

Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF) Minutes

Date: Wednesday, April 30, 2025

Time: 7:04 PM

Location: Grange Room, Town Hall, 29 Middle Rd, Boxborough, MA

Attendees:

Town Moderator: Dennis Reip

Select Board: Kristin Hilberg and Bob Stemple

Finance Committee: Tony Newton, Maria Neyland, John Greven and Joe Stulpin

School Committee: Adam Klein, Liz Fowlks

Library Trustees: Mary Brolin (also representing the Fire Station Building Committee)

Fire Station Building Committee: Mac Reid

1. Call to Order

Town Moderator Dennis Reip called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM. Quorum confirmations were noted; however, this meeting was informational only and no votes were taken.

2. 2025 Annual and Special Town Meeting (ATM/STM) Planning Status and Preview

a. Logistics and Room Layout

- A high-density seating configuration will be used, accommodating approximately 426 chairs.
- Overflow plans include the school library, though sound delay issues persist.
- Standing room and crowd control will follow Fire Chief's capacity determinations.
- Reserved seating for key boards on night one (Fire Station Building Committee, Planning Board, etc.).
- Conservation Trust will return to host the refreshment table.
- No indoor sandwich boards or political signs will be allowed.

b. Voter Materials and Handouts

- Handout tables will be at the rear, with an emphasis on QR codes to reduce paper use.
- Materials will include:
 - Town meeting guidelines
 - Planning Board report on municipal use zoning (STM Article 1)
 - School budget book (via QR code)
 - Town report and meeting guide
- Handouts are limited to items directly related to warrant articles.

c. Warrant Articles & Presentation Process

- Presenter time limits: 10 minutes for petitioners, 3 minutes for board recommendations.
- Minority Planning Board members may speak for 3 minutes (Article 1).
- Select Board is petitioner for STM Article 1; Fire Station Building Committee for STM Article 2.
- The presentation order will create context by introducing zoning (Article 1) before building funding (Article 2).
- Voting procedures include voice, hand cards, and potentially written ballots (if motioned and approved).

d. Key Planning Notes

- Discussion included possible reconsideration scenarios if Article 1 fails but Article 2 passes.
- Motions to reorder or postpone articles will follow traditional procedure.
- Reip emphasized strict adherence to “four corners” limitations for Article 2 (site-specific funding request).
- Possible amendments to Article 1 (e.g., excluding AR zones) are anticipated and were discussed.
- Written ballot voting may be raised and would require majority approval after a motion and debate.

3. Other ATM/STM Items of Interest

- Concerns about pressure tactics during petition drives were raised.
- Discussion on public confusion about zoning definitions and need for clear visuals during presentations.
- Clarified rules for reconsideration and debate closure.
- Coordination with legal counsel, director of land use and building commissioner was confirmed.
- Volunteers and procedural logistics for written ballot scenarios were discussed.

4. Committee Updates

- School Committee: Will present report under Article 2; staff attendance for Article 5 likely not required until day 2.
- Planning Board: Split opinion on Article 1; Rebecca or Alec may be the presenter.
- Housing Board: Expected to provide recommendation on STM Article 2 (confirmation pending).
- Finance Committee: Will present under ATM Article 5.

5. Review and Approval of Minutes from March 5, 2025

- Approved unanimously and will be forwarded for posting on the town website.

6. Next Meeting Date and Future Topics

- June 10, 2025
- Future agenda topics to include post-Town Meeting debrief and long-term strategic planning.

7. Adjourn

The meeting concluded at approximately 8:53 PM.