



## **Town Administrator's Report Select Board Meeting for August 7, 2023**

Matthew Coogan

### **Ciera Smith Proclamation, Library Children's Room Mural**

The Select Board will present a proclamation to Ciara Smith to recognize her beautiful mural at the Boxford Town Library Children's Room. Ciara completed this mural as a Masco Senior in May of 2022. More information on the mural, including a time-elapse video capturing Ciara's work, can be found on the [Boxford Town Library website](#). Congratulations, Ciara, and thank you for your contribution!

### **Charlie Killam Commemoration, Senator Bruce Tarr**

Senator Bruce Tarr will be joining the family of Charlie Killam at Monday night's meeting to commemorate Charlie's years of service to the Town of Boxford, including serving as a Select Board member from 1973 to 1982 and 2012 to 2015. Charlie passed away on June 22 at the age of 87. Senator Tarr arranged for a session of the State Senate to be adjourned in his honor.

### **Recognition of Boxford Police Department Accreditation**

Chief Riter is pleased to announce that the Boxford Police Department achieved state accreditation. The executive board of the [Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission \(MPAC\)](#) voted unanimously to award the department this honor at their meeting held on June 21, 2023. This achievement validates the Department's commitment to the community by maintaining the highest policing standards set forth by the MPAC. Chief Riter like to thank Lieutenant Matthew Dupont, Officer Kurtis Anderson and Officer David Barker who were instrumental in the process. Every Boxford Police Officer in the department did their part to see this process through completion. We'd also like to thank Scott Wilson for his volunteer hours as Community Liasson to the process.

### **10 Elm Community Committee**

Christine Dean, Chair of the 10 Elm Community Committee, will attend the August 7<sup>th</sup> Select Board meeting to discuss the Committee's recommendations on how to coordinate community programs and events at 10 Elm, in addition to the offerings by the COA. In the meantime, the Committee provided [a document](#) that outlines their recommendations.

### **Meeting with Masconomet Regional School District School Committee, Boxford Representatives**

The Select Board invited the Boxford Representatives from the Masco Regional School Committee to attend the August 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. The discussion will focus on the Committee's plan to vet and review the recent [5-Year Capital Plan for the Regional District](#), including the public engagement process. In

addition, the Select Board and Masco Reps. will review the process for filling a recent vacancy on the Committee, in accordance with the [Regional Agreement, Section IC](#).

### **Waste Stream Task Force Select Board Designee**

Assistant Town Administrator Brendan Sweeney reconvened the [Waste Stream Task Force](#) on July 24th.

The group unanimously recommends the Town go to bid for a new 5-year trash contract with automated collection service to start July 1, 2024. Brendan and I recommend the Select Board designate a representative to join and participate in the Task Force meetings. It currently consists of 2 representatives from the Finance Committee, Board of Health, and Recycling Committee. The Task Force discussed sending out a town-wide survey in September to get input on size of barrels, usage, etc. to help prepare a spec for an Invitation to Bid. The goal is to have the IFB ready before the end of the calendar year.

### **DPW Facility Phase 2 Schematic Design**

Chris Olbrot and his staff are putting together an RFP for the next phase for the new DPW facility, schematic design. Town Meeting appropriated \$250,000 for this phase. Last night, the Permanent Building Committee met and voted to add four temporary committee members for project. The [PBC's By-Law](#) states that "two temporary members shall be appointed who are members, professional employees of the Town, and/or designees of the appointed or elected board or committee sponsoring or requesting a construction or major maintenance project". In addition, for a major project with "multiple buildings with simultaneous and coordinated design and construction... in addition to the two temporary members from the sponsoring committees cited above who have full membership and voting rights during deliberation on their respective building's project, an additional two temporary members shall be appointed at large." On Monday night's meeting agenda is a discussion by the Board on identifying the four temporary members to the PBC for the new DPW Design Phase 2 project.

### **Kelsey Road "No Left Turn" Proposal**

In June, Chief Riter, DPW Superintendent/ Town Engineer Chris Olbrot, and I met with five Kelsey Rd residents to discuss traffic on Kelsey Rd. As you all know, GPS devices put drivers unnecessarily on Kelsey Rd as the connecting route between Rt. 97 and Ipswich Rd. Pond Street runs just parallel to Kelsey and is the preferred safer route, but Kelsey must be seconds faster than the GPS algorithm places cars on a road not designed for commuter traffic.

DPW Superintendent Chris Olbrot submitted [a memo](#) outlining a proposal to install "no left turn" signs on Ipswich Rd and Rt. 97 at Kelsey Road. If the Board like to proceed, I recommend placing this item on a September meeting agenda and have Chris provide a full presentation.

### **Municipal ADA grant**

The State's [ADA grant program](#) opened this week, with applications due mid-September. Municipalities can apply for two projects. Brendan and I recommend submitting an application for ADA improvements at the restroom facility at Stiles Pond, and ADA improvements at Cole School. The Boxford Athletic Association, the operator at the Stiles Pond snack shack, requested the Town partner with the BAA to install an adult changing station and other ADA improvements. For the Cole School, Chris Olbrot developed a scope of work to specifically address the AAB violations on campus. This week, our paving

contractor EJ Paving provided Chris an estimated project cost of \$75,000. He will be sending a memo to School Administration on the cost shortly, and I have mentioned the grant program as a potential funding mechanism. If the Board supports this plan, my office will work on submitting the applications before the September 15<sup>th</sup> deadline.

### **Dorman Property Closing**

As of August 2, 2023, the Town of Boxford officially owns the Dorman Property. The Deed was recorded at the Registry of Deeds as Book 41695, Page 274. The purchase price of \$1.45M was funded entirely by a CPA appropriation approved at May 9, 2023 Town Meeting.

### **Adaptive Reuse of Buildings Advisory (ARBA) Committee**

StudioLuz's submitted their [final report](#) to the ARBA Committee. The ARBA Committee has tentatively scheduled a public meeting for StudioLuz to present their final report on Wednesday, September 13. The final report includes recommended future uses for 188 Washington Street and 4 Middleton Rd, as well as next steps. The recommendations are based on site visits, community engagement, and a market study. All public documents, including the final report and the market study are posted on the project website, [boxfordma.gov/villagecenters](http://boxfordma.gov/villagecenters). The ARBA Committee will meet again on August 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **Fiscal Year 2024 Work Plan and Priorities**

I'd like to follow up with the Board on our discussion at the last meeting to finalize FY24 priorities for the Select Board and staff. The [latest draft](#) is in the agenda packet. I would like to post on the Select Board's webpage once it's finalized.

### **State Budget**

The State Legislature passed a \$56.2M FY24 budget on Tuesday. It is now on the Governor's desk for her review and signature. Some highlights of the FY24 budget include local aid increase, permanent funding for universal school meals, increased access to higher education, and full funding for the third year of the six-year implementation plan of the Student Opportunity Act. Boxford and Masconomet are set to receive \$1,855,093 and \$5,451,699, respectively, in Chapter 70 funding, an increase of \$43,260 and \$96,780 from the FY23 budget. Boxford will also receive \$581,138 in unrestricted Local Aid, an increase of \$18,020 from the FY23 budget.

Additionally, the Boxford Legislative Delegation was able to include \$140,000 for Boxford projects and initiatives:

- \$100,000 for repair or replacement of culverts
- \$25,000 for the procurement of CPR machines for the Fire Department
- \$15,000 for electronic voting handheld machines for town meetings

We thank our legislative delegation, Senator Bruce Tarr, Representative Tram Nguyen, and Representative Adrienne Ramos, for their support.

#### **4 Middleton Road Exterior Painting**

The Town appropriated funding to paint the exterior of the former COA building two Town Meeting's ago. The PBC met last night and agreed that the building should be painted. Painting will help seal and protect the envelop of the building while the Town works on a plan for the future use of the facility.

#### **Engine 1 Visit**

Chief Geiger and Capt. Brown visited the HME factory in Wyoming, MI a few weeks ago to inspect the new Engine 1. There are a few necessary adjustments needed, then the truck will be transported to New Hampshire for lettering. We expect delivery in the early fall.



*1: New Engine 1 for Boxford Fire Department*

#### **Spofford School Electrification Feasibility Study**

Tri-Town School Administration issued a [Request for Proposals \(RFP\)](#) for professional architectural and engineering design services to assess the feasibility of electrifying the HVAC system at Spofford School. Proposals are due August 24th. Select Board Chair Barbara Jessel, Sustainability Committee Chair Gary Martin, and myself are working with the School Administration and School Committee Chair Carol Hubbard on this effort.

#### **Project Lifesaver**

You may recall Chief Riter made arrangements to have an interested Boxford family participate in the [Project Lifesaver](#) program administered through the Town of North Andover. Project Lifesaver is a search and rescue program designed for "at risk" individuals who are prone to wandering. The program includes a bracelet device worn by an individual that can be tracked by the Police Department. The North Andover Police Department has generously offered to incorporate a Boxford family into the program.

### **10 Elm Power Issues**

We had a few electrical issues at 10 Elm this week. First, there was a sensor issue that was triggering multiple trouble alarms in the building's fire system. Chris Olbrot arranged for a technician from the installer to replace a faulty sensor on Wednesday. In addition, yesterday there was a power issue in the kitchen. The Town electrician went to 10 Elm today and restored power. Apparently, an emergency button may have been inadvertently pressed that killed the power, and it was reset. Chris notified PBC at their meeting last night of these issues.

### **National Grid spraying on Rail Trail**

My office received a few inquiries on recent brush clearing and spraying on the National Grid right of way that is commonly referred to as the Rail Trail. This is work arranged by National Grid as part of their Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) plan. National Grid has a state wide general permit for the use of herbicides for the maintenance of their right-of-ways. They send the town courtesy notices periodically but the spraying activities are not subject to local permits. The Select Board, the Board of Health, and the Conservation Commission all received notice from National Grid of this work in advance. National Grid submits annual plans to the state that can be accessed with [this link](#).

### **Endicott Bridge Coordination Meeting**

Chris Olbrot and I met with our Topsfield counterparts to discuss the design to replace the bridge Endicott Rd bridge superstructure. Boxford received a \$100,000 small bridge repair design grant and has been working with TEC. TEC expects design to be completed by the end of the calendar year and are currently at 25%. The new superstructure will have steel guardrail and be a single, pre-cast concrete span. It will be the same dimensions as the existing bridge, although the sidewalk on the northbound side will be widened from 4 to 5 feet. Part of the coordination is to fund the permitting process. Since the bridge spans over Fish Brook, the design will need to be permitted by both town's conservation commissions as well as the state's Chapter 91 process. TEC estimates the permitting cost to be between \$60,000 and \$80,000. It is anticipated those costs would be split evenly by each town. For Boxford, the plan would be to appropriate funding at May 2024 Town Meeting or use Chapter 90 funds. TEC will have a better idea of cost when design is completed. It will most likely be in the range of \$1M. An additional MassDOT small bridge grant of \$500,000 could be obtained to partially pay for construction. There may be other grant opportunities as well. Any cost not covered by grants would be shared equally by both towns. We'd most likely be pursuing both funding and grants in the 2025 Town Meeting cycle for FY26.

### **Roundtable Discussion at September 11<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting**

Chairs of the Town's Boards and Committees will be receiving an invitation to attend a roundtable discussion at the September 11<sup>th</sup> Select Board meeting. This will be an opportunity for boards and committees to provide updates and spur communication between the various boards and committees.