



## **Town Administrator's Report Select Board Meeting of February 15, 2022**

Matthew Coogan

**Topics for Meeting with State Legislative Delegation** – Attached is a memo to our state legislative delegation, including State Senator Bruce Tarr, Representative Lenny Mirra, and Representative Tram Nguyen. It includes legislative priorities for the Town of Boxford, as well as capital projects that could potentially qualify for state funds.

**FY2023 Budget, [Capital Improvement Program](#) Review Schedule** - As we begin the budget review process for FY2023, I'd like to share with you the updated Finance Committee Schedule and a proposed schedule of reviews over the next several Select Board meetings. Please note that at this point I expect the Board will meet on March 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss the Rt 133 Washington Street/ Main Street intersection, and potentially other budget and capital items. I am in the process of confirming department attendance for these meeting dates.

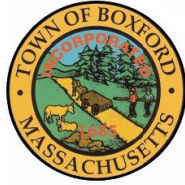
### Finance Committee Budget Meetings Tentative schedule:

- February 8<sup>th</sup>: Revenues, Police, Fire
- February 22<sup>nd</sup>: Communications, Health, CPC
- March 1<sup>st</sup>: DPW, PBC
- March 8<sup>th</sup>: Masco, Elementary Schools
- March 15<sup>th</sup>: if needed
- March 22<sup>nd</sup>: Vote to support all warrant articles
- March 29<sup>th</sup>: if needed

### Select Board Meetings Tentative schedule:

- February 28:
  - Budgets/ Capital
    - Finance Director Budget Update
    - Communications
    - Health
    - Police
  - PD Update
  - Proposed Warrant Articles, including Free Cash Appropriations

- March 14
  - Tri-Town Council Update
  - Budgets/ Capital
    - Fire
    - Elementary Schools
    - Department of Public Works & Permanent Building Committee
- March 21
  - Rt 133/ Washington and Main St Intersection Update
  - Budget/ Capital (if necessary)
- March 28
  - Community Preservation Committee Update, Warrant Articles
  - Finalize Capital Improvement Program
  - Personnel Board – compensation plan, rates FY22
  - Review Warrant Articles
  - Votes to support warrant articles
- April 4
  - Review Warrant Articles
  - Vote to support all warrant articles
  - Close Warrant



**TOWN OF BOXFORD**  
**Office of the Town Administrator**  
7A Spofford Road  
Boxford, MA 01921

**DATE:** Monday, February 14, 2022

**TO:** Honorable State Senator Bruce Tarr, Representative Lenny Mirra, Representative Tram Nguyen

**FROM:** Matt Coogan, Town Administrator

**RE: Boxford Select Board Meeting with State Legislative Delegation**

Thank you in advance to our state legislative delegation for attending the February 15, 2022 Boxford Select Board meeting. The Select Board is looking forward to the discussion. In preparation, the Town has put together the following list of Town priorities, both for legislation and for the FY23 State budget. In addition, the Board is interested in understanding the legislative priorities for both the State Senate and House of Representatives for this year.

Town Priorities:

- **Increase to Chapter 90 Funds:** The annual allocation to municipalities from the state for road construction has overall been static for many years. Boxford could use an increase to continue maintaining our paving program for the 100+ miles of roadway. Additional funding could also help in repairing and replacing culverts, guard rails, and other roadway infrastructure.
- **Massachusetts Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission and Police Reform:** *An Act Relative to Justice, Equity and Accountability in Law Enforcement in the Commonwealth* and the associated required certifications will eventually lead to the phasing out of reserve officers. Smaller communities like Boxford rely on their reserves for daily operations, specifically covering shifts. Phasing out the reserve officer program will increase operating costs for the Boxford Police Department, including expanding the need to hire additional full-time officers.
- **Modernize Statutory Newspaper Noticing Requirements:** Until recently, the Town has been running legal notices through our local paper, the Chronical Transcript. However, the paper no longer has a printed edition. According to state law, Towns are required to run notices and legal ads in a newspaper "of general circulation in the city or town where the activity is proposed". It is more costly to advertise with the Eagle Tribune, a more regional paper which has circulation, albeit limited, in Boxford. With more local newspapers reducing or ending circulation and going to web based only, the noticing requirements should be looked at by the legislature.
- **COVID Legislation:** The \$101 million Covid bill signed by Governor Baker includes an extension of virtual public meetings through July 15, 2022. The ability to hold hybrid public meetings

beyond July 15<sup>th</sup> could improve public participation and we would like to discuss this possibility with the legislators.

- **MBTA Communities:** Boxford Land Use Director Ross Povenmire will be attending Tuesday night's meeting to present on the MBTA Communities program and will be available during the legislative discussion. Boxford is preparing to provide public comment by the end of March deadline. The Select Board would like to raise some concerns about the impact of the multi-family zoning density requirements to our legislators.

As far as funding requests, there are items in the next few years of the Town's draft 5-year [Capital Improvement Program](#). The Town will be actively pursuing outside funding sources to finance these projects, including state funds. Some of the larger projects include:

- New DPW Facility: \$700,000 design + \$10M construction
- Culverts: \$1.4M for 4 culverts in need of critical repair
- Cole School site project: \$2.7M for ADA compliance, drainage, and circulation
- Rte. 133 Washington St and Main St intersection improvement: funding for additional design (cost TBD).
- Rail Trail: The Town submitted a MassTrails grant application for Boxford Rail Trail 25% design. Additional funding will be needed to bring the project to full design.
- New Communications CAD/ RMS Software: \$375,000 plus annual license and maintenance fees

Over the years state funding has been secured by our legislative delegation to fund various projects and initiatives, including recently fire department equipment, and for the Center at 10 Elm project. This year, the Town will be pursuing funding for technical assistance to develop a reuse plan for 4 Middleton Road. We are thankful to our state legislators for their continued support for the Town of Boxford.