chief and Steve Mero regarding this intersection; over the past couple years there have been a few accidents at it. Most appear that they are heading from the golf course and heading towards Tahanto. He spoke with 4 residents who live in the area, and they said

it's a horrible intersection and something needs to be done. The line of vision at the intersection is not great; trees and bushes have been cut back but it could be better. Seth suggested trimming back the bushes on the left-hand side more and adding a "stop ahead" sign to warn drivers so they don't go through it.

Highway Superintendent Steve Mero stated that over the past week the Chief and himself have met a few times regarding this intersection. They have gone out and done some pruning and have added some reflective striping. Steve believes that they have a pretty good feel for what is going on there. Chief Sahagian stated that there was an accident at Cross and Linden today. A vehicle was struck by another vehicle traveling from Central Street, no injuries. If we look at the accidents that have occurred, we had 2 in 2021, 1 in 2018 and 1 in 2015. He added that there is clear visibility at the intersection both left and right. There are also "intersection in advance signs" that gives drivers fair warning of the upcoming intersection. One accident is one too many, however accidents do happen. The Chief and Highway Superintendent are always open to input. Jamie Underwood stated that if the Chief and Highway Superintendent believe that they have a good handle on this intersection already, then we should continue to let them continue to handle it. The Chief believes that they have really looked at that intersection and does not think they would gain a lot by changing this intersection; at the very most adding a warning sign coming into Cross Street. Matt Mecum stated that he always tries to defer to the department heads on this because they are the experts that we hired to do this and if they feel that adding a sign coming from the country club is all that is needed then that is the direction he would want to go. Seth wanted to confirm that the board believed adding reflective tape to the stop sign was adequate for now. Matt stated that he defers to the two experts that were hired: public safety and roadways. Steve Mero asked Seth what he believed should happen and Seth responded by saying that people in the area have approached him stating they are not satisfied, and he felt that he should present it to the board. Jamie asked him to tell the board what they were not satisfied with. Seth stated they wanted a "stop ahead" sign and the brush trimmed. Matt stated that 50% of that has been completed, the brush was trimmed, and we are just now getting into that time of year where it will get trimmed on a continual basis. Steve Mero stated they are out there constantly trying to make the roads as safe as possible and the signage at the intersection is meeting the requirements. Matt suggested revisiting this in a few months and see if the improvements of tape striping and brush trimming has made a difference. Jamie agreed. Seth was hesitant, and Steve Mero assured him that he had never received a request for this intersection in his eight years of being Highway Superintendent. The Board agreed to revisit the conversation and thanked the department heads for coming.

### **Police Chief Search Committee Discussion:**

Matt mentioned that Chief Sahagian's Police Chief contact is coming to an end this year, and we need to get our committee, process, and procedures in place to find a new Police Chief. Matt stated he feels there should be some overlap between the new Chief and Chief Sahagian. Jamie asked if the list April provided were confirmed and April replied that they were hopefuls. Seth asked if this list is what a typical Police Chiefs search committee is comprised of and if some of them are unable to participate, how many do we feel need to be on the committee. Matt and Jamie stated they would hope for 3 at least. Matt stated they needed to get at least one resident to be on the committee and to spread the word. Jamie asked April to reach out and, in the meantime, start to develop a job description, and at the next meeting they can review some bullet points on what we are looking for in our next Chief. April stated the ATM is scheduled for June 7<sup>th</sup> and she has been eyeballing June

21<sup>st</sup> as a possible 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting; CMRPC wants to discuss with the board the Route 140 updates and the Other Place Pub would like to extend their use of the outside premises and we will need to hold a hearing.

**Vote to declare that Parcel 13 and Parcel 14, as shown on the Plan, are no longer necessary for roadway purposes:**

“WHEREAS, the Town of Boylston acquired by purchase two parcels of land for purposes of constructing a new roadway, known as Cross Street Extension. The roadway project was completed and at a Special Town Meeting on January 13, 2020, Cross Street Extension was accepted as a Town way.

WHEREAS, as shown on the As Built Plan for the Cross Street Extension, recorded at the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Plan Book 956, Plan 19 (the “Plan”), there are two remnants remaining from the original two parcels of land which were not required for the roadway project (other than being subject to easements for drainage). The two remnant parcels are shown on the Plan as Parcel 13, containing approximately 39,088 sq. ft. of land, and Parcel 14, containing approximately 76,105 sq. ft. of land.

NOW THEREFORE, the roadway project having been completed, the Board of Selectmen, acting as Road Commissioners, hereby determines and declares that Parcel 13 and Parcel 14, as shown on the Plan, are no longer necessary for roadway purposes, provided, however, that all easements shall be retained over the parcels as shown on the Plan.”

Special Town Counsel Brian Faulk explained that we needed to do this because these are held for roadway purposes right now so if we change the designation, they would be available for general municipal use. Seth stated that several residents had voiced some concerns with the right turn onto the new Cross Street extension and if we sold this land then we would not have the opportunity to potentially change that in the future. Matt asked if the town would keep a setback, and April stated that there are wetlands there and they built the road the way they did because they did not want people turning fast onto Cross Street extension and the corner slows people down; the easier we make it to take that corner, the faster people will drive on that street. We would still have the right to do something in the future if need be.

*Jamie Underwood made a motion to deem the two parcels of land taken to construct Cross Street Ext completed. Since Cross Street Extension was accepted as a town way, we need to deem these two parcels no longer necessary for roadway purposes: Parcel 13, containing approximately 39,088 sq. ft. of land, and Parcel 14, containing approximately 76,105 sq. ft. of land. Seth seconded. Voted all in favor. Matt: Yes, Seth: Yes, and Jamie: Yes.*

*Future Agenda items:*

- Seth has been in consultation with Parks and Rec to get a concert series to occur – Mr. Wilcox – Do we need a formal vote
- Housing Production Plan should be wrapping up this week
- Annual Performance Evaluations

At 7:43 PM, on a motion moved by Seth Ridinger, the following roll call vote was recorded to go into Executive Session under:

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** (closed to the public): *Per MGL c.30A, Section .21(a), Purpose 3* to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining – *Fire Department Union*

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** (closed to the public): *Per M.G.L. c. 30A, Section 21(a), Purpose 3*, to discuss strategy with respect to litigation, Sewall Gravel Pit, LLC v. Boylston, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares.

Jamie Underwood seconded. *The Board agreed they would not reconvene to open session. Roll call vote recorded as follows: Matt Mecum: Yes; Seth Ridinger: Yes, James Underwood: Yes*

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Mack, Assistant to the Board of Selectmen

### **Meeting Materials**

Agenda	On File in The Board of Selectmen's Office
Meeting Minutes Draft 04/20/2021	On File in The Board of Selectmen's Office
Town Administrators Report	On File in The Board of Selectmen's Office
Police Chiefs Report	On File in The Board of Selectmen's Office
Highway Superintendent's Report	On File in The Board of Selectmen's Office
Town Planners Report	On File in The Board of Selectmen's Office
Building Inspectors Report	On File in The Board of Selectmen's Office