



Town of Paxton
Board of Selectmen
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Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 11, 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.

Joint meeting with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

- Members present from ARPA Committee: Jeff Olson, Larissa Kennedy, Travis Thibault, Heather Munroe, Julia Pingitore.
- Members absent from ARPA Committee: Mark Savasta and Cindy Love.
- **Motion (TT) seconded (JO) to open the meeting for the ARPA Committee at 7:00pm. Unanimous, all in favor.**
- **(JP)** Asked the following attendees to come forward for discussion - Mark Love, Neil Bagdis, Jeffrey Kent, Jeremy Richard.
- **(JP)** We received an email from Mark Love with area of discussion for tonight. We have set an hour on the agenda for this topic. Please keep comments brief. All discussion happens through the chair. Not here to second guess any decisions that were made with any particular committees we are just focusing on discussion that is productive.
- **Mark Love**, None of us are here in our official committee position but as residents of the Town. We were hearing that there were a lot of questions, rumors, misinformation, conflict etc. concerning ARPA. Here to present a list of recommendations and suggestions for things to come in the future. The ARPA committee should have been made up of members of the community at large and more sensitive to diversity. I advocated for someone on the Finance Committee to be on ARPA but was told that was not possible. A member of the Select Board is also a member of the ARPA Committee. How was allowed to happen. That is in conflict with Mass General Law Chapter 268A Section 21a regarding municipal members on a board.
- **(JP)** This is an advisory committee and that is why we are allowed to appoint a Select Board member to ARPA.
- **Mark Love**, The ARPA meetings are held at 10am on a weekday. Having it at that time took the working public out of play.
- **(JP)** They are held at this time to help accommodate the schedule of the current members. If there is a quorum of the committee members that can meet at night then we can attempt to do that.

- **Neil Bagdis**, Why such the rush to get things done when you have until December 2024 to earmark projects and until December 2025 to spend it.
- **(JP)** Actually I think we have until December 2023 to earmarked projects and it needs to be spent by December 2024. It was suggested that we not waste time using the money because it was intended to be a relief to the public. The intent was to spend the money so that in turn you would employ people to do the work. For example, the ramp at COA. You have to hire someone to do the work and then you stimulate the economy. Get out and get the money spent.
- **Neil Bagdis**, Premium pay what happened to that?
- **(JP)** The ARPA Committee was conflicted with this item, so we did not discuss it and we put it to the Select Board. At the same time the Governor was looking to do something with premium pay so we waited. The premium pay was really intended for lower income individuals.
- **Mark Love**, The fire truck which went before ARPA on March 1st was only referenced as a new project on the agenda which is vague when you consider its about half the funds that we received for ARPA. I think several people would have wanted to attend that.
- **(JP)** I appreciate your opinion and that decision was not made at that meeting the decision was made at the Select Board meeting and the public was invited to that. I do not think there was any prejudice there.
- **Mark Love**, The ARPA Committee did vote unanimous including yourself.
- **(JP)** I recused myself.
- **Mark Love**, The minutes said unanimous.
- **(JP)** Do any ARPA Committee members remember me recusing myself?
- All present members said yes.
- **Travis Thibault**, It was a common practice to put new projects as a topic on the agenda.
- **Mark Love**, Advocating for the fire truck when at the same time there were two other projects that went to a ballot questions. That was not a transparent exchange.
- **(HM)** The interest alone for the fire truck would have been an additional \$10.80 a year per household for a ten year loan duration.
- **(JP)** The decision has been made the contract has been signed and we cannot go back.
- **Mark Love**, – We are in favor of the fire truck but disagree how the method to fund it occurred. We have tree issues, road issues, water issues. Now we do not have 750,000 to take care of these things. We have all of those that we cannot pay for but we will have a fire truck
- **(JP)** We are taking care of tree and storm water with ARPA funds as well. Smaller projects do not carry savings like the fire truck will. The hard task is how do you use that money the best way we can. We put it out to the public and we did get suggestions from the residents including yourself. We did a lot of great things with this money. Any amount under ten million could be used for capital items. When ARPA first started meeting the thought of the fire truck came up and I said no at that time but when ARPA regulations were changed and now communities could spend funds on capital items, I then changed my opinion.
- **Neil Bagdis**, There has been discussion about the security cameras for the school and now it appears we will need more than the \$50,000 that was voted on.
- **(HM)** We are currently still trying to work within the \$50,000.
- **(JP)** Security cameras were approved by Capital Improvement and then the town meeting voted it in. The security cameras came to ARPA and we asked for more information. We received no further information. When it went to capital so we figured that Capital had received more information than APRA did.

- **Mark Love**, In regard to the fire truck there were questions of misinformation and rumors that this may have been funded by APRA because it might have been defeated by the town residents. It was commented that the ARPA funds were the only way we would get the fire truck.
- **(JP)** That is why we moved the fire truck forward, called order to the meeting at this point, move forward with recommendations
- **Mark Love**, Presented a list of suggestions and recommendations for the ARPA Committee moving forward.
 - Fire truck
 - ARPA committee past
 - ARPA committee future
 - ARPA committee meetings
 - Capital Improvement planning committee
 - Department of revenue, division of local services
- **(JP)** Thank you we will take it under advisement.
- **(HM)** In calculating the cost of the Fire truck and interest it would total \$928,537 which translates to \$51.45 per year to the median household for a ten year loan.
- **(JP)** The decisions were made by a three person Select Board that was voted by the public.
- **Jeremy Richard**, Clarified the deadline for the ARPA projects is to earmark projects by December of 2024 and spent the funds by December 2026.
- **Jeffrey Kent**, Tonight, I am here not because I disagree with ARPA but because the CIPC bylaw was violated because ARPA did not include members of the public, Finance Committee or Capital Improvement Committee and was not held at a time that was conducive to the public. You need to set a path going forward to regain the trust and confidence in our elected officials.
- **Motion (JO) seconded (HM) to adjourn the ARPA Committee portion of the meeting at 8:03pm. Unanimous, all in favor.**

CONSENT ITEMS

- 1. Sign the Election Warrant for the State Election to be held on November 8th from 7am to 8pm at the Paxton Center School - remove
- 2. Request from the Paxton Boy Scouts Troop 105 to use the Town Common on November 5, 2022, from 9am to 1pm for a bottle and can drive.
- 3. Request from the Paxton Boy Scouts Troop 105 to place signs on the Town Common for a bottle and can drive to be held on November 5, 2022, from 9am to 1pm.
- 4. Appoint Anita Fenton as an Election Worker for the term of October 12, 2022, to August 15, 2023.
- 5. To appoint Robert Birkbeck as a full member to the Zoning Board of Appeals till June 2023.
- 6. Approve the meeting minutes for the Select Board Meeting held on September 26, 2022.
- **(JP)** Any discussion on the consent items. Hearing no items 1 - 6 are approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Discuss liaison positions and roles

- **(JP)** Does anyone have any changes
- **(CR)** If there is a vacancy on a committee to let the committee chair and Select Board member know but also add that the Town Clerk should be notified.

- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to accept the policy as written with the addition of notification to the Town Clerk. Unanimous, all in favor.**

WRSD maintenance agreement

- (HM) The address change is all set; grease traps have been inspected and the system is being pumped regularly.
- (JP) What about a change to the number?
- (HM) I can go back and ask but just keep in mind any adjustment will just come back out of our pockets.
- **Motion (CR) seconded (KH) to accept the maintenance agreement with Wachusett Regional School District. Unanimous, all in favor.**

NEW BUSINESS

Trick or Treating

- (JP) Halloween is on a Monday this year. In the past we have reduced the hours to 5pm to 7pm. During the week I worry about traffic.
- (HM) Mentioned Lions Club event is the same night.
- Neil Bagdis, Does it have to be Halloween night?
- (JP) I think most people want to stay with the tradition of it being on Halloween night.
- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to have Trick or Treating on Halloween, Monday, October 31st from 5pm to 8pm. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Tree cutting bids

- (HM) We have \$100,000 to spend on an ARPA appropriation for tree cutting. Awarded to the tree company that could give us the most trees for whatever amount we had. We need to keep money aside for road detail and stump grinding. DPW will be able to do some trees on their own. Did get recommendations from previous town that used North-Eastern and they were happy with their work.
- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to accept the tree cutting bid from North-Eastern Tree Services. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Diesel bids

- (HM) We went out for bid a couple of months ago and got no responses. Sent it out a second time. We extended the bid date. RJ McDonald was the only one that ended up bidding at a rate of \$4.56 per gallon and \$4.64 for winter blend emergency delivery \$150.00 per delivery.
- **Motion (KH) seconded (CR) to accept the diesel bid from RJ McDonald. Unanimous, all in favor.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Neil Bagdis, Chair of the Planning Board – Discussion on Olivia Knoll. This project has been in process for 13 to 14 years. We are getting the trees planted. Still some issues with the streetlights. The poles seem to be 14 to 15 feet high. The developer did not put in standard lights. The Paxton Light Department said for \$11,000 they would put in the standard lights. During a recent meeting, the developer was very displeased. They went to talk to Paxton Light Department and they came to some type of an agreement but then the developer changed their mind. Now we are looking to bring this street forward to the Town for acceptance. How do we proceed?
- (KH) Are we still holding a bond?
- Neil Bagdis Yes, we are.

- **(JP)** On our end I will ask Heather to follow up with Tara at the Paxton Light Department to see what the plan is if these lights fail.
- **Neil Bagdis**, According to the Board they do not meet our subdivision requirements. I need to know that we are moving forward as a unified source. On another subject with the new electric signs, can we put the town meeting calendar on the signs for some meetings?
- **(JP)** We currently have a policy of a max of four messages at a time but we can give it a try.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

BOARD/COMMITTEE OPENINGS

Boards, Committees, Commissions

See the Town's Website for more openings.

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

Cultural Council Grant Opportunities

Paxton Cultural Council grants are now being accepted online until October 17th. The link may be found at <https://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/local-cultural-council-program/>

Fire Department Open House

Open House on Saturday, October 15th from 10am to 1pm (no cost).

Paxton Lion's Halloween Party

The Lion's Club will be holding their annual Halloween Party at the Wentworth Field (behind Paxton Center School) on Monday, October 31st from 6:30 pm to 8:00 PM. (no cost)

Trunk or Treat

Paxton Center School will be holding their annual Trunk or Treat at the Paxton Center School on Sunday, October 23rd from 5pm to 7pm. (\$12 per trick or treat- registration required [here](#)).

FINANCES

Grants

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

MIIA 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.

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 November, no word yet.

Community Compact (IT) Grant – Requested funds 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 in September in the amount of approximately \$110,000.

DFS Firefighter Safety Grant – FD applied for \$15,500 for turnout gear in October.

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.

MIIA Risk Management Grant – Applied 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 \$9,237.50 in September.

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

Procurement:

Pending:

Diesel Fuel – Bids were due today at noon. We received one bid from RJ McDonald. We will be awarding the contract for FY23 Diesel Fuel to RJ McDonald at the following rates:

Diesel Fuel - $\$4.32 + \$0.24 \text{ (tax)} = \$4.56/\text{gallon}$

Winter Blend (GLOBAL DSL 1) $\$4.40 + \$0.24 \text{ (tax)} = \$4.64/\text{gallon}$

Emergency/On Site Delivery Charge \$150/ per

Roofs – We will be working on the work for the roofs (rec buildings and records building) next.

Security Cameras (Paxton Center School) – I am waiting on further information from the school to proceed.

Trees (ARPA funds) – We received tree bids for trees. We have an ARPA appropriation for \$100,000 and would like to hold some funds aside to cover the cost of details for the tree removals. Estimating roughly 10 days for tree work, bringing our total funds needed for detail to \$4,800, that leaves \$95,200 to fund the tree work out of the appropriation. We asked the bidders to quote per tree and in the order in which we prioritized the trees.

Therefore, the winning bidder is the company to be able to remove the most trees (which are in order) for \$92,680.

Tree Company	Furthest Prioritized Tree
North Eastern Tree Service, Inc.	141
Mayer Tree Service, Inc	136
Northern Tree Service, LLC	55

To do:

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

MEETING UPDATES

Complete Streets Public Meeting

The DPW Superintendent, in conjunction with the Town’s consultant, provided a presentation for our Complete Street Prioritization Plan on Tuesday, September 27th at 6:30pm at the Senior Center. This presentation is available on the Cable Access Station’s YouTube Channel [here](#).

PROJECTS

Updates

Complete Streets Prioritization Plan -Our Prioritization Plan has been accepted by the State. The approved plan can be viewed [here](#).

Town Building Phone Upgrade – This is still a work in progress, which we hope to resolve by the Calendar end.

Projects in the Works (Updates to come at future meetings)

5-Year Budget Forecast – We will be working on this at our financial management team meeting in October.

(HM) Federal DOT grant is due in a couple of days so we are looking to see if this is something that we can make use of.

ADJOURN

- **Adjourned Meeting at 8:47pm, Unanimous all in favor. (KH) yes, (CR) yes, (JP) yes.**

The next meeting is scheduled for October 24, 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