

**TOWN OF CONCORD
SELECT BOARD
MINUTES
APRIL 5, 2021
4:00 PM
VIDEO CONFERENCE**

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, the Concord Select Board convened in a meeting via video conference on April 5, 2021 at 4:00pm.

Present were Linda Escobedo, Chair; Susan Bates, Clerk; Terri Ackerman, and Matthew Johnson. Also present was Stephen Crane, Town Manager. Select Board member Jane Hotchkiss joined the meeting at 4:05pm.

Call to Order

Roll call

Ms. Escobedo: Aye
Ms. Ackerman: Aye
Ms. Bates: Aye
Ms. Hotchkiss: Not present
Mr. Johnson: Aye

Consent Agenda

- Minutes to approve: February 22, 2021; March 1, 2021; March 8, 2021; March 8, 2021 Executive Session (not to be released)
- Town Accountant Warrants – April 1, 2021

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
VOTED: to approve the consent agenda.

Roll call vote

Ms. Escobedo: Aye
Ms. Ackerman: Aye
Ms. Bates: Aye
Ms. Hotchkiss: Aye
Mr. Johnson: Aye

Town Manager's Report

The Health Division staff coordinated another vaccine clinic at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center to deliver the second round vaccine to Concord residents over age 65. This effort involved COA staff conducting outreach to Concord residents and support from Fire Dept. EMTs. Thanks to this effort as well as individuals seeking alternative sources of vaccine, 4,067 residents over the age of 65 (out of 5,012 total) have been vaccinated.

The Concord Police Department again will be supporting Autism Awareness Month by raising awareness and outreach to community members with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The

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Concord Police Relief Association has purchased new Autism Awareness patches that will be worn on an officer's uniform shirts on Fridays throughout the month. Patches are available for purchase with proceeds from the sale of patches donated to MinuteMan ARC. This fundraiser is one of several programs the Department will be taking part in throughout April to help raise awareness about ASD. On Friday, April 2, the Department participated in "Light It Up Blue," a nationwide initiative to mark the start of National Autism Awareness Month and celebrate World Awareness Day. At 7:30PM, patrols who were not handling an active call pulled to the side of the road and activated their cruiser's blue lights to raise awareness of autism.

Two important positions in the IT Department were recently filled: Information Systems Technician and Broadband Network Engineer. These new employees will help manage a backlog of work that has been disrupted by the pandemic.

CPW has produced an informational tree guide for the Town of Concord. CPW staff regularly engages with residents who inquire about tree planting and maintenance. This professionally produced guidance document will be an educational tool the department can use to assist residents and educate the community on the Town's tree planting and maintenance programs. Funding for the development and printing of this document was provided by both a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Public Shade Tree fund.

The new curbside trash and recycling subscription period began on April 1. To ensure pickup continues please make sure to submit your payment and purchase white barrel stickers and/or orange disposal tags as needed.

The Town was recently notified it has been awarded an FY2021 Travel & Tourism Recovery Grant in the amount of **\$28,028** for the project entitled "In partnership with the Town of Lexington, 'Two Historic Towns; One Memorable Trip.'" The program is a targeted market campaign for advertising and social media promotion of regional tourism. This partnership with Lexington is one part of a series of regional initiatives that the Town is working on collaboratively with other communities for economic recovery and vitality.

Chair's Remarks

Ms. Escobedo reported that the Middle School Building Committee sent out notice to their distribution list reminding them that the survey for middle school building project will close at 11:59pm on April 5, 2021.

Discussion of Middle School Project

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Ms. Escobedo introduced the discussion by noting the many months that the Middle School Building Committee has been working on this project, and how the committee has been working hard to get community input.

Middle School Building Committee co-chair's Dawn Guariello and Pat Nelson highlighted the feedback they have been receiving from residents at recent meetings and noted their appreciation for the opportunity to hear different perspectives. Superintendent Laurie Hunter and Schools' Finance Director Jared Stanton were also in attendance. Kristen Olsen of SMMA prepared a [PowerPoint presentation](#) for the update.

The total project cost range is currently \$80-\$100 million. The project will replace two middle schools, and is designed for an enrollment of 700 students. The goal of the project is to consolidate two middle school populations into one single 21st Century learning facility that will serve the community for generations. For additional details on the project, residents can view the PowerPoint presentation in the [meeting materials](#).

Ms. Ackerman questioned why the cost per square foot projected cost reduction caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic isn't reflected in a lower total project cost. Superintendent Hunter responded total project cost was unaffected due to an increase in the projected square footage of the project.

Ms. Hotchkiss asked where the basis for future enrollment numbers are coming from. Ms. Hunter responded that working with SMMA, the School Department came up with projections based on current enrollment and demographics in town, but noted that conditions are bound to change and they have tried to take that into account in their planning.

Ms. Bates recognized the importance and the need to build a new middle school, but voiced concern over the cost, noting that the middle school is not the last excluded debt project the Town will face that will raise property taxes.

Mr. Johnson noted Concord's tradition for finding co-funding sources in the form of public-private partnerships, grants, CPA funds, and user fees, and asked if there was any precedent for using debt-exclusion bonds for this type of project. Ms. Hunter cited a partnership regarding the high school fields and the Library's past public private partnership with the Library Corporation. Ms. Hunter stated that there has been initial conversations about outside funding, but there has not been the momentum to raise the funds required through this method.

Ms. Escobedo asked if there has been any initial insight from the survey that would guide the coming actions on the project. Ms. Hunter stated that she hadn't had a chance to review the survey yet, but they will have the opportunity to review the findings in depth once it closes that evening.

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Mr. Crane pointed out that the Town has to commit to a schematic design in order to proceed, and this design can't be conditional based on the potential funding sources of the project.

Karlen Reed of 83 Whits End offered that the new middle school will serve the town for approximately 50 years, so the Select Board should focus more on the needs of the community and less on the immediate costs, highlighting the calls in the community for the expanded gym and auditorium.

Pamela Dritt urged the Town to include the larger auditorium in the schematic design.

Mary Hartman of 16 Concord Greene stated that surveys are not a great way to set policy, and that the Middle School Building Committee should keep this in mind as they review the result of the community survey.

Henry Dane commented that the Town should start thinking about alternative ways to pay for the middle school building other than raising property taxes.

Ms. Escobedo thanked the Middle School Building Committee co-chairs, Superintendent Hunter and her staff, and SMAA for their participation in this update to the Select Board.

An Act Creating a Next Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy

Ms. Escobedo introduced this item by pointing out that the legislature recently passed an Act Creating a Next Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy, and on March 26, Governor Baker signed it into law. Sustainability Director Kate Hanley and CMLP Director Dave Wood attended to discuss this legislation. Ms. Hanley noted some of the key aspects of the legislation:

- Codifies the target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, revising the 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act emissions targets to match what scientists say we need to do.
- Raises the target for emissions reductions by 2030 from 45% to 50%, and requires emissions limits set at five-year increments.
- Requires DOER to establish a new opt-in net zero stretch building code within 18 months.
- Makes DOER responsible for updating the existing stretch energy code, which has already been adopted by over 80% of Massachusetts communities.
- Requires that the cost of climate change on society (i.e. the social cost of carbon) be part of the Mass Save Three-Year Energy Efficiency Plan cost-benefit analysis.
- Establishes appliance efficiency standards for 17 residential and commercial products, saving consumer costs on energy and water bills while cutting emissions.

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- For the first time, defines Environmental Justice populations in state statute. The definition of “environmental burden” for key permit reviews includes climate change for the first time.
- Increases the required percentage of Massachusetts electricity that comes from renewable sources. The Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) will increase 3% annually from 2025 to 2029 to reach 40% by 2030.
- Requires an additional 2,400 megawatts of offshore wind, bringing the state’s total target to 5,600 MW.
- Improves access to solar through a low-income services solar program trust.
- Requires \$12 million in annual funding be given to the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center to help Environmental Justice populations, minority-owned and women-owned businesses, and employees from the fossil fuel industry advance in the clean energy industry.
- Improves gas pipeline safety, including increased fines for safety violations.
- Establishes a pilot program to deploy geothermal heat pump micro-districts, an innovative clean energy technology.
- Requires municipal light plants, which serve specific cities or towns, to purchase 50% of their power from non-carbon sources by 2030 and get to net zero emissions by 2050.

Concord Independent Battery Approval of Events

Peter Miyette of the Concord Independent Battery attended to explain that the trainings for Battery staff will be complete in time for the Patriot’s Day. The Select Board is required to approve the firing of the cannons for events on an annual basis.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY

VOTED: to authorize the Select Board Chair to approve the firing of the cannons for Patriot’s Day, Veteran’s Day, and funerals as necessary, as defined by the contract with Concord Independent Battery, at a date and time to be determined.

Roll call vote

Ms. Escobedo: Aye
Ms. Ackerman: Aye
Ms. Bates: Aye
Ms. Hotchkiss: Aye
Mr. Johnson: Aye

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Pollinator Health Advisory Committee Charge Revision

The members of the Pollinator Health Advisory Committee requested more time to review their charge and suggest additional edits ahead of the Select Board finalizing a revision. The Select Board will review their charge at an upcoming meeting.

Committee Nominations

Tourism Director Beth Williams, Senior Planner Heather Gill, and Historical Commission Representative Nancy Nelson to the Battle Road Scenic Byway Committee for terms to expire on April 30, 2023. Mark Giddings of 474 Barretts Mill Road as the Hanscom Field Advisory Commission Representative for a term to expire on April 30, 2024

Committee Appointments

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY

VOTED: to appoint Amy Robinson of 19 Loring Road to the West Concord Advisory Committee subcommittee of the Planning Board for a term to expire on April 30, 2024. Marie Foley, Concord Chamber of Commerce representative, to the Economic Vitality Committee to fill an unexpired term set to expire April 30, 2022

Roll call vote

Ms. Escobedo: Aye

Ms. Ackerman: Aye

Ms. Bates: Aye

Ms. Hotchkiss: Aye

Mr. Johnson: Aye

Committee Liaison Reports

Ms. Bates reported that the Trails Committee met and reported that signs will be installed on trails stating that on April 1 through July 31, dogs must be leashed. Mass Audubon is planning maintenance to the Battle Road Farmhouse Connector Trail. Members also discussed whether or not to eliminate paper maps, but consensus was not reached. Concord CAN met and discussed carbon sinks and ecosystem restoration with suggestions on how residents can help restore native plants.

Ms. Hotchkiss attended the White Pond Advisory Committee, where they have continued to provide feedback to the White Pond beach improvement plans, and met with Officer Ron Holsinger regarding Sachem's Cove parking and public access. The Historic Districts

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Commission discussed contracting signage within historic districts. There was also a discussion on the removal of an existing metal fire escape at the Concord Home for the Aged, which was unanimously supported. The commission also noted that the former Verizon building at 59 Walden Street has been purchased by a real estate company.

Ms. Ackerman attended the Middle School Building Committee forum, where they provided a community update on the status of the project. The Capital Planning Task Force continues to debate whether or not they will recommend a standing capital planning committee or not. The CPTF is scheduled to have their completed final report in June 2021. The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail noted that on the last weekend of April and first weekend of May, Route 2 westbound will be closed at the trail intersection for construction. Additional signage and pavement markings and Junction Park were discussed as well.

Mr. Johnson attended the Housing Authority, where they reported that one of the finalists dropped out of consideration for the Executive Director role. The Housing Authority authorized the chair to negotiate a contract with the remaining candidate, Martin Corona. The Recreation Commission voted to authorize the chair to write a letter of support for a larger gymnasium at the middle school that is being designed. The Public Access Advisory Committee reviewed the PEG budget, and will be sending the Select Board a letter recommending approval of this budget as part of the enterprise budget process. The Public Ceremonies and Celebrations Committee continues to prepare for Patriot's Day Celebrations. The NMI-Starmet Committee completed the final draft of their report, which they will present to the Select Board on April 12.

Ms. Escobedo attended a warrant review meeting amongst Town staff, where they reported that the final 2021 Annual Town Meeting Warrant will be prepared by April 13.

Miscellaneous Correspondence

Correspondence was included in the [meeting materials](#). Correspondence continues to come in regarding the middle school building project and requests for a larger gymnasium and auditorium in the schematic design.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Adjourn

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
VOTED: to adjourn.

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Roll call vote

Ms. Escobedo: Aye
Ms. Ackerman: Aye
Ms. Bates: Aye
Ms. Hotchkiss: Aye
Mr. Johnson: Aye

Minuteman Media Network Coverage: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kYUBMH4-gEc>

Meeting Materials: <https://concordma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/28747/April-5-SB-Packet>