



Board of Selectmen

Date of Meeting: Monday, September 12, 2022
Time: 6:30 PM – 7:44 PM
Members Present: Chair Seth Ridinger; Selectmen Jamie Underwood (remote) and Matt Mecum, April Steward, Town Administrator; Town Counsel Stephen Madaus
Members Absent: Alison Mack, Administrative Assistant to the Board

Report of the Fire Chief

Fire Department Responses

The fire department continues to be busy with emergency calls for service both in town and in surrounding communities. The department has responded to fire and EMS calls in Berlin, Clinton, Holden, Northboro, Shrewsbury, West Boylston, and Worcester, in addition to handling calls within town. The department took part in three fire mobilization activations:

- Dudley – tender task force activation for a large commercial building fire
- Marlboro – forestry task force activation for a large brush fire (two-day deployment)
- Ashby – tender task force activation for a large stump/debris fire (three-day deployment)

The department continues to supplement EMS coverage to the city of Worcester on a daily basis and has provided prolonged EMS and fire coverage in Clinton and Holden while their departments were responding to several brush fires.

In addition to emergency responses, the department continues to be busy with daily inspections and other fire prevention activities. Both the Boylston Elementary School and Tahanto Regional Middle High School were inspected prior to the start of school. This inspection is done to ensure that all the life safety features of both schools are functioning properly before school began. Both inspections were successful. In addition, the department conducted a fire drill at both schools once students were back in the building. As always, student and staff cooperation were exceptional.

COVID-19 Related Activities

The town's COVID-19 numbers continue to trend down with 10 confirmed positive cases on file within the last two weeks. We have a stockpile of test kits, surgical masks, and KN95 masks in stock for distribution. The demand for masks and test kits have dropped over the summer but we anticipate that it will pick up as school has started. To my knowledge the school nurses will no longer have access to test kits through the state.

Greater Boroughs Partnership for Health Updates

The health partnership is working on setting up more regional vaccination clinics for COVID-19 booster shots. The first clinic will be held on September 23rd at the Northborough Senior Center from 9:00 am-12:00 pm for adults. A second clinic is scheduled for September 27th from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm for children 12 years and older. Based on demand, further clinics will be scheduled as needed.

Erin Couillard (Shanahan) is back from maternity leave and is currently working with the Board of Health and Council on Aging to set up a seasonal flu clinic. I met with Erin last week and she feels that the Town House is probably the best location for the flu clinic, and she will work with the Board and COA to set up a day and time for the clinic.

New Hires

We set up a committee to conduct interviews with the four internal candidates who applied for the two open full-time positions. The committee was composed of Deputy Chief Matt Ronn, Captain Don MacKenzie, Lt. Jason Bradford, FF/EMT Niccole Chiasson and West Boylston Deputy Chief Bob O'Connell. Each candidate was given a written exam to do prior to an oral interview, and answers to the written exam and interview were scored by the committee. We were very fortunate to have four outstanding candidates apply for the positions and were pleased to offer the positions to Daniel Buddenhagen and Ryan Schloerb. Both Mr. Buddenhagen and Mr. Schloerb have been on the on-call department for several years so the transition to full-time should be a smooth one.

The Boylston Professional Firefighters IAFF Local 5324 agreed to an amendment of Article 12, Section 1 of the collective bargaining agreement to modify the work week and work hours so that we can set up three groups of two full-time employees who will work a rotating 16-hour shift seven days a week. The rotation will allow the groups to work one day one followed by two days off; this will allow the community to have a minimum of two full-time staff members in the station seven days a week. There will continue to be one per diem shift available per day for on-call firefighters. This per diem shift will be four hours from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm Monday through Friday, and from 4:00 pm to 9:00 pm on Saturdays and Sundays. This will allow for three people to be at the station during peak call hours. The firefighters' union signed and approved the amendment to the CBA on July 28th. Pending acceptance by the Board of Selectmen, the two new full-time personnel can start immediately.

Other Items

Deputy Chief Matt Ronn and I met with representatives from WPI EMS to try to reinstate the student EMS program between WPI and Boylston Fire. The program fell by the wayside during the pandemic, and we are trying to get it back on track so that we can increase the number of on-call EMTs we have on staff to supplement the full-time

department. We still have overnight on-call groups to cover the ambulance; these groups cover one night a week from 11:00 pm to 7:00 am. It is getting more and more difficult to keep these positions filled, so we are hoping that we can gain some interest from the college EMS group. This program has been very successful in the past, and we hope we can spark some new interest with the current group of students.

The fire department will be once again sponsoring the annual Fire District 8 Safety Seminar to be held on Thursday, October 13th at The Manor in West Boylston. This year we are fortunate to combine our sponsorship with the New England FOOLs, a well-known and respected fire service organization. We will have two speakers this year who will present a very interesting seminar titled “Kids These Days – How to Win Friends and Influence Firefighters”. This seminar will attempt to “bridge the gap” between older fire officers and younger firefighters. It should be a very interesting evening.

April briefly discussed the Greater Boroughs Health Collaborative.

Vote to ratify the amendment to Fire Department Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) Article 13 and incorporate the amendment into the CBA

Jamie Underwood made a motion to ratify the amendment to Fire Department Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) Article 13 and incorporate the amendment into the CBA Matt Mecum seconded. Voted all in favor.

Chief of Police Report to the BOS

Chief briefly discussed budgetary updates.

- Officer McNutt has begun his field training program, starting on midnights.
- Worked with BBRSD on an evacuation for students with limited mobility.
- Continued work on reunification plans in the event of a crisis.
- Attended court for a license to carry suspension appeal.
- Conducted qualifications for the new firearms.
- Officer Marderosian has attended training for his academy.
- First day of school went well with new changes implemented.
- Sgt. Thomasian finished his master’s degree.

Seth requested the chief congratulate Sgt. Thomasian on the completion of his master's degree.

Highway Superintendent's Report to the BOS

Paving project on Central Street is completed, but some minor drainage issues still need to be resolved. Some line painting was completed on roadways. Has been working on a project to install an ADA playground at Center Courts. Added a section of fence as well. He asked the Board if they minded if one of the parking spots at the Center Court was made ADA compliant.

Mr. Mero hopes that we will continue to get the funding to finish paving central Street and then some other roads. Matt asked if we have to go back to bid for the paving contract and Mr. Mero responded yes, a three year contract.

Yard waste is going well.

Mr. Mero said there has been some burials lately in the cemetery. he then said he has someone who is interested in filling the vacancy of the cemetery commission. The Board plans to appoint someone to this position at their next meeting.

Town Administrator's Report to the BOS

1. ***Flagg Estate Work:*** Bob has been working over at the Flagg Estate painting clapboard that needed to be replaced and making necessary repairs as needed to maintain the building in its current condition.
2. ***Naturalization Ceremony:*** On August 24th I attended a naturalization ceremony at Tower Hill. This is an annual event to be held for individuals who have completed the process to obtain U.S. citizenship and are granted lawful permanent residency here in America. There were 26 countries represented at the ceremony. It was a wonderful event, and I would highly recommend attending one in the future if you have the opportunity.
3. ***Animal Control Officer:*** Steve Goals who works as our Animal Control Officer is in the process of selling his home and moving down to the Cape. He suggested that we look to see if the town of Shrewsbury may be interested in sharing their Animal Control officer with Boylston.

Jamie asked if Shrewsbury's officer is part of their BOH office. If so, he would prefer looking to a different town to partner with. April said she will look into it. A brief discussion ensued.

4. ***Town Wide Trash Pickup:*** I had the opportunity to speak to Kathleen Johnson regarding town-wide trash pickup. We both agreed that the options available are so diversified, it may be best to appoint a committee to research the issue. Ms. Johnson is available and has offered her assistance to be on said committee if the board is interested in going in that direction.

Matt said he thinks it is a good idea to form a group to explore the subject, that it does not cost the town anything to look into it. Seth said that people have been talking about this for a while and it certainly merits some serious consideration. April will put it on the next agenda.

5. ***Schedule:*** I will be attending the MMHR fall conference this Wednesday in Hull,

Mass and will be out of the office this Thursday.

6. **School:** I have a few conflicts with my evening class schedule. I will need to excuse myself from this meeting by 7:40 this evening and again on the 26th for a 7:45 PM class.
7. **Administrative Assistant:** Ali is officially out on maternity leave beginning today. She is planning on being back the week of December 19th.
8. **Upcoming Events:** This Saturday, September 17th, the Matthew J. Phillips Memorial Cornhole Tournament is being held at the field located in front of the DPW building located at the intersection of Rte. 70 and Rte. 140, with a rain date of Sunday, September 18th. The library is hosting a Fall Fest on the Common on Saturday, October 15th. If there is inclement weather, the event will be moved to the Town House.

Matt asked April for a timeline for the RFP for feasibility. April responded that the RFP has not been put out. She hopes to get it out this week. She said they are working on the front page of the ad to make sure it is correct. Seth asked that the final document be shared with the Board before it goes out.

Vote to approve IMA with the Boylston Water District

Seth stated that he does not believe the water District has approved this yet and April confirmed that they have not. Seth pointed out on the document that the section referring to the "Town manager" should be changed to "Town Administrator." April also stated that the light district needs to go into the first "whereas," because they will also be using this equipment.

Matt Mecum made a motion to approve IMA with the Boylston Water District with the aforementioned edits. Jamie Underwood seconded. Voted all in favor.

Approval of meeting minutes:08.22.2022

Jamie Underwood made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from August 22. Matt second. Voted all in favor.

Update on Conservation Status on Joslin's Lot

Stephen updated the Board. Per the vote at town meeting a conservation restriction is to be placed on the parcel of land before it can be sold. Conservation restrictions are statutory, and they require approval of the executive office of environmental affairs. Because they are statutory, they are in perpetuity. If they are not statutory the restrictions are only good for thirty years. The problem we are encountering, according to Stephen, is that the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs is it is short staffed, and it could take over a year to review a CR. Stephen suggested that we put on a private a private CR on record for

thirty years with the expectation that before the term expires it will become statutory. Seth asked that for the time being the CR is pending and will eventually be approved by the State? Stephen replied, yes. Stephen confirmed that this approach would be virtually the same verbatim as what would be approved by the state. Seth stated that we just need to make sure that an action falls within the specific language of the motion made at Town Meeting. Stephen said that it would fit within guidelines of the motion made at Town Meeting. Matt said that if it does not work it's not the end of the world if we have to wait a year to get it done. Seth said that as long as it is within the letter of the warrant and the spirit of Town Meeting, he has no problem in proceeding with Stephen's recommendation. Seth asked Stephen if he sees any reason why the state would not approve this once they get to it. Stephen replied no. Stephen said he would continue moving forward with the CR.

Selectmen's Miscellaneous or Future Agenda Items:

Seth said we need to discuss the facilities Tech. position at our next meeting.

Executive Session

Jamie Underwood made a motion to move into EXECUTIVE SESSION (Per M.G.L. c. 30A, Section 21(a), Purpose 3, to discuss strategy with respect to litigation, Sewall Gravel Pit, LLC v. Boylston, and Boylston CP, LLC v. Town of Boylston Planning Board if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. Matt seconded. Voted: Jamie - Yes, Matt - Yes, Seth -Yes. voted all in favor.

Moved into executive session at 7:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Seth Ridinger, Chair, Boylston Board of Selectmen

Meeting Materials

Agenda	On file in Board of Selectmen's Office
ARPA Invoices	On file in Board of Selectmen's Office
ARPA Running Totals	On file in Board of Selectmen's Office
Boylston Town Planner Report	On file in Board of Selectmen's Office
Building Inspector's Report	On file in Board of Selectmen's Office
Conservation Restriction Discussion	On file in Board of Selectmen's Office
RE & PP Tax Discussion	On file in Board of Selectmen's Office
TA Report	On file in Board of Selectmen's Office