



**Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF)
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 12, 2020**

APPROVED: July 14, 2020

At 7:02 PM Select Board Chair Maria Neyland called the virtual meeting to order via ZOOM. This meeting was conducted via Remote Participation, pursuant to the Current Executive Order.

Attendance (*Parties identified herein may not have been in attendance for the entire duration of this meeting*):

Select Board: Maria Neyland, Les Fox and Bob Stemple

Finance Committee: Gary Kushner and Becky Neville

ABR School Committee: Tessa McKinley, Michael Bo, Adam Klein and Nora Shine

ABR School Building Committee/Library Board of Trustees: Mary Brolin

Planning Board: Cindy Markowitz and Mark White

Other Attendees: Ryan Ferrara, Town Administrator; John Fallon, Moderator; Mac Reid, 2020 ATM Deputy Moderator; Liz Markiewicz, Town Clerk; Jennifer Barrett, Town Accountant; Peishan Bartley, Library Director; Lauren Abraham, CSC/CoA Director; Megan Connor, RecCom and Cheryl Mahoney, Dept. Assistant (Recorder)

Moderator Fallon introduced Mac Reid; noting that he is attending because he has volunteered to act as deputy Moderator at Town Meeting; as there are warrant items that Moderator Fallon may need to set aside due to potential conflicts.

Minutes

Neville moved to accept the minutes of April 14, 2020. Seconded by Brolin. **Approved by Roll Call vote: 11-0**, Brolin "aye," Fox "aye," Kushner "aye," Stemple "aye," Markowitz "aye," White "aye," Bo "aye," McKinley "aye," Fowlks "aye," Neville "aye," and Neyland "aye."

COVID-19 Updates

• **Elections – Special State and Local – Clerk Markiewicz**

She has been working with Moderator Fallon, TA Ferrara, Chief Fillebrown and Police Officer Patriarca to prepare for this dual election on June 2nd. They have to incorporate in COVID-19 protocols to create a safe polling station now relocated to the Blanchard Gym space. The printshop has mailed out the Absentee ballot applications to registered voters. Voters can also download from the website. The Dan Sena campaign has mailed out its own application forms.

• **Pre-Town Meeting Forum – Moderator, John Fallon**

The rescheduling of Town Meeting to June 22nd was done in anticipation of the Governor's phased reopening and relocated to Boxboro Regency as noted, in an effort to insure public health/safety and social distancing. The Commonwealth has now issued some guidance and provided some legal allowances, but this is a work in progress. We are awaiting direction from the Board of Health. Fallon reiterated much of the information presented at the May 11th Select Board meeting, including relating the proposed room layout and seating configurations to preserve social distancing (Seating 190+/-). Though all of these precautions will allow us to convene Town Meeting we'll need to depart from our normal practices. He related as to why the Town cannot legally conduct Town Meeting via ZOOM. A proposed bill, has not yet been passed that would allow for representative Town Meetings to meet remotely, but it does apply to communities such as ours. Though Electronic voting has also been discussed, so far, no communities have been able to successfully implement it. There was discussion as to current State Law and our Town Bylaws regarding Town Meeting requirements, including that a Town Meeting vote would be required to convert to a representative town meeting.

- TA Ferrara shared the proposed ATM lay-out for both the Parade Room and the Federal Room, for voter check-in and the health/safety and social distancing protocols that they are working to implement. There was discussion on insuring safe and adequate seating for registered voters, and those non-voters that might need to attend and providing to others if space is available. We will be requiring facemasks for the duration of the meeting. There was discussion of other sanitary measures. It was suggested that college students could serve as checkers to allow election workers to participate in the meeting. The Moderator provided an update his efforts with the Petitioner to explain our town meeting process. The Planning Bd. has deferred its recommendation on this. It was determined that there would be few if any materials handed out. The consensus was to support conducting the Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silence. It will be important to keep recommendations and presentations brief.
- The Town Meeting Warrant is at the printer, and will be mailed out to all households the weekend of May 22nd. Presentations are due June 3rd. The priority for this year's Moderator and TA webinar will be explaining the new procedures and precautions. These presentations/videos will be posted on the website prior to Town Meeting.

Select Board updates – Neyland /TA Ferrara

- The Board has been focused on COVID-19 concerns and Town Meeting preparations. The Board has begun the re-appointment process however, more volunteers need to be recruited.
- TA Ferrara reported on COVID-19 management (24 positive households) and the reopening preparations. The Emergency Operation Center meets daily. Fortunately, none of our Public Safety personnel have been diagnosed. Acton Police had their first case today. With the lockdown, Public Safety has seen an increase with domestics and mental health incidents. The goal is to come back gradually in the coming weeks. The Commonwealth is not providing a lot of guidance. Each facility has specific needs that will need to be addressed. Until we have a vaccine; masks and social distancing will remain necessary. This will be our new normal.
- Veteran Tribute Project - Stemple reported that the project is proceeding, however previous bids were not acceptable. TA Ferrara spoke to these efforts. The VTC has reached out to vendors to get their feedback and reworked the specifications; revising their scope. The crisis has stalled efforts. The intention is to re-publish next week.
- Sidewalk – we are in the permitting process with MassDOT. There has been some back and forth with them. As we work to resolve these issues we have been advised that our State funding has been extended.
- Accountant Barrett provided the status of the Town's intended paving schedule and there was discussion of some locations e.g. Sargent Road railway crossing. The State's Ch. 90 FY 21 preliminary reimbursement commitment was issued prior to the COVID-19 crisis.

AB Regional School Committee and School Building Project Committee updates - McKinley

- The District continues to be in a holding pattern. There was discussion on the impact to the AB School District concerning the budget revisions and operations under a 1/12th budget for the respective communities; building project status and fall re-opening concerns. So far there has been little guidance from the State on re-opening in the fall. Acton's Town Meeting date and location to be determined.
- To be prudent ABRSC will be including a building project update in their Article #2 Report, but they will work to keep the entire presentation brief.
- TA Ferrara advised that the District has been able to identify potential cost reductions, possibly totaling a \$1,000,000. Their intention is to set aside half (\$500,000) of that for unanticipated expenses in light of the tenuousness of the fall re-opening.
- They have hired a specialty vendor to conduct a virtual graduation for the Class of 2020. There will also be a drive-by cavalcade. Brolin, as a parent of a graduating senior, spoke to some of the details. TA Ferrara advised that graduation banners are also being hung in both towns.

- **Gates/Douglas Building Project – Brolin**

The Detail Design Packet has been submitted to MSBA. Some cost over-runs were recently identified; but the Committee will be addressing these concerns. They have been working on value management. The design and construction teams have been able to identify some savings and choices that the committee will need to make. They will be submitting their current numbers to MSBA later this week. They have contracted for modular classrooms; some of the Gates teachers are relocating there. There was discussion about their investigations into leasing vacant office space and why the various statutory and regulatory governmental requirement that would make it cost prohibitive.

Finance Committee updates - Kushner

- They approved the Clerk’s Reserve Fund Transfer for the Town election mailing.
- They are working on their ATM presentation.
- They were able to identify \$407,000 in decreases for the FY 21.
- He participated in a school capital planning meeting – the District executed two bonds – 1. projects and 2. for capital expenses. The bonding timed out well, so the District locked in at a great rate.
- The \$500,000 coming out of capital. Because projects for this year are coming in less and we got a better rate.

Library updates – Dir. Bartley

Dir. Bartley related, that pursuant to the Governor’s phase in plan and Mass. Library Board’s recommendations, the Library’s first steps to a phased re-opening; that she reviewed with staff today e.g. curbside services; making a public computer available by appointment. They are also working on protocols and protective measures for when they open once again to the public e.g. limiting patrons in building; limiting seating; and plexiglass barriers. They are considering generating a video to introduce these new procedures. There was discussion about managing those that refuse to cooperate with COVID-19 protocols.

Planning Board updates - Markowitz

They continue to conduct meeting via ZOOM. The primary item for their next meeting will be the Enclave landscape plans and proposed revisions to add porches; impacting the foot print.

The consensus was that the next meeting will be July 14, 2020 and the focus will be a review of Town Meeting. [To be Chaired by BSB]

Adjourn

At 8:21 PM, Neville moved to adjourn. Seconded by Brolin. **Approved by Roll Call vote: 12-0**, Brolin “aye,” Kushner “aye,” McKinley “aye,” Klein “aye,” Neyland “aye,” Fowlks “aye,” Stemple “aye,” Shine “aye,” Neville “aye,” Fox “aye,” White “aye,” and Markowitz “aye.”

Exhibits

- Agenda
- Regular Minutes of 4/14/20 – Draft
- Updated Budget /ATM Warrant Calendar
- ATM 2020 Warrant
- Proposed ATM floor plans
- ATM Process/Procedures Materials
- BLF leadership schedule