



Town of Paxton
Board of Selectmen
697 Pleasant Street, Paxton, MA 01612
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Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 22, 2024

**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
Carol L. Riches, Clerk

Town Administrator: Charles Blanchard, Interim Town Administrator

Attendees: see Attendee List

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

CONSENT ITEMS

- 1. Approve the meeting minutes from the Regular Meeting held on December 11, 2023.
- 2. Approve the meeting minutes from the Executive Meeting held on December 11, 2023.
- 3. Approve revised meeting minutes from the Regular Meeting held on August 8, 2022.
- 4. Appoint Charles Blanchard to the Cable Committee until his position as the Interim Town Administrator is complete.
- (JP) Hearing no other comments, all consent items have been approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Source procurement for IT Services to Suzor IT for the amount of \$44,550 for FY25 July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025.

- (JP) We have some time on this. There have been some bumps in the road, so I want to make sure all IT services are going in the right direction before we go ahead and declare their procurement.
- Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to push this item forward until we are able to verify the direction that we want our IT services to go in. Unanimous. All in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

Vote to call Town Caucus on March 11, 2024, at 7pm at Paxton Center school.

- Motion (KH) seconded (CR) approve Town Caucus to be held on March 11, 2024, at 7pm at Paxton Center School. Unanimous. All in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

Vote on recommendation for early voting in-person for the 2024 Presidential Primary in February, the 2024 State Primary in September and the 2024 Presidential Election in November as presented by the Town Clerk.

- **(JP)** The Town Clerk has requested the following dates for early voting in person.
- **Laurie Becker** Provided the following letter for the Select Board to vote on:

As the Chief Election Officer for the Town of Paxton, I am recommending that the hours and dates for Early Voting In-person for the 2024 Presidential Primary to be as follows:

Day	Date	Time
Saturday	February 24, 2024	10:00am-2:00pm
Monday	February 26, 2024	10:00am-2:00pm
Tuesday	February 27, 2024	10:00am-2:00pm
Wednesday	February 28, 2024	10:00am-2:00pm
Thursday	February 29, 2024	10:00am-2:00pm

According to MGL chapter 54 section 25B

On weekends, the number of hours you must be open depends on the number of registered voters in your community. The required minimum hours for weekends are:

Number of Voters	Required Weekend Early Voting Hours
0 - 4,999	At least 1 day per weekend At least 2 hours each day you are open At least 4 hours total each weekend

For weekdays, the required minimum early voting hours will vary depending on the size of your community and at what point it is during the in-person early voting period. By default, the early voting hours are during your regular business hours; however, selectboard may have the option to limit early voting hours on certain days, if your community is small enough.

The required weekday early voting hours are:

Number of Voters	Required Weekday Early Voting Hours
0 - 4,999	At least 25% of regular business hours

To limit your early voting hours, your selectboard will need to vote to do so at a public meeting held no later than 20 days before early voting begins. The proposed hours are more than the State Requirement of 25% of regular business hours. If I held Early Voting hours for all my scheduled office hours, I would need to be here before and after the start of my scheduled hours to set up and break down which I feel is an unnecessary burden on my office.

I would also ask the Select Board vote to allow the Town Clerk to set Early Voting Office Hours for the State Primary in September and the Presidential Election in November. The hours will be likely similar to those set for the Presidential Primary, however there are 2 weeks (and 2 Saturdays) of early voting for the Presidential Election. There will be no Early Voting on October 25th which is a Friday which my office is not legally required to be open for. I will hold EV hours on Friday, November 1st. While this date is not legally required, it is recommended by the state as the advertised last day of Early Voting in person in the media will be this date.

MGL 54 § 25B also addresses in person Early Voting for the Annual Town Election. Specifically, it says, “(c)(1) The select board, board of selectmen, town council or city council of each city and town may vote to authorize early in-person voting for any other city or town preliminary or election not included in subsection (b). Such vote may only be taken after a request from not less than 50 percent of the registrars of the city or town recommending in-person early voting; provided, however, that such vote shall occur not less than 5 business days prior to the proposed beginning of early voting.”

- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to recommend early voting in-person for the 2024 Presidential Primary in February, the 2024 State Primary in September and the 2024 Presidential Election in November as presented by the Town Clerk and Board of Registrars. Unanimous. All in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

Correspondence

- (JP) A number of accolades to the DPW during the recent storms while being short staffed.
- (KH) More to come but a quick shout out to a town resident that took up a huge initiative to put back in good order all our town markers with all our abutting towns. There will be a follow-up to this.

Town Administrator update

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

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

COA

The ground water that infiltrated into the lower level of the White Building was cleaned up and no additional water came in with the weekend storm. We will continue to monitor this.

An update on the April 1st change to SCM Elderbus is in the February Paxton Senior Connection Newsletter, and Cindy is working with the WRTA to keep our residents informed to ensure a smooth transition.

Building

In December, the Building Department had 24 permits pulled, which is the same as last month.

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

DPW

The DPW Building Committee met on January 17th with Weston & Sampson to review the project status. Several similar DPW projects are going out to bid in the next few months which will help W&S provide an accurate probable cost estimate. The Committee will meet again on February 7th to discuss the impact this project would have if this project went forward with a Debt Exclusion.

Library

The Library Director is continuing to work with the contractor on scheduling the roof and gutter repairs now that the good weather seems to have left us.

Treasurer/Collector

Our part-time Assistant Treasurer/Collector, Amanda DeRezendes reconsidered her decision to leave and will remain in her position at least until late spring.

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). This Earmark has been reduced by 50%. I will work with Travis on our options to move forward with this.

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. This Earmark has been reduced by 50%. I will work with Recreation on our options to move forward with this.

- (KH) How is dam #1
- (CB) It was repaired within a couple of days.

ADJOURN

- Adjourned Meeting at 7:17pm, Unanimous all-in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.
- The next meeting is scheduled for February 12, 2024, 7:00pm.

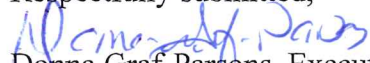
Documents from the Meeting filed in BOS office:

Agenda

Attendance list

Town Administrators update

Respectfully submitted,



Donna Graf-Parsons, Executive Assistant