



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

Monday, March 13, 2023

Meeting Location: 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: Heather M. Munroe, Town Administrator

Attendees: see Attendee List

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

UPDATE FROM TOWN COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

- Joint session with the Planning Board for consideration of an interim appointment of Peter Schur until the Annual Town Election on May 8, 2023.
- **Neil Bagdis** – Recommend Peter Schur be appointed to fill a current vacancy on the Board until the Annual Town Election.
- **Peter Schur** – I have lived in Paxton for 34 years. I have a masters from Clark in Public Administration. Served on Select Board for 3 years. 16 years on the Finance Committee and 11 years on Bay Path School Committee. Now I would like to help the town on the Planning Board.
- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to appoint Peter Schur to the Planning Board until the May 8, 2023 election. Unanimous all in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**
- Chief Savasta – presented Paul Riley and Timothy Larkham to be appointed as full time Police Officers.
- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to appoint Paul Riley and Timothy Larkham as full time Police Officers. Unanimous all in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

CONSENT ITEMS

- 1. Approve the meeting minutes from the regular meeting held on February 27, 2023.
- 2. Approve the meeting minutes from the regular meeting held on March 8, 2023.
- 3. Approve one-day liquor license for Anna Maria College for Saturday, April 15, 2023, 10am to 6pm and May 10, 2023, 4pm to 10pm.
- 4. Reappoint Jennifer Bridgers to the Board of Registrars for a three-year term ending March 31, 2026.
- 5. Appoint Jeremy Richard to the Economic Development Committee as the representative from the Finance Committee and as a non-voting member for the term ending June 30, 2023.

- 6. Accept donation from Mr. & Mrs. Stratton in the amount of \$10,000 with \$5,000 each going to the Police and Fire Departments.
- **(JP)** Are there any objections to any of the consent items? Hearing no comment. Items 1 through 6 are approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Review the progress of the Select Board goals

- **(JP)** – Reviewed the updates that were provided by the Town Administrator.
 - Communication
 - Joint meeting
 - Charter review working group
- **(HM)** - Town counsel recommended to do as a special act for the charter review. In good practice you should review your charter every ten years.
- **(JP)** - Put it on a future agenda and take some time to review the charter and ask other committees if they have any input and then discuss to determine if there are any changes that need to be made.
 - Meeting monthly with boards and committees
 - I would like to start putting together a Select Board handbook
 - Liaison positions
 - Budgeting process
 - Annual timeline for the budgets
 - Work with fin com for annual budget process
 - Establish EDC
 - Improve town wide communication.
- **(CR)** - Are we doing okay with meeting with our liaisons? Are we all doing that?
- **(KH)** - For the most part I am. Some committees meet during the day, which is hard, and a lot of my groups are not very active at the moment.
- **(HM)** – If you want I will keep this on once a quarter to make sure we are keeping on track.

Vote to close the warrant on April 24, 2023, for the Annual Town Meeting to be held on June 5, 2023.

- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to close the warrant on April 24, 2023 for the annual town meeting held on June 5, 2023. Unanimous all in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

NEW BUSINESS

Discuss potential projects for ARPA

- **(CR)** - Capital projects – the only department that has brought any forward was the DPW. One of the items was a small item. It is a boom head attachment that the DPW Director said would save the town money, time and manpower. The ARPA funding has some funds left in the household project. That could possibly be used for something like this.
- **Mark Love** - As a representative from the Capital Committee this item will also help with storm water and would cost about \$14,700. Travis spoke of storm water and I raised the question how much help would the ditch head mean to you and Travis said, time, money and man power. Finance and Capital are now working on bringing these projects forward. We had our eye on capital depreciation. What we are conflicted with is perhaps there are other opportunities for the ARPA spending. The other item is the chipper which

could be another item for consideration. Take it under advisement and hit the pause button and come back in a month and look at it.

- (JP) - There could be a number of things that ARPA funds could be used for, but we will keep these items in mind.

Discuss form for budget article warrant

- (HM) – I would like to present that we put the budget forward as the bottom-line budget with an additional handout given to the residents at town meeting. The actual budget will have just the bottom-line number. This would give flexibility to the department heads in order to move money around. It also gives flexibility to the department heads as things happen. We can track internal transfers as well.
- (JP) We would need to put a policy in place for internal transfers.
- (HM) - We can post on the accountants page a monthly transfers sheet to keep track of this.
- **Mark Love** – The thought was that the article was only going to have one line. We think that we do still need to have the breakdown and then it would be fine if the article was just a one line item. We should have a policy and structure, and then this would be fine. If this was brought back to the Finance Committee with this explanation then the committee would be comfortable with this. As long as the detail is in the back of the warrant.
- **Motion (CR) seconded (KH) to accept the recommendation for the budget to be a departmental bottom line number Unanimous all in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

Accept bid recommendations for security cameras

- (HM) – We just received these bids today. Rick Bedard has been assisting with this project. Worked hand and hand with the school. The school wanted to use the state contract. Our problem was that they had a quote but it did not give specifics. We did an optional pre-bid walk through. On Feb 23rd documents went out and bids were due today. We had three bids overall. One bid did not include a quote sheet so we had to consider this nonresponsive. The other two bids were valid and we were able to negotiate with the lowest bidder and they brought down their bid to be below the 50,000 that we have to spend. This will include the first year of service as well. The school will then be able to budget for the annual service going forward.
- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to accept the bid from Security 101 for the security cameras for Paxton Center School. Unanimous all in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

Review updated application and fee schedule for one-day liquor license

- (HM) – Modified the current one day liquor license so that all the questions can be answered in the application itself. We also do not currently charge for this license. Eventually this can go online and then we can get sign offs as well from any departments that we deem necessary.
- (JP) – I think it makes sense to start with a \$50 fee for the application and then we can always review it.
- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to accept the new one day liquor license application with a fee of \$50.00. Unanimous all in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**
- (HM) - When do want to make this effective?
- (JP) - Immediately.

SELECT BOARD CORRESPONDENCE

- (JP) – Correspondence from a town resident commending Andrew Clark from the water department for a job well done.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- **Neil Bagdis** – First, I would like to see the town calendar on the town sign. Secondly the Planning Board will look to reschedule our meeting so that our schedule is opposite that of the Select Board. It is also difficult for the liaisons to attend meetings so this should help with that as well.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

Boards, Committees, Commissions

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

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

Kids’ Summer Program – The Recreation Department is now accepting applications for kids ages 4 through 6th graders. For information about the program, fee schedules, and employment opportunities, please check out the Recreation page of the [Town’s website](#).

Paxton Days & Summer Jam – This year the Town has a fun filled day planned for Saturday, June 17th from 10am to 8pm. The festivities will take place at Central Fields and Band Stand. This is a FREE event open to all ages. There will be music, food, games, food trucks, and other vendors. To participate as a vendor, please contact Donna Parsons at dparsons@townofpaxton.net.

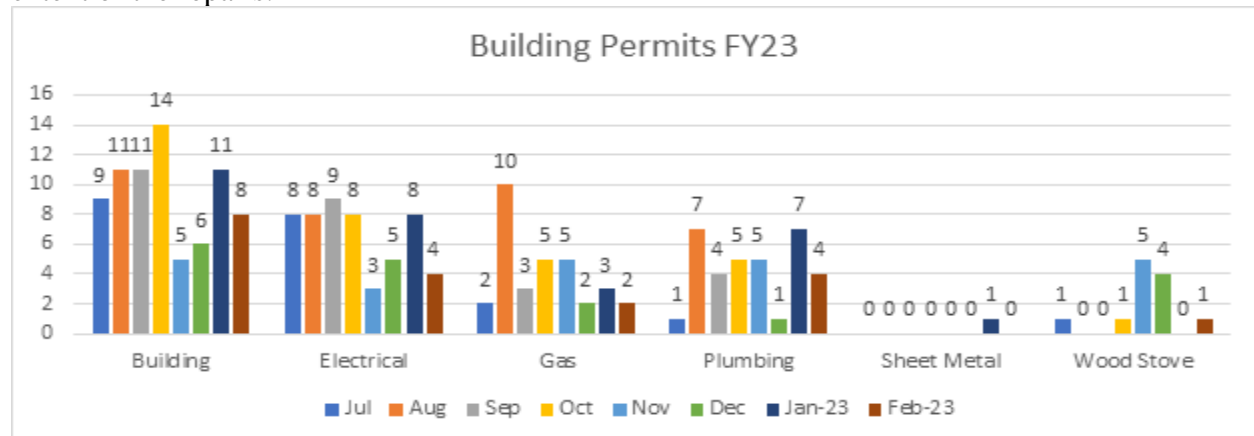
Town-wide Yard Sale – Each year, resident Bob Wilby organizes a Town-wide yard sale for Paxton. This year’s yard sale is scheduled for Saturday, May 20th from 8 am to 2 pm. To be listed on the annual Yard-sale map, please contact Bob at (508) 792-4662.

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

Building Department

In February, we had eight building permits pulled, with a total of 19 permits for the department for the month. While that number was 11 less than January, it was the same number that we had in February 2022. By this time last fiscal year, we had a total of 228 permits pulled, this year we are at 207, or 9% less than less year. On a more positive note, we had 75 Building Permits pulled in FY23, whereas at this same time in FY22, we only had 72 Building Permits pulled.

Of the building permits pulled in February 2023, three were for water damage, one was for a kitchen remodel, bathroom remodel, 2 roofs, and for an entry door. Of these projects, the remodels will likely impact our new growth figure, the water damage permits will depend on the extent of the repairs.



DPW

Paving – The DPW expects to pave/reclaim Forestdale, Glen Alan, and Orchard this spring.

Complete Streets- The DPW is planning to apply for a complete streets grant this year to redo the sidewalks along Richards Ave.

MS4 Project – This project was ARPA funded in order to bring the Town into compliance with state regulations. The DPW is currently working with Fuss & O’Neil. Samples and inspections.

West Street Engineering – The project was ARPA funded and the Town has worked with Tatar & Howard on this project. The goal is to have a Mass Works grant ready to go this Spring before the State’s deadline.

Black Hill Bridge – This project was funded by a Small Bridge grant by the State. We are working with CHA on this project. The consultant was behind and we have been working with the State. Once the project is complete, we expect to apply for a Small Bridge action grant.

DCR – Working through Wes and Sampson, our consultant that the Town worked with for our schematic design for the DPW building, we are applying for a Request for Determination of Applicability under the Watershed Protection Act to obtain an opinion of whether we will be allowed to use the same property to build a new DPW building and confirm that we can place a septic system on the site. We expect a response prior to May.

Asnebumskit Dam – We had a Phase I study completed in May 2022. One of the action items was to update our Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for the Dam. With the hard work of Jeff Olson from the Fire Department the Town now has an EAP for the Dam that staff will be reviewing.

IT

We received notice from our IT director that he will complete his work with the Town on March 17th. We will be working with Rabidou Consulting for IT support for the remainder of the fiscal year. Shawn Mead from Fire and myself will be collecting IT requests over the next few weeks to address the ones we can in house and send the rest out. We are most curious as to what the requests are. We will look to build a scope of services for FY24+ IT services.

Town Administrator

On Wednesday, March 8, the Select Board met on Zoom to vote to move the Annual Town Meeting from May until Monday, June 5th at 7pm. The Select Board is expected to vote on extending the date for the closure of the warrant to a date in late April. The additional time will provide the Town with an opportunity to have the most up-to-date school figures used as part of the budget, and potentially reduce the impact of budget cuts to departments.

FINANCES

FY24 Budget Process

The Finance Committee has been regularly meeting on Wednesday evenings. At the last meeting, it was restated that the Town currently has budget requests that exceed expected revenues. The Finance Committee and Town officials will work together to come to a balanced budget over the next few weeks.

Grants

Newly Awarded:

Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant – The Town received word last week that we received approximately \$4,455 in a reimbursable grant to update the Town’s Hazard Mitigation Plan.

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 of \$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 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. Funds will be required to be used and projects completed by June 30, 2026.

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:

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 be awarded through December, no word yet.

Procurement:

Active:

- **Security Cameras (Paxton Center School)** – With the assistance of Town Resident, Rick Bedard, and Principal Rickan and Facilities Director Mark Wilde, the Town was able to take advantage of the State contract vendor list, ITC-71. We disseminated materials for a request for quote on the State contract on 2/23, a voluntary walk-through was held on 3/3 and bids are due on Monday, March 13th at 12 noon.
- **Trash Collection** – We drafted an RFP for municipal trash collection for FY24. The Town Admin, Tom Carroll of the BOH, and Sheryl Lombardi are meeting late this week to get everything wrapped up and get the process completed.

To do:

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

Paramedic/Firefighter – There was a new opening for a paramedic/firefighter which closed last week. Interviews are underway.

PROJECTS

Updates

Town Building Phone Upgrade – All phones are now connected to the internet. We have resolved the last of the phone line issues and Wi-Fi matter at the Library. We are in the process of scheduling our official cutover.

(JP) The current snow storm is expected to bring 12 to 20 inches of snow possibly to our area. Trash service has already been delayed one day. Keep your cars off the road.

(HM) - The town hall, COA and library will all be closed on Tuesday and we will keep everyone updated on the opening time for Wednesday.

ADJOURN

- **Adjourned Meeting at 8:28pm, Unanimous all-in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

The next meeting is scheduled for March 27, 2023, at 6pm.

Documents from the Meeting filed in BOS office:

Agenda

Attendance list

Town Administrators update

Meeting minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Graf-Parsons
Executive Assistant