



SELECT BOARD

Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 15, 2021

7:30 PM

Town Hall Room 204 with In-Person and Virtual Public Participation

Present: David Martin, Jim Snyder-Grant, Fran Arsenault, Himaja Nagireddy; Town Manager John S. Mangiaratti, and Assistant Town Manager Mark Hald

Absent: Dean Charter

Mr. Martin called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. Ms. Nagireddy participated remotely due to a geographical location greater than 20 miles.

I. Regular Business

1. Resident Concerns

Mr. Martin stated there will be a three minute limit for each speaker.

Jennifer Morazes, Central Street, requesting to hire a full-time renter advocate representing the Acton Committee on Housing and Climate. Ms. Morazes read from a prepared statement which is included in the Extra Information folder in the meeting packet on Docushare.

Alissa Nicol, School Street noted that some previous speakers at the 11/1 meeting had described the speech by Madeline Cruz of 10/18 as lasting nearly an hour, and noted that Ms. Cruz' actual speaking time was 35 minutes. Ms. Nicol read from a prepared statement which is included in the Extra Information folder in the meeting packet on Docushare.

Rebecca Wilson, Wingate Lane – commented on a public comment at the November 1, 2021 speaking on behalf of the Acton Housing Authority (AHA) regarding accusations regarding a resident that spoke to the Board on October 18, 2021 meeting and commenting on his abuse of power as an AHA Commissioner and read from a prepared statement which is included in the Extra Information in the meeting packet on Docushare.

David Fair, 490 Great Road – commented that every family in Acton needs to be treated with dignity and respect and have basic levels of safety and cleanliness. Feels that the AHA is treating residents with disrespect.

Madeline Cruz – commented on her treatment by the AHA and a member of the Commission disrespecting her at the last Board meeting with the comment of the Commission member supporting the AHA. Ms. Cruz commented that she feels as though she is being disrespected and requests to be treated equally.

Bob Van Meter, Half Moon Hill – supports the request of hiring a tenant advocate. Danny Factor, Davis Road – concerned for tenants and their lack of ability to access pro bono legal aid.



Stella Ko – commented on support for fairness in town and supports hiring a renter advocate.

Alia Layne, Townhouse Lane – expressed disappointment toward what was stated by the AHA member and the Select Board; feels there isn't much being done to remedy the situation for Madeline Cruz.

Terra, West Acton – supports Madeline Cruz and hiring a rental advocate.

2. Chair Update/Town Manager Update/Members Minutes

No updates or Minutes were presented or discussed.

II. Public Hearings

3. 7:35 PM Gas Main Petitions, National Grid

Mr. Martin read the public hearing notice. Representing National Grid was Mary Maloney. The property owners at Martin Street (Boston Area Gleaners) and Quarry Road at Mirasol Circle (private developer) are requesting natural gas hookups requiring a street cut into town-owned roadways.

The subdivision off Quarry Road already has been built and connections are already in place to hook up to natural gas.

Mr. Snyder-Grant suggests implementing a policy that discourages the use of natural gas for new construction and rehabbing current buildings, and providing education for alternative measures such as providing electrical services instead of natural gas and working with the Building and Planning Division when subdivision applications are submitted to the Planning Board.

Judith Aronstein, Gregory Lane – member of Mothers Out Front expressed discouragement that there was a lost opportunity to work with the developer on energy alternatives to natural gas.

Alissa Nicol, School Street – mentioned that residents have been contacting National Grid for three years regarding a gas leak on Stow Street from Robbins Street to Liberty.

Debra Simes – talked to the site supervisor at Mirasol Circle and the project had already been approved so it won't be realistic to deny the gas permit, but suggests that developers are informed of alternatives to natural gas. Ms. Simes reported that a member of Boston Area Gleaners said they will put their project on hold until the spring. Ms. Simes recommends the Board consider putting the approval request on hold while the Boston Area Gleaners consider other heating alternatives.

Terra, West Acton – requests people stop calling it "natural" gas because it is a toxic chemical that poisons people and requests the Board deny the connection at Mirasol Circle.

Karen Watkins, Strawberry Hill Road – commented that it would make sense to have the Building Division and Planning Division to offer information regarding energy alternatives.

Danny Factor, Davis Road – commented that the town doesn't have to wait for the State to make the decision regarding the town meeting vote to ban fossil fuel connections to new construction and major rehabilitation projects.



Stella Ko, Guswood Road – thankful the Town declared a climate emergency and should take extraordinary measures and deny gas main installation petitions.

Ms. Arsenault moved to close the public hearing. The motion failed due to lack of second.

Ms. Arsenault moved to approve the gas main petition on Quarry Road at Mirasol Circle. The motion failed due to lack of a second.

Mr. Snyder-Grant moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to continue the hearing to December 20, 2021 at 7:35 PM and voted unanimously by roll call vote, 4-0.

4. 7:40 PM Amendment to Traffic Rules and Order, High Street at Parker Street
Mr. Martin read the public hearing notice. Corey York, DPW Director gave a presentation to the Board regarding the proposed amendment to the traffic rules and order for the intersection of High Street and Prospect Street proposing to install four-way stop signs.
Terra, West Acton – in favor of a four-way stop and inquired about the cost of the study.
Mr. Snyder-Grant moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to close the public hearing and approved unanimously by roll call vote 4-0. Mr. Snyder-Grant moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to approve the proposed stop signs on High Street at the intersection of Prospect Street and approved unanimously by roll call vote 4-0.

III. Sewer Commissioners

5. Request from Acton Water District Related to Use of Waste Water Treatment Plant as a PFAS Mitigation Measure
Mr. Mangiaratti updated the Board on the Water District's efforts along with Town staff to come up with several ideas to mitigate PFAS in the water supply, one of which would be to discharge into the waste water treatment plant. Mr. Martin expressed his non-support of this requested plan and noted that PFAS is currently not regulated in waste water, but could be in the future, and that clean water is easier to filter for PFAS utilizing activated charcoal. The Board took no action in order to wait for a time when Water District staff could be available to describe the request and answer questions.

IV. New/Special Business

6. Presentation of the Town Manager's FY23-32 Capital Plan (Joint Meeting with the Finance Committee)
The Finance Committee moved and seconded to enter into the Select Board meeting. Mr. Mangiaratti presented his proposed FY23-32 Capital Improvement Plan. Mr. Mangiaratti noted that in the past five years, the town has invested over 4.5% of the total budget in Capital projects in 2018, it increased in 2021 due to construction of the new fire station, the construction of the twin school, and the debt override for the Minuteman High School. The total Free Cash projects recommended budget is \$637,000, and the total recommended General Fund debt projects budget is



\$2,685,000 with an estimated FY23 debt service cost of \$410,029. Members of the Finance Committee asked several questions including plans for renovations for the existing fire stations, to consider leasing laptops as opposed to purchasing for the Police Department, concerns about software upkeep for the regional emergency communication center in the next 10 years, if the new Infrastructure Bill would have funds to consider utilizing the availability to fund some of the larger general fund debt projects, if the Capital Improvement Plan will be part of the Acton Leadership Group plan, if the Town Manager would provide information if certain funding (from federal grants) will be assigned to some of the larger projects, provide the Finance Committee a scorecard of where projects are in terms of completion in the future, and questions about the total cost from the capital study conducted in 2015, question about implementing a bicycle plan alongside a sidewalk plan. Mr. Mangiaratti explained that the previous Capital Plans only involved buildings, where the current CIP includes future studies. The full presentation is available in the Extra Information folder for the November 15, 2021 meeting.

Charlie Kadlec, Paul Revere Road – asked if any existing projects are included on the current debt override and if any debt override is planned, how it would impact the taxpayer.

Terra, West Acton – questioned what the total is on the spreadsheet for the long-term capital plan. Mr. Mangiaratti answered to \$78.6 million, and questioned if the Town Manager was planning for needs as the population increases such as land purchases, and the need for more schools.

Janet Adachi, Simon Hapgood Lane – congratulates the Town Manager on the Capital Plan proposal and allowing for more public comment.

The Town Manager agreed to answer additional questions that might come in by email, including additional questions from the Finance Committee that would be sent in by the Chair of the Finance Committee.

The Finance Committee moved, seconded and voted to exit this portion of the Select Board meeting.

7. Review Conceptual Plans for Asa Parlin House Rehabilitation

Karle Packard from Red Hawk Architecture and Martha Lyon, Landscape Designer from Martha Lyon Design presented the proposed, conceptual plans. Mr. Snyder-Grant asked if electrical outlets would be in place to use an induction stove or microwave during events that include hot food.. Mr. Packard would have to go back and look at current building codes. The main room will have a divider wall installed to accommodate two meetings at the same time. Mr. Martin expressed concern about the overall utility of the plan and the intended addition.

Alissa Nicol, School Street – supportive of the project and asked about any changes to the design since the presentation to the Design Review Board. Ms. Lyon redesigned the parking lot space, took out some landscaping from the front of the house to make it more visible from Newtown Road, and a walkway from Town Hall parking lot.



Adam Nolde, Broadview Street – appreciates the venue and echoes concerns about having a cultural center without food, and having a large meeting in a small space, concerned about the cost of the project.

Jason Cole, questioned the maximum capacity of the indoor portion of the facility. Mr. Mangiaratti submitted an application for Community Preservation funds, but needs a final design to complete the application. The majority of the Board is in favor of moving forward with the current design presented.

8. Board to Vote to Discontinue Use of the Accu-Vote Optical Scan Tabulator and Accept the ImageCast Precinct Tabulator for Town Elections

Town Clerk Eva Szkaradek informed the Board that the current voting machines were purchased in 2007 and is requesting the Board to vote to discontinue the Accu-Vote Optical Scan Tabulator and vote to accept the ImageCast Precinct Tabulator as the ImageCast Precinct Tabulator provides better security. **Mr. Snyder-Grant moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to replace the Accu-Vote optical Scan Tabulator with the ImageCast precinct Tabulator for Town Elections and approved unanimously by roll call vote 4-0.**

9. Board to Approve Single Polling Location for Future Town Elections

Ms. Szkaradek informed the Board that consolidating to one polling location worked very well during the pandemic and feels that, even with an additional precinct, providing a single polling location will work well. Oversight of a single polling location is logically simpler, less expensive and requires fewer staff as compared to operating multiple locations.

Mr. Snyder-Grant moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to approve a single polling location for future town elections and approved unanimously by roll call vote 4-0.

10. Approve Electric Vehicle Charging Rates at Commuter Lot

Mr. Mangiaratti requested the Board's approval of a new charging rate at the South Acton Commuter lot and presented three options: (1) free from 6:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Monday through Friday, and \$2.00 per hour all other times, (2) \$2.00 per hour at all times, and (3) \$0.30 per kilowatt hour. In all cases, commuter lot stickers would be required. Discussion included noting that cars on typical commuting schedules will be fully charged well before the drivers return on the train, and so a charge by the hour seemed punitive and inappropriate for this situation. **Mr. Snyder-Grant moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to approve a thirty cent per kilowatt hour charging rate at the train station around the clock and approved unanimously by roll call vote 4-0.**

V. Consent Items

Mr. Martin held consent item 11. **Mr. Snyder-Grant moved and seconded by Ms. Arsenault to approve consent items 12-20 inclusive and approved unanimously**



4-0. After a short discussion of item 11 concerning the list of those attending the November 5, 2021 Board meeting,

Mr. Snyder-Grant moved and seconded by Ms. Arsenault to approve meeting minutes from November 5, 2021 and approved unanimously 4-0.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

- Agenda, November 15, 2021
- Gas Main Petitions, National Grid
- Amendment to Traffic Rules and Order, High Street at Parker Street
- Letter from Woodard & Curran Requesting Direct Discharge at the Water Treatment Plant for PFAS Mitigation Dated October 29, 2021
- Presentation of the Town Manager's FY23-32 Capital Plan
- Conceptual Plans for Asa Parlin House Rehabilitation
- Memo from Town Clerk Requesting Discontinued Use of the Accu-Vote Optical Scan Tabulator and Accept the ImageCast Precinct Tabulator Dated November 8, 2021
- Memo from Town Clerk Requesting Approval for Single Polling Location for Future Town Elections
- Meeting Minutes, November 5, 2021
- Committee Appointment Recommendation, Bethany Nichols for Land Stewardship Committee
- Committee Appointment Recommendation, Lori Cooney for Community Preservation Committee
- Committee Appointment Recommendation, Nancy Savage for Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council
- Committee Appointment Recommendation, David Schena for Zoning Board of Appeals
- Committee Appointment, Michael Geiss for Water Resource Advisory Committee
- Committee Appointment, Joseph Robb for Water Resource Advisory Committee
- Memo from Austin Cyganiewicz, Intergovernmental Affairs Requesting to Declare Surplus Equipment from Department of Public Works Dated November 9, 2021
- Memo from Recreation Department Requesting Gift Acceptance for \$167.00 Dated November 2, 2021
- Memo from the Elizabeth White Fund Trustees Dated November 10, 2021
- Statement from Alissa Nicol
- Statement from Jennifer Morazes