

Select Board Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, May 23, 2023  
Stow Town Building & Zoom

Present in the Warren Room: Megan Birch-McMichael, Cortni Frecha, Ingeborg Hegemann Clark, Hector Constantzos, John “JT” Toole, and Town Administrator Denise Dembkoski

Chair Birch-McMichael called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and welcomed newly elected Board member JT Toole, and noted that she was reelected to a three-year term.

**Reorganization of the Board**

Chair Birch-McMichael began the reorganization of the Board by asking for a nomination for Chair.

*Board member Hegemann nominated Cortni Frecha as Chair of the Select Board for the coming year, ending after the 2024 Annual Town Election.*

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

Outgoing Chair Birch-McMichael handed the meeting over to Chair Frecha, who then presided over the Select Board meeting.

*Board member Constantzos nominated Megan Birch-McMichael as Clerk of the Select Board for the coming year, ending after the 2024 Annual Town Election.*

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

**Public Comment**

Comments are limited to two minutes and speakers are asked to state their name and address.

Dorothy Granat, 11 White Pond Road, was present via Zoom and spoke about water in Lower Village.

**Board Member Comments - none**

**Town Administrator (TA) Report**

- The TA thanked everyone who worked behind the scenes for the Annual Town Meeting (ATM). She submitted a letter to the Independent to recognize and thank everyone who participated. They will discuss the ATM later tonight, including the unforeseen issues with the clicker voting system and the sound system. All systems were tested multiple times before the meeting.
- The Nashoba Regional High School Building Project Update on tonight’s agenda has been cancelled. The project update is on the agenda for the next Select Board meeting.
- The TA updated the Board on her schedule; she will take a few days off for the Memorial Day weekend and will attend the MA Municipal Managers Conference on June 1 and June 2.

**Recognition**

Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Mr. Constantzos hoped this recognition would encourage residents to learn more about the different cultures that have mixed in and enhanced our country.

### Mental Health Awareness Month

Mr. Constantzos hoped this recognition would help alleviate the stigma of mental health issues and encourage people to be mindful of their mental health and get help when they need it.

Ms. Hegemann said she would like to see future recognitions that come before the Board be connected to an activity in order to be more meaningful. Ms. Hegemann thinks the Board should be “less paper focused and more action focused” with these recognitions.

Ms. Dembkoski clarified that this was not brought forth by the town’s diversity group, which in the past has presented proclamations to the Board with supporting events.

*Board member Constantzos moved to recognize the month of May 2023 as Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month for the Town of Stow.*

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

*Board member Constantzos moved to recognize the month of May 2023 as Mental Health Awareness Month for the Town of Stow.*

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

### **Annual June Appointments**

*Board member Constantzos moved to reappoint Francis Ramsbottom to the position of Building Commissioner, for a one-year term, ending May 31, 2024.*

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

*Board member Constantzos moved to reappoint the following inspectors, for one-year terms, ending May 31, 2024.*

- *Local Inspector: Douglas Hyde*
- *Inspector of Wires: Robert W. Norton*
- *Deputy Inspector of Wires: Dennis Monteiro*
- *Deputy Inspector of Wires: Michael A. Norton*
- *Plumbing & Gas Inspector: Adam Sahlberg*
- *Deputy Plumbing & Gas Inspector: Robert Smith*

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

*Board member Constantzos moved to reappoint Fire Chief John Paul Benoit to the position of Forest Warden, for a one-year term, ending May 31, 2024.*

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

### **Recreation Department Boating Program Permit**

*Board member Constantzos moved, on the recommendation of the Lake Boon Commission, to grant a Commercial Use Permit to the Stow Recreation Department for its boating program for Camp Stow and the Town Beach, for the 2023 season, valid through December 31, 2023.*

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

## **Annual Town Meeting Debrief**

Chair Frecha noted for the record that she was unable to attend Annual Town Meeting.

The Board members had a general discussion about the meeting and how it was handled very well, with everyone having an opportunity to provide a comment and a response comment. The Board discussed the purpose and procedure regarding the consent calendar.

Ms. Birch-McMichael urged the Board to continue to think about the issues that they as a Board can proactively present at the beginning of the meeting.

Presentations changed from prior years, with the two schools giving their presentation before the budget article, which made it more efficient. The Moderator also used a clock to time all speakers.

Katherine West, 8 High Street, was present via Zoom. Ms. West is a volunteer at town meetings and elections. She spoke about the issues with the clickers and noted the extensive and successful testing of them beforehand. Ms. West gave a 'shout out' to the moderator and assistant moderator who were able to switch gears quickly and found a way to make it all work in the middle of a fast-paced meeting.

## **Meeting Minutes**

*Board member Constantzos moved to accept the meeting minutes of the May 9, 2023 meeting as drafted. Board member Toole seconded the motion and it passed 4-0-1 with Mr. Toole abstaining.*

## **Correspondence**

Correspondence included a draft of the Open Space Plan. It will be added as an agenda item at a future meeting for discussion.

Mr. Constantzos asked about the Notice of Filing from Eversource Energy. It is similar to other courtesy notifications and requests for comments received from other companies, and may be required by law.

Ms. Birch-McMichael appreciated the thank you note from the Brauers. The Board looks forward to speaking with them later in the year about Holocaust Remembrance Day.

## **Adjournment**

*At 7:38 p.m. Board member Constantzos moved to adjourn.*

*Board member Toole 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.*