

Select Board Meeting
Minutes of Tuesday, February 15, 2022
Virtual Meeting Broadcast on Comcast Channel 22 Verizon Channel 45

I. Call to Order

Chairman Huntress called the Select Board Meeting of February 15, 2022 to order at 7:00 PM.

Members present: Alex Vispoli, Dick Howe, Annie Gilbert, Laura Gregory.

Others in attendance: Town Manager Andrew Flanagan, Deputy Town Manager Michael Lindstrom, Asst. Town Manager Patrick Lawlor, Town Clerk Melissa Ripley, Town Counsel Tom Urbelis, and Tom Carbone, Health Director.

A. Moment of Silence/Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting began with a Moment of Silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Communications/Announcements/Liaison Reports

The Town Manager reported that the recommended budget and financial plan was released on February 4th and can be found on the Town Website. Andrew will be presenting an initial overview of the budget at the Select Board Meeting on February 28th. He also reported that Governor Baker is lifting the masking order effective February 28th at which time they will be asking the Board to lift the mask mandate.

Tom Carbone reported on the number of Covid cases in Andover which have dropped significantly over the past few weeks. The last time we saw the number of cases this low was at the end of October. Approximately 80% of the Town's population have been vaccinated and many have received the booster. There are 60% of eleven-year-old children vaccinated and that number continues to rise. Today, the state came out with revised mask guidance effective February 28th; we are moving away from the emergency environment we have been in for the last two years and towards normalcy.

Questions by the Board:

Would you recommend lifting the mandate for the Town Offices? We are a little concerned about coming back from school vacation and we should be ready to come back to the meeting on February 28th and provide some guidance at that time.

How have the efforts been going to get booster and vaccinations out to where the people are? They held another clinic later in the day last week and are planning to hold a Moderna clinic the first week in March. that will run longer to accommodate people coming home from work. They are also working with Rita Casper to target younger grades and they are working together to bring a pharmacy right to the schools to make it easy for parents to get their children vaccinated. Tom Carbone talked about the use of face masks and that they recommend the N95 masks but any face mask is better than no mask.

If we are anticipating a vote at our next meeting, could we have some feedback from the Library, Senior Center and the Youth Center before the Select Board votes?

Chris Huntress has been in contact with the School Committee Chair to make sure we understand what their concerns are and what their schedule is.

Mike Lindstrom reported that House Bill 2193, which is the Home Rule Petition for the Bald Hill Land swap, was approved by the legislature and signed by Governor Baker on February 3rd. It transfers the control of 126 Tewksbury Street to the Conservation Committee and puts the Bald Hill Compost area in the care and custody of the Town.

Melissa Ripley reported that the Town census has been sent out and it is very important for residents to complete and return because it affects their voting status as well as the money the Town receives from the state. She also encouraged residents to license their dogs.

Alex Vispoli thanked the Senior Center Team for the copy of their latest newsletter which was full of information on activities. Thank you to Sanborn Elementary School folks for the invitation to read to the 4th grade students on Friday, along with many other Town people.

Annie Gilbert mentioned that the survey sent out by the Town Seal Review Committee is available on the Town Website. She encourages people to take a few minutes to fill out the survey.

Laura Gregory attended the community conversation with Albert Pless, the new Director of DEI earlier this evening and is looking forward to working with him. On Thursday, there is an open-mic night at 7:00 PM celebrating Black History Month with information available on the Andover website. People are encouraged to register on line. You can also access the survey for the Town Seal Survey on the Town Website.

Chris Huntress expects that the Board will be able to have an in-person meeting on February 28th. He also reported that the Investment Committee will be meeting on Thursday, February 17th to discuss the investment strategy and the proceeds from the pension obligation bond; he expects the Board will receive an update on February 28th. The AYS Steering Committee is meeting on Tuesday, March 1st to begin the process of developing the profile for the next Director. Alex Vispoli said spoke with Jon Stumpf, Chair of the Governance Committee about the report they will be presenting to the Board. Chris expects that they will be coming before the Board in March.

IV. Citizens Petitions and Presentations

To provide public comment during Citizens Petitions and Presentations visit:

www.andoverma.gov/JoinSelectBoardMeeting

Joe Albuquerque, 197 Greenwood Road spoke about the Andover ARPA Framework that was approved at the January 24, 2022 Select Board meeting after only two public meetings. In his opinion, there appears to be a lack of transparency and inclusiveness related to the ARPA funds from our Town officials. Towns we often compare ourselves to asked for presentations and input from the public and businesses. Several communities conducted a community survey; we have until 2025 to expend the funds. He was surprised that the Select Board (as water commissioners) did not know about the water main upgrades for Argilla Road for growth in the Dascomb Road and Lowell Junction areas. He is disappointed that the Town Manager decided that only \$250,000 of the \$10.9M in ARPA funds will be allocated for behavioral health services over the next three years.

Mr. Huntress said that although he disagrees with a some of Mr. Albuquerque's statements, the Board strongly supports and sympathizes with our businesses and residents. Comments are duly noted and will take them in consideration.

Stacey Albuquerque, 197 Greenwood Road, asked the Select Board to reopen discussions on the ARPA Funding framework and disagrees with the Town Manager's decision to use 86% of the funds for capital expenses. As the CEO of the Town, she hopes Mr. Flanagan would be more inclusive and sensitive to the needs of the community to provide more funds for economic and mental health support, affordable housing, and small business assistance. With regard to the two large capital expenditures, why not apply the \$4M for water replacement to address a larger area of residences and businesses who suffer from brown water and lead.

The Landfill project has been going on since 1973. She feels there are better uses for the ARPA funds than to use \$2.5M for this project that would benefit the public as a whole. The Town has spent \$13M towards this project and the landfill project is not close to shovel-ready, the Town has yet to receive construction easements for residents located next to the landfill. There is no Federal mandate to cap the landfill, as long as we are progressing the DEP is satisfied. ARPA Funds is a checkbook for the residents, there needs to be more transparency on how to spend these funds.

The Town Manager said that in regard to the needs of the community, 100% of the requests of the actual service providers in our community were included in the final plan. The service providers spoke to those who are being served and those who have been most impacted by the pandemic and they believe they have put sufficient funds within the plan to address those needs. The Economic Development funds put aside were consistent with the direct communications that Ann Ormond had with actual businesses and what would be of the greatest benefit to them. The Argilla Road water main is the source of a large percentage of our discolored water. Reducing our tax rate in Andover is the number one priority of residents and there's no greater way to control the rate of increase than by expanding the tax base in the commercial land industrial areas. You have to make an investment to attract companies. We did not do a survey, we took a deeper dive than that, and addressed the most acute needs of the community that will have long-term lasting affects for the residents in Andover. They are working on the final steps of the landfill and it is ready to go.

Karen Kim, 98 Burnham Road, read prepared notes about being uncomfortable with the Town spending \$1.5M on renovations to the Town Offices and not spending enough to help people who need help with rent, mortgage and utility aid. The schools suffered a lot of strain during the pandemic and while APS has applied for an ESSER III Grant, will that be enough? Could some of the ARPA funds be invested to help the school system with student mental health issues, vs spending on capital expenditures.

Roland Kim, 98 Burnham Road is questioning the percentage of how the ARPA monies budgeted differ from how he would think of the empathy and understanding for the businesses and residents; it leans more towards municipal projects for the Town. The

needs of the residents and small businesses should not be a supplement to the Town budget. The intent does not align with how the budget is laid out.

Mike Meyers, 416 South Main Street, asked what the process is for the Town Committees transferring from a virtual meeting to in-person meetings. Mr. Huntress said the Board expects to be back to in-person meetings starting on Feb 28th.

V. Regular Business

A. 2022 Annual Town Election Warrant

Melissa Ripley reported on the Town Election of March 22, 2022 and the openings which include the Town Moderator, two School Committee members for 3-years, and two Select Board openings for 3-years, and one Trustee of the Punchard Free School for 3-years, and one Trustee of Punchard Free School for 1-year. The Polling locations will remain as is. Every registered voter in the Town of Andover will receive a postcard confirming what their new precinct is and the address for the polling location. Please contact the Town Clerk's office for an absentee ballot. Early voting is not an option for local elections and Mail-in ballots are for state elections only.

Annie Gilbert moved to approve the March 22, 2022 Town Election Warrant as printed with printed postcards being mailed in later February 2022, to inform the residents of any potential changes to their polling location or precinct. Motion seconded by Laura Gregory. Roll call: A. Vispoli-Y, A. Gilbert-Y, D. Howe-Y, L. Gregory-Y, C. Huntress-Y. Motion passes 5-0 to approve.

B. [Excess Levy Capacity Policy Framework](#)

The Town Manager presented the Framework for the Excess Levy Capacity. He noted that we have a significant excess capacity this year as a result of the Pension Obligation Plan. The Town Manager's presentation includes information on the mechanics of the proposal (see attached). Excess levy capacity mitigates the impact of property taxes and may be used to offset cost of major projects or reasonable requests. Funds may not be released without the approval of the Select Board and the Finance Committee. The Town Manager will draft a policy to codify how they have been approaching excess levy capacity, there is a framework in place that stipulates potential use.

Anything that meets the criteria would have to have the vote of both boards (Select Board and Finance Committee) and go to Town Meeting for approval of the appropriation. There would be a clear process in place. This policy will require the Town Manager and Select Board to think about future projects and how those projects could dovetail with these funds. They will look at major capital projects and what the impacts of funding those would be and how using excess levy capacity could mitigate the costs.

Members of the Select Board had several questions regarding the policy framework, so the Chair tabled the vote to their next meeting on February 28th.

VI. Consent Agenda

A. Appointments by the Town Manager

Alex Vispoli moved to approve the appointments by the Town Manager as listed. Motion seconded by Annie Gilbert. Roll call: D. Howe-Y, A. Gilbert-Y, A. Vispoli-Y, L. Gregory-Y, C. Huntress-Y. Motion passes 5-0 to approve.

Department	Name	Position	Rate/Term	Date of Hire
Memorial Hall Library	Liana DiPasquale <i>(Susan Buckley)</i>	Library Assistant	\$27.13/hr	3/09/2022
Memorial Hall Library	Charlene Clark <i>(Ann McGrath)</i>	Library Aide	\$14.25/hr	2/08/2022
Memorial Hall Library	Jacob Murphy <i>(Arianne Schwartz Slauenwhite)</i>	Library Aide	\$14.25/hr	2/08/2022
Community Services – Youth Services	Stephen Lisauskas	Seasonal	\$25.00/hr	3/01/2022
Community Services – Youth Services	Robert Alexander	Seasonal	\$25.00/hr	3/14/2022
Community Services – Youth Services	Victoria Rousseau	Seasonal	\$21.00/hr	2/08/2022
Community Services – Youth Services	Isabelle Wild	Seasonal	\$20.00/hr	3/01/2022
Community Services – Youth Services	Abigail Spewock	Seasonal	\$15.00/hr	3/01/2022
Community Services – Recreation	Kathleen Schardin	Kid Care Group Leader 2	\$18.00/hr	2/28/2022
Community Services – Recreation	Molly Whelan	Kid Care Assistant Group Leader	\$15.00/hr	2/08/2022
Community Services – Recreation	Ainsley Napolitano	Kid Care Assistant Group Leader 1	\$14.25/hr	2/07/2022
Community Services – Recreation	Osborne Macy	Kid Care Assistant Group Leader 1	\$14.25/hr	2/07/2022

VII. Approval of Minutes

A. Board to approve minutes from the following meetings:

Alex Vispoli moved to approve the following Select Board Minutes:

November 15, 2021 and November 29, 2021 Regular Sessions

December 8, 2021 TriBoard

December 13, 2021 Regular Session and December 13, 2021 – Goals Workshop

January 5, 2022, January 12, 2022, and January 24, 2022 Regular Sessions

Motion seconded by Dick Howe. Roll call: A. Gilbert-Y, A. Vispoli-Y, D. Howe-Y, L. Gregory-Y, C. Huntress-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

VIII. Executive Session

Annie Gilbert moved that the Board vote to go into Executive Session pursuant to option 3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining for the America Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees State Council 93 Local 1704 AFL-CIO, Andover Independent Employees Association, Andover Police Patrolman's Union Massachusetts Coalition of Police Local 477, Andover Police Superior Officers Association NEBPA Local 99, Andover Public Safety Communicators NEBPA Local 109 and International Association of Firefighters Local 1658 AFL-CIO, and for the Chair to declare that an open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Town; and not to return to open session. The Chair so declared that an open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Town. Motion seconded by Alex Vispoli. Roll call: A. Gilbert-Y, A. Vispoli-Y, D. Howe-Y, L. Gregory-Y, C. Huntress-Y.
Motion passes 5-0.

IX. Adjourn

At 8:26 PM the Board voted to adjourn from Open Session and move to Executive Session not to return to Open Session.

Respectfully submitted,
Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary

Pursuant to S.2475 "An Act Relative to Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency," which was enacted into law on June 16, 2021, this meeting of the Select Board will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. The virtual meeting will be broadcast on Verizon Channel 45 and Comcast Channel 22

Members of the public who wish to participate in the meeting can do so by emailing manager@andoverma.us or by calling (978) 623-8311. Residents are encouraged to email their questions or comments ahead of the meeting – however, staff will be available to present the Select Board with questions and comments received during the meeting. Please include your name and address with your question or comment.

Every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so despite our best efforts, we will post on the Town's website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of the proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.