

1 **Minutes of the**  
2 **BOXFORD SELECT BOARD**  
3 **HYBRID VIA ZOOM**  
4 **Monday, January 8, 2024**  
5 **Draft**  
6

7 Present: Barbara Jessel, Chuck Costello, Peter Perkins, Margaret Chow-Menzer, Judi  
8 Stickney  
9

10 Others Present: Town Administrator Matthew Coogan, Katie Colangelo  
11 Lt. Tamara Aghoian, Bob Figelski, Peter Holland, Ross Povenmire, Ron Dole, Ellen  
12 Guerin, A.J. Paglia, Eric Wendell, Kathy Zolla, Stephanie Meegan, Gary Martin, Karen  
13 Sheridan, Bob Gore, Natasha Grigg, Joe Hill, Wendy Perkins, Al Constan, Carol  
14 Hubbard, David Smallman, Al Nierenberg, Rebecca Potts, Liz Murphy, Lisa Donahue,  
15 Ted Riter, and Minutes Recorder Donna Grieco.  
16

17 **6:30 PM Call to Order**

18 Select Board Chair Barbara Jessel called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.  
19 The roll was read, and all members were all present.  
20

21 **6:35 PM Announcements**  
22

23 **Boxford Housing Partnership Meeting**– Select Board member **Chow-Menzer**  
24 announced that there will be a Boxford Community Housing Needs Workshop which will  
25 take place at Town Hall, Meeting Room #1, on JANUARY 20, 2024, at 9 AM. The  
26 following will be discussed: Update on the Merrimack Valley Regional Housing Plan  
27 Project, Boxford Community Needs Assessment, Community Housing Goals and  
28 Strategies and Identifying the Potential for future Housing Development in Boxford.  
29

30 **Martin Luther King Jr. Day** – Select Board member **Perkins** announced that Town  
31 offices will be closed on Monday, January 15 in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.  
32 There will be no trash/recycling pick up on Monday, January 15th. Pick up will run on a  
33 one-day delay for the remainder of the week.  
34

35 **Town of Boxford is Hiring** – Select Board member **Costello** announced that the Town  
36 of Boxford is hiring for the following positions:

- 37 • Administrative Assistant - Inspectional Services and Zoning Board of Appeals
- 38 • Full Time Dispatcher – Communications
- 39 • Program, Outreach, and Activities Assistant - Council on Aging

40 For more detailed information about these positions, please visit:

41 [www.boxfordma.gov/employmentopportunities](http://www.boxfordma.gov/employmentopportunities). Please send your cover letter, resume  
42 and completed Application for Employment to Leanne Mihalchik  
43 ([lmihalchik@boxfordma.gov](mailto:lmihalchik@boxfordma.gov)).  
44

45 **6:40 PM Recognition of Years of Service**

46 The Select Board recognized, thanked and awarded certificates to numerous long-time  
47 Town of Boxford employees in honor of their employment milestones which ranged from  
48 ten to thirty-five years. Photographs were also taken.

49  
50 10 Years – Katie Colangelo  
51 20 Years – Tamara Aghoian, Pam Blaquiere, Bob Figelski, Peter Holland, Ross Povenmire  
52 25 Years – Ron Dole, Ellen Guerin, A.J. Paglia, Mikey Ricker, Doug Small, Eric Wendell  
53 35 Years – Kathy Zolla

54  
55 The following employees with over 25 years of service also received honorable mention:  
56

57 Josh Kennedy, Children's Librarian - 26 years  
58 Kendell Longo, Health Director - 28 years  
59 Kara Fitzpatrick, Sergeant, Police Department - 28 years  
60 Dave Noyes, Foreman, DPW - 31 years  
61 Jim Riter, Police Chief - 33 years  
62 Warren Gould, Director of Communications - 43 years

63  
64

65 **6:50 PM - Roundtable Discussion with Board and Committee Chairs**

66 **Discussion** which included:

- 67
  - Updates from Boards and Committees on Current Issues, Achievements, etc.
  - Discussion of possible May 14, 2024, Town Meeting Warrant Articles

69  
70 **Emergency Response & Advisory Committee (ERAC)**– Chair Ellen Guerin reported  
71 on the committee’s first meeting of 12/12/23 where they reviewed the charge to analyze  
72 response to emergency call data. Next meeting will be in January. The committee does  
73 not anticipate the need to request a Town Meeting warrant article. Select Board Chair  
74 Jessel thanked her for her involvement in this committee.

75  
76 **Sustainability Committee** – Gary Martin highlighted three projects as follows:

- 77 1) Boxford Community Electricity (Aggregation Plan)  
78 a. The DPU gave preliminary approval to Boxford’s Electrical Aggregation  
79 Plan. The committee is working with Good Energy to request an RFQ.  
80 They will evaluate quotes and recommend whether to launch the  
81 aggregation plan or not. If they do recommend it, it would be for either  
82 June or November of 2024.  
83  
84 2) Spofford Pond School HVAC Electrification Study and Preliminary Design  
85 a. Town Administrator Coogan, Select Board Chair Jessel and Gary Martin  
86 will evaluate options presented by the engineering firm, CMTI, in hopes of  
87 making the Spofford Pond School more energy efficient, reduce  
88 emissions, improve indoor air quality and make classrooms more  
89 comfortable. The committee hopes to replace the old gas-fired equipment  
90 with quieter, more efficient heat pumps that will also provide air  
91 conditioning to the classrooms.  
92

93 3) DOER's New Climate Leader Communities Program

- 94 a. Boxford has been awarded nearly \$400K in grants since becoming  
95 certified as a Green Community. The new Climate Leader Program, with  
96 more stringent requirements, provides more grant funding opportunities.  
97 This committee is deciding whether to work towards Climate Leader  
98 Certification. If so, the committee will require a Town Meeting warrant  
99 article to adopt a Specialized Stretch Code for new construction.  
100

101 **Recycling Committee** – Chair Karen Sheridan reported that costs at the drop-off  
102 Recycling Center with Republic have doubled for disposing of materials and that there  
103 will be a new fee schedule as of 1/6/24. The new fee schedules appear on the Town's  
104 website. There will now be a charge to recycle cardboard. If cardboard is placed at  
105 curbside into a 32-gallon barrel or placed in recycle bins, residents would not incur a  
106 charge. Earth Day will take place on Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup> outside Town Hall.

107 Select Board member Costello asked how the money which is collected at the  
108 Recycling Center is handled and was informed that it is deposited at the end of the day  
109 as a night deposit into the Recycling Revolving account.

110 Select Chair Jessel requested that the cardboard info be posted to the website.

111 Select Board member Perkins asked about various metal costs. He was informed that  
112 they are on the fee schedule.

113 **Planning Board** – Bob Gore noted that Ross Povenmire is a pleasure to work with and  
114 offered him his congratulations. He reported that there is a housing shortage  
115 everywhere and Boxford is no different. The Boxford Foundation has conducted some  
116 studies and there may be more activity in this realm as the studies try to determine  
117 possible solutions. There may be some creative things that Boxford can do in this area.

118 **Land Committee** – Natasha Grigg thanked all Boxford public servants. She reported  
119 that her committee has no warrant articles required for Town Meeting. They were unable  
120 to acquire a parcel of land for possible community housing due to the owner's illness  
121 and now, in addition, the probability for 40B zoning would take five years. There is  
122 another possible parcel of land adjacent to wetlands that is of interest, and depending  
123 on the seller, a sale may or may not take place. This committee is currently in a holding  
124 pattern.

125 **Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Update** – Chair Natasha Grigg reported  
126 that the CPU is reviewing project applications for funding which may require warrant  
127 articles at the Town Meeting. They are for the Johnson Field Playground Project  
128 continuation; Community Housing funding for a circuit rider; Stiles Pond Action  
129 Committee funding to study and relegate pollution: and finally funding for an  
130 environmentally friendly robotic grass mower, a total of four possible warrant articles.

131 **Housing Partnership** – Joe Hill thanked the CPC Committee and reported that they  
132 may require a warrant article for the Boxford Commons Study which is aimed at  
133 providing moderately priced housing for residents. There are a total of 12 units that  
134 could potentially be developed on this 13-acre parcel which would require a warrant for  
135 their development. The committee is awaiting a financial model from Town Council to  
136 determine how much money would need to be put down as a deposit on the property.  
137 They will also require a Housing Coordinator, a part-time position, to assist in  
138 implementing the Housing Production Plan and the work of the Boxford Housing  
139 Partnership Committee. The role will be shared with other towns and be under the  
140 direction of the Merrimack Valley Planning Committee. The funding is highly supported  
141 by Stu Saginor of the CPA. There is also the Boxford Small Repair Grants Trust which  
142 will provide up to \$7500 for Boxford seniors and residents with permanent disabilities to  
143 make essential modifications to their homes which would allow them to age in place. A  
144 draft of this agreement has been submitted for review. Lastly, there were three out of  
145 five members appointed in December to this committee. There is now also a rep from  
146 the Council on Aging.

147 **Historical Commission/Historic District Commission** – Wendy Perkins reported that  
148 they are looking to complete an inventory of the whole Town which will require an RFP.  
149 They need a consultant and will try again to secure one. As for the Historic District  
150 Commission, they have begun upgrading their guidelines, but they will be completed  
151 this Spring and found online.

152

153 **Board of Health** – Al Constan offered his congratulations to the award recipients for  
154 their milestones in public service. He reported on the following completed issues:

- 155 1) Willows Project – The Board reviewed and approved the Operation and  
156 Maintenance manuals. A site visit was performed of the septic and leach field  
157 systems and they found an impressive septic. Based on this visit, a Certificate of  
158 Compliance was issued. Operation and maintenance of the well requires an HOA  
159 to maintain the water system and leach field and the existence of an operation  
160 manual that anyone can pick up and use if something were to go wrong.  
161 Homeowners will own the system as it will be deeded to them. The deed will also  
162 read that owners must be 50 years of age or older in case of a sale where  
163 someone may try to buy or flip any of the properties.
- 164 2) Online stickers are back in place since the Health Assistant has been hired and  
165 they are popular. Online sales amounted to \$12,000 in the fourth quarter of 2023.  
166

167 Ongoing Projects include:

- 168 • Cross committee activities include working with different committees and DEP to  
169 repair/replace the Johnson Field Playground.
- 170 • A BOH representative serves on the Stiles Pond committee which is looking to  
171 determine nutrient flow and do remediation of algae and contaminant cleanup

- work.
- There are two BOH representative on the Waste Stream Task Force. The BOH maintains the contract for Town trash collection. They are proposing a contract for Town trash pickup and will present findings on Wednesday. Most likely they will work with an individual vendor who submitted a bid and not have to go through the RFP process. They are looking to lock this up and have the contract signed before the contract ends in June. The contract most likely will be for automated collection and bi-weekly recycling which will save the Town approximately \$500K over 5 years.
- The Board of Health is looking to review regulations on new or replacement utility poles from National Grid. The EAP has allowed chemical treatment of poles in the past. They are now allowing arsenic treated poles to be erected, which were banned twenty years ago. The Board feels that rather than require a 50 ft. set back of these poles, they should now be set back even further to about 100 ft. away from a domestic well. The option for non-treated fiberglass poles costs \$4000 per pole vs. \$400 for an arsenic treated pole. Select Board member Costello remarked that in a hardship situation where someone cannot move their well, a fiberglass pole could be used, at the owner’s expense.

**Elementary School Committee-** Carol Hubbard updated the Select Board on the following ongoing projects:

- The HVAC Study at Spofford Pond School is ongoing and most likely will require a warrant article.
- Another potential warrant article for Town Meeting is the ADA work on the exterior of the Cole School. Paving etc. will be completed over the summer.
- There is general policy work ongoing such as the Food Service Contract which must be renegotiated in January.
- Education programs maintain a literacy focus using new research to help more kids read better.
- The committee is looking at attendance issues including chronic absenteeism.
- In early February, a Saturday Budget Session will be held and include any new requests or anything unexpected. They are anticipating a hefty increase to the school budget this year.
- Various flooring projects will require a warrant article.
- There is a potential need to repair a section of the Cole School roof and a site renovation project; both of which will take place in FY’25.

**Boxford Cultural Council (Cultural Art) Committee** – Stephanie Meegan reported that the MA Cultural Council which provides funding has upped Boxford’s allocation, so no warrant articles will be necessary. Other items of interest included:

- Five art pieces were sold from the Art Exhibit at 10 Elm.
- There will be a Student Art Exhibit on 1/19/24 at 10 Elm from 5-7 pm, which will include ten pieces from the Cole School and ten from the Spofford School. This will also include the Spofford band assemble.
- Seasonal art exhibits will also continue to be displayed at 10 Elm.

- 217 • On 1/20 the Cantemus Chamber Chorus will present Annelies which is based on  
218 “Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl”.  
219 • A Boxford coloring book containing 12 recognizable Boxford scenes for 3<sup>rd</sup>  
220 graders (or anyone) has been created and are now being printed.  
221

222 Topic: Art History and Public Art, programs include:

- 223 • There will be an Impressionism and a History of Public Art program taking place.  
224 • Yarning Around MA program entitled “Yarn Bombing”  
225 • Two Crochet workshops will be conducted.  
226 • The theatre presentation entitled *Nun of This and Nun of That* will take place at  
227 the COA.  
228

229 Topic: Nature, programs include:

- 230 • The World of Owls- Summer Reading Program  
231 • Boxford Spring Birdwatching Hike (a senior-friendly walk)  
232

233 Other Upcoming Events:

- 234 • New England MA Youth Orchestra rehearsal and concerts  
235 • All Town events including July 4<sup>th</sup>  
236 • SummerFest  
237 • Apple Festival  
238 • Indigenous People Day in October in Newburyport  
239 • Music with Matt York (performing Willie Nelson) at the COA  
240

There is an email address and Facebook Page for the Boxford Cultural Council.

241 **Conservation Committee** – David Smallman thanked Ross Povenmire for his 20 years  
242 of service and reported on the committee’s ongoing work including 4 culverts, two of  
243 which have been approved. There are 2 still holding. Pyebrook Road at Pyebrook Lane,  
244 Georgetown Road at Pyebrook, Herrick Road and Pyebrook, and Glendale Rd., two of  
245 these roads are starting to fail so we are trying to get them done as soon as possible  
246 and ensure that they will all meet stream crossing regulations. These culverts are past  
247 their prime. Roads have been widened over the years beyond the width of the culvert  
248 but they will all be brought up to date. There was a sidewalk issue needing attention and  
249 all departments involved went together to look at the issues and going forward it will be  
250 easier to rectify problems if departments work together when warranted and where  
251 overlap exists. The committee is also working on two driveways on Main Street and  
252 Silvermine Road. This involves two house lots. The committee requested funding from  
253 the owner to build a plan. There are two common driveways on two separate lots,  
254 currently owned by the same person. The committee has had hearings surrounding the  
255 Border to Boston Rail Trail, specifically the section that runs from Georgetown Road in  
256 Boxford into Georgetown. It is ADA accessible, not withstanding some inherent issues  
257 that come with accessibility for aged rails, but the committee is working through them to

258 meet all regulations and concerns of abutters. There is currently one opening on this  
259 very busy committee, and Mr. Smallman asked people to apply.

260  
261 **Border to Boston Rail Trail Committee** – Al Nierenberg reported that this committee  
262 will not require any warrant articles for Town Meeting unless there are permanent  
263 easements for the right of way on the rail section just mentioned, Georgetown Road into  
264 Georgetown. If there is to be compensation for those easements, then there would be a  
265 warrant article. Border to Boston Trail takes a long time to put in, so the section while  
266 approved, will be paved and professional looking and done in the next few years. The  
267 middle section from Georgetown to the Power Station is in the design phase and will  
268 take even longer. The committee is talking about getting the final remaining section of  
269 the trail which was to have been built on road, off the road via a bridge over 95, which  
270 will not happen for many years. The goal is to attain 100% off road status.

271  
272 **Adaptive Reuse of Buildings Advisory Committee (ARBA)** – Becky Potts reported  
273 that the ARBA Committee will require a warrant article for rezoning parcels located at 4  
274 Middleton Road and 188 Washington Street to B1 (business district).  
275 Another warrant article will be necessary to authorize the Select Board to dispose of  
276 these properties either by lease or sale. Property evaluations of 188 Washington Street  
277 and 4 Middleton Road will be available next week. A commercial real estate company  
278 has approached the committee and offered to complete a free market analysis and  
279 hopefully they will have that information available at their next meeting on Wednesday.  
280 The Tri-Town School Union currently rents the Aaron Wood building next door to the  
281 Cole School from the Town of Boxford. They also occupy space in other towns. The  
282 Union is very interested in 4 Middleton Road for office space and the opportunity to  
283 have all of their offices under one roof. If they move into 4 Middleton Road, that would  
284 then free up the Aaron Wood building for some needed classrooms to accommodate  
285 the growing elementary school enrollments in Boxford. There is a \$1 million bond debt  
286 on Aaron Wood which would roll out at the same time Boxford needs to do renovations  
287 on 4 Middleton Road. This might create an opportunity to roll the bond over into a new  
288 bond for that building.

289  
290 **10 Elm Committee** – Elizabeth Murphy reported that the committee is working with the  
291 COA to discuss building needs. The committee developed a tiered plan for usage and  
292 rentals which needs Select Board approval. A successful family event was held with  
293 over 70 attendees and BTA/BOLT is also planning an event on 1/25. The committee is  
294 happy to entertain requests for programs for all of the Town's demographics.

295  
296 **Recreation Committee** – Lisa Donahue noted that the committee is maintaining  
297 connections with BAA, BTA BOLT, and Camp Sacajawea. They maintain the tennis and  
298 pickle ball courts, and track their usage. They are involved in the Johnson Field  
299 Playground Renovation, will review their current bylaws and propose any necessary  
300 changes, and going forward will order equipment using the Recreation Committee  
301 budget.

302

303 **Board of Commissioners of Trust Funds** – Ted Riter discussed four funds including  
304 the Michelle Wilson Fund, and the B.P. Cole Memorial Trust Fund which offers up to  
305 \$2000 to Boxford MASCO graduates who have completed high school and plan to  
306 attend college or post-secondary, vocational schools, etc. They also have funds for  
307 Boxford and Hamilton students, on a case-by-case basis, to attend Boy and Girl Scout  
308 Troops and finally, they administer the DARE program. There is also the Matthew Smith  
309 Scholarship Fund which thus far has received no requests. The Tri-Centennial Memorial  
310 Trust fund has set up a picnic table for bikers to rest. Contact the Board of  
311 Commissioners of Trust Funds for more information on any of these programs and for  
312 application instructions. The Board meets in late February or March and make their  
313 awards in March or April of every year.

314  
315 **Permanent Building Committee** – Select Board member Margaret Chow-Menzer  
316 reported that they are working on the new schematic design of the DPW facility and that  
317 interviews will be held next week to review the top three proposals from the RFP. The  
318 committee is also working with the Board of Health and the Recreation Committee  
319 relative to the Johnson Field Playground and ensuring there are no issues with DEP  
320 and the landfill because of its location. The type of equipment that can be installed will  
321 be dependent upon the depth that they can bore holes. The committee is also looking at  
322 how to expand the back of the 10 Elm building for picnic use, and to add a fence so  
323 people don't accidentally fall into the retention pond. They may need to replace the  
324 refrigerator at 10 Elm because the current size is inadequate and are also looking to  
325 add a sink to the Great Room because renters will need access to a sink when the other  
326 part of the building and the kitchen is closed. The Little Red School House roof is being  
327 worked on three days per week by Essex Tech students, and is coming along. The  
328 committee is looking at the Boxford Commons irrigation system, which has constantly  
329 clogged heads due to a function of a shallow well. As previously discussed, the Tri-  
330 Town Council is interested in 4 Middleton Road. Finally, Select Board member Chow-  
331 Menzer stated that an RFP for exterior painting of 4 Middleton Road will be required for  
332 this Spring since it is important not to allow the building to fall into disrepair.

333  
334 **Library Board of Trustees** – Select Board Chair Jessel reported that there has been a  
335 resignation from this Board and a new person is required. She thanked John Paul Ryan  
336 for his service. There is an effort underway to hire a new Library Director. There are  
337 some good applicants; some interviews have already been conducted with one more to  
338 be completed. The committee will identify two finalists for second interviews.

339  
340 **Finance Committee** – Town Administrator Coogan reported that some of the new  
341 Willows growth revenue will be realized this fiscal year. Building permit fees increased  
342 and earned interest also increased. The committee set the budget guidelines which  
343 states not to exceed a 2 1/2 % increase over FY'24. The Finance Committee School  
344 budgets are not yet completed however all budget proposals from other departments  
345 have been received, He will provide the budget to the Select Board on 2/12/24. The CIP  
346 is on a parallel path and are waiting for capital submissions from MASCO. Select Board  
347 member Costello asked if there was information about the restrictions for use of the  
348 \$250K received. The Town Administrator stated that it will be used as Chapter 90



349 funding is intended (for roads, sidewalks, rail trails, etc. He is not sure if education is  
350 included herein).

351  
352 The Select Board thanked all committee members for their participation in the meeting  
353 and for their efforts.

354  
355

356 **8:15 PM - Boxford Liquor License Renewals**

357 The following entities requested liquor license renewals:

- 358
  - Far Corner Farm Golf Course, Inc.
  - Boxford Community Kitchen

360

361 On a **MOTION** made by **Stickney**, second by **Perkins**, the Select Board **VOTED**  
362 unanimously by roll call vote to grant the requested liquor licenses to Far Corner  
363 Farm Golf Course and Boxford Community Kitchen upon the condition that the  
364 licensees shall in all respects, conform to all of the provisions of the Liquor  
365 Control Act, Chapter 138 of the General Laws, as amended and any rules or  
366 regulations made thereunder by the licensing authorities. In addition, the  
367 licensees must maintain required insurance and meet all requirements by Town  
368 Fire and Building inspectors as noted in the Town's inspection reports as  
369 enclosed in this packet. The licenses will expire December 31, 2024.

370

371 **8:25 PM - Report of the Town Administrator**

372 **Common Victualler's License Renewal Requests:**

- 373
  - Boxford Community Kitchen
  - Benson's Ice Cream

374 On a **MOTION** made by **Stickney**, second by **Chow-Menzer** the Select Board  
375 **VOTED** unanimously by roll call vote to approve Common Victualler's License  
376 # 24-08 to Boxford Community Kitchen located at 7 Elm St and with expiration  
377 on 12/31/24.

378  
379 On a **MOTION** made by **Stickney**, second by **Chow-Menzer** the Select Board  
380 **VOTED** unanimously by roll call vote to approve Common Victualler's License  
381 # 24-02 to Benson's Ice Cream located at 181 Washington St. and with  
382 expiration of 12/31/24.

383 **Junk License Renewal**

384 David Noyes

385 On a **MOTION** made by **Stickney**, second by **Perkins** the Select Board **VOTED**  
386 unanimously by roll call vote to renew a junk license #24-01 to David Noyes, of  
387 212 Main St. with expiration of 12/31/24.

388 **8:30 PM Routines**

389 Approval of Minutes of 12/18/23

390 On a **MOTION** made by **Costello**, second by **Stickney**, the Select Board **VOTED**  
391 unanimously by roll call vote to approve the Select Board Meeting Minutes of 12/18/23 as  
392 amended.

393  
394 **9:00 PM Adjourn**

395 On a **MOTION** made by **Perkins**, second by **Costello**, the Select Board  
396 **VOTED** unanimously by roll call vote to adjourn.

397  
398 **Next Meeting – January 22, 2024**

399  
400 **Adjourn**

401 Respectfully submitted,  
402 *Donna M Grieco*  
403 Minutes Recorder

404  
405 **Documents either distributed to the Board of Selectmen before the meeting**  
406 **in a packet or at the meeting:**

407  
408 Announcement: Boxford Housing Partnership Meeting

409 Announcement: Martin Luther King Jr. Day

410 Announcement: Town of Boxford is Hiring

411 Liquor License motion

412 Victualler's License Boxford Community Kitchen and supporting documentation

413 Victualler's License Benson's Ice Cream and supporting documentation

414 Junk License David Noyes and supporting documentation

415 Building Department December 2023 Report

416 Draft Minutes: 12/18/2023

417