



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, November 9, 2021

APPROVED: December 14, 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)

Attendance

Select Board: John Markiewicz, Jennifer Campbell, Les Fox, Wes Fowlks and Diana Lipari

Finance Committee: Ling Chen, Becky Neville, Maria Neyland and Gary Kushner

ABR School Committee: Adam Klein and Tessa McKinley

Planning Board: Cindy Markowitz and Robin Larazow

Other Attendees: Peishan Bartley, Library Director; John Fallon, Town Moderator and Cheryl Mahoney, Administrative Assistant, and Steve Ballard

At 7:03 PM, Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Chair Adam Klein called the meeting to order via ZOOM.

MINUTES

Neville moved to approve the minutes of October 5, 2021, as written. Seconded by: Markiewicz. **Approved 10-0, Roll**

Call Vote: Markiewicz, Neville, Neyland, Lipari, Markowitz, Fox, Kushner, Fowlks, Klein and Larazow.

AB REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE AND SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT COMMITTEE UPDATES

- Transportation Updates: There have been discussions with some drivers about vaccine concerns, however the District is two drivers short for operations. However staffing will continue to be an issue.
- COVID Updates: The District's Vaccine Mandate goes into effect next Monday and everyone is cooperating. There have been many productive discussions. With the cooperation of the Acton Board of Health and the donation of pediatric vaccines from Acton Pharmacy, they were able to secure 300 vaccines for students. Clinics will be held this Saturday and next Saturday. Slots were filled in 15 minutes.
- Budget updates: The Finance Team FY 2023 budget development is doing well. Based on three-year rolling enrollment data, they are looking at an increase for Boxborough for FY 2023. They have done away with their Budget Saturdays; instead, they now conduct a marathon budget meeting. Their FY 2021 Budget has been closed out. E&D was certified at one million. Regional Transportation reimbursement came back at approximately \$300,000. They continue to work on CARES reimbursable expenses.
- ARPA Update: They are working on the ARPA planning. Acton has committed Two Million over three- years of their ARPA funding. It was noted that Boxborough's ARPA commitment is still being considered.

SELECT BOARD UPDATES

- Personnel Updates: There was discussion about the Memorandum provided by ATA Hudson, specifically the new hire at the Library and the new Assessor. There was discussion as to the candidate for Treasurer/Collector declining the Town's offer.

- The staff luncheon that the Select Board hosted last week seemed to have been well received.

There was discussion as the other personnel matter - Comp Survey, DPW Unionizing, CBU Negotiations, Town Administrator Search and the other remaining vacancies.

Maria Neyland spoke regarding today's Personnel Board meeting. Two employees have reached out to the Personnel Bd. to ask to be regraded. The Personnel Board is meeting next week to move forward on their

requests. The Town Clerk supports the reclassification. ATA Hudson has been meeting with the Personnel Board members but their Chair is waiting for ITA Terenzini to meet with her. Neyland also advised that she and one other have been made alternate Personnel Bd. members and they did not need to be appointed by the Select Board.

There was discussion as to the status of the efforts to identify eligible ARPA expenditures and closing out the CARES program.

There was discussion as to maintenance issues at Town Hall, specifically the hot water supply issues in the 2nd floor kitchen. There was discussion as to the funding for this repair/replacement – open article, RFT, or maintenance budget.

Library Updates

The Library had to close the last week of October due to issues with the well repairs. DPW Dir. Kukkula really stepped up and continues to provide updates. These issues are still having an impact on their plumbing. The participants noted that the well repairs also impacted the School, Police and Fire Stations. It was also noted that it is likely that a Reserve Fund Transfer will be necessary to address these cost overruns. There may still be expenses yet to be identified.

Otherwise, the Library operating as normal.

The Library had one book discussion.

The Book Sale was a huge success.

There is going to be an Anti-Semitism discussion group.

Back Patio is complete and furniture is on order.

Campbell – how much will be repairs on water systems.

They continue to work on obtaining quotes for the remaining repairs.

Planning Board Updates

The consultant is working on the recodification project; this is a technical “clean-up” and will be labor intensive. They are working to address the MS-4 EPA mandate(s). They intend on presenting bylaw amendments for Annual Town Meeting, including amending the MS-4 related bylaw. They are proposing switching the administrative and management responsibilities from the Select Board to Planning Board.

They have approved some minor permit applications.

There was discussion as to the culvert maintenance project that MassDOT is doing along Route 111 near the Lyons property. MassDOT has indicated that they do not need a permit.

Finance Committee Updates

Reserve fund Update: They have concerns about this. There was a review of the Transfer Requests approved so far and the Reserve Fund’s current balance. There is a concern about the consulting costs for the finance responsibilities, the Hager Well repair cost overruns and the DPW staffing unionization. As of August, legal fees were at \$14,000 and they have also been advised of possible litigation. There was discussion as to the role of litigation as to the interest of the Town.

– Budget Updates

- FY 2022 – The Accountant issues monthly updates and everything is going well. Free Cash has been certified.
- FY 2023 – Planning

The Accountant has most of the materials ready to distribute. ITA is developing a directional memo. The process is BSB, FinCom and the Personnel Bd. will meet to identify budget placeholders e.g. cost of living increase.

There was discussion as to closing out CARES funding and possible remaining expenditures.

They have had discussion as to the funding for the Liberty Fields project.

They also intend on having discussions as to the re-allocation of Ambulance revenue fund approved at ATM. The intent was that these funds would be used to acquire a new ambulance.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Veterans' Memorial Dedication will be this Thursday.

There was discussion for FY 2023 Budget development process, specifically the Joint FinCom/BSB Budget Workshops and re-assigning them from Saturdays to a week night. These discussions will continue. There was discussion of the ABRSC budget development timeline.

Next meeting will be December 14, 2021, Chaired by the Finance Committee.

Adjourn

At 8:07 PM, McKinley moved to adjourn. Seconded by Campbell. **Approved 12-0, Roll Call Vote:** Markiewicz, Neville, Neyland, Lipari, Larazow Markowitz, Fox, Kushner, Fowlks, McKinley, Campbell, and Klein.

EXHIBITS

Agenda

Minutes of 10/5/21

BLF schedule of Chair assignment



Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF)

Tuesday, November 9, 2021 at 7 PM

PLACE: *Virtual Meeting* - this meeting is being conducted via Remote Participation, pursuant to the Current Executive Order [Extended 6/16/21]. *Remote participation instructions are provided below.*

To Join the ZOOM event:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82908542562?pwd=ckY0QUlFbmczR1BTdWNJV1BGMW1PZz09>

Meeting ID: 829 0854 2562

Passcode: 384137

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,82908542562# US (Washington DC) 13126266799,,82908542562#

+US (Chicago)

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kdmam19eT7>

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order (ABRSC)
2. Introductions (for any new members or staff who may be in attendance)
3. Review and accept minutes of October 5, 2021
4. AB Regional School Committee and School Building Project Committee updates
 - Transportation updates
 - Covid updates
 - Budget updates
 - ARPA Update
5. Select Board updates
 - Personnel updates
6. Library updates
7. Planning Board updates
 - Zoning Bylaws update

8. Finance Committee updates
 - Reserve fund update
 - Budget updates
 - FY 2022 – Current
 - FY 2023 - Planning

9. Other business

10. Next meeting date TBD [*To be Chaired by FinCom*]

11. Adjourn

Boxborough Leadership Forum is comprised of members of the Select Board, Finance Committee, Library Board of Trustees, Planning Board and AB School Committee – a quorum of these respective boards may be present for this meeting.



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, October 5, 2021

APPROVED: _____

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)

Attendance

Select Board: John Markiewicz, Jennifer Campbell, Wes Fowlks and Diana Lipari

Finance Committee: Gary Kushner, Becky Neville and Maria Neyland

ABR School Committee: Adam Klein and Tessa McKinley

Library Board of Trustees: Mary Brolin (also member of the School Building Comm.) (at 7:15 PM)

Planning Board: Cindy Markowitz

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

At 7:03 PM, Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Chair Adam Klein called the meeting to order via ZOOM. This meeting was conducted via Remote Participation, pursuant to the Current Executive Order.

Introductions (for any new members who may be in attendance)

Neville recognized Maria Neyland as the newest member of the Finance Committee

Johanna Choo introduced herself as the newest Sustainability Committee member and spoke to her background.

Minutes

Neville moved to approve the minutes of September 1, 2021, as revised, Seconded by Campbell. **Approved 8-0-2, Roll**

Call Vote: Neville, Lipari, Kushner, Campbell, Markiewicz, Fowlks, Markowitz, and Klein. McKinley and Neyland abstained.

AB Regional School Committee and School Building Project Committee Updates

- The School Comm. has voted to officially name the West Acton facility as the Boardwalk Campus also with a recognition of the Nipmuc nation.
- For this school year there have been six new Districtwide administrative hires.
- The ABRSD has approved the development of a mascot-naming screening committee. Student involvement/input is going to be a key element of this effort. The intention is to have those findings presented to the ABRSC so a mascot could be named in the spring. Participants provided their feedback on this effort.
- The District is working with both town's on America Rescue Plan Act [ARPA] funding. The Acton SB has allocated a \$2 Million lump sum [approximately 30% of their ARPA funding] to the ABRSD. It is anticipated that the District will be using these funds for the projects that they have submitted as part of the APRA process. There was further discussion among the participants. It was suggested that the Town reach out to Supt. Light as there were proposals provided related to the Blanchard School that the District was unaware of. It was also noted that our Metro. Area Planning Council division "MAGIC" has advised that there are APRA funds that will also be coming to the state, in general, that may benefit Boxborough. ATA Hudson continues his work on refining the ARPA proposed projects information.

Brolin reported that the contractors are working to close in the building envelope and work is underway to identify the necessary furnishings for the West Acton facility.

Select Board Updates

- The Select Board is working to clarify the various roles and responsibilities in the Town structure. To that end the Board has re-affirmed the Town Govt. Study findings. Multiple inconsistencies across several governing documents have been identified and efforts are underway to clean up this disparity. Communication is essential.
- The Board has provided a list of priorities to ITA Terenzini.
- The Public Safety Compensation Study Article was short funded and the Chiefs have agreed to make up the deficit.
- There was a general discussion as to employee morale, acknowledging the stressors/workloads being experienced and the continued issues with recruitment/retention. It was also noted that the circulating of misinformation adds to these issues.

Library Updates

- The discussion continued as to employee morale and the concerns about misinformation and comments being made about staff. Stakeholders have a responsibility in this. Clear communication as to responsibilities and process is essential. ITA Terenzini's institutional knowledge will be vital.
- Last week there was a program presented by First Nation's group. This presentation ties into other upcoming programs.
- The patio is almost done and it looks great! The Friends of the Library will be contributing the funding for furnishings.
- Development for their strategic planning project is underway, which will include identifying eligibility for outside funding sources.
- We have hired a new part time staff member, Jennifer Bauder, a Boxborough resident.

Planning Board Updates

- The Planning Board has only met once since the last BLF.
- The Priest Lane subdivision was approved.
- The Arranta Bio [1414 Mass.Ave.] approval process continues. The next hearing session will be on October 14th.
- The Zoning Bylaw Recodification review project is underway – Planner Corson is developing work schedule.
- The Atty. General has, still, not fully approved the 2021 ATM Zoning Amendments. They are hoping to get them posted to the website soon.

Finance Committee Updates

- There is a real concern with the staffing deficits in the finance departments.
- They are monitoring the use of the Reserve Fund, have discussed the FY 22 Reserve Fund Transfer Requests [RFTs] to date. There was RFT to backfill coverage/training for the Accountant and there is a potential that an RFT may be necessary to address these other staffing deficits.

- They have had a discussion as to the purpose of Reserve Fund Transfer Requests [RFTs]. They are working on a proposal to update their RFT process to clarify and document that they are not to be used to fund articles shortfalls. There was further discussion to provide participants with context – purpose, intent and process; along with the funding request thresholds that have, historically, triggered the need for a town meeting article.
- With Neyland coming on they have updated their liaison list.
- They will be reviewing the current Capital Plan at their next meeting. Next steps are then to have departments/ stakeholders provide input as to budget priorities and specifically salaries.

Other Business

There was discussion as to purpose, intent and history of these Leadership Forums. Structure is to allow a vehicle for the identified stakeholder boards can come together to share updates with each other; providing information allowing them a town wide perspective as they work through their respective responsibilities. The BLF's qualifying statement on its agendas is - *Boxborough Leadership Forum is comprised of members of the Select Board, Finance Committee, Library Board of Trustees, Planning Board and AB School Committee – a quorum of these respective boards may be present for this meeting.* As this is a public event the public and members of any other Town Board/Committee always welcome. The practice has been to specifically invite a Board/Committee to a meeting when there is a matter for which their input/perspective might be sought.

Next meeting will be via ZOOM and Chaired by ABRSC on November 9th at 7:00 PM.

Adjourn

At 8:32 PM, Neville moved to adjourn. Seconded by Brolin. **Approved 11-0 Roll Call Vote:** Neville, Lipari, Campbell, McKinley, Brolin, Kushner, Markowitz, Fowlks, Neyland, Markiewicz and Klein.

Exhibits:

Agenda

Draft Minutes 09/01/2021

BLF

Month	Chaired by
2020	
7-Jan-20	Library
4-Feb-20	Library
17-Mar-20	Planning Board
14-Apr-20	Planning Board
12-May-20	Select Board / Town Moderator
June 2020	
14-Jul-20	Select Board
August 2020	
September 2020	
6-Oct-20	ABRSC
10-Nov-20	ABRSC
December 2020	FinCom
2021	
19-Jan-21	FinCom / Budget
16-Feb-21	Library
16-Mar-21	Library
20-Apr-21	Planning Board
19-May-21	Planning Board / Moderator
23-Jun-21	Select Board
July 2021	
August 2021	
1-Sep-21	Select Board
5-Oct-21	ABRSC
9-Nov-21	ABRSC
December 2021	FinCom
2022	
January 2022	FinCom / Budget