

**Select Board Meeting
December 1, 2025, 7:00 PM
Sanford Hall, Town Hall
155 Village Street**

Present: Todd Alessandri, Chair; Dennis Crowley, Vice-Chair; Maryjane White, Clerk; Frank Rossi, Member; Glenn Trindade, Member.

Staff Present: Michael Boynton, Town Manager; Allison Potter, Assistant Town Manager; Peter Pelletier, Department of Public Works (DPW) Director; Nolan Lynch, Assistant DPW Director; Alex Williams, Treasurer/Collector; Carol Pratt, Finance Director; Stephanie Carlisle, Sustainability Coordinator.

At 7:00PM, Mr. Alessandri called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance.

Public Comments

There were none.

Authorization to Expend Grant Funds: Mass Dept. of Environmental Protection Recycling Dividends Program- \$6,000

The Board reviewed the Grant Acceptance Form, Memo, Award Letter & Contract

Stephanie Carlisle, Sustainability Coordinator, discussed the grant expenditure authorization for the Recycling Dividends Program explaining that the Town applies for this grant annually and earns funding based on points awarded for various recycling program activities. This year, Medway earned 10 points, though the state has made the standards more challenging by removing or tightening certain categories. Despite the reduced opportunities, the Town will receive \$6,000, which is typically used to offset the cost of the Curbside Chronicle mailing and to support operations at the recycling center. When asked by Mr. Alessandri how this compared to previous years, Ms. Carlisle noted that the Town once received closer to \$9,000 and even \$10,000 in past years, but she has ideas to discuss with the Trash and Recycling Committee to improve future scores. In response to Mr. Rossi's question about lost points, she explained that the textile recovery category, for which the Town previously earned points, was removed statewide. She also described a newer Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion category that offers points for multilingual messaging and discount programs for residents not in the trash program, as well as opportunities to earn points by participating in regional household hazardous waste days. She added that composting remains an area where the Town could still improve. When asked about the cost of the Curbside Chronicle, she confirmed it typically ranges from \$3,000 to \$5,000. Mr. Rossi and Mr. Alessandri both commended her work.

Mr. Trindade moved that the Board authorize the expenditure of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Recycling Dividends Program in the amount of \$6,000, seconded by Ms. White. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Contract Approval: Insituform Technologies LLC for On Call Sewer Repair Services - \$172,625

The Board reviewed the Memo, Bid Results and Insituform Technologies LLC Contract

Mr. Pelletier explained that the contract involves work to address inflow and infiltration (I&I) issues in the Town's sewer system. He noted that InSituForm is a well-known company with extensive experience in this type of work, and that although the Town has not used them before, they came with strong references and were recommended by the Town's consultant, Kleinfelder. The funding for this initiative will come from money previously transferred within the sewer budget. Mr. Lynch clarified that while the Town had previously performed smaller-scale repairs such as grouting, this project represents a new, more comprehensive effort focused on lining pipes and correcting significant defects identified in earlier I&I studies. He explained that roughly \$172,000 worth of specific repairs had already been identified, though the final total may change because the contract is structured as an on-call service agreement. This approach is to prevent substantial daily infiltration, estimated at 82,000 gallons per day, by lining entire problem sections rather than making piecemeal repairs. Mr. Boynton provided further context, describing how the process works: technicians enter manholes, run liners through pipes, and carefully select material thickness to ensure that pipe capacity is not reduced. This method is often faster and more cost-effective than open-cut trenching and avoids the need to tear up roadways. They also discussed InSituForm's long-standing national presence and patented lining technology, with Mr. Rossi noting he recognized the company from prior work. Mr. Alessandri noted a sunken sewer line area on Milford Street between the Church and Cumberland Farms, and Mr. Lynch reported that the Town had already contacted the responsible developer to address the issue promptly.

Mr. Trindade moved that the Board approve the Insituform Technologies LLC Contract for On-Call Sewer Repair Services in the amount of \$172,625 and authorize the Chair to execute it, seconded by Ms. White. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Approval: Additional Soil Remediation at 120 Main Street

The Board reviewed the Memo & Project Update

Mr. Boynton began by explaining that although Town Meeting had appropriated \$1.25 million for remediation and the Town had received very favorable bids for demolition and cleanup, new issues had emerged during excavation. Prior soil tests, borings, and test pits had suggested contamination under the former building footprint. However, once demolition was complete and the contractor began deeper excavation, previously unidentified areas of contamination were discovered. In particular, hydraulic oil migration had traveled north rather than south, contradicting the assumptions relied upon from nearly two decades of environmental reports submitted to the DEP by the prior owner's engineering firm. He added that crews unexpectedly uncovered an underground storage tank that had not appeared on any plans which required testing, removal, and soil evaluation, adding unanticipated costs. He noted the Town was fortunate that the contractor was already on-site and that Mr. Pelletier had extensive expertise in environmental remediation, but that overall cost could exceed the appropriated amount if the situation reaches a worst-case scenario. Mr. Boynton explained that possible options could include capping and isolating contaminated soil on-site rather than removing it entirely, but the ideal outcome was still a fully clean site.

Mr. Pelletier then provided a technical breakdown of the discoveries. He noted that the memo provided to the Board included a map showing a blue dashed line representing the planned excavation area and a much larger black outline reflecting the expanded excavation now required. In some areas, the contaminated zone had tripled in size because the hydraulic oil traveled horizontally through fast-moving soils like sand and gravel rather than downward as expected. Since the soil composition across the site varies dramatically, contamination had spread through certain layers undetected by earlier test pits. He explained that Tetra Tech's preliminary worst-case estimate projected approximately 3,500 tons of contaminated soil requiring disposal at \$98 per ton, while excavation itself ran about \$6,000 per day with a funding gap of approximately \$73,000. Mr. Pelletier confirmed that Section 1, the first major excavation zone, had returned clean bottom and sidewall samples. As crews worked toward the street, Tetra Tech

identified that the Town could potentially consolidate about 500 tons of contaminated soil into a restricted area near Section 3 and cap it with a bentonite layer. This option would prevent water infiltration and contamination spread but would impose a deed restriction prohibiting development, utilities, or sensitive uses on that site. Such an approach might save roughly \$100,000 compared to full removal. Mr. Alessandri clarified that using the capped-soil option would shift the projected worst-case deficit of \$73,000 into a positive balance of about \$27,000.

Mr. Boynton explained that the request before the Board was authorization to continue the project within the amount appropriated at Town Meeting, with an understanding that if costs exceeded that threshold, he and staff would return with funding recommendations. He noted that some environmental funds from prior settlement payments might be available if needed. Mr. Trindade expressed strong support for fully cleaning the site rather than capping soil, emphasizing that the Town should remediate the property completely even if it required additional cost. Mr. Crowley asked whether the state required periodic testing every ten years. Mr. Boynton replied that the prior owners, Medway Block, were obligated to perform annual testing through a licensed site professional and had done so, but that groundwater sampling alone could not have revealed the additional contaminated soil uncovered during excavation. Mr. Pelletier added that earlier monitoring relied on groundwater wells, which would not have identified lateral soil contamination without digging. He confirmed that the black outline on the map represented the anticipated worst-case excavation area, and he hoped the final contamination boundary would remain within that zone. He indicated that weather disruptions could delay progress but expected that by the next meeting, the Town should have a clearer picture of total exposure. Mr. Rossi asked whether the purple-blue area on the map represented the potential capped-soil savings zone, and Mr. Pelletier explained that the actual capped area would be a smaller rectangular section near Section 3, where deep contaminated material already existed. Up to 500 tons could be added there and sealed under a bentonite cap with a deed restriction.

Mr. Trindade moved to authorize the Town Manager and DPW to move forward with the cleanup at 120 Main St., seconded by Ms. White. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Approval: Hold Harmless Agreement- 80 Winthrop Street Easement

The Board reviewed the Memo and Drainage & Maintenance Agreement

Mr. Lynch explained that the issue arose after a building permit triggered review by the Conservation Commission, which then contacted the DPW regarding a small culvert-related area in the roadway. He noted that the Town had performed minor pipe-replacement work there two years earlier, but the inlet pipe in question—installed hundreds of years ago—no longer carries water and has no functional impact on the existing drainage system. The property owner has already begun placing a fence line and landscape pavers near the area, and after speaking with them, the DPW determined it had no objection as long as no permanent structures obstructed the Town’s ability to access the site if necessary. Mr. Lynch stated that if the Town ever needed to enter the area and remove the improvements, it would not be responsible for restoring anything beyond making it safe. He added that the agreement would remain in effect even if the property is sold, a point already confirmed with Town Counsel, and noted that the DPW does not intend to approve such arrangements Town-wide, but in this specific instance the location has minimal drainage and cooperation with the homeowner is reasonable.

Mr. Trindade moved that the Board approve the Drainage & Maintenance Agreement for the 80 Winthrop Street Easement, seconded by Ms. White. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Presentation: Five Year Revenue and Expense Forecast

The Board reviewed the FY27 Five Year Projection

Mr. Boynton began by noting that Carol Pratt, Finance Director, prepared an excellent set of financial projections, and that the numbers remain difficult to predict given current economic and governmental uncertainties. He explained that the first major challenge in developing the forecast is the unsettled situation at the state level, particularly the possibility of reductions in state aid. These reductions were delayed by federal legislation until after the midterm elections, leaving municipalities unsure of the timing and magnitude of the financial effect. Additionally, the state is experiencing its own revenue volatility, and later in the month the House, Senate, and Governor's finance team will begin formulating consensus revenue estimates. Mr. Boynton emphasized that municipalities across Massachusetts are already struggling under Proposition 2½ constraints and that reducing local aid should not be considered a viable option. He also noted that possible changes to the Chapter 70 education funding formula could take years to implement, and he stressed that representatives and senators must recognize that communities like Medway cannot sustain further state aid reductions. He then described the second major challenge; health insurance costs. He noted that the Town has benefited from several years of favorable experience ratings, which has kept total health insurance increases over the past four years to only 9.7%, a level far below other communities facing double-digit or even 20–30% annual increases. The projection currently assumes a 5% increase for the coming year, but he cautioned that the market remains highly unstable. He said all other assumptions were made conservatively, estimating higher expenses and lower revenues, level-funding state aid and local receipts, and avoiding any new staffing unless necessary. Some restructuring at the library is being explored, but otherwise the Town intends to maintain stability. Mr. Boynton reiterated that Ms. Pratt had done a superb job preparing the analysis before turning over the presentation to her.

Ms. Pratt highlighted conservative new growth estimates and level assumptions for both state aid and local receipts, acknowledging these figures could change—hopefully upward, though that cannot be assumed. She noted that the Town increased its use of ambulance receipts reserved for appropriation to \$1 million, which significantly bolsters revenues and may grow further if call volumes continue to rise. On the expense side, retirement and health insurance remain the most volatile and impactful budget categories. She added that fiscal year 2027 will actually see a decrease in retirement assessments due to a shift from payroll-based to actuarial-based calculations, however, increases of roughly \$150,000 per year are expected in fiscal years 2029 and 2030 due to adjustments in mortality assumptions and the county's unfunded pension liability. Mr. Boynton noted that although some impacts have been deferred to fiscal year 2034, long-term projections remain manageable absent a significant downturn in investment returns. Mr. Alessandri questioned the assumption that expenses would rise only 1%, suggesting it seemed low and Ms. Pratt explained that most department budgets remain level-funded year to year, and salary costs—not operational expenses—drive the majority of budget growth. Mr. Boynton added that despite years of stable electricity pricing, recent bids jumped from 9.5 to 13 cents per kilowatt hour, resulting in a \$170,000 cost increase for the Town and Schools combined, which will need to be addressed. Mr. Rossi then asked about revenue assumptions tied to the Medway Energy Center, noting that it represents a significant future revenue source. Mr. Boynton reported that the company still intends to proceed, but the project faces zoning hurdles in Bellingham. Medway can permit the project locally, but Bellingham's constraints may push the proposal into an EFSP process. While the project appears roughly a year behind schedule, it remains on track for the timeline needed to support future municipal debt. He said preliminary discussions have begun regarding a potential PILOT agreement, likely modeled after the Medway Grid arrangement, though it is too early for meaningful numbers.

Ms. Pratt then emphasized the importance of reviewing the Town's debt schedule, which is included in the forecast attachments. Significant municipal building project debt is projected for fiscal year 2029, though actual payment timing may shift due to typical delays between authorization and first principal payments. Mr. Boynton explained that when evaluating debt, the Town focuses on non-excluded debt because excluded debt cannot be repurposed once paid off. He stressed that Medway avoids allowing falling debt to re-enter the general budget, because doing so would eliminate the Town's ability to fund major future projects such as school roofs, field improvements, or municipal buildings. Maintaining

roughly \$940,000 in future debt capacity preserves the Town's ability to address upcoming infrastructure needs.

Mr. Crowley noted that while the five-year projection shows negative numbers, this has been the case for more than two decades and does not cause concern because the estimates are intentionally conservative and do not reflect strong permitting and new growth trends. Mr. Trindade emphasized that previous financial challenges occurred because the Town did not engage in conservative forecasting, which led to commitments that could not be funded. He commended the financial management team for its disciplined approach and noted that staff additions are rare and well-justified—particularly in public safety, where ambulance revenues help offset firefighter positions. Mr. Boynton added that the mismatch between steadily compounding expenses and flat revenues remains a challenge, particularly given the inadequacy of current Chapter 70 funding levels for smaller communities. He explained that retaining trained personnel requires competitive compensation, which is increasingly difficult without stronger state revenue sharing. Mr. Alessandri asked about the future assumptions for the property tax levy, noting the Town had nearly reached the levy limit this year. Mr. Boynton replied that the Town will evaluate annually whether holding back levy capacity is possible, though it is not guaranteed. Mr. Rossi observed that the five-year forecasts traditionally assume reaching the levy limit, consistent with past practice. He also highlighted that Medway's recent reaffirmation of its AAA bond rating by S&P reflects strong financial management, including conservative assumptions and robust multi-year forecasting. Mr. Boynton agreed and noted that Medway has not received a management letter citing deficiencies in more than a decade, a testament to the work of Ms. Pratt and the financial team. Mr. Trindade and Mr. Crowley echoed this praise, recalling earlier years when audits revealed multiple issues. They emphasized that today Medway ranks among the top 10% of Massachusetts communities financially, and that the Town's strong bond rating reduces borrowing costs for major capital projects.

Discussion/Vote: Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Policy

The Board reviewed the FY27 Budget Policy Draft

Ms. Pratt explained that this policy is presented annually in the form of a standard letter required under the Town's bylaws, outlining consistent guidance for municipal budgeting. She noted that it follows the same template used in previous years and briefly references the existing agreements for administrative, DPW, and clerical staff as part of the framework. Mr. Crowley asked whether the schools, who traditionally follow a separate budgeting timeline, would be able to meet their usual submission date given the transition to a new business manager and Ms. Pratt confirmed they would. Ms. Pratt added that the budget instructions would be sent to staff the next day.

Mr. Trindade moved that the Board approve the FY27 Budget Policy as presented, seconded by Ms. White. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Approval: Advance of Funds in Lieu of Borrowing Municipal Complex Design - \$4,568,326

The Board reviewed the Memo and Advance of Funds in Lieu of Borrowing Report

Town Treasurer Alex Williams explained that this request to approve an advance of funds in lieu of borrowing for the municipal complex design represents the second installment of advance funding for the design phase and brings the project close to its full authorized amount. He clarified that the purpose of the approval is to allow the Town to spend funds now without yet issuing formal debt. Ms. Pratt added that the Town had received an updated cash-flow projection for the project, showing an estimated total design cost of around \$6 million—lower than the original \$7.9 million authorization. The projection also indicated that as of June 30th, the Town would be carrying about \$2.6 million in project expenses, suggesting that a bond anticipation note would likely not be necessary and that the Town's cash reserves

could sustain the project until the formal borrowing planned for September of 2026. It was clarified that the purpose of this approval is to simply provide the authority to use existing cash to pay expenses ahead of issuing long-term debt. Mr. Crowley asked about current bond market conditions, and Ms. Pratt explained that monthly yield reports from the Town's financial advisor show long-term borrowing rates hovering near 4%, with some recent project estimates ranging from 3.75% to 3.94% after accounting for premium adjustments. He also questioned whether it would be more efficient to borrow only part of the design funding at first, given that architectural services will extend over 18 months. Ms. Pratt responded that the Town typically conducts borrowing only once each year and prefers to wait until September 2026 to know the true project cost before issuing debt, especially to avoid borrowing prematurely. She emphasized that the Town would rely on its own cash to cover expenses until then, drawing down only what is needed.

Mr. Trindade moved that the Board vote to approve the Advance of Funds In Lieu of Borrowing Report in the amount of \$4,568,326 for the purpose of interim funding for costs related to the Design of the Municipal Complex Project authorized at the 2024 Fall Town Meeting, seconded by Ms. White. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Consideration of Withdrawal from Mass. Strategic Health Group for Medical Insurance Benefits as of June 30, 2026

The Board reviewed the letter to MSHG

Mr. Boynton noted that the Town joined the group in 2022 and has had good results, benefiting from favorable experience and solid stop-loss coverage; however, the group is now shifting toward forming smaller joint-purchase subgroups within the larger JPA, a direction he feels does not align with the Town's goals, particularly because it could eventually force Medway to partner with communities that have poor or volatile insurance experience. To protect the Town from financial risk, he and Ms. Pratt have been exploring other purchasing groups, as well as the feasibility of remaining fully self-insured, although he emphasized that self-insurance carries major exposure for a Town of their size due to the danger of large claims or clusters of mid-range claims that fall below stop-loss thresholds. Mr. Boynton reported that Medway currently has a surplus in the Mass Strategic Group, which would take roughly 18 months to fully return due to run-out claims and administrative fees, and that they will carefully monitor those funds. Because the agreement requires the Town to give preliminary notice of withdrawal by December 31, the Board must act now, especially since a new prospective joint-purchase group—composed of communities of similar or varied sizes and offering a more traditional structure—appears ready to approve Medway's participation within the month. When asked by Mr. Alessandri what might occur before the final February vote, Mr. Boynton said that if they are formally approved by the new group in mid-December, they will send a letter in early January confirming their intent, though technically the Mass Strategic Group could refuse reentry if Medway later changed course. In response to Mr. Crowley's questions about the health insurance advisory process, Mr. Boynton clarified that although the Insurance Advisory Committee will review the final comparison of benefits—which early analysis suggests is actually more favorable in the new group—he plans to wait until Medway is officially accepted before seeking their formal feedback. He emphasized that he is trying to sequence the steps correctly to meet required deadlines while avoiding asking the committee to act prematurely.

Mr. Trindade moved that the Board approve the withdrawal from Mass Strategic Health Group for Medical Insurance Benefits as of June 30, 2026 seconded by Ms. White. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Approval/Vote: Annual License Renewals

The Board reviewed the List of licenses to be renewed for 2026

Mr. Boynton spoke on the annual license renewals for the businesses listed in the meeting packet, noting Natalie Lennon's first-time effort in compiling the list. He requested that the Board approve all license renewal applications as provided. Mr. Rossi inquired about the status of pending applications, to which it was clarified that those would be issued to the businesses once all required documents were submitted. Ms. Lennon explained that most of the pending items involved businesses in the plaza for which Jon Ackley was still awaiting inspection reports from the property manager, and that all restaurants had submitted their paperwork and passed their Fire Department inspections. There was additional discussion regarding Class II Licensees, with Ms. Lennon noting that one vendor, Medway Mobile, needed to update documents due to a location change, which would require new paperwork to be filed and clarified that another applicant, AAA, was no longer in business.

Mr. Trindade moved that the Board approve the license renewals for the businesses as listed on the agenda conditioned upon the receipt of all necessary documentation, payment, and departmental approvals required for renewal of the specific licenses, seconded by Ms. White. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Action Items from Previous Meeting

The Board reviewed the November 3, 2025, Action Item List

The Board briefly discussed the federal stormwater improvement grant and Mr. Boynton explained that they continue discussions with the EPA, but have no new progress, prompting the board to agree to push the item out six months to June 2026. They also noted that the Populatic Street matter is still awaiting action from land court, leading to a decision to move that item to June 2026 as well.

Town Manager's Report

There were no back up materials for the Board to review.

Mr. Boynton provided an update on the municipal complex, noting that a preliminary meeting was held earlier in the day with several companies interested in serving as the Construction Manager. He explained that these firms, essentially general contractors who would join the project under the CM model, included several major industry players. Between 7-10 companies attended, toured the site, and participated in what he described as a very encouraging discussion. He reminded the Board that the Municipal Complex Community Forum is scheduled for next Wednesday, the 10th, at 7 p.m. at Thayer House, and expressed hope that the architects may have early conceptual materials ready, as they are nearly finished with programming and meetings with key departments to assess needs and workflows. The forum will also serve as a listening session for nearby residents to voice concerns about the project. Additionally, he reminded everyone of the Volunteer Appreciation event is Monday the 8th at Thayer House beginning at 6 p.m., featuring a buffet-style setup to thank Board & Committee volunteers for their service. Finally, he announced upcoming holiday hours, stating that the Town will follow the usual half-day schedule on December 24, will be closed on December 25, and will also give employees the additional Friday off since it is already a shortened workday.

This time is being reserved for topics that the Chair did not reasonably anticipate would be discussed.

There were no back up materials for the Board to review.

This agenda item was not discussed.

Select Board Reports

There were no back up materials for the Board to review.

Mr. Rossi noted he attended the Town's Thanksgiving football victory and praised the annual parade, which featured an impressive turn out of fire trucks including 41 from various towns, with the farthest coming from Royalston, as well as an antique Wareham truck brought in by a private owner. The Board thanked the Christmas Parade Committee, Mr. Boynton, the Highway Department, and all who contributed to making the event a success. Mr. Alessandri added his own thanks to Board and Committee volunteers, noting he would miss the December 8th appreciation event due to work travel, and additionally offered congratulations to his neighbor, Andy Bliss of Village Street Automotive, on his retirement after many years of dedicated work. Mr. Trindade highlighted the success of the bonfire event, thanking those for securing pallets, DPW staff, Public Safety Departments, and several volunteers—including John Farrell, Carl Homan, Rob Oster, and Brian Bartel—for physically moving and assembling the pallets. He also thanked Richard Perella, Alan Tingley, and the Christmas Parade Committee for organizing what he described as the best fireworks display yet. Board members also noted how great the decorations looked and recognized the local hockey and football teams for assisting the Lions Club with unloading and selling Christmas trees, such help the club relies on each year.

At 8:13pm Mr. Trindade motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. White. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Natalie Lennon
Executive Assistant
Town Manager's Office