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**Minutes of the
BOXFORD SELECT BOARD
HYBRID VIA ZOOM
Monday, March 11, 2024
Draft**

Present: Barbara Jessel, Chuck Costello, Margaret Chow-Menzer, Judi Stickney
Absent: Peter Perkins

Others Present: Town Administrator Matthew Coogan, Fire Chief Geiger, DPW Superintendent Chris Olbrot, National Grid Reps, Karen Sheridan, Nick Albina, Nathaniel Hunt, Michael White, Alex Constan, Stefanie Robin Siegel, Asst. Town Administrator Brendan Sweeney, and Minutes Recorder Donna Grieco

6:30 PM Call to Order

Select Board Chair Jessel called the Select Board Meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

6:35 PM Announcements

Real Estate Tax Exemption: Select Board member Chow-Menzer announced that the period for filing Real Estate Tax Exemptions for residents who are eligible for property tax relief is currently ongoing. Some of the programs available include:

- Legally Blind
- Disabled Veterans
- Seniors 65+ years with low to moderate income
- CPA Surcharge Exemption

Anyone interested in applying for an exemption should contact the Assessor's Office at 978-887-6692, Monday – Thursday, from 8:00am - 4:30pm. Applications will be accepted until April 1, 2024, for the current tax year.

MBTA Communities Act Public Information Session – Select Board member Stickney announced that an information session sponsored by the Boxford Housing Production Plan Committee, Merrimack Valley Planning Committee, and the Boxford Housing Partnership will be held at Town Hall, Meeting Room #1 on Saturday, March 16th from 9:00 – 10:30 AM. This is a hybrid meeting accessible either in person or via Zoom. Zoom details may be found at www.boxfordma.gov/mbtainfosession.

Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes Are Due – Select Board member Costello announced that motor vehicle excise taxes are due March 18th. For payment instructions, please visit: www.boxfordma.gov/excisetax318

Small Repair Grant Trust - Select Board Chair Jessel announced that Boxford is pleased to announce its program to provide grants of up to \$7,500 to Boxford seniors of 60 years of age or older and to residents with a permanent disability. The residents must be at or below the moderate-income level of 100% of the local area median income. For more information about the program and to obtain an application, please go to the Town website at www.BoxfordMA.gov/small-repairgrant-trust, the Town Administrator's office, or the COA at 10 Elm St.

The Committee is also seeking a resident of Boxford who might be interested in serving as

51 a trustee. This person does not have to be a board or committee member in Town. If
52 interested, please contact the Town Administrator.

53
54 **St. Patrick's Day Dinner** – Select Board Chair Jessel announced that Masconomet High
55 School is hosting a dinner on Wednesday, March 20th, from 4-6 PM at Masco's Small Cafeteria.
56 Dinner and free raffles will be provided. To sign up call COA @ 978-887-3591.

57
58 **6:40 PM Public Hearing - National Grid Petition Plan #20863997, for replacement of direct**
59 **buried cable at Porter Rd and Anna's Way** - National Grid Company (North Andover), is
60 seeking permission to construct a line of underground electric conduits, including the necessary
61 sustaining and protecting fixtures under and across the public way herein named Anna's Way
62 and Porter Road– National Grid requests permission to: install approximately 2970 feet of 1- 1C
63 2 AL 15KV EPR cable, approximately 1434 feet of 4- 3", 51 feet of 2- 3" conduit, 4 heavy- duty
64 handholes and 2 primary pull boxes on Anna's Way & Porter Road, in Boxford.

65
66 Select Board Chair Jessel opened the public hearing. National Grid's Petition Plan No.
67 20863997, dated January 15, 2024, was presented, and discussed. It was stated that residents
68 will be notified, and construction may begin on May 24th and take 3-6 weeks to complete. After
69 some questions surrounding the placement of the trench, Select Board Chair Jessel closed the
70 public hearing.

71 On a **MOTION** made by **Costello**, second by **Stickney**, the Select Board
72 **VOTED** unanimously by roll call vote to approve the replacement of National Grid's
73 direct buried cable, on Porter Road and Anna's Way (Plan #20863997), as presented by
74 National Grid, and under the direction of the Town Engineer.

75
76 **6:50 PM Meeting with Waste Stream Task Force**

77 Asst. Town Administrator Sweeney provided an update on the process for a new 5-year Trash
78 and Recycling Contract- The WSTF ultimately decided to enter into an agreement with a new
79 hauler, G. Mello Disposal Corp., which is based locally out of Georgetown. G. Mello's offer was
80 the most advantageous to the Town financially, and their customer service was lauded by their
81 current municipal clients in the region.

82 The key terms of the agreement between G. Mello and the Town are as follows:

- 83 • Base cost of \$583,080 in FY25, which is to increase at a fixed rate of 4% per year.
84 • Trash disposal fee of \$100/ton, which is to increase at a fixed rate of 4% per year.
85 • Recycling through a contract between G. Mello and Casella, where the Town's recyclables are
86 taken to Casella's facility and the bill that G. Mello receives is passed along to the Town.

87
88 FY25 Trash & Recycling Budget - Boxford will save \$155 K from switching to automated
89 collection trash/recycling collection, with bi-weekly (every other week) recycling. The Town is
90 expected to realize significant savings in FY25 when compared to what the Town is anticipating
91 spending for its current contract with Waste Management in FY24. Even estimated costs in
92 FY29, the last year of the contract, are projected to be less than what the Town is anticipating
93 spending for its current contract with Waste Management in FY24.

94
95 Automated Collection and User Fees - The WSTF is making the following recommendations
96 regarding the administration of the program:

- 97 • A 64-gallon container should be offered for disposal of trash, with a 96-gallon container
98 offered for bi-weekly disposal of recycling.
99 • The Town should introduce a user fee to replace the revenue that is currently collected from
100 trash sticker sales. This alternative was recommended instead of absorbing the full cost of the

101 contract into the tax levy, which likely would have resulted in a significant property tax
102 increase.
103 • The Town should use Free Cash to purchase the standardized containers required for
104 automated collection. These containers would then become the property of the Town of Boxford
105 and are to remain with specific residences, even if ownership of the residence changes. The
106 estimated cost to purchase the required number of containers is roughly \$360,000.
107 • Households will have the ability to request multiple 64-gallon trash containers, for which they
108 will have to pay an additional annual user fee. Any resident that requests multiple trash
109 containers will have to pay a subsequent \$175 per year fee for each additional trash container
110 requested. These containers will also be purchased using the Town's Free Cash, and will also
111 be property of the Town, though the supplemental revenue from the additional user fees will
112 more than cover the cost to the Town to purchase the additional containers.
113 • Standardized "overflow bags" will be available for purchase, in the event that a household is
114 not able to fit all of their trash within their standardized containers on any given week. These
115 bags will be available for purchase at Town Hall at a price of \$6/bag.
116 The contract will hopefully be executed by 4/1/24. Stickers will continue to be used through June
117 30, 2024, with the new program set to begin July 1st. All pertinent information will be
118 communicated via a public communication plan.
119 Asst. Town Administrator Sweeney thanked the Task Force for all of their efforts as did the
120 Select Board. They also thanked Asst. Town Administrator Sweeney for his comprehensive
121 report and diligence.

122
123 **7:20 PM Meeting with DPW Superintendent/ Town Engineer**

124 FY'24 Department Goal and Objectives:
125 GOAL 1: Repair, Replacement, and Maintenance of Infrastructure
126 GOAL 2: Continue Improvement of Town Recreation Facilities
127 GOAL 3: Continue Improvement of Town Facilities

128
129 Fiscal Year 2025 Department Budget Review - The DPW's budget is level funded with
130 increases accounting for salary adjustments and benefits. FY'24 Adopted budget totaled:
131 \$356,041.00. FY25 Proposed budget total is \$397,782.00.

132
133 CIP Department Requests - Department goals for FY'25-29 include: (see project sheets for
134 specific details)

- 135 • Replace 2010 Chevrolet One Ton Dump Truck (#28)
- 136 • Replace 1988 Ford Tractor
- 137 • Mini Excavator with Brush Side Mower attachment
- 138 • Replace 2015 Chevrolet 3/4 Ton Dump Truck (#20)
- 139 • Dump/Plow Truck (#29)
- 140 • Dump/Plow Truck (#24)
- 141 • 1.5 Ton Truck with 45' Bucket
- 142 • Annual Roadway Reconstruction
- 143 • Roadway Network Assessment
- 144 • Design and Permitting of Drainage System on Balmoral
- 145 • Construction of Ipswich Rd Culvert B-82
- 146 • Construction Georgetown Rd Culvert B-129
- 147 • Design & Permitting and Construction of Middleton Rd Culvert B-203
- 148 • Construction of Culvert near #39 Glendale Road
- 149 • Construction of Culvert B-150 (Pye Brook Ln.)
- 150 • Construction of Culvert B-93 Herrick Rd.

- 151 • Main St. Retaining Wall Assessment and Design
- 152 • Relocate and replace DPW Garage (100% Design)
- 153 • Endicott Bridge Reconstruction
- 154 • Johnson Field Playground
- 155 • Lincoln Hall Well and Septic System Design
- 156 • Lincoln Hall Ceiling Paint/Exterior Paint
- 157 • Police Department Ceiling Repairs
- 158 • B2B Rail Trail North Boxford to Georgetown
- 159 • B2B Rail Trail Boxford Design
- 160 • Stiles Pond Snack Shack Roof
- 161 • Lincoln Hall Steps Repair and Exterior Work
- 162 • Police Station HVAC Duct Improvements
- 163 • HVAC Distribution at West Fire Station
- 164 • Lincoln Hall HVAC Package Units
- 165 • Lincoln Hall Interior Paint and Floors
- 166 • Jim Locke Softball Field Renovations
- 167 • Boxford Common Turf Replacement
- 168 • Koster Field Revitalization
- 169 • Morse Field Design and Revitalization
- 170 • New Irrigation Well at Boxford Commons

171 FY25 CIP total: \$4,305,000.00.

172

173 **Update on Culverts** – With dramatic cost increases of roughly 50-75%, even with various
174 funding sources (MA DOT, Fair Share 2024, ARPA, and Chapter 90) and grants (MVP Grant,
175 Ipswich River Water Shed Alliance), it may not be feasible to complete all projects within 4-5
176 years. Culverts needing repair include Glendale Road, Georgetown Road, Middleton Road,
177 Herrick Road, Pye Brook Lane and Ipswich Road.

178

179 **8:00 PM Meeting with Boxford Fire Chief**

180 **FY2025 Fire Department Goals & Objectives**

181 **GOAL 1:** Continue to Provide Fire Department Personnel with the Best Techniques, Practices
182 and Training

183 **GOAL 2:** Continue to Improve our Emergency Medical Capabilities

184 **GOAL 3:** Continue Program to Update the Department's Equipment and Facilities

185

186 Fiscal Year 2025 Department Budget Review- FY'25 Proposed budget is \$928,139.00.

187 The Fire Department's FY2025 proposed budget is a level-services budget, with funding
188 increases capturing the increased cost of employee salaries and benefits. Cost increases for
189 Uniforms represents additional members, and increases for Dues & Subscriptions represent an
190 increase by the Essex County Fire Chiefs Association.

191

192 CIP Department Requests- \$611,000.00 is requested for FY'25 for the following: (please see
193 project sheets for specific details and Fiscal Years. Items with an asterisk are for FY25)

- 194 • *Rescue 1 Replacement (may hold off on this depending on ERAC recommendation)
- 195 • *Turnout Gear
- 196 • West Fire Station Second Floor Renovations
- 197 • *SCBA Air Compressor
- 198 • *East Fire Station Kitchen
- 199 • Vehicle Stabilizers

- 200 • On Duty Car
- 201 • New Furniture
- 202 • Thermal Imager Camera
- 203 • Fire Boats
- 204 • Squad 2
- 205 • Fire Department Facilities Study
- 206 • Storage Shed
- 207 • Fire Chief's Vehicle
- 208 • Jaws of Life

209

210 **8:40 PM Report of the Town Administrator**

211 Warrant Articles for May Town Meeting – There are 22 Warrant Articles totaling \$ 46,881,615.00

212 As Taken From the Town Administrator's Town Warrant Article List they include:

213 1 Receive reports (housekeeping)

214 2 Collective Bargaining Agreement - Police Reserves

215 3 Classification Plan and Compensation Plan

216 4 FY 2025 Operating Budget

217 5 FY25 Budget Override - Elementary Schools

218 6 FY25 Budget Override - Masco

219 7 Revoke Opioid Settlement Stabilization Fund

220 8 Annual curbside solid waste collection fee

221 9 Omnibus Capital Article

222 IT Hardware

223 Automated Trash Collection Bins

224 Replace 2010 Chevrolet One Ton Dump Truck

225 Mini Excavator with Brush Side Mower attachment

226 Design & Permitting of Balmoral Drainage System

227 Lincoln Hall Painting

228 Lincoln Hall Interior Paint and Flooring

229 Police Station Ceiling Repairs

230 Boxford Common Irrigation Well

231 Fire Department Turnout Gear

232 FD SCBA Compressor

233 Election Tabulators

234 Cole and Spofford Flooring Replacement next phase

235 Cole HVAC Electrification Feasibility Study

236 Cole School ADA Site Improvements

237 9 Fund Consulting Services for Emergency Response Advisory Committee

238 10 Debt: DPW Facility Design

239 11 Debt: Spofford HVAC Electrification Design

240 12 Masco Capital - \$5M Designer + OPM (Debt Exclusion)

241 13 Masco Capital - Priority 3

242 14 CPC: Annual Budget and Reserves

243 15 CPC: Stiles Pond

244 16 CPC: Johnson Playground

245 17 Property Acquisition (Donation)

246 18 Remove By-Law Computer Advisory Committee

247 19 By-Law: Adoption of Specialized Opt-in Building Code

248 20 By-Law Recreation Committee Amendment

249 21 By-Law: Town Administrator

250 22 Zoning bylaw: accessory dwelling unit amendment

251
252 **Aggregation Update** – Bids will be in tomorrow. The outlook is favorable as it appears the rates
253 Boxford will receive will beat those of National Grid by \$.05.

254
255 **Update on Changes to Employee Health Insurance Plans-** There will be an agreement in
256 place to be voted on and signed by the Select Board at the next meeting.

257
258 Select Board Meeting Schedule - The Town Administrator reviewed a proposed schedule for the
259 remainder of Select Board meetings in 2024 as follows:

- 260 • March 25
- 261 • April 1
- 262 • April 8*, 22
- 263 • May 6, 20 (1st and 3rd Monday)
- 264 • June 10, 24
- 265 • July 8
- 266 • August 12
- 267 • September 9, 23
- 268 • October 7, 21 (1st and 3rd Monday)
- 269 • November 4, 18 (1st and 3rd Monday)
- 270 • December 2, 16 (1st and 3rd Monday)

271
272 *April 8th would be 35 days before May 14th Town Meeting and the Warrant would be finalized
273 at that meeting.

274
275 **8:55 PM Routines**

276 Appointments – after introductions, background information and interest discussion, the Select
277 Board voted to appoint the following:

278
279 Nick Albina, and Nathaniel Hunt, to the Recreation Committee
280 On a **MOTION** made by **Stickney**, second by **Costello**, the Select Board **VOTED**
281 unanimously to appoint Nick Albina and Nathaniel Hunt to the Recreation Committee,
282 with terms ending 6/30/25.

283
284 Stefanie Robin Siegel, to the Historic Districts Commission / Historical Commission
285 On a **MOTION** made by **Stickney**, second by **Chow-Menzer**, the Select Board **VOTED**
286 unanimously to appoint Stefanie Robin Siegel as an alternate to the Historic Districts
287 Commission/Historical Commission, with term ending 6/30/26.

288 Approval of Minutes for Select Board meetings of January 8, 22, and February 26, 2024.

289
290 On a **MOTION** made by **Stickney**, second by **Costello**, the Select Board **VOTED**
291 unanimously to approve the minutes of January 8, 2024, as amended.

292 On a **MOTION** made by **Stickney**, second by **Costello**, the Select Board **VOTED**
293 unanimously to approve the minutes of January 22, 2024, as presented.

294 On a **MOTION** made by **Stickney**, second by **Costello**, the Select Board **VOTED**
295 unanimously, with Chair Jessel abstaining, to approve the minutes of February 26,
296 2024, as amended.

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9:05 PM Adjourn

On a **MOTION** made by **Stickney**, second by **Chow-Menzer**, the Select Board **VOTED** unanimously to adjourn.

Next Meeting – March 25, 2024, 5:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Donna M Grieco
Minutes Recorder

311 **Documents either distributed to the Select Board before the meeting in a packet or at the**
312 **meeting:**

- 313
314 Agenda
315 New Call to Order
316 Announcement: Real Estate Tax Exemption
317 Announcement: MBTA Communities Act Public Information Session
318 Announcement: Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes Are Due
319 Announcement: Small Repair Grant Trust Program
320 Announcement: St. Patrick's Dinner
321 Town of Boxford Public Hearing Notice regarding National Grid's request for permission to
322 construct a line of underground electric conduits, and supporting documents
323 Memo from Asst. Town Administrator - Report of the Waste Stream Task Force
324 DPW Budget and CIP Requests with Project Detail Sheets
325 Letter from Fire Chief Geiger relative to a proposed staff increase plan
326 Annual Town Meeting Article List
327 Memo from Town Administrator to select Board relative to proposed schedule for Select Board
328 meetings in 2024
329 Form submission from: Board / Committee Volunteer Form from Nick Albina
330 Form submission from: Board / Committee Volunteer Form from Nathaniel Hunt
331 Letter from Stefanie Robin Siegel relative to serving on the Historic Districts Commission /
332 Historical Commission
333 Draft Meeting Minutes – January 8, 2024
334 Draft Meeting Minutes – January 22, 2024
335 Draft Meeting Minutes – February 26, 2024
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