



Town of Paxton
Board of Selectmen
697 Pleasant Street, Paxton, MA 01612
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dparsons@townofpaxton.net

Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 27, 2022

Meeting Location: John Bauer Senior Center 17 West Street, Paxton, MA 01612

Members Present: Julia N. Pingitore, Chair
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 7:00pm.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. We will enter into Executive Session and will return to the regular meeting only for the purpose of adjourning.

CONSENT ITEMS

- 1. Appoint Dylan Havey as a full time Police Officer.
- 2. Accept the bond disbursement for Police and Fire into their gift accounts.
- 3. Update appointment for Neil Bagdis to the Capital Improvement Committee.
- 4. Approve the meeting minutes for the Select Board Meeting held on December 12, 2022.
- (JP) I'm going to move item number one to new business. Any discussion on the remaining consent items? Hearing no comment. Items 2, 3 & 4 are approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Revise Nonunion positions

- (HM) Reached out to Mary Aicardi about a wage chart but we have not heard back from her yet. Working on calculations with current payroll sheets to try and get everyone on a step. Added a few positions that were not previously on the chart. The Water foreman currently is nonunion, but DPW foreman is. Need to review this.
- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to approve the revision of nonunion positions on the wage and compensation chart. Unanimous, all in favor.**

NEW BUSINESS

Appoint Dylan Havey as a full time Police Officer

Chief Savasta - Dylan Havey was hired as a public safety officer and has recently completed the academy and now we would like to appoint Dylan Havey as a full-time police officer.

- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to appoint Dylan Havey as a full time police officer. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Early vote by mail

- **Laurie Becker** - All towns are required to have early vote by mail unless voted otherwise by the Select Board. Things to keep in mind. Overall, very popular and it encourages voting. Personally I have a slight concern with the cost factor when we have a presidential or state election where we could have a large number of ballots to order and pay for the postage to mail them as well.
- **(JP)** If we take no action there will be early vote by mail if we take a vote then we will have to set a hearing.
- **(CR)** What are other towns doing?
- **Laurie Becker** – Everyone seems to have their own opinion.
- **(JP)** I would be inclined to do this year and then revisit it next year.
- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to allow the early voting for this year and revisit it for the next calendar year. Unanimous, all in favor**

Early vote in person

- **Laurie Becker** – The Board of Registrars vote was split 2 to 2. More options is a good thing however the number of people that use that option its not worth the work to run it.
- **(JP)** I think if we are going to allow early voting in person then it needs to be worth our while for those that are doing it.
- **Laurie Becker** – The Board of Registrars requested just two days of early voting in person if we do it. Monday, April 24th from 12pm to 2pm and Friday, April 28th from 10am to 4pm
- **(KH)** This would give seniors the ability to schedule a ride or have someone assist them to come vote.
- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to approve the early voting in persons for April 24th and April 28th. Unanimous, all in favor**
- **Laurie Becker** – Disabled individuals can now vote from home with Democracy Live.

Town Administrators Goals

- **(HM)** I will use the goals for the Select Board to base mine off of. I will have them ready for our next meeting.
- **(CR)** I will send mine over.

SELECT BOARD CORRESPONDENCE

- **(JP)** FEMA sent over a letter in regard to floodplains with some revisions that they have. If there is anything that needs to be updated, then we will look into it.
- **(JP)** COVID tests are still available at the Town Hall and COA. COVID is on the rise and has not peaked yet, however the Flu and RSV have peaked.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- none

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

BOARD/COMMITTEE OPENINGS

Boards, Committees, Commissions

See the Town's Website for openings.

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

Check out the Town's Website for the latest programs.

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

COA

Food pantry is still accepting donations, they are in need of shelf-stable goods, and in particular, they go through a lot of cereal and breakfast foods.

DPW

Much thanks and appreciation go out to the team at the DPW, who worked many hours over the last week to ensure that our roads for safe to travel and fallen branches were removed. The tree removal project was completed just in time to make this past wind storm less troublesome.

The DPW has hired Tristan Colonese as our new light equipment operator, we are excited to welcome him to the team.

Emergency Personnel

This past week was quite busy with the windstorm, followed by the ice. Emergency crews, including DPW, Fire, PD, and Light were all hard at work to remove debris, restore power, and manage emergency situations.

Library

Over the last few days, we have conducted an emergency procurement for the boiler/oil tank at the Library. With a "puff back" in the heating system, the boiler was taken out of service. The Fire Department was a huge help in getting the project moving. We were able to procure the services of RJ McDonald, Inc out of Barre to the cost of \$46,900 to remove the old oil tank and boiler, and install new ones. We were able to have the circulator pumps on and left water dripping in the sinks to keep the pipes from freezing during the past week. The Trustees met last Monday evening in an emergency meeting to approve and award the contract. The heat is now on and the oil tank is slated to be replaced this week.

Town Clerk

Our Municipal Assistant left the Town over a month ago and we have decided to split the role into two parts, one as the Assistant Town Clerk and one as the Assistant Treasurer/Collector. After five interviews, and many more applicants, the position was offered to Hannah Lipper who will start as the Assistant Town Clerk in early January for eight hours a week.

FINANCES

Grants

Newly Awarded:

None at this time.

Active/Status Update:

Community Compact (IT) Grant – Grant funds were awarded in December in the amount of \$115,000 to support conversion to records management system, including scanning and electronically filing many of the Town’s files to relieve storage burden and make files more user friendly and searchable.

Community Compact Grant “HR Procedures” – Turnover in staff at Collin’s Center. Working with them to finish up the project. In Progress

DFS Firefighter Safety Grant – FD was awarded for \$15,500 for a grant for turnout gear which they applied for in October.

Early Education & Care – The Recreation Department has received a grant for \$3,250 a month towards the Before/After School Program starting in October. (9/2022)- In Progress

MIA Risk Management Grant – We were awarded half of the funding for the cost of chain saw safety kits (chaps, etc.), bucket truck communication gear, and cybersecurity simulation and testing costs for staff for a total of \$5626.53 out of the total \$9,237.50 applied for in September.

MIA Wellness Grant – Partially Complete.

Office of Grants & Research – The Police Department received a grant with funding from the National Highway & Traffic Safety Administration in the amount of \$19,921 (9.2022) – In Progress.

SAFE Grant – FD applied for and were awarded a grant in the amount of \$5,400 for safety education.

Shared Streets Grant- In Progress.

Small Bridge Grant (2019) – Planning Grant Black Hill Road, in progress.

State Earmark of Funds – Senator Gobi and Representative Ferguson had contacted my office early this summer to inquire if there were projects related to economic development in which we could use funding. They submitted legislation that would support \$75k for redoing our Zoning Bylaws and \$125k related to our DPW building. We received notice on Friday that the earmark totaling \$200k was approved.

United Way – The Recreation Department applied for and were awarded funds in the amount of \$5000 for additional after school/out of school programming.

Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Salt Reduction Grant – We were awarded the 50/50 matching grant for a polar flex system, that if awarded would reduce the cost of the item, which is originally \$6,700, in half.

Applied for:

ADA Grant – Applied for COA building automatic door opener and other miscellaneous safety enhancements for the total amount of \$25,461.61 in September. Unfortunately, we did not receive this grant this year, we will work

on our application and apply again next year.

Ambulance Certified Public Expenditure Program – FD applied for reimbursement for Medicaid/Mass Health ambulance billings for the prior Fiscal Year 2022, with the amount requested at \$62,566.

Assistance to Firefighters Grant- FD applied in January 2021 for \$450,000 for a Water Tanker. Funding to awarded through December, no word yet.

GAP II Grant – The DPW applied for the GAP III grant for funding for the Water Department’s Pump stations for energy efficiencies, in the amount of \$50,000 in August.

Procurement:

Completed:

Emergency Procurement – Library – The Trustees awarded the contract for the emergency replacement of the boiler and oil tank, and removal of both, to RJ McDonald in the amount of \$46,900.

Pending:

None at this time.

To do:

- ✓ **Cable Access Software**
- ✓ **Records Building – Fence**
- ✓ **Security Cameras (Paxton Center School) –**
- ✓ **Town Common area drainage (WRAP funding)**
- ✓ **Trash Collection**
- ✓ **Tivnan Field Lights (materials only)**

JOB OPENINGS

DPW

Temporary Employee – With an employee out on leave for the next 12 weeks, we have posted for a temporary employee to assist the DPW with regular tasks and snow responsibilities.

Town Hall

Assistant Treasurer Collector – Our shared municipal assistant left in November, and we are hiring under that budget line item for two positions, one being for the Assistant Treasurer Collector. This position will be generally 8 hours per week, with additional hours available during tax months and to cover absences. This position is posted on the website and Indeed. We expect to begin interviewing next week.

Conservation Agent- This position has been vacant for a few months. The Con Com met last week to review the job description and posting and is for four hours a week. Once posted, this should be placed on the website and indeed.

PROJECTS

Updates

Town Building Phone Upgrade – We have met with IT and the vendor and are moving forward on this project. We should breakeven with the cost of our current phone bills and should have remaining funds left over from the ATM article for phones to return to the Town at year end. We are still hopeful that the phones will be up, running, and folks will be trained by calendar's end.

ADJOURN

- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to leave the regular meeting and entered into Executive Session at 7:40pm and we will return to the regular meeting for the purpose of adjourning. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**
- **Returned to Regular Session at 8:33pm**
- **Adjourned Meeting at 8:33pm, Unanimous all in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

The next meeting is scheduled for January 9, 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