

**Select Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, January 24, 2023**  
**Stow Town Building & Zoom**

Present in the Warren Room: Megan Birch-McMichael, Ellen Sturgis, Cortni Frecha, Ingeborg Hegemann Clark, Hector Constantzos, and Town Administrator Denise Demboski

Chair Birch-McMichael called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

**Public Comment**

The Chair noted that Public Comment is limited to items not on the agenda and anyone speaking should state their name and address. Comments are limited to two minutes or less and should be respectful and productive.

Jonathan Mascia, 153 Harvard Road, spoke about the flooding at his property, the related deteriorating road conditions, and his well that has tested positive for PFAS.

**Board Member Comments**

Ms. Sturgis noted the passing of Cliff (Clifton) Smith. He was an Associate Professor at BU's School of Management where he taught and ran the Entrepreneurial Management Institute, and was on the Board of Directors of the Stow Conservation Trust. It is a huge loss for Stow and she sent condolences out to his wife and children, who also live in town.

Mr. Constantzos acknowledged and wished a Happy New Year to all those who follow the Lunar New Year. The Year of the Rabbit began on Sunday.

**Town Administrator (TA) Report**

- As of January 19, there are eight COVID-19 positive cases in town which is a 7.34 positivity rate.
- There is a special Select Board meeting Tuesday, January 31 at 7 p.m. via Zoom only to discuss the Lake Boon dam project. This is not a public hearing.
- There is still space available for the in-person Municipal Citizens Academy which begins Thursday, February 2 and runs for eight-weeks on Thursday evenings. The program may be cancelled and rescheduled due to the low number of applicants.
- "Discussions With Denise" is scheduled for Wednesday February 1 from 9:30-11 a.m. for open discussion at the Pompo Community Center with special guest Library Director Tina McAndrew. Private appointments are available from 11-11:30 a.m.; call the Pompo front desk to schedule.
- The TA met with the Collings Foundation to discuss their 2023 events. The TA will work with public safety department heads to put together a comprehensive plan for the year.

**Recognition**

World Wetlands Day – February 2, 2023

Ms. Hegemann spoke as a member of the Conservation Commission and gave a brief overview, and said the commission plans to have events, webinars, and an outdoor activity to recognize the day.

*Board member Frecha moved that the Stow Select Board join with the Stow Conservation Commission in proclaiming February 2, 2023 as World Wetlands Day in Stow in order to highlight the value of*

wetlands, increase awareness of their importance, and promote actions that will lead to their conservation and restoration. We recognize the potential of restoring wetlands at Stow Acres Driving Range here in Stow with a goal of enhancing floodplains, wildlife habitat and climate resilience. Board member Hegemann seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### **Black History Month Proclamation**

Abby Morgan, 20 Railroad Ave, was present in the Warren Room to represent NASJA and their request for a Black History Month Proclamation. She said NASJA is working on the Mapledale Conservation Project, which will commemorate Black History at the Mapledale Golf Course (now Stow Acres).

*Board member Frecha moved to approve and sign the Black History Month Proclamation as presented by the Nashoba Area Social Justice Alliance (NASJA) and proclaim February 2023 as Black History Month in Stow. Board member Hegemann seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

#### **Appointments**

##### **Fire Department - Joshua Mondragon**

Mr. Mondragon is a veteran of the Air Force and an active firefighter at Hanscom Air Force Base.

*Board member Frecha moved to appoint Joshua Mondragon to the position of Call Firefighter/EMT for the Stow Fire Department, effective immediately, for a term expiring June 30, 2023.*

*Board member Hegemann seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

##### **Council on Aging (COA) – Albert Arthur**

Albert Arthur was present via Zoom. He has been a resident for four years and has been attending the COA meetings for the past year as an associate member.

*Board member Frecha moved to appoint Albert Arthur to the Council on Aging for an indefinite term.*

*Board member Hegemann seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

##### **Randall Library Building Exterior Design Committee - Andrew Grote**

Andrew Grote was present via Zoom. He has been a resident since 2016 and his three young children are frequent users of the library. He is an architect who has worked on public projects, including libraries.

*Board member Frecha moved to appoint Andrew Grote to the Randall Library Building Exterior Design Committee, to serve until the exterior design of the building has been approved by the Randall Library Building Committee 2.0.*

*Board member Hegemann seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

#### **Nashoba Regional High School Building Project Update**

Superintendent Kirk Downing was present in the Warren Room.

Mr. Downing said they publish “Board Briefs” which is their pacing mechanism for educating town boards and citizens on the progress of the project. The project is now in phase four with the focus of

the last building committee meeting being on funding the project, which is stage five and is under the authority of the school committee.

Discussion ensued with comments and questions from the Board. Regarding the high-cost estimate for the project, Mr. Downing said that in December the MSBA (MA School Building Authority) recognized the escalating costs of construction and has increased the ceiling limit of some of its financial participation. This project is Construction Manager At-Risk as opposed to Design-Bid-Build, which means that construction can begin before the plans are complete. This helps reduce overall costs. There will be more in-person updates during the year.

### **Randall Library Update**

Library Director Tina McAndrew was present in the Warren Room.

Ms. McAndrew provided a brief update on the past year at the Randall Library. Use of the library's online resources as well as in-person statistics have steadily increased. The library renovation project is moving forward, with the hiring of an Owner's Project Manager in November and the designer in January, with an aggressive timeline for schematic design. Ms. McAndrew mentioned the financial support from the Randall Trust (via the Library Trustees), the Hale High School Fund, the Second Century Fund, and the Randall Library Friends with their fundraising subgroup Revitalize Randall. Many short-term and long-term goals were met, including a new homebound delivery program, professional development for all staff, becoming fine-free, and a volunteer program with 15 people. She concluded her presentation by sharing praise from a happy patron.

### **Police Department Policies**

Police Chief Michael Sallese was present in the Warren Room.

#### Wellness Program

The Wellness Program is a result of the Chief's commitment to the mental well-being of the police officers and dispatchers, who can't help others if they themselves are struggling. This would allow 30 minutes of exercise while on duty, with parameters in place. A "check up from the neck up" with a licensed professional will reward an officer with four hours of time-off once confirmation of the session has been received. Parts of the program were suggested by members of the department, and they will now be able to use the equipment that was donated by Sgt. Goguen.

*Board member Frecha moved to approve the addition of the Wellness Program policy to Stow Police Department policy, as presented by Police Chief Michael Sallese at this meeting.*

*Board member Hegemann seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

#### Lieutenant Hiring Policy

Lt. Darren Thraen will be retiring on May 11, 2023 after 31 years with the department. The lieutenant position is not part of the union, and they will be seeking someone with at least three years of supervisory experience. This hiring process will bring in an outside consulting agency that does police hiring. This, and every policy, has been submitted to the union by the Chief.

*Board member Frecha moved to approve the Lieutenant Hiring policy, as presented by Police Chief Michael Sallese at this meeting.*

*Board member Hegemann seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

## **Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) Requests**

Chief Sallese was the representative for the TSAC.

### Stop Sign at Marlboro Road and Gleasondale Road

Phase one of the pilot program has begun at this intersection, and traffic data is being reviewed. Phase two will require a temporary stop sign where Marlboro Road meets Gleasondale Road to the south of the Hello Garden island. If approved by the Select Board, the stop sign would be installed within 90 days once notification is made and the information is posted in the newspaper. These are low-cost fixes to see what works. The Board discussed adding the word “temporary” to, and deleting the word “Old” from the motion.

*Board member Frecha moved to approve placement of a stop sign at Marlboro Road and Gleasondale Road and sign the Notice of Traffic Regulation, as presented by Police Chief Michael Sallese for the TSAC at this meeting.*

*Board member Hegemann seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

### Changes to Traffic Rules and Regulations: All Night Parking Ban and Declared Snow Emergency

Chief Sallese explained the change to the All Night Parking Ban to now allow an exemption if notice has been provided to the police department about a vehicle being unable to operate or other hardship. Chief Sallese explained the need to add a Declared Snow Emergency section to help public safety departments with operations during a storm.

*Board member Frecha moved to approve an amendment to Stow’s Traffic Rules & Regulations Article IV, Section 3, to modify the All-Night Winter Parking Ban, as presented by Police Chief Michael Sallese for the TSAC at this meeting.*

*Board member Hegemann seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

*Board member Frecha moved to approve the addition of Section 4, “Declared Snow Emergency” to Stow’s Traffic Rules & Regulations Article IV, as presented by Police Chief Michael Sallese for the TSAC at this meeting.*

*Board member Hegemann seconded the motion for discussion.*

Ms. Hegemann suggested that in the Declared Snow Emergency the word “are” should be “is” in the sentence “...any vehicle that are in the roadway...” and Chief Sallese agreed to the change.

Board member Frecha amended her motion to state “Article IV, as amended...”.

*Board member Frecha moved to approve the addition of Section 4, “Declared Snow Emergency” to Stow’s Traffic Rules & Regulations Article IV, as presented by Police Chief Michael Sallese for the TSAC at this meeting and as amended by the Select Board.*

*Board member Hegemann seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

## **Update on ARPA Funds**

The town received just over \$2 million and has allocated \$1.8 million through the Select Board with \$294,000 remaining. \$100,000 was allocated to community initiative projects, and with no requests

received, that money should go to other projects or be reallocated. Funding must be fully allocated by the end of 2024 and spent by 2026.

Mr. Constantzos asked about using the unallocated funds for the Hudson Road intersection, and discussion ensued. Ms. Dembkoski explained that the money already allocated to this project was for the intersection improvement plans that were presented to the Board. Bridge repairs are millions of dollars and there is not enough money to be put towards this project.

Ms. Sturgis suggested that the community initiative project money be put towards the library renovation. After discussion, this topic will be added to a future agenda for discussion and a vote.

### **Meeting Minutes**

*Board member Frecha moved to accept the meeting minutes of the January 10, 2023 meeting as drafted. Board member Hegemann seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

### **Correspondence**

The Board noted that the Green Advisory Committee sent additional information relating to their presentation at the last meeting.

Ms. Frecha brought up for discussion the letters about Stow Acres and Lower Village.

Mr. Constantzos brought up for discussion the email regarding the Trail of Flowers.

### **Adjournment**

*At 8:28 p.m. Board member Frecha moved to adjourn. Board member Hegemann seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

*Joyce Sampson*

Executive Assistant

### **Documents used at this meeting:**

*Documents can be found in the Select Board's Office in the meeting folder.*