



Town of Paxton  
Board of Selectmen  
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## Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, December 12, 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. We will enter into Executive Session and will return to the regular meeting only for the purpose of adjourning.

### CONSENT ITEMS

- 1. Request from the Paxton Garden Club to use the Town Common on 6/3/2023 from 7am to 1pm for a plant sale.
- 2. Approve the meeting minutes for the Select Board Meeting held on November 28, 2022.
- 3. Approve the meeting minutes for the Select Board Meeting held on December 5, 2022.
- (JP) Any discussion on the consent items. Hearing no comment. Items 1, 2 & 3 are approved.

### OLD BUSINESS

#### Select Board Goals

- (JP) A redline versions was provided to the Board members. Updated section 3 so we have a forward look of what we want for the town.
- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to accept the goals as reviewed. Unanimous, all in favor.**

### NEW BUSINESS

- **Appoint Neil Bagdis to the Capital Improvement Committee**
- Neil Bagdis, I would like to be appointed to the Capital Improvement Committee because I feel with my experience and the way that I look at issues it would be a good fit and I am willing to give my time.
- (JP) There is some concern with this appointment because Neil is a vendor to the town and he also helps support other capital items for the town. The Town Administer called

Town Counsel and we don't have a great amount of information on this, but we can move forward and appoint Neil.

- **Neil Bagdis**, I am aware of the conflict of interest in working with the Planning Board. I think having an understanding of what that means I don't see this as an issue. I would always disclose the relationship that I have with the state, and I don't think there would be any concern.
- **(JP)** It's not disqualifying but there may be a conflict of interest that you will have to work on.
- **(CR)** When an issue comes up that you would have some involvement with. I would suggest that you leave the room rather than just move to the audience.
- **(JP)** For your own benefit make sure you know what your confines are. Anything over 10,000.
- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to appoint Neil Bagdis to the Capital Improvement Committee. Unanimous, all in favor.**

## **License Renewals**

### **Liquor**

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

### **Auto Body Shops**

- Paxton Auto

### **Class II Car Sales**

- Paxton Auto
- Pimental Realty Trust
- Peter Bogren Sr.

### **Common Victuallers**

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

### **Packaged Goods**

- Paxton Sports Center
- Paxton Liquor Store
- Paxton House of Pizza
- Paxton Marketplace

### **Above Ground Tanks**

- Anna Maria College
- Worcester County Memorial
- Kettlebrook Golf Course

- Industrial Tower & Wireless
- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to approve the renewal of the 2023 licenses. Hold liquor licenses until all inspections are complete. Unanimous, all in favor.**

#### **Update wage and comp chart**

- (HM) Updated the wage and compensation chart. More consistency and accuracy on setting the rate for new hires. For the FY24 budget we can see where employees are and where they will move to for the upcoming budget year.
- (JP) Carol, did we just target certain positions when we did this last?
- (CR) Yes, this was not comprehensive we were just looking to pull in certain positions. We worked under the constraints of a grant to do this. The inspectors are not on this.
- (HM) We took the inspectors off because we are looking for a different way to pay them. Perhaps a flat fee for an inspection rather than an hourly rate. We can include them for now if you want. I did not include anyone with a set annual stipend.
- (JP) What is your view of COLA's when you take into account the steps of the chart?
- (HM) Have the whole chart increase by COLA each year. Use the steps as a merit but the whole chart goes up by COLA. For this year get everyone on the chart and then get everyone using the chart for future years. Just use 2.5% for this year. The COLA is going to be the step increase this year.
- (CR) Everyone was told what their grade and step was so they could use those worksheets.
- (JP) Can we touch base with the Collins Center to see if they have some back up for their grades.
- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to approve the updated wage and compensation chart. Unanimous, all in favor.**

#### **FY24 budget discussion**

- (HM) Reviewed a budget calendar to get everyone on the same page.
- (JP) I would like to have a meeting with CIPC as well to have them present what they have put together for capital items this year. This would need to be before the warrant closes.
- (CR) We all need to be on the same page prior to town meeting.
- (HM) The report from CIPC will be due before March 27, 2023. Schedule a presentation from CIPC on March 13, 2023. This schedule will be given to the Finance Committee and CIPC to review and make suggestions.
- (HM) Recommendations will be very liberal. We need to do level service budgets and I still feel that will be difficult. No COLA for nonunion employee's just base increase. Stipends would need to remain level funded, no COLA increases. As far as capital requests, we don't have the bandwidth to cover this so any capital funds that come in would have to go to the town for a vote. We need to communicate this up front. I would also recommend doing a bottom-line department budget. That will give the departments a little more comfort in knowing they would have some flexibility with their budgets since we are budgeting so tightly. This would also save the Finance Committee from having to do so many transfers at the end of the year.
- (JP) Do you want to do a letter to the departments on this?
- (HM) Yes, if you approve it. It is very reasonable for the Select Board to send out direction to the department heads.
- (JP) Some people may need a little education on what the level funding means.

- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to approve the recommendations for the FY24 budget process and to send them to each of the departments. Unanimous, all in favor.**

**SELECT BOARD CORRESPONDENCE**

- none

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

- none

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT**

**Boards, Committees, Commissions**

See the Town’s Website for openings.

**COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS**

**Tree Lighting and Fire Station Santa Visit**

The tree lighting event held by the Recreation Department was well attended and excellent. This past weekend Santa at the Fire Station was also well attended.

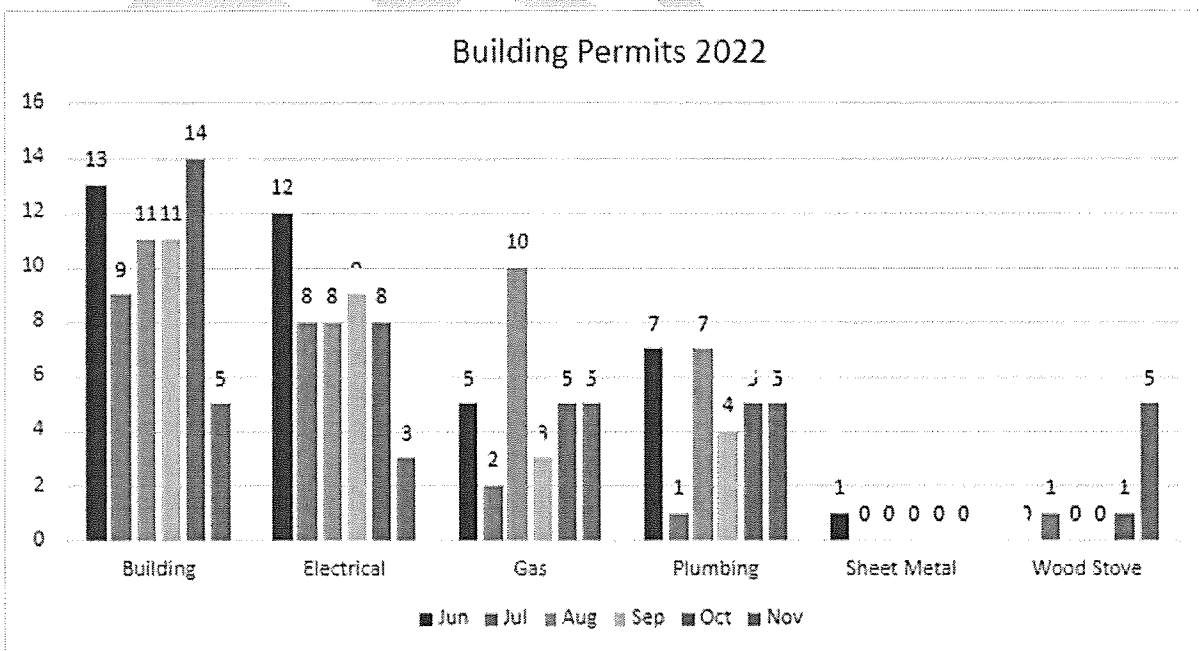
**DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES**

**Assessor’s Office**

The tax rate was approved December 12, 2022. The FY23 tax rate has been set at \$17.58.

**Building**

We had 23 building permits pulled in November, down from 33 in October.



**DPW** - The DPW has been busy and has a lot of different projects they are working on:

- **Tree Work** – The Tree Company has been busy at work removing dead/dying trees around Town. They expect to be done this week, several weeks ahead of schedule.

**Town Administrator's Office**

I have taken self-paced procurement training courses over the past two months. I have completed the Bidding Basics class. I have a live webinar this week to finish the Design and Construction class. Then, I have the self-paced Goods and Services piece and a live webinar left, which should be completed by month's end.

**FINANCES**

**Grants**

Newly Awarded:

**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.

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

**MIIA 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.

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

**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.

Active/Status Update:

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

**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 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.

**Shared Streets Grant**- In Progress.

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

**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.

**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:**

Pending:

**Security Cameras (Paxton Center School)** – This is now back in our hands to further pursue and procure.

*To do:*

**Cable Access Software**

**Records Building – Fence**

**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.

**Assistant Town Clerk** – Our shared municipal assistant left in November and we are hiring under that budget line item for two positions, one being for the Assistant Town Clerk. This position will be generally 8 hours per week, with additional hours available during certain months (elections) 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 8:32pm and we will return to the regular meeting for the purpose of adjourning. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**
- **Returned to Regular Session at 9:52pm**
- **Adjourned Meeting at 9:52pm, Unanimous all in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

The next meeting is scheduled for December 26, 2022, 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

