



SELECT BOARD MEETING

**Minutes of Monday, September 12, 2022
7:00 PM**

Board Members participating were Select Board Chair Marshall Hook, Select Board Vice-Chair and Clerk Lynne Bermudez and Select Board Members Rafael McDonald and Boyd Jackson. Select Board Member Cameron Brown was absent. Of the Select Board's staff Town Administrator Kevin Harutunian and Debra Morong were present. Chief Neal Hovey, Chief Jennifer Collins-Brown, Highway Superintendent Gary Wildes and Health Agent Wendy Hansbury were also present.

GOVERNOR'S ORDER

Select Board Chair Marshall Hook announced that, due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency announced by Governor Baker, this meeting would be conducted as a Virtual Meeting via ZOOM and as such, participation was remote. He then read the following:

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted via remote means. Members of the public who wish to watch or listen to the meeting may do so in the following manner: Video conference is on the agenda. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the Topsfield website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Select Board Chair Hook called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice-Chair and Clerk Bermudez made the following announcements:

Announcement of Recordings

“The meeting is being recorded by the Recording Clerk via ZOOM in the event that the connection is lost at any time during the meeting, a device is being used by the recording clerk for the purpose of taking minutes; is there anyone else present who wishes to record the meeting?” There was no response.

“While we are conducting town business using remote participation via ZOOM, we ask that those of you not recognized by the chair or otherwise engaged in the discussion of the moment to please mute your microphone to avoid interruptions outside the conversation.”

SB Videos on Demand (VOD)

“Select Board meetings can be viewed by going into the Watch Cable Video on Demand icon on the homepage of the Town's website.”

Select Board Meetings:

“On Wednesday, September 21st, the Board will hold a work session at 6 PM. The next Select Board Meeting will be on Monday, September 26th at 7 PM. Please check the meeting postings on the Town Website for information to either join via zoom or for the location of that particular meeting/work session.”

CITIZEN QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

There were no questions or comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No action.

NEW BUSINESS

PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE

Members of the Playground Committee [Glen Gollrad, Talisa Rafferty and Jen LeRoyer] presented information on the overall role of the Playground Committee and the background and status of the proposal to install a Pump Track at Bare Hill Park.

The considerations in selecting a site included safety and security, environmental concerns, privacy and noise, accessibility and parking, use of property and liability. After looking at various sites in Topsfield, the committee recommends the Bare Hill Park site. The maintenance of the pump track will be provided by volunteers and 100% of the cost will be covered by fundraisers and donations.

Discussion was held on vehicle access to the park, the existing chain across the entrance, if the turning radius is wide enough and if line of sight exiting the site is safe. Highway Supt. Gary Wildes commented that gravel would be added in the parking area and that the turning radius is sufficient. Chief Hovey will visit the site to review the line of sight. Supt. Wildes said the chain was installed to prevent vehicles from going on the Cemetery service road. The existing walking path would not be disturbed and parking would be laid out so it does not block access to the walking path.

The design of the park is at a beginner level and will follow best practices for pump parks. A discussion was held on the potential noise and disturbance to memorial services at the cemetery. Supt. Wildes commented that the park is located in an area that is not visible from the Cemetery and has a wooded buffer between the two areas.

TA Harutunian commented that no additional liability insurance coverage is needed, per MIAA.

More information will be presented to the Select Board as the project progresses.

MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

TA Harutunian presented for appointment volunteer applicants for the Master Plan Steering Committee. All applicants were discussed at the August 29, 2022 meeting, except Rosalee DiScipio. Because Ms. DiScipio is known to the Select Board through previous volunteer positions in the Town, the Select Board included her in the member appointments vote.

Vice-Chair and Clerk Bermudez made a motion to appoint the following to the Master Plan Steering Committee to serve until the committee is disbanded: Andrew Mulholland (ConsCom), Bradley Bissell (Sustainability), Elizabeth Mulholland (Historical Commission), Gary Bergmann (Resident-at-Large), Gregor Smith (ZBA), Chief Jen Collins-Brown (Public Safety), Josh Rownd (Planning Board Member), TA Kevin Harutunian, R. Chris Bandereck (Business Owner), Steve Hall (Planning Board Member), Tom Rosa (Resident-at-Large), Rosalee DiScipio and Zillie Bhujju (ECDC).

Ms. Morong informed the Select Board that R. Chris Bandereck withdrew his application. Vice-Chair and Clerk Bermudez amended the motion on the table to

remove Mr. Bandereck. Select Board Member McDonald seconded the amended motion and the motion carried by roll call vote as follows:

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| Chair Hook | Yes |
| Vice-Chair and Clerk Bermudez | Yes |
| Select Board Member Jackson | Yes |
| Select Board Member McDonald | Yes |

TA Harutunian noted that there are two seats for Select Board members but only one will be filled at this time.

Vice-Chair and Clerk Bermudez made a motion to appoint Chair Hook to the Master Plan Steering Committee until disbanded. Select Board Member McDonald seconded the motion and the motion carried by roll call vote as follows:

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|-------------------------------|-----|
| Chair Hook | Yes |
| Vice-Chair and Clerk Bermudez | Yes |
| Select Board Member Jackson | Yes |
| Select Board Member McDonald | Yes |

POLICE DEPARTMENT: Discussion of New Traffic Officers

Chief Hovey provided an update on a new program to use non-sworn police officers for details at road construction sites. There is currently a shortage of police officers to cover details in Topsfield and many other communities, and this new program will help to fill Topsfield positions to maximize public safety for residents. Chief Hovey shared information on the qualifications of the individuals that will work with the Topsfield Police Department and explained the orientation process, training, and background checks for all traffic control officers to ensure Police Department and police reform standards are met.

POLICE DEPARTMENT: New Generator

TA Harutunian presented for approval the contract with Seacoast Generator for the new generator for the Police Department. This equipment has been on the capital plan for a number of years and will be paid for with ARPA funds.

Select Board Member McDonald made a motion to approve a contract between the Town of Topsfield and Seacoast Generator of Seabrook, NH for supplying and installing a Kohler 38K W RCL volt 3 phase Standby Generator System for an amount of \$32,000; and for the Select Chair to sign. Vice-Chair and Clerk Bermudez seconded the motion and the motion carried by roll call vote as follows:

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| Chair Hook | Yes |
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| Vice-Chair and Clerk Bermudez | Yes |
| Select Board Member Jackson | Yes |
| Select Board Member McDonald | Yes |

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Highway Supt. Gary Wildes presented for approval the contract with Stertil-Koni for the purchase and installation of a heavy vehicle lift. This equipment will be paid for with ARPA funds. Supt. Wildes noted that the request is pending the final approval and signature of the Town Accountant.

Select Board Member McDonald made a motion to approve a contract between the Town of Topsfield and Stertil-Koni of Stevensville, MD for Heavy Duty Vehicle Lifts for an amount of \$54,383.50; and for the Select Chair to sign, contingent on the approval of the town accountant. Vice-Chair and Clerk Bermudez seconded the motion and the motion carried by roll call vote of 3 in favor, as follows:

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| Chair Hook | Yes |
| Vice-Chair and Clerk Bermudez | Yes |
| Select Board Member McDonald | Yes |
| Select Board Member Jackson | No vote due to technical difficulties |

PYE BROOK PARK: WELL & PUMP SYSTEM

TA Harutunian and Health Agent Wendy Hansbury reviewed the repairs and updates needed on the irrigation well and pump system for the landfill cap at Pye Brook Park. As part of the DEP landfill post-closure requirements, grass must be maintained on the top layer of the landfill cap. The current irrigation and well system are not providing enough water to maintain the grass. A two-phase plan has been developed to make repairs and quotes have been received for phase one. The cost of phase two is to be determined. The ARPA Working Group has identified this project as a priority. Moving forward with phase one in the fall and completing phase two in the spring will ensure that the grass is maintained and will bring the landfill cap into DEP compliance.

DEPT. OF ENERGY RESOURCES

Chief Collins-Brown presented for acceptance a Comm. of Mass. Green Communities Competitive Grant in the amount of \$132,000. The grant will be used to improve energy efficiency at the Steward and Proctor Schools.

Select Board Member McDonald made a motion to approve a contract between the Town of Topsfield and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources for a Green Communities Competitive Grant in the amount of \$132,000 with a termination date of September 30, 2024; and for the Select Chair to sign. Vice-Chair and Clerk Bermudez seconded the motion and the motion carried by roll call vote as follows:

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| Chair Hook | Yes |
| Vice-Chair and Clerk Bermudez | Yes |
| Select Board Member Jackson | Yes |
| Select Board Member McDonald | Yes |

120 HILL STREET

TA Harutunian informed the Select Board that the 120 Hill Street property is being sold. A portion of the property is currently under Chapter 61B as Recreational Land, and for the past four years has received a 25% reduction in property taxes. It was determined this year that the requirements for designation as Recreational Land were not being met. A lien has been placed on the property for the past due taxes. As lienholder, the Town has the first right of refusal to purchase the land. A letter will be drafted for Select Board review and a vote taken at the September 26, 2022 Board meeting on whether the Town wishes to purchase the land. The Board of Assessors will determine the amount of money that is due to the Town.

FY2023 TOWN GOALS

A discussion was held on the draft FY2023 Town Goals that incorporates comments from the August 29, 2022 Select Board meeting. Brief discussions were held on sections related to the Continued Revitalization of Downtown, Communication and Sustainability. Further comments and edits should be forwarded to TA Harutunian for a final document and vote at the September 26, 2022 meeting.

SELECT BOARD UPDATES

A discussion was held on the current process to secure resident Topsfield Fair tickets for families with children. Residents with minor children over the age of eight will need to get a letter from the Town Clerk confirming the number of minor children that live in the house (as the Town cannot provide this data directly to the Fair for privacy reasons). Children under eight are allowed into the Fair at no charge. It is unclear to the Town what change prompted this new requirement of a letter. Communication is ongoing to prepare for next year.

Select Board Member Jackson commented that a resident watched the Select Board meeting on live Topsfield Cable and could not see the full room. This issue will be brought to the attention of Boxford Cable TV.

Select Board Member McDonald thanked the organizers of the Tomato Festival for a fun and successful event. He also noted that the Library is available for Select Board drop-in sessions the third Saturday of the month between 10 am – 12 noon. He will check on availability for a weeknight. The Select Board members will sign up for sessions and the format will be re-evaluated after a few sessions.

Vice-Chair and Clerk Bermudez thanked the Agricultural Commission for taking over the organization of Tomato Festival and the Topsfield Community Partnership (TCP) for their continued funding of the event. She also requested that the Traffic Advisory Committee review the triangle intersection at Hill Street and Salem Street for safety and possibly installing a stop sign. Chief Hovey will investigate further.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

TA Harutunian provided an update on the following items:

- Infrastructure Work/Capital:
 - o Town Hall Generator
 - o Library: HVAC and elevator replacement/repairs
- Personnel and Collective Bargaining:
 - o Job Postings
 - Sr. Administrative Assistant – Building, 24 hours
 - Sr. Administrative Assistant – Fire, 15 hours
 - Executive Assistant Position – Town Administrator/Select Board
 - Parks and Cemetery Equipment Operator
 - Two new Firefighters
- Town Operations and Activities:
 - o Americans Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
 - Website Page live
 - o Emerson Field 40B Community Meeting
 - o Request to name the Asbury Bridge – conversations underway with Veteran's Committee
 - o Holiday on the Green preparation underway
 - o Curbside Metal Collection Wednesday the 21st through Friday 23rd
- Events
 - o Howlett Brook Bridge Restoration Event
 - Wednesday the 14th Gould Barn at 7:00PM

- Home Grown Market – final one of this season
 - Thursday 15th at 4:00PM – 6:30PM
- Community Meeting on the Garage RFP
 - Thursday 15th at 7:00PM
- Concert on the Common – sponsored by the Library
 - Saturday the 17th at 4:30PM
 - Colin Jamieson
- Police Relief Association Movie Night
 - Saturday the 17th at dusk
 - The movie the Bad Guys
- Final Summer Concert Series – sponsored by the Cultural Council
 - Sunday the 18th at 4:00PM
 - James Michael, Baritone Broadway
- Master Plan Kick-Off Meeting
 - Monday September 26th, tour at 1:00Pm, followed with a meeting at 4:00PM
- Tomato Festival – Thank you!

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence is available on BoardDocs.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:19 PM, Vice-Chair and Clerk Bermudez made a motion to adjourn. Select Board Member Jackson seconded the motion and the motion carried by roll call vote as follows:

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| Chair Hook | Yes |
| Vice-Chair and Clerk Bermudez | Yes |
| Select Board Member Jackson | Yes |
| Select Board Member McDonald | Yes |

Respectfully submitted,

Debra A. Morong, Executive Assistant & Recording Secretary

Theresa Coffey, Recording Secretary

DOCUMENTS

1. Agenda
2. 7-14-22 Master Plan Steering Committee Charter
 - a. Andrew Mulholland 9.12.2022
 - b. Bradley Bissell 8.25.2022
 - c. Elizabeth Mulholland 8.10.22

- d. Gary Bergmann 8.25.22
 - e. Gregor Smith 8.9.22
 - f. Tom Rosa 7.26.22
 - g. Chief Jen Colins-Brown
 - h. Rosalee DiScipio 9.12.2022
- 3. Police Dept. Generator Quotes and Estimates 9.11.2022
 - 4. Steril-Koni – DPW Heavy Duty Vehicle Lift Contract
 - 5. Pye Brook Park – Irrigation Well and Pump System – Quotes 9.7.2022
 - 6. Dept Energy Resources – Green Comm. Competitive Grant Program Contract 2022 –9.30.2024
 - 7. FY2023 Town Goals – Draft 8.29.2022
 - 8. FY2023 Town Goals – 8.29.2022 Clean
 - 9. BHP Pump track for Select Board 2022
 - 10. Town Administrator Report 9.12.2022

Pursuant to the 'Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18-25, the approval of these minutes by the Board constitutes a certification of the date, time and place of the meeting, the members present and absent, and the actions taken at the meeting. Any other description of statements made by any person, or the summary of the discussion of any matter, is included for the purpose of context only, and no certification, express or implied, is made by the Board as to the completeness or accuracy of such statements.