

Board of Selectmen

Date of Meeting: Monday, August 21st, 2023

Time: 6:30 PM – 8:14 PM

Members Present: Chair Jamie Underwood, Selectmen Seth Ridinger and Matt Mecum; April Steward, Town Administrator; and Alison Mack, Administrative Assistant to the Board

The meeting commenced at 6:30 PM.

Financial Warrants were signed in agreement.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Chair Jamie Underwood started the meeting with a moment of silence for residents who had recently passed: Mary Seed, Billy Mann, and Sergeant Thomas’ father.

**Town Administrators Report to the BOS:**

1. *MassDOT and Rte. 70:* With all the roadwork being performed in the Morningdale section of town, I think it would be beneficial to invite a representative from the MassDot District III office into a meeting to inquire what upcoming plans the Commonwealth’s has for roadway improvements along Rte. 70.
2. *FEMA Proposed Flood Hazard Determinations for Worcester, County:* Please find in your Dropbox the documents provided to us from the Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency. They have issued a preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), and where applicable, Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report, reflecting proposed flood hazard determinations within Worcester County, Massachusetts. This information was provided to us at the beginning of the 90-day statutory appeals period. The appeal period will be commencing on Monday, August28, 2023. We will continue to work with FEMA throughout this process.
3. *Radio Communication Project:* Selectmen Mecum and I have been working with Motorola and the other vendors on this project to ensure that police and fire radios will be up and running before the school year commences. We are going ahead with running the system on one tower located at the police station and the two antennas, one located at TRMHS and the other at fire station. This allows police, fire, municipal light, and highway to be up and running with the new handhelds. We still do not have acceptable coverage on the east side of town, and we are continuing to work on that issue. We are seeing positive results with the new equipment and coverage in the rest of the town.
4. *Community Compact IT Grant:* On August 10th, Paul Dell’Aquila and Matt Mecum were able to attend the Community Compact Municipal Fiber Grant Awards Celebration and accept the award on the town’s behalf. We were fortunate to receive a grant of $335,000. This grant is to run fiber in-between BMS, TRMHS, BES, and the regional school district. This grant will allow us to close critical gaps in local networks and will enable us to connect municipally owned facilities.
5. *Part-Time Facilities Assistant:* I am looking to hire a PT Facilities Assistant to work alongside Bob Bourassa throughout the remainder of this fiscal. The additional staff will assist Bob in wrapping up larger sized projects he has been working on, such as the records retention room project in the basement, preparing the room downstairs for the new location of the Parks &Recreation department, and painting at the Flagg Estate. This position would be for one ten-hour day per week. If the board gives me permission, I would like to advertise the opening this coming weekend.

**Reports:** Police Chief, Fire Chief, Highway Superintendent, Building Inspector and Town Planner – *On File in the Board of Selectmens Office*

**Approval of meeting minutes: 02/27/23, 07/27/2023:**

*Seth Ridinger made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of 02/27/23 and 07/27/23, Matt Mecum seconded. Voted all in favor.*

**Conflict of Interest Discussion with Bill Filsinger: ZBA Member requested to be a representative on the Affordable Housing Committee:**

Bill Filsinger and Janet Lombardi attended the meeting. Janet offered to represent the ZBA on the Affordable Housing Committee. Bill questioned the charter of the AHC and if a member from the ZBA would be a conflict since the ZBA is the one who issues the permits for affordable housing. Town Administrator April Steward spoke with Town Counsel Stephen Madaus, and he determined there was no conflict of interest since it is not a paid position and there is no compensation being received.

The Board decided they would appoint Janet Lombardi and Peter Caruso to the Affordable Housing Committee at the next meeting on Monday, September 11th, since their names were not on this Agenda for appointment.

**Feasibility Study Update:**

We had a $75K grant and $75K airmark. We used a contractor/consultant to do some studies and that was the report the Board of Selectmen received. It was clear that Boylston does not have the money to do what was presented, brand new senior center, fire station and police station. The dollar figures came back much higher than expected. The Feasibility Study Committee determined they still had $75K to look at what they can do for a senior center. COA Chair, Dennis Goguen added that Mark Fuller suggested using the Gough House as a senior center and the Fuller Foundation offered to help with some costs. ADA Compliancy, Elevator, and parking were addressed as items that would need to be investigated. Matt added that this does not stop them from looking into renovating the police and fire, and that will still be pursued. This will put a lot more focus on the senior center at the moment over the police and fire. Nel Lazour added that the Gough House is listed under preservation restrictions so it will need to go by the standards that have been set for it, which tend to make it a more expensive project. Nel asked what this feasibility study entails. Howard responded that it helps us look at what we need to accomplish a senior center; inside and exterior, landscape, improvements, ADA requirements. The first step is saying what do we need; bathrooms, kitchen, office space…etc. This allows us to get drawings and a layout put together and then we can go out to bids to do specific pieces of the project. We do have some of this information already based on the general information previously gathered; this will just be a brand-new perspective since the building already exists. Matt added that they would like to expand the Feasibility Study Committee by two people: resident Mark Fuller and Joan Deal as the representative from HRP.

**Vote to add two more positions to the Feasibility Study Committee:**

*Matt Mecum made a motion to add two more positions to the Feasibility Study Committee, Seth Ridinger seconded. Voted all in favor.*

**Vote to appoint Mark Fuller to the Feasibility Study Committee:**

*Matt Mecum made a motion to appoint Mark Fuller to the Feasibility Study Committee, Seth Ridinger seconded. Voted all in favor.*

**Discussion on Financial Policies Committee:**

Seth Ridinger stated they met on August 9th. It was a pretty good meeting; Seth Ridinger, Cheri Cox, Howard Drobner, and Van Baker. The committee would like to present the documents to the Board one chapter at a time instead of presenting everything at once. The Committee is looking to have a couple sections done by the end of the year to present to the board. The Board agreed this was fine.

Howard Drobner added that they will not be recreating the wheel, they will be looking at other surrounding towns and modifying their information to create what best fits for Boylston.

**Vote to approve and sign the one-day liquor license requests for the First Congregational Church of Boylston meetings at the Boylston Town House and waive fees (9/11, 09/18, 09/25, 10/02, 10/16, 10/23 and 10/30):**

The Church is offering a free community event to educate people on the Christian faith. There will be a meal, video and discussion. They need an insurance binder.

*Seth Ridinger made a motion to grant a one-day liquor license requests for the First Congregational Church of Boylston meetings at the Boylston Town House and waive usage fees, pending the insurance provider (9/11, 09/18, 09/25, 10/02, 10/16, 10/23 and 10/30), Matt Mecum seconded. Voted all in favor.*

**ARPA Funds Allocation Discussion and Possible Vote to Assign Funding:**

Chair Matt Mecum mentioned he has heard talk of them clawing back this money and its making him nervous, given we have some known needs. One of the larger projects is the Radio project. We have about $200,000 left from the original budget and have about $323,000 in additional costs; the largest of those costs being the dispatch console. The dispatch console needs to be replaced; its 20-30 years old and they are not sure if it will turn back on once they turn it off. Its $140,000 for the console install and tech support for the first year and about $12,000 per year after that for continued support.

* The fencing quote came in at $140,000.
* Piping and power to the site quote came in at $40,000

We have $625,000 in ARPA funds available, and Matt is asking if we want to allocate up to $400,000 towards the radio project.

* HRP came to the board regarding the roof on the Gough House. It was an emergency, and the Fuller Foundation took care of that. Matt suggested matching those funds ($50,000)
* CodeRed – emergency alert system quote - $4,536 (funded through ARPA Funds last year)
* Old Town Hall roof repairs - $15,000 for historic shingles

April believed the money needed to be allocated by the end of this year and the money has to be spent by 2024.

*Matt Mecum made a motion that we allocate $400,000 from our remaining ARPA funds for the Communication (Radio) project, $50,000 Gough House external repairs, $4,536 for the CodeRed system, and $15,000 for roof repair/replacement at the Historical Society building, Seth Ridinger seconded. Voted all in favor.*

**Vote to appoint members to the Affordable Housing Committee:**

* + ZBA Representative – TBD
  + Planning Board Representative – TBD

The Board decided they would appoint Janet Lombardi and Peter Caruso to the Affordable Housing Committee at the next meeting on Monday, September 11th, since their names were not on this Agenda for appointment.

**Vote to approve the Town Administrator to hire a PT Facilities Assistant; 10 hours per week:**

*Seth Ridinger made a motion to authorize the town administrator to offer a position not to exceed 10 hours per week; facilities technician, Matt Mecum seconded. Voted all in favor.*

**Vote to approve the gift of $2,500.00 from the Lillian A. Luksis Charitable Giving Fund to the Boylston Council on Aging:**

*Matt Mecum made a motion to approve the gift of $2,500.00 from the Lillian A. Luksis Charitable Giving Fund to the Boylston Council on Aging, Seth Ridinger seconded. Voted all in favor.*

**Vote to approve the Worcester Horticultural Society Inc Application for Multiple Amendments: Change of Officers/Directors/LLC Managers:**

*Seth Ridinger made a motion to approve the Worcester Horticultural Society Inc Application for Multiple Amendments: Change of Officers/Directors/LLC Managers, Matt Mecum seconded. Voted all in favor.*

**Vote to approve and sign the one-day liquor license request for CREST on September 15th, 2023:** Matt Mecum recused himself from this discussion.

*Seth Ridinger made a motion to approve and sign the one-day liquor license request for CREST on September 15th, 2023, Jamie Underwood seconded. Voted all in favor.*

***At 8:14 PM, Matt Mecum made a motion to go into Executive Session: Per MGL c.30A, §21, (2):***  *To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel or contract negotiations with non-union personnel, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares – Highway Superintendent. Not to return to open session. Seth Ridinger seconded. Voted all in favor.*

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Mack, Assistant to the Board of Selectmen

**Meeting Materials**

Agenda On File in The Board of Selectmen’s Office

Crest Technologies COI On File in The Board of Selectmen’s Office

Highway Superintendent Report On File in The Board of Selectmen’s Office

Town Planner Report On File in The Board of Selectmen’s Office

Police Chiefs Report On File in The Board of Selectmen’s Office

Fire Chiefs Report On File in The Board of Selectmen’s Office

Building Inspectors Report On File in The Board of Selectmen’s Office

Town Administrators Report On File in The Board of Selectmen’s Office

WCHS Change of Managers Application On File in The Board of Selectmen’s Office

First Congregational Church Event Application On File in The Board of Selectmen’s Office

Lillian A Luksis Grant Check On File in The Board of Selectmen’s Office

02/27/2023 Meeting Minutes On File in The Board of Selectmen’s Office

07/27/23 Meeting Minutes On File in The Board of Selectmen’s Office