



TOWN OF PAXTON

SELECT BOARD MEETING
Monday, December 11, 2023 – 7:00pm
Training Room – Public Safety Complex
576 Pleasant Street, Paxton MA 01612

This agenda lists all matters anticipated for discussion, some items may be passed over, and other items not listed may be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law. Select Board meetings are recorded by the Local Cable Access Channel. Any member of the public planning to record the meeting must first notify the Chair. The Chair will strive to honor timed items as best as possible, however, the estimated timing may occasionally be different.

CALL TO ORDER

1.	OPEN MEETING - Executive Session to follow regular meeting agenda items
2.	CONSENT ITEMS
7:00PM	1. Approve the meeting minutes from the Regular Meeting held on November 16, 2023.
	2. Approve the meeting minutes from the Executive Session on November 16, 2023.
	3. Approve the meeting minutes from the Special Meeting held on November 20, 2023.
	4. Approve the meeting minutes from the Regular Meeting held on November 27, 2023.
3.	NEW BUSINESS
7:05PM	1. Discuss the SCM Elder bus option for senior transportation for FY25.
	2. Mike Pingitore presentation on ambulance billing and old debt write off report.
	3. Discuss Comp Time and Direct Deposit policies.
	4. Review and approve December licenses.
	5. Review and sign Trash Liens.
4.	OLD BUSINESS
5.	SELECTBOARD CORRESPONDENCE
6.	TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT
7.	PUBLIC COMMENT
8.	EXECUTIVE SESSION
8:00PM	1. To conduct strategy session for negotiation with non-union personnel being the Interim Town Administrator. MGL Chapter 30A, Sec. 21 (2).
	2. To conduct negotiation with non-union personnel being the Interim Town Administrator. MGL Chapter 30A, Sec. 21 (2).
	3. To conduct strategy with respect to collective bargaining for the Police Union. MGL Chapter 30A, Sec. 21 (3).
	4. Executive session to discuss potential litigation concerning the Holden Dispatch contract. Chapter 30A, Sec. 21 (3).
9.	ADJOURN

- Times may be adjusted during the meeting.
- The documents that support this meeting can be located on the Town's website (townofpaxton.net) on the Select Board page under meeting materials.

The meeting room is handicapped accessible. With advance notice the Select Board can arrange for reasonable accommodation for persons with other disabilities. To request assistance please contact the Town Administrators Office at 508-799-7347



Town of Paxton
Board of Selectmen
697 Pleasant Street, Paxton, MA 01612
(508) 754-7638 – phone (508) 797-0966 – fax
dparsons@townofpaxton.net

Regular Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 16, 2023

Meeting Location: Training Room of the Public Safety Complex
576 Pleasant Street, Paxton, MA 01612

Members Present: Julia N. Pingitore, Chair
Kirk R. Huehls, Vice Chair, not present
Carol L. Riches, Clerk

Town Administrator: Heather M. Munroe, Town Administrator

Attendees: see Attendee List

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:06pm. We will enter into Executive Session and will return to the regular meeting only for the purpose of adjourning.

UPDATE FROM TOWN COMMITTEES/BOARDS/DEPARTMENTS

- **Richard Fenton – Historical Commission** - 2024 calendars and tee shirts are currently available for sale at the Paxton Market. In the near future the DPW will be installing on Richards Ave a commemorative sign that focuses on the homestead of Willard Moore. We are erecting this sign due to his importance to the Town of Paxton.
- **Nick Powlovich – Cable Committee** - Telvue has started the installation of their equipment. We are running tests on the Wi-Fi camera. We will be doing the Special Town Meeting via YouTube only. We are looking to have the new camera for this meeting room in by the end of this month.
- **Chris Stone - Cemetery Commission** – We had some broken headstones that were repaired. They were damaged by a mower that is what article #2 for the Special Town Meeting is for and another one was damaged by a car that ran through the stone wall. We are doing fall clean up and waiting for a bucket truck to take down a couple of dead trees. The sales of lots have been vigorous so in the near future we may need to look at paving another road in the cemetery.

Interview with Gary Goldberg for Interim Town Administrators position

- **(JP)** Provided an update on where we are in this interview process. Board member Kirk Huehls could not be here so he will review the interview afterward to assist with our decision prior to the Town meeting on November 20th.
- **(JP)** Our most valuable asset is our employees. How do you work to develop a good rapport for a short-term assignment?
- **Gary Goldberg** The first thing would be to understand the culture of the town and meet with the current Town Administrator prior to her leaving as well as the Select Board and Department managers about any concerns or problems they have and then meet with the employees.
- **(JP)** What experience do you have in managing a deficit situation with finances?
- **Gary Goldberg** I have 45 years of professional HR management. I have done negotiations for benefits with my knowledge of employment law, and I have managed my law practice, but I have not dealt with financial deficits to the level that you would need for this position.
- **(JP)** What else might you bring to the table as an Interim Town Administrator? How have you helped moved a business forward during your assignment (or otherwise)?
- **Gary Goldberg** I worked for Tri Valley in 2017 on an interim bases but then asked me to stay on. I would develop a transparent, open, and honest relationship with the staff. Recruitment and retention strategies are key to helping things grow. Always work to do what is right for the organization.
- **(JP)** Do you have experience working with Microsoft OneDrive and are you familiar with the process of sharing files and collaborating on documents within a Teams channel?
- **Gary Goldberg** Team's is not a problem. My IT could be better, but I did run my own law firm alone.
- **(JP)** What do you feel uniquely qualifies you for this interim position?
- **Gary Goldberg** In terms of time you caught me at the best time. I'm retiring but I am not ready to stop working all together. I am very approachable. I am a problem solver. You need to understand a situation before you make any move.
- **(JP)** When are done with your current position?
- **Gary Goldberg** January 2nd.
- **(JP)** Why are you interested in an interim position with such a short term?
- **Gary Goldberg** This would be an excellent way to segway into retirement. The opportunity was perfect for the time. Do a job that I have been doing just in a different venue.
- **(CR)** I have no doubt you could step in and do what is required. We are really in the crunch of doing the budget right now.
- **Gary Goldberg** The key is to understand what the current priorities are for the town and work with the Town Administrator, Select Board and Department heads to see what that is.

CONSENT ITEMS

- 1. Approve the meeting minutes from the Regular Meeting held on October 25, 2023
- 2. Approve the meeting minutes from the Executive Meeting held on October 25, 2023
- 3. Accept disclosure form for Larry Sponberg to vote on Richards Memorial Library grant from the Cultural Council.

- 4. Accept disclosure form for Patricia Wheeler to vote on Richards Memorial Library grant from the Cultural Council.
- 5. Approve disclosure form for Anita Fenton to vote on Richards Memorial Library grant from the Cultural Council.
- 6. To accept the resignation of Anita Fenton from the Cultural Council effective 12/31/2023.
- (JP) Hearing no comments, consent items #1 through #6 have been approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Donation of stocks to Police and Fire Departments to be placed into their grant funds

- (JP) The stocks in question were sold and checks will be sent out today. Approximately \$12,036.88 for fire and \$12,034.40 for police.

Motion (CR) seconded (JP) to accept the donations as stated and allow the Police and Fire Departments to place the donations in their gift accounts Unanimous, all in favor. (CR) yes, (JP) yes.

Amendment from Kettlebrook Golf Course Inc to change the manager listed on the retail liquor license from Donald Marrone to Cara Cullen.

Motion (CR) seconded (JP) to accept the Amendment from Kettlebrook Golf Course Inc to change the manager listed on the retail liquor license from Donald Marrone to Cara Cullen. Unanimous, all in favor. (CR) yes, (JP) yes.

Review motions for the Special Town Meeting and make recommendations. Review warrant articles for the STM

Article #1 Water Enterprise

- **Motion (CR) seconded (JP) to recommend approval as written. Unanimous, all in favor. (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

Article #2 Cemetery Commission

- (JP) Pass over this article.
- (HM) Put a request into the reserve fund.
- (CR) Could be a yearend transfer.
- **Motion (CR) seconded (JP) to recommend to take no action. Unanimous, all in favor. (CR) yes, (JP) yes**

Article #3 Elections/Registrars

- (HM) This was put through as a reserve fund request.
- **Motion (CR) seconded (JP) to recommend to take no action. Unanimous, all in favor. (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

Article #4 Fund Interim TA

- (JP) This is to put someone in place while Heather is out on parental leave. This is an unanticipated item. There is no place else to pull this from except for Free Cash.
- **Mark Love** We could take it from stabilization or capital rather than free cash.

- (JP) We cannot take it from Capital because the Capital bylaw reads that it needs to be on the annual report from Capital to go forward. Yes, we do have stabilization. Using Stabilization should always be a last resort. That could affect our rating on bonds and notes so you should not use Stabilization unless there are no other options.
- **Motion (CR) seconded (JP) to recommend approval using free cash for the amount of \$15,000 for the Interim Town Administrator. Unanimous, all in favor. (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

Article # 5 PSC Generator repairs

- **Motion (CR) seconded (JP) to recommend approval to use free cash for the funding for the generator. Unanimous, all in favor. (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

Article #6 replacement 2014 Exmark Mower

- **Motion (Cr) seconded (JP) to recommend approval that \$4,613 is taken from the cemetery commission sale of cemetery lots. Unanimous, all in favor. (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

Article #7 Water Enterprise

- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to recommend approval using the retained earnings Unanimous, all in favor. (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

Article #8 5-year Contract

- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to recommend approve as written. Unanimous, all in favor. (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

Article #9 Public way – Olivia Knoll

- **Motion (CR) seconded (JP) to recommend approval as written. Unanimous, all in favor. (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

Article #10 WRSD agreement

- (JP) They need 4 out of the 5 towns to approve. Three towns are voting either against or they are not putting on a warrant at this time.
- (CR) The Finance Committee voted disapproval on this.
- (JP) It is a voting power issue. It really is just in accordance with the regional agreement as it currently sits. This could be taken on at a later time.
- **Motion (CR) seconded (JP) to recommend we take no action. Unanimous, all in favor. (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

Article #11 Bylaw – Revolving fund

- (HM) This would be an account that we can use to set some proceeds aside such as the rent for 10 West Market so we can save up in case we have to do something for the building. This does take \$4,800 from the revenue that the town currently has but it does put funds aside. This would be for FY25.
- (JP) What would be the benefit to do this now versus at the Annual Town Meeting
- (HM) It would be ready to go now, or you would have to have two articles if you waited for the Annual Town Meeting.

- **Motion (CR) seconded (JP) to recommend approval. Unanimous, all in favor. (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

Select Board Correspondence

- (JP) The Police Department recede a \$40,000 grant for equipment.
- (HM) This will be used for a license plate reader and additional tasers.

TOWN ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Boards, Committees, Commissions

- **Board of Appeals** – There are two vacant associate position available for the Board of Appeals. Please see the [Town's website](#) for more information.
- **Cable & Communications Committee** – There are currently two positions available on this committee. This committee is responsible for running and maintaining cable access TV channels, live streaming and recording government and community meetings. The committee currently meets monthly. Please see the [Town's website](#) for more information.
- **DPW Building Committee** - The Town of Paxton has reconfigured its DPW Building Committee to update the charge and membership. This Committee will be instrumental in matching the Department of Public Works building infrastructure needs with the Town's financial constraints and the Community desires. There is currently 1 resident vacancies for someone with a marketing/advertising background available. Please see the [Town's website](#) for more information.
- **Historic District Commission** - The Historic District Commission is a group of individuals committed to maintaining the historic integrity and aesthetic appeal of Paxton's treasured landmarks. We work to ensure that our town's rich history remains an integral part of its future. There is currently 1 opening. Please see the [Town's website](#) for more information.

[See the Town's Website for all openings and how to submit an application.](#)

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

Check out the [Town's Website](#) for the latest programs.

- **Annual Tree Lighting**– The Town of Paxton will be holding Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony on Sunday, December 2, 2023 from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM. For more information visit the [Town's website](#).

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

DPW

The fall/winter scheduled water tank cleaning at Asnebumskit has now been postponed until Spring of 2024. The department is currently finishing up projects before the official winter season and precipitation arrives.

The Water Commission at their last meeting, in order to have needed funding to cover FY24 Water Enterprise Costs, has taken the initial step to increase Water rates as relate to every customer's meter rate cost from \$21.45 to \$27 a month for the last six months of this fiscal year (January-June 2024). There is an expectation that after additional research, the Water Commission will take up revising the current water rate schedule and reflecting an additional increase for July 1st, 2024.

As the Town was not successful with the One Stop Grant for the West Street Water Main Project, we have begun discussions with our consultant, Tata & Howard, on what the next steps forward would be for other funding sources. While discussions are still preliminary, they are looking at possible sources such as USDA loans, FEMA programs. Estimated costs of the project are around \$7.4 Million for approximately 1.2 miles of roadway that includes water, drainage, and road work.

Finance Offices

The finance team is working on finishing up submittal and approval of new growth figures, the LA4, and Tax Recap. Once these documents have been submitted and approved, a date will be scheduled for the Select Board to hold an annual Tax Rate Hearing.

The auditors, Roselli & Clark, will be working with our finance team beginning the week after Thanksgiving to work on the FY23 Town Audit.

Fire

The Town Generator repairs have begun this week. Additional parts and work were required.

Library

The Flat Roof is slated to be repaired the first week in December, with gutter work to follow. Annual Letters to Santa is returning, Youth Services will be at the Tree Lighting, and canvasses for the art show are available.

Town Clerk

The Town Clerk's office wrapped up the State Senate Election and is now in the midst of certifying hundreds of signatures for various petitions and articles for the Primary for March. The Office is also working closely with the Inspector General's Office to try to schedule a "Responsibilities of Boards and Committees" training in person for Town members that may be interested.

Town Administrator

The Special Town Meeting (STM) is scheduled for Monday, November 20th at 7pm at the Paxton Center School. The approved warrant will be linked upon approval and signature of the Select Board. If anyone has any questions, please contact hmunroe@townofpaxton.net. Additional explanation materials are also available here.

The steering committee along with the Planning Board will be holding a public information session on the currently drafted MBTA Zoning Bylaw on Tuesday, November 21st at 7pm. The meeting will be televised. After a brief presentation and any questions, the steering committee will review

and possibly make revisions to the bylaw and submit to the Planning Board for a public hearing and their approval for a future Town Meeting for adoption.

FINANCES

Gifts

We received an annual donation, through the sale of Stock, to both the Police and Fire Department that the Select Board accepted this evening. \$12,036.88 for the Fire Department and \$12,034.40 for the Police Department.

Grants

New

Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance – Municipal Law Enforcement Grant Program – The Police received an award from the Office of Grants and Research in the amount of \$40,924.40 for Police Computers, Plate Reader, and Tasers.

Barre Charitable Savings Trust Grant – The library received a \$950 grant for museum passes for use by patrons.

Miia Risk Grant – The Town has been awarded a MIIA Risk Grant in the amount of \$10,000 for a trench box that can extend our current one for DPW for additional depth coverage and safety.

FY24

ADA Grant – We submitted a grant again for FY24 for ADA improvements at the COA, with the same details as last year and updated costs totaling around \$25k. We do not expect to hear back until Thanksgiving week.

Recreation Earmark – In the FY24 final budget, the Governor approved an earmark for \$27,000 for enhancements for the recreation department to include the following:

Playground Repair and Mulch (\$4,000)

The Town owns one public playground next to the Paxton Center School. During school hours, the students use the playground for recess. After hours, the playground is utilized during the afterschool program and by members of the public. The playground needs more odds/ends maintenance to keep all parts safe. In addition, because of the after-school program, we must maintain a minimum level of 9 inches of mulch around all potential fall zones.

2. Adjustable Basketball Hoops at the Paxton Center School (\$18,000)

The Recreation program runs a basketball program at the Paxton Center School. The current basketball hoops do not allow for younger kids to play and require volunteers to tediously attach and manually lower basketball hoops for each game, which brings with it its own safety risk. If we were to replace current hoops with four adjustable hoops, that would make them versatile, serve both the

b ball program and the students at the Paxton Center School, and would alleviate
a the chance of injury through manual adjustments.

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k 3. Wentworth Bathroom Repairs (\$5,000)

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The Recreation and Town own a bathhouse out by our Wentworth field. The bathhouse is used during games and during the Summer Program. The building is old and in dire need of repairs.

SMRP Grant – DEP awarded us a grant in the amount of \$3,500 to help with our recycling program for FY24.

Town Common Earmark – In the FY24 final budget, the Governor approved an earmark for \$50,000 for a design, feasibility, and traffic study for the town common/town center.

Outstanding FY23

Ambulance Certified Public Expenditure Program –\$62,566 - Pending.
Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities.
\$20,000 project to support Sensory Processing Disorder.

Community Compact (IT) Grant –\$115,000 to support conversion to records management system, including scanning and electronically filing records.

Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant –\$4,455 reimbursable grant to update the Town’s Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Small Bridge Grant (2019) – Planning Grant Black Hill Road, extended until December 2023.

State Earmark of Funds – Zoning Bylaw rewrite, underway.

Procurement

: To do:

- ✓ Records Building – Fence
- ✓ Town Common area drainage

JOB OPENINGS

Police Officer – There is one opening for a police officer.

Public comment

- **Mark Love** What are the next steps in the selection of an Interim Town Administrator?
- **(JP)** The next step is for the Select Board to meet before the Special Town Meeting to make a decision on an Interim Town Administrator.

- **Mark Love** What are the requirements for bringing something up as a correspondence. I would like to have my email put into the correspondence. Note * Email will be submitted into the record that discussed the Interim Town Administrator and the possible request of the use of reserve funds to pay for such. I would question if free cash is disqualified because it was not presented to us. If you want to find a way to use Capital Depreciation funds, then let us do that.
- **(JP)** Request that the Town Adminisor get a determination from legal.
- **(HM)** Suggested to Mr. Love that as a town member there is nothing to stop you from standing up at town meetings and making a recommendation from a different source.
- **Mark Love** These place holders are not specific and that is why my email gave three options to find a solution to be clear and be in agreement on Monday night. I believe the door is open to use Capital Depreciation.
- **(JP)** I appreciate the spirit you come in and I would like to get an opinion from legal counsel on this and if my opinion is wrong then that would be a great option. We are on the same page that it needs to get done we just need to get on the same page as to how to get it done.

ADJOURN

- **Motion (CR) seconded (JP) to leave the regular meeting and entered into Executive Session at 8:23pm and we will return to the regular meeting for the purpose of adjourning. (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**
- **Returned to Regular Session at 8:55pm**
- **Adjourned Meeting at 8:55pm, Unanimous all-in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**
- **The next meeting is scheduled for November 27, 2023, 7:00pm.**

Documents from the Meeting filed in BOS office:

Agenda

Attendance list

Town Administrators update

Meeting minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Graf-Parsons

Executive Assistant



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Minutes of Meeting prior to Special Town Meeting

Monday, November 20, 2023

**Meeting Location: Paxton Center School
19 West Street, Paxton, MA 01612**

Members Present: Julia N. Pingitore, Chair
Kirk R. Huehls, Vice Chair, via phone
Carol L. Riches, Clerk

Town Administrator: Heather M. Munroe, Town Administrator

Attendees: see Attendee List

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:11pm.

- **(JP)** Pass over discussion of the interim Town Administrator because Board member Huehls has been unable to review the last interview.
- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to pass over the discussion for the Interim Town Administrator. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**
- **(HM)** The funding for the generator outside of using free cash, potential of using Capital Depreciation funds. It is outside the scope of the bylaw and would not recommend Capital Depreciation fund or Stabilization as one of the funding sources of the generator repairs.
- **(JP)** Alter funding source of article 5 to come from Capital Depreciation account.
- **Mark Love** That is what we wanted to have happen. We voted on the article as written and voted disapproval. As chairman what can I do. They would favor Capital Depreciation.
- **(HM)** Committee authorize you to recommend if it was any other source other than Free Cash.
- **Brian Falk** If it is in the minutes then it is fair to report that at the town meeting tonight. Since it is a repair, it is not crucial and does not fall within the scope of the bylaws that we would need for a new item.
- **Mark Love** The minutes have not been memorialized but if Heather's recollection is that any other source would be okay.
- **(JP)** Reviewed article for discussion with Board member Huehls.
 - Article #1 – approved.
 - Article #2 – approved.
 - Article #3 – approved.
 - Article #4 – approved.

Article #5 – updated motion

- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to amend from the approval of funding from Free Cash to Capital Depreciation Fund. Unanimous, all in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

Article #6 – approved.

Article #7 – approved.

Article #8 – approved.

Article #9 - approved

Article #10 – approved.

Article #11 - approved

- **(HM)** We need to schedule another meeting for the tax clarification hearing and selection of the Interim Town Administrator.
- **(JP)** Schedule November 27th at 7pm at the Public Safety Complex for tax classification hearing and discussion on the Interim Town Administrator. Let us keep our scheduled meeting on December 11th and then see if we need a meeting on December 18th.
- **Adjourned Meeting at 6:38pm to move into the Special Town Meeting, Unanimous all-in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**
- **The next meeting is scheduled for November 27, 2023, 7:00pm.**

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Respectfully submitted,

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Kirk R. Huehls, Vice Chair
Carol L. Riches, Clerk

Town Administrator: Heather M. Munroe, Town Administrator

Attendees: see Attendee List

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

NEW BUSINESS

Appoint Tyler Osborn as a part time Public Safety Officer.

- Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to appoint Tyler Osborn as a part time Public Safety Officer. Unanimous. All in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.

Tax Classification Hearing for FY24

- **Kateri Clute**, Principal Assessor, present for the Annual Classification Hearing to set the tax rate for FY24. The presentation in its entirety can be obtained in the Select Board office.
- (KH) Given that we are trying to attract business I would recommend a single rate.
- Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to approve the use of Factor 1 to calculate the tax rate. Unanimous, all in favor. Roll call (CR) yes, (KH) yes, (JP) yes.
- Motion (KH) seconded (CR) that the Town will not provide a discount for Open Space. Unanimous, all in favor. Roll call (CR) yes, (KH) yes, (JP) yes.
- Motion (KH) seconded (CR) that the Town will not provide a discount for Residential Exemptions. Unanimous, all in favor. Roll call (CR) yes, (KH) yes, (JP) yes.
- Motion (KH) seconded (CR) that the Town will not provide a discount for Small Commercial Exemptions. Unanimous, all in favor. Roll call (CR) yes, (KH) yes, (JP) yes.
- **Kateri Clute** New tax rate will be \$16.07. Asked the Board to sign the LA5. I will be going to the COA on Wednesday from 10am to 12pm to meet with any seniors that may have questions on senior exemptions.
- (CR) Recognized the Town Administrator, Town Treasurer, Town Account and Assessors for all the work that they put into setting the tax rate.

Interim Town Administrator

- **(KH)** Still contemplating if we really need someone for those 8 weeks. Between the department heads and our liaisons do we really need someone. We are tight financially.
- **(JP)** If we could go 8 weeks without someone in that position then that brings to question if we need anyone in that position. We definitely do. It is a busy time for finance, and we need someone there to be a conduit for information.
- **(CR)** In that position you never know what is going to come up. Mass general law is the same throughout all towns so an Interim will be very effective during that time. You need someone to handle not only the day-to-day duties but also earmarks, grants, procurement and any other issues that may come up.
- **(JP)** Willing to take a motion for an interim candidate.
- **KH motion CR second to select Charles Blanchard as the Interim Town Administrator. Unanimous, all in favor. Roll call (CR) yes, (KH) yes, (JP) yes.**
- **Mark Love** Can we have a discussion on this?
- **(JP)** This will not be open for discussion. It is a Select Board decision. Your email went into correspondence.
- **Neil Bagdis** Any discussion on the amount.
- **(JP)** That will be a discussion between us and Mr. Blanchard should he decide to accept the position.
- **Neil Bagdis** Aren't there be other professional people that could take over.
- **(JP)** We are blessed to have someone that has actual municipal experience with Mr. Blanchard. We do not expect anything further than the \$15,000 that was passed at the town meeting.
- **Neil Bagdis** At the Special Town Meeting the warrant article for Olivia Knoll should have been sponsored by the Planning Board but the warrant article said it was sponsored by the Select Board. Second issue we have had two plowable snows and Brigham Road is still open. Can we put up the sign and get the DPW to close the road?

Town Administrator update

Boards, Committees, Commissions

Board of Appeals – There are two vacant associate position available for the Board of Appeals. Please see the [Town's website](#) for more information.

Cable & Communications Committee – There are currently two positions available on this committee. This committee is responsible for running and maintaining cable access TV channels, live streaming and recording government and community meetings. The committee currently meets monthly. Please see the [Town's website](#) for more information.

DPW Building Committee - The Town of Paxton has reconfigured its DPW Building Committee to update the charge and membership. This Committee will be instrumental in matching the Department of Public Works building infrastructure needs with the Town's financial constraints and the Community desires. There is 1 resident vacancies for someone with a marketing/advertising background available. Please see the [Town's website](#) for more information.

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landmarks. We work to ensure that our town's rich history remains an integral part of its future. There is currently 1 opening. Please see the [Town's website](#) for more information.

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COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

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Annual Tree Lighting– The Town of Paxton will be holding Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony on Sunday, December 2, 2023 from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM. For more information visit the [Town's website](#).

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

Assessors

The Select Board held the annual Tax Rate hearing on November 27, 2023 and set a single tax rate for the Town of 16.07. In order to see how the figure compares to past year's, the average value of a single family home is below, along with the tax rate and the actual tax bill. The Principal Assessor, Kateri Clute, will be at the COA on the 13th of December from 10am-12pm to answer any veteran's or senior questions about taxes or exemptions.

YEAR	AVERAGE VALUE SFR	TAX RATE	TAX
FY24	\$ 459,020.00	\$ 16.07	\$ 7,376.45
FY23	\$ 412,579.00	\$ 17.58	\$ 7,253.14
FY22	\$ 367,171.00	\$ 18.98	\$

Fire

The Town Generator repairs have been completed and the Generator is once more in good health!

Town Administrator

The Select Board voted on November 27th to offer the short-term Interim Town Administrator position to Charlie Blanchard while I am out on parental leave. If Charlie accepts, the SB will setup an executive session to meet with Charlie and arrange the details over the next few weeks.

FINANCES

Grants

FY24

ADA Grant – We submitted a grant again for FY24 for ADA improvements at the COA, with the same details as last year and updated costs totaling around \$25k. We do not expect to hear back until Thanksgiving week.

Barre Charitable Savings Trust Grant – The library received a \$950 grant for museum passes for use by patrons.

Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance – Municipal Law Enforcement Grant Program – The Police received an award from the Office of Grants and Research in the amount of \$40,924.40 for Police Computers, Plate Reader, and Tasers.

Miia Risk Grant – The Town has been awarded a MIIA Risk Grant in the amount of \$10,000 for a trench box that can extend our current one for DPW for additional depth coverage and safety.

Recreation Earmark – In the FY24 final budget, the Governor approved an earmark for \$27,000 for enhancements for the recreation department to include the following:

Playground Repair and Mulch (\$4,000)

The Town owns one public playground next to the Paxton Center School. During school hours, the students use the playground for recess. After hours, the playground is utilized during the afterschool program and by members of the public. The playground needs more odds/ends maintenance to keep all parts safe. In addition, because of the after-school program, we must maintain a minimum level of 9 inches of mulch around all potential fall zones.

2. Adjustable Basketball Hoops at the Paxton Center School (\$18,000)

The Recreation program runs a basketball program at the Paxton Center School. The current basketball hoops do not allow for younger kids to play and require volunteers to tediously attach and manually lower basketball hoops for each game, which brings with it its own safety risk. If we were to replace current hoops with four adjustable hoops, that would make them versatile, serve both the basketball program and the students at the Paxton Center School, and would alleviate the chance of injury through manual adjustments.

3. Wentworth Bathroom Repairs (\$5,000)

The Recreation and Town own a bathhouse out by our Wentworth field. The bathhouse is used during games and during the Summer Program. The building is old and in dire need of repairs.

SMRP Grant – DEP awarded us a grant in the amount of \$3,500 to help with our recycling program for FY24.

Town Common Earmark – In the FY24 final budget, the Governor approved an earmark for \$50,000 for a design, feasibility, and traffic study for the town common/town center.

Outstanding FY23

Ambulance Certified Public Expenditure Program –\$62,566 - Pending.

Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities.

\$20,000 project to support Sensory Processing Disorder.

Community Compact (IT) Grant –\$115,000 to support conversion to records management system, including scanning and electronically filing records.

Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant –\$4,455 reimbursable grant to update the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Small Bridge Grant (2019) – Planning Grant Black Hill Road, extended until December 2023.

State Earmark of Funds – Zoning Bylaw rewrite, underway.

JOB OPENINGS

Police Officer – There is one opening for a police officer.

ADJOURN

- **Adjourned Meeting at 7:38pm, Unanimous all-in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**
- **The next meeting is scheduled for December 11, 2023, 7:00pm.**

Documents from the Meeting filed in BOS office:

Agenda

Attendance list

Town Administrators update

Tax Classification Hearing

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Graf-Parsons
Executive Assistant



TOWN OF PAXTON
697 Pleasant Street, Paxton, MA 01612

Town of Paxton Ambulance Receivables Write Off Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures that will be used to write off ambulance receipts that are considered uncollectable.

Policy:

The policy of the Paxton Fire/EMS and the Town of Paxton is to collect all receivables generated by the Fire Department's ambulance service with the exception of cases where payment would create severe financial hardship or the collection process is unable to recover payment.

Intent:

In implementing this policy, the Fire Chief, Town Administrator, and billing company will at all times be mindful that it is the intent of the Board of Selectmen that all Paxton residents should expect prompt and professional service regardless of their ability to pay for said services. All requests for waiver of payment should be treated with sensitivity and fairness and not affect a patient's ability to have full access to services and treatment.

It is with this intent that the following billing policy guidelines are established and will be practiced:

The billing company will make three attempts to collect payment for all service.

Reasons for non-payment may include the following:

- Denial by an insurance carrier
- No known address of patient
- No supplemental or Medicare secondary insurance coverage
- Deceased person
- Hardship/Inability to pay

Financial Hardship Requests

Requests for a waiver of a portion or all of an ambulance bill shall be submitted by the patient to the billing company; on the billing company's approved form for review and determination of financial conditions of the patient and ability to pay. The request may require documentation, such as hospital free confirmation, a letter from a third party such as a social worker, or a letter from the patient attesting to their hardship that has been signed under the pains and penalties of perjury.

The billing company will review all request for waivers based upon financial hardship and make recommendations to the Fire Chief . The Town Administrator will make the final determination through recommendation of the Fire Chief.

The Fire Chief shall notify the billing company of the decision of the Town Administrator within ten (10) days so that it may be documents in the accounts receivable report issued by the billing company.

The Town shall receive and review a monthly balance of accounts from the billing company, including all aging and current accounts.

On a quarterly basis the Fire Chief and the Town Administrator shall meet to review uncollected receivables that the billing company recommend writing off. A review of all hardship cases will take place at this time.

The Town shall meet with the billing company representative biannually in June and December to discuss aging receivable that have had no activity for the prior 180 days. The process for attempting collection by the billing agency on each outstanding account will be reviewed prior to making a decision to write off any uncollected amounts.

The Fire Chief and the Town Administrator shall meet in December after confirming that the billing agency has taken every step to try to recover outstanding collections and will make a determination of what amounts should be considered for write off.

In the case of all determined write off of receivables, the accounts will be clearly noted as to the reason for the write off.

A list of uncollectable accounts that are determined to be written off shall be presented to the Board of Selectmen. All documents sent to the Board of Selectmen shall be stored in full compliance with HIPPA regulations or destroyed upon review.

Policy accepted by the Board of Selectmen on August 24, 2015.



COMPENSATORY TIME POLICY

Applies to:	Non-Union, Non-Contracted Salaried Employees
Select Board Original Adoption:	--
Amended on:	--
Last Reviewed by the Select Board:	--

1.0 Policy Statement

The Town of Paxton currently provides compensatory time off ("comp time") to non-contracted/non-union salaried employees who work additional hours beyond their regular schedule. This policy outlines the conditions under which comp time may be accrued and used.

2.0 Reason for the Policy

This policy is being issued to clarify accrual and use of compensatory time-off.

3.0 Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to all non-contracted salaried employees. Non-exempt employees are covered by overtime provisions as per the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and are not eligible for comp time under this policy.

4.0 Who is responsible for enforcing this policy?

This policy/procedure shall be implemented through the Town Administrator's Office.

5.0 Definitions

Employee: shall mean any department head who is non-union and not under a personnel contract, who works more than 20 hours per week, and is paid a salary rather than an hourly rate.

6.0 Policy

6.1 Accrual of Comp Time

Employees may accrue and bank a maximum of 40 hours of comp time at any given time. Any hours worked beyond this without using accrued comp time will not earn additional comp time. Comp time will rollover regardless of calendar or fiscal year. Additional time can be accrued, but may never exceed a balance of 40 hours at any given time.

6.2 Tracking of Time that becomes Comp Time

In order for Comp Time to be accrued, an employee must contemporaneously mark

hours over and above their bi-weekly scheduled on their timesheets that are submitted and they must be signed off by their supervisor. The payroll processor will log the accrual of Comp Time over their scheduled work hours for the bi-weekly period in accordance with the restrictions in 6.1 above.

6.3 Use of Comp Time

Employees may use accrued comp time with the approval of their supervisor in the same manner that use of vacation and personal time is handled.

6.4 Payout of Unused Comp Time

Upon separation of employment from the Town, employees will NOT be paid for unused comp time.

DRAFT



DIRECT DEPOSIT POLICY

Applies to:	All Employees
Select Board Original Adoption:	--
Amended on:	--
Last Reviewed by the Select Board:	--

1.0 Policy Statement

In order to provide better employee access to payroll information and allow employees to receive and view payroll information electronically, all employees must be on Direct Deposit per our Payroll Administration Software requirements.

2.0 Reason for the Policy

This policy is being issued to make the change requiring all Town Employees to be on Direct Deposit.

3.0 Who does this policy apply to?

Any individual who receives funds through the Town's Payroll system, regardless of number of times a check is issued per year.

4.0 Who is responsible for enforcing this policy?

This policy/procedure shall be implemented through the Town Administrator's Office.

5.0 Definitions

Employee: shall mean any individual who receives now or will receive in the future a Town Check processed through the Town's Payroll Process.

6.0 Policy

Effective January 1, 2024, all Employee's shall have completed a Direct Deposit form and have it submitted to the Executive Assistant no later than 10am on January 8, 2024. The only exclusion will be for any Union Employee who is currently not signed up for Direct Deposit as of December 1, 2023.

12/6/2023

<u>Cust #</u>	Trash	lien fees	ALL TOTALS
1234	\$ 243.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 343.00
2170	\$ 177.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 227.00
2776	\$ 122.72	\$ 50.00	\$ 172.72
2889	\$ 140.72	\$ 100.00	\$ 240.72
3031	\$ 243.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 343.00
3411	\$ 155.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 255.00
3741	\$ 128.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 178.00
3772	\$ 129.39	\$ 100.00	\$ 229.39
	\$ 1,338.83	\$ 650.00	\$ 1,988.83

DECEMBER RENEWAL OF LICENSES

Liquor

- Paxton Market Place – All Liquor
- Paxton Sports Center - Club
- Paxton Liquor Store – All Liquor
- Anna Maria College - Club
- Kettlebrook Golf Course – Club
- American Legion – Veterans Club

Packaged Goods

- Paxton Sports Center
- Paxton Liquor Store
- Paxton House of Pizza
- Paxton Market Place

Above Ground Tanks

- Worcester County Memorial
- Kettlebrook Golf Course
- Anna Maria College
- Industrial Tower & Wireless

Auto Body Shops

- Paxton Auto

Class II Car Sales

- Paxton Auto
- Pimentel Realty Trust

Common Victuallers

- Theo's
- J.C Donuts Inc.
- Paxton Sports Center
- Paxton House of Pizza
- Paxton American Legion
- Paxton Marketplace
- Kettlebrook Golf Course
- Sodexho
- 10 West Market

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

Heather M. Munroe, Town Administrator
December 11, 2023

BOARD/COMMITTEE OPENINGS

Boards, Committees, Commissions

Board of Appeals – There are two vacant associate position available for the Board of Appeals. Please see the [Town's website](#) for more information.

Cable & Communications Committee – There are currently two positions available on this committee. This committee is responsible for running and maintaining cable access TV channels, live streaming and recording government and community meetings. The committee currently meets monthly. Please see the [Town's website](#) for more information.

DPW Building Committee - The Town of Paxton has reconfigured its DPW Building Committee to update the charge and membership. This Committee will be instrumental in matching the Department of Public Works building infrastructure needs with the Town's financial constraints and the Community desires. There is currently 1 resident vacancies for someone with a marketing/advertising background available. Please see the [Town's website](#) for more information.

Historic District Commission - The Historic District Commission is a group of individuals committed to maintaining the historic integrity and aesthetic appeal of Paxton's treasured landmarks. We work to ensure that our town's rich history remains an integral part of its future. There is currently 1 opening. Please see the [Town's website](#) for more information.

[See the Town's Website for all openings and how to submit an application.](#)

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

Check out the [Town's Website](#) for the latest programs.

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

COA

Van service – We have begun looking at the possibility of phasing out the way we currently provide transportation services to our seniors and working with SCM Elder Bus to take over the service. Over the past few years we have seen the use of the van and overall ridership drop. We currently charge seniors \$7 roundtrip, our COA Director Cindy spends numerous hours each week serving as dispatch and coordinating with drivers and riders for the three days a week that we provide service. We currently serve between 20-25 total unique riders per year.

Our current expenses for the service include wages for bus drivers, insurance, gas costs, repairs, and maintenance, averaging around \$19k per year, with a collection of about \$2.5k a year in fees, which incurs approximately a \$16.5k difference between expenses and revenues.

SCM Elderbus contracts with Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA). The way their program works is that they would continue to serve the town three days a week and have more specific pickup and drop off times. When they charged for rides, it was \$1.25/1.50 each way, or \$2.50 round trip. At least until June 30, 2024, they are not currently charging for service to seniors. Their program also provides service to residents who have a disability and may not be a senior. Like Paxton, they generally keep service to within the bordering Towns to Paxton.

The assessment for the costs of the transportation service would be created at the end of each fiscal year and would not be paid by the town until two fiscal years after the completion of the serviced one, and would be found on the State Assessment section of the Town's annual cherry sheet. For example, if the service began in FY25, we would not be assessed until FY27. They currently assess Town's at approximately 20% of their actual costs for providing a ride. Based on reviewing other community figures, if we calculated about \$10 per each one-way ride as the assessment. If we continue to average around 450 single-way trips a year, our annual assessment would be around \$4,500.

From a senior service perspective, we would be able to provide our riders with a handicap accessible means of transportation that may well expand those able to use the service to include those less steady on canes, walkers, and wheelchairs. The change of the service would free up time for our Director to shift focus to outreach, programming, and other needs.

From a financial perspective, we would realize an immediate savings in the cost for the transportation service, of at least \$16.5k (taking into consideration current fees collected) a year. In addition, we would know the cost of our assessment in advance to allow us to better budget and forecast our expenses. Lastly, this would allow the COA to refocus some of their budget to increased programming, outreach hours, and food pantry costs.

The COA Board met last Wednesday and voted to support the transition to SCM Elderbus. The next step is to receive support from the Select Board for the transition. If supported, the COA Director and TA will work with providing information sessions along with SCM Elderbus, working with current riders, and starting a slow transition as early as Spring.

Building

In November, the Building Department had 24 permits pulled, which is two less overall permits from last month and the lowest number of actual building permits, 6, since July of this year. The 6 building permits constituted: kitchen/bathroom remodel; 2 roofs; one garage repair; one garden shed; and siding. FY24 permits for the department are higher than FY23 by one, but lower than FY22 by 12. Overall, calculating through the end of October, Building Permits themselves have netted approximately \$12,500, or about one half of what we have expected for the year. This trend could stay up or cool down over the winter months, only time will tell.

Permit	July	August	September	October	November
Building	16	8	16	13	6
Electrical	9	14	9	5	6
Gas	1	0	3	2	4
Plumbing	5	4	2	4	6
Sheet Metal	0	1	0	1	0
Wood Stove	2	0	1	1	2
TOTAL	33	27	31	26	24

DPW

After many years serving the Town of Paxton, Gary Richards will retire as Highway Foreman on December 31st.

The winter season has begun and the parking ban bylaw is now in effect, read more details [here](#).

Finance Offices

Our Tax Rate for FY25 has been certified and the Treasurer/Collector is working on having bills printed.

Library

The Library is working with the roofing company to have schedule time to get the roof work completed asap so we can then have the gutter work completed before inclement weather hits us.

Treasurer/Collector

Our part-time Assistant Treasurer/Collector, Amanda DeRezendes will be leaving us on the 18th of December. We appreciate all of her hard work and wish her well in her future endeavors. The position is expected to be open and posted in the upcoming weeks.

Town Administrator

My last day before leave is currently scheduled for December 14th. Our office is wrapping up the FY25 budget compilation for the Finance Committee, the five year Capital Plan Forecast for CIPC, and a multiple grant/earmark paperwork to allow projects to commence.

FINANCES

Grants

Updates

Recreation Earmark – In the FY24 final budget, the Governor approved an earmark for \$27,000 for enhancements for the recreation department to include the following: Playground Repair and Mulch (\$4,000); Adjustable Basketball Hoops at the Paxton Center School; and Wentworth Bathroom Repairs (\$5,000). The contract has now been submitted by the Town and upon signature of the State, we will be able to proceed.

Town Common Earmark – In the FY24 final budget, the Governor approved an earmark for \$50,000 for a design, feasibility, and traffic study for the town common/town center. The paperwork has now been submitted for this earmark and the work can begin.

DPW Earmark – In the FY23 budget, the Town was awarded ARPA funds from the State in the amount of up to \$200k for work for the DPW building. Our draft budget to the State was submitted this week and approved with contracts being finalized. Once given the go ahead, we have until 2026 to complete the project. The project is scheduled to include: design/permits/procurement septic system design, install, related work at the DPW, purchase of permanent bathroom trailer unit, and the purchase and install of an electronic gate, along with miscellaneous safety repairs as funds may permit.

MIIA Wellness Grant – We have applied for a grant for approximately \$5k for MIIA wellness. The grant includes so air filtration filters, orthopedic chairs, carpet replacement, fresh produce for staff, and training funds. We should here within the next month or two if we have received the grant.

FY24

ADA Grant – We submitted a grant again for FY24 for ADA improvements at the COA, with the same details as last year and updated costs totaling around \$25k. As of 12.08.2023, we are still waiting to hear on any awards and have checked in again with the state on any possible updates to the award date. (*Updated 12.09.2023*)

Barre Charitable Savings Trust Grant – The library received a \$950 grant for museum passes for use by patrons.

Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance – Municipal Law Enforcement Grant Program – The Police received an award from the Office of Grants and Research in the amount of \$40,924.40 for Police Computers, Plate Reader, and Tasers.

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Ambulance Certified Public Expenditure Program –\$62,566 - Pending

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Community Compact (IT) Grant –\$115,000 to support conversion to records management system, including scanning and electronically filing records. This grant will run until December 2024. (*Updated 12.09.2023*)

Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant –\$4,455 reimbursable grant to update the Town’s Hazard Mitigation Plan. Final paperwork for the grant award has been submitted to MEMA and work should be scheduled to begin shortly. (*Updated 12.09.2023*)

Small Bridge Grant (2019) – Planning Grant Black Hill Road, extended until December 2023. Working with Mass DOT, we are in the process of modifying our current contract for this grant. We will be instead turning from our current consultant to working with Mass DOT consultant who they will manage the project and work. We are expected to be able to apply for the next round of funding next fall. (*updated 12.09.2023*)

State Earmark of Funds – Zoning Bylaw rewrite, underway. The Steering Committee is now working on the Subdivision rules and regulations and some definitions.

Procurement:

To do:

- ✓ Records Building – Fence
- ✓ Town Common area drainage
- ✓ Septic System DPW – Earmark
- ✓ Recreation Earmark (Basketball Hoops)

JOB OPENINGS

Police Officer – There is one opening for a police officer.

Assistant Treasurer/Collector – Upcoming opening for a part-time Assistant Treasurer/Collector