



Board of Selectmen

Date of Meeting: Monday, October 22nd, 2018
Location: Town Hall, 221 Main Street
Time: 6:30 PM – 8:10 PM
Members Present: Chairman James Wood; Michael May; James Underwood; April Steward, Town Administrator; Alison Mack, Administrative Assistant to the Board; D.M. Moschos, Special Town Counsel

The meeting commenced at 6:30 PM.

Financial Warrants were signed in agreement.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes: The minutes of 10/02/18 were presented for approval.

Jamie Underwood motioned to accept the meeting minutes as written, Mike May seconded; Voted all in favor.

Human Resource Capacity for the Town of Boylston – D. M. Moschos:

- Boylston has a population of a little less than \$5,000. Boylston is considered a small employer; total work for being around 60 people including part-time. The issue is what type of Human Resource capacity should be considered by the Town in the context of the size of the town and number of employees that work for the town. D.M. Moschos stated that he does not think Boylston can justify the expense of a Human Resource Director to handle the personnel function; the cost of that is about \$80K-\$100K a year.
- He stated that many towns the size of Boylston ask the Town Administrator to also be the personnel officer for that town and combine that function with their function. You do need someone who handles the paperwork and records and maintain them. D.M. Moschos stated that he usually recommends having an Administrative Assistant provide the staff support to the Town Administrator. He does not believe that their needs to be a full-time role; they could be a part time or combine that function with Administrative work at the Town Hall. Many towns look to Labor Counsel or Town Counsel for support to changes in the law; In D.M. Moschos opinion, that type of combination tends to work out well. The Town Administrator should be encouraged to take courses on personnel administration and brought up to date on personnel matters. He recommends this combination for the Town of Boylston.
- D.M. Moschos has over 30 years of experience dealing with Town Personnel. Jamie Underwood brought the residents up to date by stating that Boylston had a study done that suggested bringing in an independent HR Administrator due to a couple things that the town had gone through in the past couple of years. At that time, we did have a Town Administrator with HR and managerial experience, however we still went with an HR Administrator. Jamie Underwood stated that it looks like we would be taking two steps back because our current Town Administrator April Steward does not have HR experience. D.M. Moschos stated that HR is a key function of management and does not believe you can have an independent office; they need to work with the Board of Selectman and the Town Administrator to manage the affairs of the town. Jamie Underwood stated that they had it set up, so the Town Administrator was not the head of personnel in case anyone had any issues with them. Jim Woods stated that's not true. Jamie Underwood stated that in the meeting that the Board voted for an HR Administrator. April Steward stepped in to state that the name of the position was a mistake and at the time of appointment, but at the time of the ad it was listed as an HR Assistant. More discussion ensued regarding the role of the position and the title.

- D.M. Moschos stated that these are the decisions the Board must make. He strongly recommended not having an independent HR person, because this is a function of management. Jamie Underwood stated that if there was an issue with a certain board, they either go to their own board or go to an HR office. D.M. Moschos stated that the selected boards do have to abide by the Town policies.
- Mike May had multiple questions and statements regarding the HR role. Does the question become, who does the individual report to (independent party or TA) and what are the plus and minuses in the discussion? Also, if the position is part time, we would lean towards shared services and finding a HR Administrator who is a professional and full time with an agreement of the Town; are they going to report to the TA? What concerns him is that if Boylston is negotiating with a certain Union, who leads that negotiation and what the role of the HR person? He believes that the Town Administrator and the Board of Selectman are the ones who do. Mike May stated that he believes HR cannot act independently and that the Board of Selectman and Town Administrator must be involved in the resolution.
- Resident Chris Katz stated that in his opinion you can't have someone gage the risk of what's legal for the Town; no offense but there are some things that a C- candidate for a Town Administrator will not know and you need someone whose independent. Jim Woods stopped Chris and told him to keep his negative comments to himself. Chris Katz stated that recordings don't forget and that it's not a negative comment, but a direct quote made by someone else previously. Mike May stopped the discussion and recommended the Chair to take a three-minute recess to speak with Town Counsel regarding this conversation; he is not comfortable going forward with this discussion regarding where the conversation is leading.
- Resident Jennifer Anderson, a Senior Human Resource Professional stated that the industry is no longer known as Personnel Management, she has 22 years of experience and has a few observations she asked the Board to think about:
 - To have a very effective HR function, the person needs to be seen as independent and be able to both coordinate with the Town as well as the employees with the town; her concern would be that people may not feel as though they had the ability to meet in a confidential way that is truly independent to hear the concerns of the employee.
 - By not having an independent relationship it puts the town at risk if the individual who is trying to manage through that issue and does not understand the legal requirements and documentation requirements that would be a risk for the town.
 - There are also outsourcing options that in the long term have more expertise and would be putting the town in a better situation overall; unsure of costs. Within small towns and having a lot of emotion on different topics, having an independent HR person who is able to objectively see both sides of the situation and present that both to Counsel and Selectman as management.
- D.M. Moschos stated that when she raised the issue that employees may have a problem coming to the HR Department due to feeling uncomfortable; this is an issue that HR Departments are facing today. The second, is that does the Town Administrator have the capacity to perform professional substitute policy matters; that's a decision the Board of Selectman needs to make. If they do not feel as though they are adequate for the position then, it's a combination of someone working part time and using labor counsel to assist. You have a greater involvement in the Public Sector than the private sector. The issue here is to assess the capacity of the Town Government to determine what skills the town people have, to provide HR activity. The second issue is the question of the inability of employees to speak independently with HR; Towns handle that differently. Thirdly, is the issue of benefits; not the same scope as in the private sector. Overall, the Board needs to come to some type of conclusion regarding the scope of services needed, the capacity of the Town Administrator, and the costs to provide services to carry out the function of the HR role.
- Discussion continued regarding HR role between residents, Mike May and Jamie Underwood while Town Counsel D.M. Moschos, TA April Steward and Chair Jim Woods took a few minutes to meet and discuss the situation privately.
- D.M. Moschos suggested considering the residents comments, evaluate the Town Administrator and Administrative Assistants experience, look at the costs of outsourcing, and based on these evaluations

the Selectman should come back and make some determinations on how they would like to organize the HR function and see what would be best for the town. The Board of Selectman agreed that they are good on this topic right now and will come back to it later once they consider all the options.

Tax Classification Hearing: Joint Hearing with Board of Assessors

- Paul from The Board of Assessors stated that the law will allow them to go up to 150% on Commercial Industrial Personal Property, which is about an 8% shift on the residential side.
- Dropped 0.69 cents, which saved the town \$470,000 in residential
- For a \$200,000 house it dropped \$138 dollars; 4.1%
- Paul mentioned that Commercial had new growth for FY19; \$37,988,000
 - Do not have FedEx personal property bill yet
- The board wants to continue to encourage the growth on 140 and the board discusses the tax rate.
- No class code of property taxes went up

Jamie Underwood made the motion to accept the single tax rate of 16.04 for FY2019. Mike May seconded, Voted all in favor.

Forged Letter to Resident:

- Paul made the town aware that a fake letter was sent out to try to get a property to remove the trash from their front yard. Jamie Underwood stated that the town should be aware that if they receive anything like this to throw it out.

Tower Hill Botanic Garden Guardhouse - Grace Chapman Elton

- Grace mentioned that they have their stable gatehouse down near the road but bought a little mini house as a gatehouse. Its currently halfway up the road but will be moving it all the way up to the top of the hill for Winter Imagine (within the next month). They have also moved to timed ticketing; 60-75 tickets per 15-minute time block allowing them to control the flow more.
- The big orange circle on the diagram is a parking lot that they are paving at the moment, which will give them 57 more parking spots. Indoor space and grounds can hold a lot more people, but the parking has always been their limitation.
- Summer season was a success; Boylston residents can come to THBG for free at any time besides a ticketed event.

Permit Application, Knights of Columbus One Day Liquor License for Trivia Night at Church Hall October 27th

Mike May made a motion to accept the One Day Liquor License and waive the fee for Trivia Night at Church Hill on October 27th, Jamie Underwood seconded, voted all in favor.

Permit Application; Mikes Moonwalk Rentals: Christmas Tree Sales 11/23/18 – 12/23/18

Jamie Underwood made a motion to accept the Permit Application for Mikes Moonwalk Christmas Tree Sales from 11/23/18 – 12/23/18, Mike May seconded, Voted all in favor.

Cultural Counsel Appointments – Kathy Evans and Lena Scaplen

Mike May made a motion to appoint Lena Scaplen and Kathy Evans to the Cultural Council, Jamie Underwood seconded, voted all in favor.

Sign Sample Warrant for the State Election

Completed.

Town Administrators Report to the Board:

1. Wednesday, October 4th I attended the DLS “What’s New in Municipal Law” Seminar in Holyoke, MA. This is a seminar that DLS puts on annually to review new legislation and recent court decisions pertaining to local government.
2. Thursday, October 11th Dr. Baker and I were invited to Melrose to accept on behalf of the town a Small Town Grant Award. Boylston was one of twelve recipients of a Housing Choice Initiative Small Town Capital Grant, we were awarded \$83,500.00. This award will fund a traffic engineering study for the Route 140/Sewall Street intersection to consider reconfiguring the current layout for better traffic flow in that area.
3. The IFB for Cross Street was advertised in the Telegram & Gazette on Sunday, October 14th. Ads were also placed in the Central Register and in CommBuys as required by MGL 30 §39M. The bid opening is scheduled for Thursday, November 1st.

The project went before ConCom on Monday the 15th and received a negative determination of applicability with conditions (which is what we were looking for). There was also a Public Hearing on the Stormwater Control Permit but that was continued until peer review is received from Graves Engineering. The Planning Board Public Hearing on the Definitive Subdivision Plan will be held on November 7th.

4. We are anxiously awaiting the results of the MassWorks STRAP Grant. I am told that the award recipients would be announced sometime before the end of October.
5. Electrical Inspector John McQuade came in to update me on the progress of the electrical panel upgrades within the units in Edgebrook Drive. So far six units have received the needed upgrades to replace the Federal Pacific Circuit Breaker Panels and to relocate them. Inspector McQuade wanted to let the board know that the project is progressing nicely.
6. It is getting to be that time of year again when the Town issues their annual Winter Parking Ban. If the board so chooses to issue the ban again this year it will run from December 1st, 2018 until April 1st, 2019 from 1:00 A.M. to 6:00 A.M.

Jamie Underwood made the motion to have the winter parking ban run from December 1st, 2018 until April 1st, 2019 from 1:00A.M. to 6:00A.M. Mike May seconded, voted all in favor.

7. Bells of Peace – A World War I Remembrance. Bells of Peace is a collaborative program, whereby American citizens and organizations, across the entire country, are invited to toll bells in their communities twenty-one times on Sunday, November 11, 2018 at 11:00 a.m. local time. Bells will be tolled in communities across the nation, in places of worship, schools, town halls, public carillons, and cemeteries. This nationwide program is designed to honor those American men and women who served one hundred years ago, during World War One. The war ended by an armistice agreement between the warring countries at 11 a.m. on November 11th, 1918. If you are interested in participating in this event, there is more information in your packet.
8. You have been invited to attend a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony & Community Celebration at the Blackstone Heritage Corridor Visitor Center located in Worcester. The event will be held on Saturday, October 27, 2018 beginning at 9:00 AM. There is additional information in your packet.

Mike May:

- Mike May stated that there is an annual MMA Trade Show held in Boston on Jan 18th-19th; worthwhile.
- There is also a Massachusetts Recruitment Guide Handbook that we should keep on file
- Looking to get Lauren Goldberg out to Boylston to cover and train the dos and don'ts of working in municipal work.

At 8:10 PM Mike May motioned to adjourn; Jamie Underwood seconded; voted all in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Alison Mack, Assistant to the Board of Selectmen

Meeting Materials

Agenda	On file in Board of Selectmen's Office
Meeting Sign-In Sheet	On file in Board of Selectman's Office
TA Report	On file in Board of Selectman's Office
Residential/Commercial CIP Tax Info	On file in Board of Selectman's Office
MA Recruitment Guidelines Book	On file in Board of Selectman's Office
THBG Night Lights Traffic Pattern Diagram	On file in Board of Selectman's Office
Mirick O'Connell HR Function Email	On file in Board of Selectman's Office