

Select Board Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, July 25, 2023  
Stow Town Building & Zoom

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

Absent: Ingeborg Hegemann Clark

Chair Frecha called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

**Public Comment** - none

**Board Member Comments**

Mr. Constantzos recognized and sent thoughts to the pilot and family, and also the people on the ground, who were affected by the recent incident near Minute Man Air Field.

**Town Administrator (TA) Report**

- The TA recognized the Fire Chief, the Police Chief, and the members of their departments for the response to the plane crash on Sunday and for how seamlessly the departments worked together. Thankfully it was not a tragic situation, and we hope for a speedy recovery for those involved. The TA thanked the neighbors who rushed to the aid of the pilot and passengers for their heroic actions. They will be recognized formally at the next meeting.
- Regarding the settlement for Lower Village, Town Accountant Julie Costello spoke with the Dept. of Revenue and we were able to credit the proceeds to FY23, which means we can appropriate it at the annual town meeting instead of waiting an additional year.
- The TA will be testifying remotely tomorrow at the Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight on making remote hybrid meetings a permanent change in the state law. She will be representing Stow and also the Small Town Administrators Association.
- The Special Town Meeting warrant closes Tuesday, August 1 and she anticipates 15 articles with 11 being changes to the Charter. There will be a draft presented to the Board on August 8 and the Board will vote the final warrant at the following meeting.

**Appointment**

Due to an oversight, employee Jonathan Foster’s name was not listed with the July 1 reappointments.

*Board member Constantzos moved to reappoint Jonathan Foster as a Call Firefighter/EMT for the Stow Fire Department for a term expiring June 30, 2024.*

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

**Police Lieutenant Contract**

Ms. Dembkoski said that Lt. Barhight looks forward to beginning in Stow and being a part of the community.

*Board member Constantzos moved to approve, and authorize the Town Administrator to sign, the contract for Police Lieutenant Kellie Barhight.*

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

### **Ride to Defeat ALS**

Event Manager Myke Farricker was unable to attend. Ms. Dembkoski said that Mr. Farricker has expressed his appreciation for the support the town has given to them throughout the years.

Police Chief Sallesse has submitted a traffic plan to keep the riders safe as they ride through Stow.

*Board member Constantzos moved to approve the use of Stow public ways for the 2023 Ride to Defeat ALS Bike Ride on Sunday, September 17, 2023.*

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

### **Approve Order of Layout of a Portion of Box Mill Road**

The Planning Board voted to approve the layout alteration and the Order of Layout has been returned to the Select Board. If approved tonight by this Board, it will then appear as an article on the special town meeting warrant.

*Board member Constantzos moved that:*

*Whereas the Select Board of the Town of Stow, acting pursuant to G.L. c. 82, §§ 21-24, having deemed that common convenience and necessity require the acceptance of a portion of Box Mill Road as a Town way, hereby lays out a portion of Box Mill Road as a public way, all as shown on the plan referenced below, and*

*Whereas the boundaries of the layout of a portion of Box Mill Road are shown on a plan entitled "Layout Plan of Land, Box Mill Road Over Elizabeth Brook, Stow, Massachusetts", dated June 26, 2023, prepared by Green International Affiliates, Inc., which plan was referred to the Planning Board and which plan is hereby adopted as a part of this order, and all land lying within the layout of a portion of Box Mill Road is hereby laid out as a public way.*

*The aforementioned plan is hereby forwarded to the Town Clerk for filing and the foregoing layouts are hereby reported to the Town for acceptance.*

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

### **Distribution of Cemetery Committee Tasks**

Ms. Dembkoski said she has been working towards consolidating the cemetery and highway departments through a phased approach. She has met with the Cemetery Committee throughout the years and they have supported the plan. The committee was going to vote the changes and then dissolve itself, however, there is only one member left on the committee. If the Board votes in favor of the motions tonight this would keep the cemetery operations running. Next steps would be adding the changes to the special town meeting warrant, and then to the annual town election ballot to formally consolidate the departments into a public works department.

*Board member Constantzos moved to authorize the Superintendent of Streets, in consultation with the Cemetery Supervisor, for spending of Cemetery Perpetual Care Funds.*

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

*Board member Constantzos moved to authorize the Town Administrator and Assistant Town Administrator to sign Cemetery Deeds.*

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

*Board member Constantzos moved to authorize the Town Administrator to act for any other tasks for the Cemetery Committee, as required.*

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

### **Economic Development and Industrial Commission (EDIC)**

Ms. Dembkoski provided a timeline, stating that the Board discussed the EDIC mission statement and goals from August through December of 2022. The mission statement was approved at the December 13, 2022 meeting and the Board set and approved goals with the EDIC members on March 14, 2023. Shortly after the goals were set, all members of the EDIC resigned with no reason given.

Ms. Dembkoski asked the Board how they wanted to proceed, as the office received some applications for the vacancies that existed prior to all the EDIC members resigning. The Board wants to see this move forward and discussion ensued about the mission statement, goals, and membership. The EDIC was formed many years ago with 7 members, and the Board discussed reducing it to 5 members. The Board discussed if the statement and goals need to be reworded, however, Chair Frecha said that the current statement and goals were a distillation of much discussion. Although the two goals are what this Board would like to see accomplished, the EDIC could bring forth other ideas and projects. Ms. Dembkoski will send the new mission statement and goals to those who applied to see if they are still interested in being appointed to the EDIC.

### **Select Board Workshop to Establish Goals and FY24 Priorities**

The Board discussed the need for a separate workshop, or if setting their goals could be an agenda item with each of them bringing their ideas to an upcoming meeting, or perhaps having a yearly work plan. Chair Frecha added that she is a proponent of the opportunity for them to chat, which is why she added “updates” to the end of the meeting. After a continued discussion, the Board will set aside time at an upcoming meeting to discuss their goals.

The Board will also be setting the TA’s goals, and at their request, Ms. Dembkoski will send them the TA goals that the Board voted on during the past two years. Board members will email their Select Board goals and their TA goals to Ms. Dembkoski and she will collect and consolidate them for the August 22 meeting.

### **Proposed Policy on Rotation of Chair for Town Committees**

Discussion ensued about having board and committees rotate the position of chair because many have long-term chairs. The Board acknowledged that the Select Board cannot force this upon groups.

Ms. Dembkoski said the Charter Review Committee (CRC) is planning to put forward a Charter change that boards and committees reorganize annually. The CRC is voting on their articles tomorrow night. If reorganization does become part of the Charter next year, and board and committees don’t follow it, then the Select Board can have a general discussion with some of the appointed boards.

**Meeting Minutes**

*Board member Constantzos moved to accept the meeting minutes of the July 11, 2023 meeting as drafted. Board member Toole seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

**Board Correspondence & Updates – no comments****Adjournment**

*At 8:07 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.*