



**Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF)
Tuesday, February 4, 2020
Meeting Minutes
Morse/Hilberg Meeting Room, Town Hall
29 Middle Road, Boxborough, MA 01719**

Approved: March 17, 2020

Attendance

Select Board: Chair Maria Neyland, Clerk Wes Fowlks

Finance Committee: Member Becky Neville, Member Ling Chen, Chair Gary Kushner at 7:02PM

ABR School Committee: Member Michael Bo, Member Nora Shine

Library: Chair Mary Brolin

Planning Board: Chair Cindy Markowitz

Town Staff: Ryan Ferrara, Town Administrator; Sean Donahue, Assistant Town Administrator; Jennifer Barrett, Town Accountant; Peishan Bartley, Library Director

An audience member arrived at 7:10 PM

Call to Order (Library Board of Trustees)

Library Board of Trustees Chair Brolin called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Introductions

All in attendance introduced themselves.

Review of Open Meeting Law Complaint submitted on January 15, 2020

There was an Open Meeting Law complaint regarding the minutes voted on Jan 7, 2020 from the October 29, 2019 meeting regarding no mentioned of exhibits. The BLF would need to re-vote minutes and draft a response. It was discussed the response would be delegated to TA Ferrara.

Review and accept Minutes

October 29, 2019, as revised

Ferrara indicated the minutes were identical except for including exhibits.

Neville made a motion to approve the minutes as revised. Second by Neyland.

Passed unanimously, except that Bo abstained, citing he was not at that meeting.

Brolin mentioned the Town Clerk's updated template for minutes, which Ferrara indicated will be in the response.

Kushner moved to delegate the response of the OML complaint to TA Ferrara. Seconded by Neyland.
Passed unanimously

January 7, 2020, first review

Markowitz had two amendments to the Planning Board section:

- Last sentence: strike last sentence of second bullet.
- Change “support” to “sponsor”

Neville made a motion to approve the minutes as revised. Seconded Neyland.

Passed unanimously, excepted that Bo abstained again.

Select Board updates

Building Committee

Neyland gave an update on the Building Committee. The Committee voted on a plot of land at Stow Road for a new public safety facility. Since the Committee fulfilled its charge, the Select Board voted to disband the Committee effective February 14, 2020. The Board has committed to a new charge, which will create a new Committee with 11 members comprised of: 2 at-large members, 2 Select Board, 2 Finance Committee and 1 from Planning Board, Board of Health, Sustainability Committee, Recreation Commission, Council on Aging. The new Committee will start fresh and focus on design, to which Neyland praised Brolin’s work with the School Building Committee.

Neyland explained the Conservation Commission elected not to be part of the new Committee as there are no wetlands concerns.

Markowitz asked about alternate members. Neyland responded there will not be any.

Kushner added some advisory who will assist in the process including Police, Fire, Town Administrator and an out of Town firefighter.

Winterfest

Neyland commented on Winterfest and attributed its success to the Recreation Commission.

Elections

Neyland reminded everyone of the upcoming elections on March 3, 2020 and March 31, 2020.

AB Regional School Committee

Bo discussed ABRSC passed at preliminary budget. School official vote is February 6, 2020 had budget Saturday and preliminary budget.

School Building Project Committee

As ABRSD Bldg. Project Chair, Brolin provided an update stating the Committee was ready to sign a contract with Consigli. Further updates on various meetings including OPM and architect, incoming bids and meeting with bond counsel. The Committee is hoping for low bond rates (2.5% or better) Materials and paint are being looked over for building. Construction is expected to commence the day after school ends.

Ling asked if the Committee budgeted for inflation. Brolin said yes, and a 3-year trajectory was taken.

Finance Committee updates

Kushner gave an update on the budget process stating the Finance Committee was two-thirds through. Neville mentioned some will need to be adjusted.

Kushner further provided update on elected official salary increases. His hope is to complete the budget in the next few weeks.

Kushner stated bonding subcommittee met to review school debt. Their plan is to bond \$75 million and have in place by February 26th. The bond's interest rate would be high for the first nine years before dropping to a low of 1.8% or 1.9%. The true interest rate would be 2.56%, offering an approximate \$6.239 million premium. The approximate savings is \$50 per household. Discussion about principal payments. Kushner mentioned the plan is to have level payments for thirty years.

Moving to paving, Kushner proposed borrowing more than the typical \$300,000 in first year due to low borrowing rates. Discussion around spending money to avoid arbitrage.

Neville asked when Planning Board can provide Zoning Changes. Markowitz advised Planning Bd. hopes to have by February 27th.

Neyland reminded everyone warrant changes are due March 11th. Kushner mentioned both Ling and he will be on the Building Committee.

Library updates

Library Dir. Bartley explained the current status of hiring personnel. Her goal is to have more children's activities and build a teen service department. The youth service librarian attended the high school volunteer fair.

Bartley is working with Council on Aging/Community Service Dir. Abraham to form a collection of personal care items.

The Library will host a workshop in February on Identity Theft and Fraud Prevention by the Better Business Bureau.

Planning Board updates

Markowitz mentioned the joint meeting with the Select Board regarding Boxborough 2030. Three out of the seven items were addressed.

Markowitz provided an update on the Zoning Audit stating Town Planner Corson was working on drafting the zoning bylaw RFP, as well as zoning bylaw amendments for Town Meeting.

FY2021 budget/warrant (Town Meeting, May 11, 2020) updates

Town Accountant Barrett presented the current budget model. She indicated its inclusion of school debt at 6.15%. Accountant Barrett further explained the current year's limit and the exempted school debt.

Discussion shifted towards salary increases. Barrett explained a general 2.6 CPI increase but the Personnel Board needs to still vote the classification plan.

Regarding vocational student enrollment, Barrett explained a drop in Minuteman and increase in Nashoba. Bo said the schools are comfortable with the decrease.

Ferrara provided various updates in the Warrant Process for Town Meeting. Upcoming meetings for Personnel Board on February 6th and joint Select Board/Finance Committee Capital Budget Saturday, February 8th.

Draft list of warrant articles was presented. Ferrara mentioned how Special Town Meeting can occur, if needed, at Annual Town Meeting. At the Capital Budget meeting, some CPA projects will be presented: Library patio, Hager Land Bridge and Liberty Fields. General discussion about presentation on warrant.

Ferrara went over other CPA applications: Cemetery Work (quad 3) North Cemetery, Town Clerk Records; Rent Assistance; Regional Housing Services; Ferrara Community Garden; Conservation Trust Transfer.

General discussion around commercial appraisals consulting and an upcoming meeting with Town Assessor Genna to assess Town's position.

Further discussion surrounding SAFER Grant application. More updates would follow at the February 8th meeting.

Additional staffing for Well-Being Committee was discussed and Ferrara is working with COA/Community Development Dir. Abraham. Comments were made surrounding adding staff, as was not the direction and if it would even appear on warrant as a placeholder.

OPEB discussion disclosed last actuary was one year ago. Kushner wants to increase risk for more money. Discussion around comparison with district concluded with possibly revising OPEB next year.

Ferrara discussed closing out prior articles.

DPW capital budget was discussed regarding paving and generator. Questions surrounding size of DPW generator may occur at February 8th meeting.

Additional capital items were discussed from Town Hall, Library, Police and Fire. Neyland asked about Fire obtaining other grants such as FEMA for equipment needs. Barrett said grant was denied but the Chief will apply again. It was noted turnover has been heavy in Fire.

Ferrara mentioned new Inspection Vehicle. Neyland asked for costs repair vs. purchase.

Additional items discussed were DPW infield groomer and Police fire suppression system. Member Neville asked if Acton-Boxborough baseball helps pay. Barrett said they may provide up to \$2,000. Further discussion around fire suppression system to occur on February 8th.

Final items discussed were senior worker program, energy efficient code, zoning bylaw amendments, water resources.

Neyland and Kushner asked for a list of any new items on the Capital plan.

Next meeting is March 17th at 7:00 PM.

Neyland made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Neville.

Meeting adjourned at 8:27 PM.

Exhibits

1. Agenda for February 4, 2020
2. Open Meeting Law Complaint from January 15, 2020
3. Updated Minutes from October 29, 2019
4. Minutes from January 7, 2020
5. Updated FY2021 Budget Model BLF
6. FY2021 Budget Worksheet V4 (Articles List)
7. School Debt Strategy Memo February 6, 2020