

**Board of Selectmen
August 21, 2023
Town Hall
Veteran's Memorial Hall, Town Hall
308 Main Street, Sturbridge**

This meeting is available online at:

<https://sturbridge.vod.castus.tv/vod/?video=76259c7b-3c9f-478a-94e2-9be6f5b1f159>

Present:

Jamie Goodwin, Chair
Mary Dowling, Clerk
Selectman Mary Blanchard
Selectman MaryLou Volpe

Absent:

Chase Kaitbenski, Vice Chair

Staff:

Robin A. Grimm, Ph.D., Town Administrator
Michelle Garman, Executive Assistant

Chair Goodwin called meeting to order at 6:30p.m.

Chair Goodwin read the agenda.

The Selectmen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moment of Silence Observed for everyone in Hawaii and Southern California

Public Service Announcements

Pumpkins are coming to the Sturbridge Federated Church on September 23, 2023 the pumpkin patch will run through October 31, 2023

Susan Brogan - Pan-Mass Challenge – Ms. Brogan is originally from Sturbridge, she is on the Board of Directors for the Pan-Mass Challenge. She wanted to thank the people of Sturbridge as a whole, special thank you to public safety, bus drivers. 2600 riders were surveyed and gave Sturbridge 91% rating from riders involved in the event.

Mary Dowling, thanked Ms. Brogan for coming in and acknowledge all of the hard work put in by the Town of Sturbridge employees and residents.

Pan-Mass Challenge will be back August 2, 2024 next year.

Public Hearing

- Allocating the local property tax levy amount the classes of real property and personal property for FY2024.

Sturbridge Board of Assessor and Ann P. Murphy, MAA Principal Assessor presented the Fiscal Year 2024 Classification Hearing. A copy of which is on file in the Town Administrators Office as well as the Principal Assessors office.

Motion: To close the Public Hearing

By: Selectman Mary Blanchard

2nd: Selectman MaryLou Volpe

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Kaitbenski Absent)

Motion: To accept CIP factor of one

By: Selectman Mary Blanchard

2nd: Selectman MaryLou Volpe

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Kaitbenski Absent)

Motion: To not approve the open space discount

By: Selectman Mary Blanchard

2nd: Selectman MaryLou Volpe

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Kaitbenski Absent)

Motion: To not approve the residential exemption

By: Selectman Mary Blanchard

2nd: Selectman MaryLou Volpe

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Kaitbenski Absent)

Town Administrator Update

- Update E-1 Pumps

The Town sewer system has 2,147 accounts. Of those accounts, 68% do not have E-1 pumps. The majority of the remainder of customers who do have said pumps have equipment that was installed over 20 years ago – meaning not only the pumps are failing, but the other system parts as well, i.e. power cords and control panels. We are discovering now that with new pumps, rather than rebuilds, the original panels are far better to be replaced to avoid any risk of failure resulting in liability.

The number of replacements and rebuilds over the past eight years is significant – and costly. This year, alone, we have installed 53 new pumps. A new challenge that we are facing is that the supplier for our pumps/parts no longer recommends rebuilding as the individual parts are increasing dramatically in cost, and the labor is significant.

Currently, the budget line for E-1's is approximately 2.8% of the total. To cover the costs in 24, we would need to increase by 6.9% - with the total cost for E-1's comprising 9.1% of the budget – for 32% of the ratepayers.

If the Board wishes to continue to service E-1's, the Town will need to request a budget transfer for this year, and consider an increase for next year of 6.9% to cover this year in addition to the 3.5% the equipment is likely to increase next year.

- Selectman Mary Blanchard indicated that the residents are also responsible if they damage the pump.
- Chair Goodwin stated general places in Town that are serviced in town will not have an E-1 pump. Is the user that is using the pump station also using the E-1 pumps. He also asked if there is a part Town that the fails are more concentrated.
- Shane Moody, Veolia, stated they are all around town, not concentrated in one particular part. They now know the pumps cannot be repaired they are finding that they have to purchase new pumps. Approximately 100 pumps a year.
- Selectman Blanchard stated when the E-1 pumps were put in the Town did a lot of research that they were the best ones. The Town invested in the pumps to keep the lakes clean. She feels Veolia needs to predict better and budget better.
- Chair Goodwin stated they need more information we have a water/sewer budget change coming up. The costs to rebuild the pump has eclipsed the costs of the new ones.
- Selectman MaryLou Volpe asked when the pumps are being replaced are the panels being replaced and put in a higher location.
- Shane Moody, Veolia, stated yes they have to hire a licensed electrician to move the panel and place it in a more suitable location.

Department Reports

- Department of Public Works –
Heather Blakeley, DPW Director gave a detailed description of her department report a copy of which is on file in the Town Administrators Office.

Administrator Grimm addressed the Board regarding construction on New Boston Road.

- 501 Main Street has started they are currently waiting on the Conservation Clearance.

- Maple Street Waterline project is completed and will be on the paving project for new year.
- Cooper Road repair is complete, currently getting bids for paving repair.

Selectman Dowling asked what is the process when selecting roads for the Chapter 91 road paving projects.

Heather Blakeley stated they use a rating score to determine what road and through that rating, there are differently levels of repairs for the roads.

- Water/Sewer -

Shane Moody, Veolia Project Manager, gave a detailed description of his department report a copy of which is on file in the Town Administrators Office.

Action Items:

- A. Consideration and possible action to confirm the appointment of Keri Kirby as a full-time dispatcher for the Sturbridge Police Department, effective August 28, 2023, with the hourly rate of \$28.28 and the benefits of a three-year employee minus longevity.

Motion: To confirm the appointment of Keri Kirby as a full-time dispatcher for the Sturbridge Police Department, effective August 28, 2023, with the hourly rate of \$28.28 and the benefits of a three-year employee minus longevity.

By: Selectman MaryLou Volpe

2nd: Selectman Mary Blanchard

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Kaitbenski Absent)

- B. Consideration and possible action to confirm the appointment of Deven Kingman as a full-time police officer with the Sturbridge Police Department, effective August 28, 2023, with the hourly rate of \$29.25, this appointment is contingent upon Mr. Kingman successfully completing all phases of the hiring process and that he successfully graduates Massachusetts Police Training Council Recruit Officer Course.

Motion: To confirm the appointment of Deven Kingman as a full-time police officer with the Sturbridge Police Department, effective August 28, 2023, with the hourly rate of \$29.25, this appointment is contingent upon Mr. Kingman successfully completing all phases of the hiring process and that he successfully graduates Massachusetts Police Training Council Recruit Officer Course.

By: Selectman Mary Blanchard

2nd: Selectman MaryLou Volpe

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Kaitbenski Absent)

- C. Consideration and possible action to confirm the appointment of Officer Paul Janson to the position of Sergeant effective August 22, 2023 at the hourly rate of \$37.62.

Motion: To confirm the appointment of Officer Paul Janson to the position of Sergeant effective August 22, 2023 at the hourly rate of \$37.62.

By: Selectman MaryLou Volpe

2nd: Selectman Mary Dowling

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Kaitbenski Absent)

- D. Consideration and possible action on an application for a Dock Permit for Ronald Peterson at 243 Big Alum, Sturbridge.

Selectman Blanchard has a problem with the extension she feels it's a safety issue for swimmers and other boats.

Selectman Dowling if there was a 30ft dock there it would have been grandfathered in prior to the Selectmen's policy of 25ft.

Mr. Peterson would like the Board of Selectmen to come out to his property and look at the location of his dock.

No action taken – hold for a later date

- E. Consideration and possible action on the use of Chapter 90 funds for the annual paving program.

Motion: To approve the use of chapter 90 funds for the annual paving program

By: Selectman Mary Blanchard

2nd: Selectman MaryLou Volpe

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Kaitbenski Absent)

- F. Consideration and possible action on a Transient Vendor application for David Brockman at The Sturbridge Host Hotel on September 3, 2023 from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and September 4, 2023 from 8:00a.m. to 5:00p.m.

Motion: To approve the Transient Vendor application for David Brockman at The Sturbridge Host Hotel on September 3, 2023 from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and September 4, 2023 from 8:00a.m. to 5:00p.m.

By: Selectman Mary Blanchard

2nd: Selectman Mary Lou Volpe

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Kaitbenski Absent)

- G. Consideration and possible action to accept the letter of resignation from Trisha Towns, Full-Time Dispatcher, effective September 14, 2023.

Motion: To accept the letter of resignation from Trisha Towns, Full-Time Dispatcher, effective September 14, 2023.

By: Chair Goodwin

2nd: Selectman Mary Blanchard

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Kaitbenski Absent)

- H. Consideration and possible action to accept the letter of resignation from Trevor Bresse, Full-Time Dispatcher, effective August 24, 2023.

Motion: To accept the letter of resignation from Trevor Bresse, Full-Time Dispatcher, effective August 24, 2023.

By: Chair Goodwin

2nd: Selectman Mary Blanchard

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Kaitbenski Absent)

- I. Consideration and possible action to accept two donations to the Sturbridge Police Department. The first donation is from Baba Sushi in the amount of \$243.00 and the second donation is from CCS Property Management, LLC in the amount of \$300.00. The donations will offset the costs of the Police Departments youth initiatives.

Motion: To accept two donations to the Sturbridge Police Department. The first donation is from Baba Sushi in the amount of \$243.00 and the second donation is from CCS Property Management, LLC in the amount of \$300.00. The donations will offset the costs of the Police Departments youth initiatives.

By: Selectman Mary Blanchard

2nd: Selectman MaryLou Volpe

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Kaitbenski Absent)

- J. Consideration and possible action to accept the resignation of Constantine Economos as part-time custodian, effective August 15, 2023.

Motion: To accept the resignation of Constantine Economos as part-time custodian, effective August 15, 2023.

By: Chair Goodwin

2nd: Selectman Mary Blanchard

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Kaitbenski Absent)

- K. Consideration and possible action on the appointment of Chase Walker as part-time custodian for twelve (12) hours per week at the hourly rate of \$18.35, effective upon successful employment screening.

Motion: To approve the appointment of Chase Walker as part-time custodian for twelve (12) hours per week at the hourly rate of \$18.35, effective upon successful employment screening.

By: Selectman MaryLou Volpe

2nd: Selectman Mary Blanchard

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Kaitbenski Absent)

- L. Consideration and possible action on the appointment of Bryan Mero as part-time custodian for twelve (12) hours per week at the hourly rate of \$18.35, effective upon successful employment screening.**

Motion: To approve the appointment of Bryan Mero as part-time custodian for twelve (12) hours per week at the hourly rate of \$18.35, effective upon successful employment screening.

By: Selectman Mary Blanchard

2nd: Selectman MaryLou Volpe

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Kaitbenski Absent)

Heather Blakeley, DPW Director, requested the Board of Selectmen approve the use of Chapter 90 funds for the FY 2024 paving program.

Motion: To approve the use of Chapter 90 Funds for the FY2024 annual paving program in the amounts presented by the DPW Director.

By: Selectman Mary Blanchard

2nd: Selectman MaryLou Volpe

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Kaitbenski Absent)

Old Business:

School Committee Posting

New Business:

No New Business

Correspondence

No Correspondence

Citizen's Forum

Resident of Adams Road addressed the Board regarding the construction on New Boston Road that is causing Adams Road to be washed out.

Chair Goodwin asked what is being built on New Boston Road.

The resident has met with the Building Department and Conservation Department regarding her concerns.

Administrator Grimm, stated she spoke with the Building Commission, DPW Director and Conservation Agent. The Building Commissioner will be out on a site visit tomorrow.

Approval of Minutes

Adjourn:

Motion: To adjourn

By: Selectman Mary Blanchard

2nd: Chair Goodwin

Vote: 4-0-0

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Minutes prepared by: Michelle Garman

Clerk of the Board: Mary Downing

Nov. 20 '23
Date signed: _____