



## Town Administrator's Report Select Board Meeting for November 6, 2023

Matthew Coogan

### **DPW Update**

DPW Superintendent/ Town Engineer Chris Olbrot will attend the November 6<sup>th</sup> meeting to provide a department update. [His written update is available in the agenda packet material and through this link.](#) Chris is also proposing some changes to the snow plow contractor rate sheet, [also included in the agenda packet.](#)

### **Lifting of Hiring Freeze, COA Outreach & Activities Coordinator**

There is an opening for the Outreach Coordinator position at the COA, and Director Pam Blaquiere has been working on revising the job description broaden the tasks to include coordinating activities. This is based on the existing needs of the COA, and as a result of having the social worker position staffed. Pam will attend the November 6<sup>th</sup> meeting to present a revised job description for the Board to consider.

### **Applications for FY25 CPA Projects**

The Boxford Community Preservation Committee will be holding its annual Public Hearing on Tuesday, November 14<sup>th</sup> by Zoom. The purpose of this Hearing is to obtain comments from the public on the needs, possibilities and resources of the Town of Boxford regarding community preservation possibilities and resources. The Zoom connection information will be posted on the Town of Boxford website calendar several days prior to the hearing. Applications for funding to be considered during the May 2024 Town Meeting must be received by November 14, 2023. It is expected that the applicant will be present at the November 14<sup>th</sup> public hearing.

The Massachusetts Community Preservation Coalition web page at <https://www.communitypreservation.org/> includes information on determining whether a potential project is eligible. Potential applicants can also contact Ross Povenmire at [rpovenmire@town.boxford.ma.us](mailto:rpovenmire@town.boxford.ma.us). CPC funds cannot be used for maintenance, for the purchase of artificial turf, or to replace existing operating funds.

	Open Space	Historic	Recreation	Housing
Acquire	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Create	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Preserve	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Support	No	No	No	Yes

Rehabilitate and/or Restore	Yes, if acquired or created with CPA funds	Yes	Yes (new 7/8/2012)	Yes, if acquired or created with CPA funds
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The Stiles Pond Advisory Committee (SPAC) plans on submitting an application to hire a consultant to assess lake health, identify threats to water quality and recreational use, and develop a plan with active measures to rehabilitate/preserve Stile Pond for recreation and open space values. Possible actions include new regulations, changes in land use practices, and stormwater management measures. Representatives of SPAC will attend the Select Board meeting to further discuss this initiative. In the agenda packet Board members will find a legal opinion from Town Counsel confirming that this study would be eligible to receive CPA funds.

### **Veterans Day Festivities**

The Boxford Veterans’ Day Ceremony will be held on Saturday, November 11, 2023 at 11:00 AM at the James Melvin Green on Elm Street.

In addition, we’d like to congratulate our Regional Veterans’ Services Department, which has been awarded The North Shore Chamber of Commerce’s Minuteman Service Award. It recognizes “remarkable acts of dedication and outstanding leadership on behalf of our military or veterans through volunteering, advocacy, community projects or other actions”. The award will be presented to VSO Joe LeBlanc at the North Shore Chamber’s “Salute to Veterans” breakfast on Thursday, Nov. 9 at Danversport.

### **October 25<sup>th</sup> Public Safety Information Session**

Our Public Safety Team hosted an information session on the 3-Tiered Emergency Response program on October 25. There were about 20 people in attendance. Chief Geiger put together a very thorough PowerPoint presentation. The presentation and the recording of the meeting is available on the project website, [boxfordma.gov/EmergencyResponse](http://boxfordma.gov/EmergencyResponse). It was also posted on the [Town’s Facebook page](#).

### **Masco Student Enrollment**

The Masconomet Regional School District Administration has provided the Final Residential Enrollment Summary certified with DESI. The numbers will be used to apportion the FY25 operating budget to the member Towns. Overall district enrollment has decreased to 1,558 in October 2023 from 1,595 in October 2022, and Boxford’s enrollment has decreased to 587 from 600 the previous year. However, Boxford’s share of district enrollment has increased by 0.16%.

### **Fire Engine Procurement Updates**

The new Engine One was delivered to the Town last month and is now active at the West Station. Funding for this engine was approved at the 2021 Town Meeting. It took roughly 2 years to procure the truck due to supply chain issues.

We worked with Chief Geiger to conduct an Invitation for Bids for a new Engine 6 “mini pumper” truck and are working on formally awarding the bid. The sole bid was \$354,000, significantly lower than we expected the mini-pumper to cost; \$550,000 was approved by at May Town Meeting for this

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expenditure. Chief Gieger was able to work with the winning vendor to spec out a mini pumper that already been assembled and meets all department requirements. The result is a significant savings and a significantly reduced lead time to receive delivery of the vehicle.

The Fire Department is also working on the design and assembly of a new Engine 4.

### **DPW Facility - RFQ for Designer Services**

The Town's Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for schematic design services for a new DPW facility is available on the Town's [open bids webpage](#). Proposals will be due on November 17th. The Permanent Building Committee will then undertake a selection process. The goal is for the Town to be contracted with a design team by the start of the calendar year.

### **Cell Service Issues**

The Select Board has prioritized developing a strategy to improve cellular service in Town, particularly in the East Village and portions of Main Street in West Boxford. The Board has discussed the successful deployment of small cell antennae on utility poles in North Andover as an alternative to installing cell towers in town. Through North Andover I have reached out to contacts at Verizon who were part of the small cell antennae deployment in an effort to start discussions on the possibility of deploying this technology in Town.

### **Update of Town Website**

We had a kickoff meeting with our project manager at CivicPlus for our website update. As mentioned, we will be doing an overhaul of our website, migrating it to a new platform that will improve the user interface as well as staff's availability to manage and edit the site. We will be assembling a group of high-user staff to help in the process. It should take about 8 months to complete the full transition.

### **Town of Boxford Fall 2023 Newsletter**

The Fall 2023 edition of the Boxford Community Newsletter was released last week and available on the [Town website](#).

### **Library Director Recruitment**

Kevin Bourque's last day as Boxford Public Library Director is Friday, November 3rd. Kevin led the library through Covid, as well as the renovation of the Library at Town Hall. We thank him for his eight years of service to the community and wish him the best of luck in his new position as the Newburyport Public Library Director.

Robyn Luna, Head of Circulation, has kindly agreed to serve as the Interim Director. We will be posting the permanent position the week of November 6<sup>th</sup>.