



Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF)

*Comprising meetings of the: Select Board, Finance Committee,
Library Board of Trustees, Planning Board and the AB Regional School Committee*

Meeting Minutes Tuesday, April 20, 2021

APPROVED: May 19, 2021

PLACE: *Virtual Meeting* - being conducted via Remote Participation, pursuant to the Current Executive Order.

(Parties identified herein may not have been in attendance for the duration of this meeting)

Finance Committee: Gary Kushner, Becky Neville, and Diana Lipari;

Select Board: Wes Fowlks, John Markiewicz, Maria Neyland and Bob Stemple

ABR School Committee: Nora Shine

Library Board of Trustees: Jennifer Campbell and Mary Brolin (also member of the School Building Comm.)

Planning Board: Cindy Markowitz and Robin Lazarow

Other Attendees: Ryan Ferrara, Town Administrator; Rajon Hudson, Assistant Town Administrator; Peishan Bartley, Library Director; John Fallon, Moderator; Cheryl Mahoney, Administrative Assistant; John Lyons and Priya Sundaram

At 7:03 PM, Planning Board Chair Cindy Markowitz called the virtual meeting to order via ZOOM. This meeting was conducted via Remote Participation, pursuant to the Current Executive Order.

MINUTES

Campbell moved to approve minutes of March 16, 2021, as written. Seconded by Stemple. **Approved 11-0-1** by Roll Call Vote: Neville "aye," Neyland "aye," Campbell "aye," Lazarow "aye," Lipari, "aye," Brolin "aye," Stemple "aye," Markiewicz "aye," Fowlks "aye," Kushner "aye," and Markowitz "aye." Shine abstained.

COVID-19 UPDATES

Ferrara reported that we are now classified a "green" community [Less than 15 cases] Through the efforts of our Town and other local communities the State is establishing a vaccination site at Devens, details are in process. Vaccination protocols now open to all residents. Ferrara will follow up on vaccination numbers for the Town's seniors. There was discussion about the Town's current protocols; staffing; remote/virtual meetings; the potential timeline for return to in-person Committee meetings; and how other organizations [ABRSD] are addressing this. There has been no updates or directives from the state regarding changing status quo allowing for remote public meetings. There is discussion throughout the state that remote/virtual public meetings have proven productive and a valuable tool. The consensus was to support lobbying the State to make these allowances permanent. The BSB will develop a letter to our legislators and reach out to other communities.

SELECT BOARD UPDATES

Stemple provided an update on the Veterans Tribute project.

Fowlks advised that the Accountant, Interim Clerk and Interim TA positions have been posted.

Ferrara/Hudson provided an update on water testing activities in Town. The PFAS water testing was done at the Hager Well and there were no significant findings. Residents are currently being offered two separate complimentary water

testing programs, the one which targets PFAS, has already reached maximum enrollment and has a waiting list. The other will test for general water quality, also with limited enrollment.

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Annual Town Meeting will be held on Saturday, June 12th with a rain date of June 13th. The intent is to keep proceedings moving; allowing for Town Meeting to be completed in one day. The Town is working with the Regency as to the sale of food during ATM. This will be a hybrid meeting [Parade Room/Parking Lot]; as such there are a lot of moving parts, including a kid friendly area along with the Regency offering food sales during the meeting, all while following COVID protocols. Fallon discussed the legal aspects of conducting Town Meeting during the pandemic. Mary Brolin will serve as Deputy Moderator for the outside area and Mac Reid has agreed to serve in Fallon's stead for the Diversity Sense of the Meeting Article.

With the date change presentations can now be submitted later on May 21st. They will be posted on the ATM webpage prior to Town Meeting. There was discussion as to managing the logistics of the presenting the differing positions of the Select Board and FinCom on Articles #4 and #5. It was also noted that there have been discussions as to possible amendments to certain articles.

Standard Voter Materials/Information - Fallon

Town Meeting materials have been posted to the website.

The intention is to hold the Liberty Fields articles as close to noon as possible.

Personnel Bd. re-voted their Article #4 recommendation, now unanimously supporting the 2.4% salary increase. Fincom has funded salaries at 1.4 % in Article #5. These Articles could be complicated. This translate to roughly a \$20,000 difference of opinion.

AB Regional School Committee Updates - Shine

The FY 22 Budget was voted on last month.

There was discussion as to the District's upcoming policy changes concerning reducing the role of Teaching Assistant in elementary school classrooms. These reductions activities are part of Supt. Light's goals.

School Building Project Committee Update - Brolin

The project is moving along. Blasting/drilling continues on the ledge so they are able to begin the utility installation. on. Doing a lot of blasting and drilling to remove more ledge. Starting utility installation. Steel is up for structures A & B, and C & D is in process. The Geothermic wells installation went well. The boardwalk will be replaced over the summer. The contractor is working with the District in planning the "Topping off" ceremony. The plan is for the students to sign one I-beam and stakeholders to sign another. The School Committee is working on creating a "Naming" committee for the new school; and they are seeking recommendations for those that could serve. Kushner noted that the project remains underbudget and on schedule with occupancy available as of August of 2022; and the contract completing the finish work by June of 2023.

FINANCE COMMITTEE UPDATES - Kushner

FY 2021 - They have approved two Reserve Fund Transfers for the Fire Department for bedding and door repairs.

FY 2022 – With the Budget published under Article #5 the FinCom and BSB has a \$20,000 philosophical difference. There was discussion on this. FinCom is working on their Article #5 presentation and they may have more. There was discussion as to the UCC Community Center Lease – usage during COVID and payments.

Priya Sundaram is attending tonight as she is considering joining FinCom. She introduced herself.

Planning Board Updates – Markowitz

Enclave - Members did a walk through with the developers to review plantings; in anticipation of spring planting. There was a complaint made about construction occurring on Sunday at the site; this was brought to the building inspector's attention.

Vibalogics - They continue with this Site Plan Review hearing; working on a list of conditions. There is a 2nd tenant has announced that they will also be occupying this site.

Staffing - There are trying to meet with the Personnel Bd. Chair Bak to discuss the Town Planner job description and draft MoU.

CISCO/Beaverbrook – There was a broad discussion as to the status of possible development and the efforts of the stakeholder working group that have been meeting with the developer.

LIBRARY UPDATES - Bartley

They are working to return to normal operating hours; under the COVID protocols. They are continuing curbside pick-up program.

They have been awarded a grant to support community inclusion outreach - discussions; presentations; educational resources/materials.

The library exterior painting is completed and came in under budget. They are now looking at touching up the doors and other components.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ferrara reported that he will be seeking direction on the Route 111 sidewalk project from the Conservation Commission on Wednesday. There will have to be some additional water resource and repaving work. It has been worked out between the Town, MassDoT and our legislators that any cost overruns, in excess of the awarded MassWorks grant and previously dedicated Town funds; will be borne by MassDoT. Though a Town project; MassDoT will be managing project. They have identified a vendor and are hoping for the spring/summer commencement.

The next BLF will be Wednesday, May 19th; chaired by the Planning Board. The Pre-Town Meeting discussions will also occur at this meeting.

ADJOURN

At 8:54 PM. Campbell moved to adjourn. Seconded by Brolin. **Approved 11-0** By Roll Call Vote: Neyland "aye," Campbell "aye," Brolin "aye," Stemple "aye," Markiewicz "aye," Kushner "aye," Fowlks "aye," Lipari, "aye," Neville "aye," Lazarow "aye," and Markowitz "aye."

Exhibits

Agenda

Minutes of 3/16/2021 – Draft

Link to ATM Webpage

2021 Town Meeting, Budget, Warrant Article Calendar

ATM Process Documents