



TOWN OF GRAFTON
GRAFTON MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER
30 PROVIDENCE ROAD
GRAFTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01519
(508) 839-5335 ext. 1201 • FAX (508) 839-4602
www.grafton-ma.gov

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**SELECT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
March 14, 2023
7:00PM
via Zoom**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chair Colleen Roy. In attendance by roll call were Chair Colleen Roy, Ray Mead, Vice Chair Mat Often, Clerk Andy Jefferson, and Ann Marie Foley. Staff in attendance were Town Administrator Evan Brassard and Assistant Town Administrator William Blake.

1. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a) Pole Petition by National Grid – Old Westboro Road

Ms. Roy stated that National Grid has asked to postpone the hearing due to weather.

Mr. Jefferson read the legal notice.

Mr. Jefferson made a motion seconded by Ms. Foley to open the public hearing. Motion passed 5 – 0 by roll call vote.

Mr. Often made a motion seconded by Mr. Mead to continue the public hearing on March 21. Motion passed 5 – 0 by roll call vote.

2. APPOINTMENTS/SELECT BOARD – None

3. APPOINTMENTS/TOWN ADMINISTRATOR – None

4. NEW BUSINESS/CONTINUED BUSINESS

a) Review and Discuss Citizens' Petition(s) for Spring Town Meeting

The Board reviewed the citizens' petition to change Joncas Terrace from a private road to a road owned by the Town.

Mr. Mead highlighted several issues with the road and stated that the Town could not accept it in this condition.

Ms. Roy and Mr. Often noted the importance of understanding the procedure for the Town to take ownership of the road.

d) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Committee Project Requests

Mr. Brassard spoke on the ARPA Committee's \$60,000 request to purchase a plug-in hybrid minivan for the Senior Center and \$50,000 request for outdoor exercise equipment.

Ms. Foley described the exercise equipment that would be placed in public parks.

Mr. Brassard stated that this would leave \$69,256.41 of ARPA funds remaining.

Mr. Jefferson made a motion seconded by Mr. Often to approve the ARPA Committee's request to fund a van for the Grafton Senior Center. Motion passed 5 – 0 by roll call vote.

Mr. Jefferson made a motion seconded by Mr. Often to approve the ARPA Committee's request to fund outdoor exercise equipment. Motion passed 5 – 0 by roll call vote.

b) Vote on Development Agreement – Snow Road Local Initiative Program (LIP)

James Venincasa and Steve Venincasa explained how changing the affordability component from 25% of units at 80% AMI to 15% of units at 80% AMI and 10% at 60% AMI would be too great of a financial loss for them.

Mr. Jefferson made a motion seconded by Mr. Mead to enter into the Development Agreement with SJV Investments LLC regarding 14 Snow Road and authorize the Chair to sign.

Mr. Often stated that although the affordability is not ideal, he supports this project, as it represents a significant move forward into continued Safe Harbor.

Motion passed 4 – 1 by roll call vote: Mead, Aye; Often, Aye; Jefferson, Aye; Foley, Nay; Roy, Aye.

c) Town Administrator Annual Evaluation

Ms. Roy shared her thoughts on the score being low and some comments being unfair characterizations.

Mr. Mead stated that he was not in favor of debating or amending the document and thought this was a really good evaluation.

Regarding the outlying comments, Mr. Often spoke on the importance of individual board members being able to express their thoughts independently in the evaluation.

Ms. Foley agreed with Mr. Mead and Mr. Often and noted that in the rating scale, a 3 represents a good performance, while anything less than 3 should be addressed with Mr. Brassard.

Ms. Roy highlighted that this evaluation could affect Mr. Brassard's contract.

Mr. Mead spoke on the challenges of being in a Town Administrator's position.

Mr. Often and Ms. Foley agreed that this evaluation was a positive review.

Mr. Jefferson supported not changing the document and suggested working next year to ensure the Board is in closer agreement about what should be considered a good, great, or outstanding performance.

Mr. Jefferson made a motion seconded by Mr. Often to approve the Town Administrator Annual Evaluation as presented. Motion passed 5 – 0 by roll call vote.

e) Local Initiative Program (LIP) Proposal Procedure Policy

In the procedure, Ms. Foley recommended designating two individuals to negotiate with a developer. She noted that the second person did not have to be a Select Board member.

Mr. Often agreed with Ms. Foley and stated that the Affordable Housing Trust had expressed interest in being involved in these negotiations. He stated that the Trust should be the first body to review all LIP proposals.

Ms. Roy suggested having each initial LIP presentation at one joint meeting with the Board and the Trust.

Mr. Mead and Mr. Jefferson noted the importance of not involving too many individuals in the negotiation process because they may not all be aligned.

Mr. Often stated that he was in favor of the joint meeting and designating two Board members to negotiate LIP developments.

Mr. Blake agreed to draft a policy based on this discussion.

f) Discuss Select Board Goals

Ms. Foley suggested combining some of the goals to streamline and reduce the quantity.

- *Generate a prioritized list for Municipal Land Use AND Protect Open Space*
- *Increase visibility on electric and green options AND Undertake additional environmental initiatives*

Mr. Mead and Mr. Often agreed.

Mr. Jefferson suggested adding a goal to improve their relationship and outreach with their local indigenous community. The Board agreed.

The Board discussed whether the goal to *Monitor the use of ARPA Funds* was necessary to include. They agreed to keep it on the document.

5. SELECT BOARD REPORTS

Mr. Jefferson appreciated the Finance Committee's two most recent meetings to review the budget. Ms. Roy noted that a third meeting is scheduled for the following night.

6. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Mr. Brassard gave the following presentation:

BUDGET PROCESS

- Finance Committee Hearings
 - 3/8/2023 – Update
 - 3/11/2023 – Update
 - 3/15/2023
- Cherry Sheet Released
 - Chapter 70 roughly 0.7%
 - U.G.G.A. roughly 2.7%
- BVT Assessment:
 - \$1,551,295.00
 - Roughly \$60K higher than anticipated

- Capacity
 - Currently \$186,106
 - Very conservative revenue figures

OTHER THINGS WE ARE DOING

- Rain Barrell Program is live
 - Order by 4/2 with Pickup of 4/15
 - \$89.00 with \$25.00 off for the first barrel
- Composting
 - William...

Mr. Blake announced that information about the composting program and the signup link are available on the Town website's homepage and the Select Board page. He stated that the first 500 residents to signup will receive a free 13-gallon toter and a year's supply of liners.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

There were no questions or comments about the correspondence.

8. RESIGNATIONS – None

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

10. MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Jefferson made a motion seconded by Mr. Often to approve the meeting minutes from March 7 and March 8 of 2023 as written. Motion passed 5 – 0 by roll call vote.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

ADJOURN

Mr. Often made a motion seconded by Ms. Foley to adjourn. Motion passed 5 – 0 by roll call vote.

The Board's meeting materials are available at <https://www.grafton-ma.gov/AgendaCenter/Select-Board-4>

A full recording of this meeting is available at <https://youtu.be/wmQnHIYqhTY>