

**Buckland Select Board
Meeting Minutes
November 10, 2020 5:30 p.m.
Meeting Via Zoom**

Listing of Topics

Appointments

5:30 p.m. - Deerfield River Watershed Association, Chris Curtis, National Wild & Scenic River Designation

5:45 p.m. - GSFABA, Whit Sanford

6:00 p.m. - FY19 CDBG Program, Breezeway Farms Consulting, Linda Overing, Public Hearing

Agenda Items

Senior Center Expansion Discussion, Finance Committee

APR 120 day waiver notice - Ashfield Road, Atherton

Buckland Recreation, Ski Club

Annual License Renewals, discussion

Town Hall services

Documents to Sign

Contract Amendment, FRCOG - Open Space & Recreation Plan

Minutes

Items Not Reasonably Anticipated by Chair 48 Hours in Advance of Meeting

Select Board Member Concerns

Town Administrator's Report

Film Permit update

Buckland Storm Patrol 2020

Landfill Remediation

Classification Hearing and Tax Recap review

Charlemont Road Culvert BRIC grant application

Wastewater Treatment Plan personnel update

Streetlight Modifications

Watershed Newsletter, Crittenden Hill mention

Public Comment

Volunteer Recognition - Election Poll Workers

Announcements

Executive Session, Under the provision of MGL, 30A, Section 21(a), exempt 3

Attendees

Dena Willmore - Select Board Chair
 Barry Del Castilho - Select Board Member
 Zachary Turner - Select Board Member
 Heather Butler - Buckland Town Administrator
 Chris Curtis - Deerfield River Watershed Association
 Whit Sanford - GSFABA
 Linda Overing - Breezeway Farms Consulting
 James Sullivan - Falls Cable
 Mary Bolduc - Boards' Clerk

Meeting

Meeting opened at 5:30 p.m. by Ms. Willmore, Select Board Chair.

Appointments

5:30 p.m. - Deerfield River Watershed Association, Chris Curtis, National Wild & Scenic River designation - Mr. Curtis gave a presentation explaining the purpose of the designation and what it would mean to the Deerfield River and the towns through which it flows. Free flowing sections like Zoar Gap and other recreational stretches of the river would be protected from new federally permitted dams, and federal monies would be available to enhance and safeguard the river. He asked if the Board would please submit a letter of support for a feasibility study, stating that he has met with Deerfield, Shelburne, Colrain, Ashfield, and Savoy and all are "on board" to pursue the Wild and Scenic Designation for the Deerfield River. Mr Turner moved that the Board submit a letter of support, seconded by Ms. Willmore. Ms. Willmore pointed out that dams are not necessarily a negative factor, and are a source of revenue. She wanted to ensure that there would be no impact on existing dams and, if damaged by storms, could be repaired. Mr. Curtis replied that current dams would be protected, and the study/project would focus on free flowing sections of the river. Vote in support of motion to submit letter of support: Del Castilho, yes; Turner, yes; Willmore, yes.

5:45 p.m. - GSFABA, Whit Sanford - Ms. Sanford presented the Board with an overview of the current status of the Greater Shelburne Falls Area Business Association (GSFABA), how it arrived at that point, whether it can sustain itself, the format of a partnership, and the possibilities going forward. She explained awarding of a \$30,000 Commonwealth Place Grant which must be matched dollar for dollar through a crowd-funding campaign. Half of the money will go to small businesses trough the GSFABA Economic Recovery Fund, and the other half will support the Village Revitalization Project. The Revitalization Project will provide for improved holiday lighting in the village and year round lighting on the Iron Bridge and/or Bridge of Flowers to enhance the everyday appearance of downtown, especially through the winter months. Ms. Sanford is seeking financial support for these initiatives to meet their crowd funding goal and help the GSFABA remain viable. She also provided spread sheets for the

expenses of these projects. including the value of in kind services. Board discussion followed regarding the financial responsibility of the town vs area businesses. In summation, Ms. Sanford felt the position of the Board was to not participate at this time. Ms. Willmore explained that if the Business Association could come back with a revised proposal, renewed enthusiasm both in terms of energy and finances, and more specific data on how Buckland would benefit relative to the number of businesses on this side of the river, the Select Board would be willing to reconsider.

6:00 p.m. - FY19 CDBG Program, Breezeway Farms Consulting, Linda Overing, Public Hearing - Ms. Overing explained that a public hearing is a requirement of the the CDBG grant, to report on its accomplishments while the grant is still open. Scheduled to end in December, the grant has been extended to March. Projects funded by this grant are Phase II of the William Street Project, the Micro Enterprise Program, and the Community Action Food Pantry.

William Street Phase II began where Phase I ended and continued to North Street. It included new water pipes which hopefully benefits water distribution throughout the town. New and additional drainage, banking, and repaving improved the road conditions.

The Micro Enterprise Program is funded with \$20,000 to be distributed in up to 4 loans of \$5,000. each to businesses impacted by COVID. Three loans have been approved and a fourth is yet to be decided. Franklin County CDC has been contracted to manage the program. Ms. Overing also gave a brief overview of the loan criteria, and explained that the business need not be in the village to qualify, nor must it be a brick and mortar business.

The Food Pantry has not missed a distribution, though it had to make significant changes to its operation. It used to operate as a choice pantry where participants could select their items in a grocery shopping format. Due to COVID, the format shifted to a pre-bagged pick up, which has worked thus far but will not be sustainable through the winter. Staff is working on implementing safety protocols to ensure the safe return of shoppers. Originally 97 persons were funded for Pantry benefits; it has increased to 123. Hours have been expanded from the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Wednesdays of the month to every Wednesday.

Agenda

Senior Center Expansion Discussion, Finance Committee - The Select Board and Finance Committee members engaged in a discussion of the Senior Center Expansion, touching on various facets of the issue. The need for a district was discussed, noting that it really was most necessary if borrowing money to build. If not building a new facility then there really is little or no need for a district. Structure of governance and ownership was debated. Various scenarios of ownership were discussed as well as citing the advantages and disadvantages of each. It was suggested that ownership

model should be decided as an initial step. Alternative delivery models such a “Senior Center Without Walls” were suggested.

Since the purpose is to serve seniors, would it be better to investigate the possibility of a 50 year lease on the current site, and what renovations could be achieved with a much lesser budget than currently being considered? The suggestion was put forth that each Select Board (Ashfield, Buckland, and Shelburne) make a list of priorities in descending order, then compare and see where ideas/priorities overlap. Different financial possibilities and resulting consequences were discussed; for example, if one town drops out, how are those expenses covered by remaining towns? Is there a mechanism for dissolution of debt? It was pointed out that the population of seniors and the number of seniors wanting to avail themselves of the Senior Center services are quite different numbers; therefore, a detailed look at need is in order. It was reiterated that a rank ordered list of “show stopping” concerns be submitted by each town. Ms. Willmore asked Mr. Del Castillo and Mr. Turner to submit their thoughts.

APR 120 day waiver notice: Ashfield Road, Atherton - Mr. Turner moved to approve waiver as written, seconded by Mr. Del Castillo. Vote: Turner, yes; Del Castillo, yes; Willmore, yes.

Buckland Recreation, Ski Club - Cindy Schwartz addressed the Board regarding the pass through program the Recreation Committee runs in cooperation with Berkshire East to offer reduced rate skiing for local students. The program is not financially supported by the Town, but is facilitated by the Recreation Committee as a service to the community. Due to COVID, the groups will be smaller this year (thus, more groups) necessitating more volunteers. There was no vote necessary; Ms. Schwartz wanted to inform the Board of this year’s participation in the program and ask if there were any concerns or feedback. Board members voiced their support and appreciation for the program and the Recreation Committee’s efforts.

Annual License Renewals, discussion - Letters for renewal have been sent out. Ms. Butler explained to the Board that the necessary Fire Safety Certification for Local Licensing was not current for businesses seeking renewal, and further pointed out the ramifications of such a document not being part of the renewal process. Other deficiencies will be addressed by renewal being contingent upon the business making the necessary corrections. Given the impact of the pandemic on local establishments, Ms. Butler emphasized the Town’s efforts to work with them to facilitate the renewal process, and she stated her faith in Police Chief Hicks and Fire Chief Guyette to help the affected businesses through certification and renewal. This only impacts businesses that pour, not those that sell alcohol retail. She also reported that the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission (ABCC) and the Treasury Department are both aware of the situation.

Town Hall Services - Due to a recent uptick in COVID cases and Governor Baker’s new guidelines, Ms. Butler informed the Board that she deems it prudent to restrict Town Hall services to “by appointment”. Town Hall employees continue to work, staggering in-

person days and working remote. Town Hall will be locked. It is the safest way to conduct business both for the benefit of the public and for Town Hall employees.

Documents to Sign

Contract Amendment, FRCOG - Open Space and Recreation Plan - Mr. Turner moved to sign, seconded by Mr. Del Castilho. No discussion. Vote: Turner, yes; Del Castilho, yes; Willmore, yes.

Minutes - Mr. Turner moved to approve Select Board minutes from August 25, 2020, August 31, 2020, September 8, 2020, and October 30, 2020. Motion was seconded by Mr. Del Castilho. Vote: Turner, yes; Del Castilho, yes; Willmore, yes.

Items Not Reasonably Anticipated by Chair 48 Hours in Advance of Meeting - N/A

Select Board Member Concerns - N/A

Town Administrator's Report - See Attached.

Public Comment - N/A

Volunteer Recognition - Poll workers were recognized for their efforts in the November 3, 2020 election, executing their duties amid record voter participation and COVID protocols/regulations.

Announcements - A new recipient of the Boston Post Cane will be announced soon.

With no further regular business to conduct, Mr. Turner moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Del Castilho. Vote: Turner, yes; Del Castilho, yes; Willmore, yes. Because the Board was to meet in Executive Session, Mr. Del Castilho moved to rescind the motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Willmore. Vote to rescind: Turner, yes; Del Castilho, yes; Willmore, yes. Mr. Del Castilho then moved to go into Executive Session, seconded by Ms. Willmore. Vote: Turner, yes; Del Castilho, yes; Willmore, yes. Select Board went into Executive Session at 7: 51 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Mary Bolduc, Boards' Clerk, December 20, 2020

Signed:

Dena Willmore _____

Barry Del Castillo _____

Zachary Turner _____