

**Select Board Meeting
January 20, 2026, 7:00 PM
Sanford Hall, Town Hall
155 Village Street**

Present: Todd Alessandri, Chair; Dennis Crowley, Vice-Chair; Maryjane White (8:05PM), Clerk; Frank Rossi, Member; Glenn Trindade, Member (7:20PM).

Staff Present: Michael Boynton, Town Manager; Allison Potter, Assistant Town Manager; Peter Pelletier, Department of Public Works (DPW) Director; Nolan Lynch Department of Public Works (DPW) Deputy Director; and Stefany Ohannesian, Town Clerk.

At 7:01PM, Mr. Alessandri called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments: None

Introduction of Domenic Padula, Information Technology Services Director

Mr. Boynton introduced Domenic Padula and stated that the IT Department would be undergoing a rebrand and be referred to as the Department of Technology and Innovation. Mr. Padula has senior level experience in the private sector and is a resident. Mr. Padula's interview was outstanding and he has numerous qualifications.

Mr. Padula introduced himself and reiterated he was from the private sector. He stated his goal is to shift the focus of the Town's IT department from a break/fix to a more strategic outlook. He would like the department to provide consultation regarding different technologies, process and systems utilized by the Town. He would like the department to be a problem-solving department and create a plan on how they can focus on the customer, be proactive. Mr. Padula stated he would like to understand the needs and objectives of each department and to see IT as the grease in the machine. He would like to do an analysis to determine where improvements can be made, tech can be shifted or replaced. Mr. Padula plans on meeting with each department head. Mr. Rossi asked when Mr. Padula started and Mr. Padula responded three weeks ago. Mr. Rossi asked what he had done for assessments so far. Mr. Padula stated he shadowed Rich Boucher, met with a few department heads and logged into some accounts. One simple task he has already addressed was the replacement of an inefficient printer. Mr. Rossi asked about cyber security. Mr. Padula said he had been speaking with Mr. Boucher and understood the Town to be well positioned, but they will stay on top of it. Mr. Padula will research options for phishing training and prevention hardware and mentioned KnowB4 is a great product. Mr. Boynton stated that the Board authorized another new position as of January 1st. Mr. Padula will evaluate needs to determine whether they need a new employee or the needs can be met with software products and different approaches.

Mr. Boynton stated that Mr. Padula is one of a handful of changes. Cheryl Houle of HR is departing to be assistant town manager for Holliston. They have hired Joyce Sheehan as her replacement. Natalie Lennon is moving to Accounting. Carol Pratt is retiring in July so we will be looking for a new Town Accountant and Finance Director.

Approval: Public Hearing: Vote to Opt-Out of Vote by Mail for the May 19, 2026, Town Election

The Board reviewed: Memo from Town Clerk Stefany Ohannesian

Stefany Ohannesian discussed the request to opt out of vote by mail for the Town election only. However, absentee ballots will still be available. There were no public comments. Mr. Crowley asked about the cost of the mail-in ballots and Ms. Ohannesian stated the cost is \$1.07 per ballot costing the town approximately \$10,000. Last election only 43 people voted by mail.

Mr. Rossi moved that the Board approve the Opt-Out of Vote by Mail for the May 19, 2026, Town Election, seconded by Mr. Crowley. VOTE: 4-0-0.

Approval: 2026 Election Police Details for May 19th (Town Election), September 1st (State Primary), and November 3rd (State Election)

The Board reviewed: Memo from Town Clerk Stefany Ohannesian

Mr. Boynton stated that the law changed and that the Chief used to work with the Town to arrange the details, but it now requires a vote of the Board. There will be two police officers, one in the gym and the other in the hallway.

Mr. Rossi moved to approve the 2026 Election Police Details for May 19th (Town Election), September 1st (State Primary), and November 3rd (State Election), seconded by Mr. Crowley. VOTE: 4-0-0.

Mr. Rossi asked about the census. To date, 2,500 have been returned. Ms. Ohannesian stated that the census activates your voter status in town. The Town is not able to delete a voter without signature. If the census goes unanswered for four years, we can delete the voter. If a resident becomes inactive, they will need to provide ID to vote.

Mr. Crowley asked if the Town census determines the population. Mr. Boynton stated the town population is determined by the federal census every 10 years. Ms. Ohannesian stated that the town population is 13,857 and she maintains that figure. The Town is not always aware changing residential status. Indicators are marriages, births and deaths. Mr. Boynton stated the next federal census is in 2030 and the results set the precincts. Ms. Ohannesian stated it is important residents return the dog licenses, as well.

Appointment Consideration: Investment Advisory Committee – Michael Auler

The Board reviewed: Candidate's letter of interest

Mr. Alessandri introduced Michael Auler. Mr. Auler lives at 4 Winterberry Lane and has been a resident since 1998. Mr. Rossi stated he is familiar with Mr. Auler's credentials, and he has an excellent reputation. The Investment Advisory Committee meets infrequently and has 3 members.

Mr. Rossi moved to appoint Mr. Auler to the Investment Advisory Committee, seconded by Mr. Trindade. VOTE: 4-0-0.

Vote: Open May 11, 2026, Special and Annual Town Meeting Warrants

The Board reviewed: FY27 Budget and 2026 Annual Town Meeting Calendar

Mr. Trindade moved to open Special and Annual Town Meeting Warrants, seconded by Mr. Rossi. VOTE: 4-0

Update: Landfill/Recycling Center

Mr. Pelletier provided a brief background of the issue surrounding the landfill/recycling center. The landfill was closed in 1982. There was a closure plan, but it is not clear that DEP has a copy of the closure plan. Mr. Boynton stated the landfill was under the jurisdiction of the Board of Health at that time.

The Town's position is that the landfill was closed and capped according to the 1982 plan. The recycling center was opened in the 1990's. There is no documentation of the closure. In the 1990's there was an attempt to repair the cap with fill from the Big Dig. This was standard with many towns as the State was giving away the fill. Mr. Boynton stated that last year two new inspectors noted that a transfer station was not approved and asked for record of the approval of the cap. The DEP has instructed the Town to do test pits to test whether the cap was done to 1982 standards. We have asserted that the cap was done properly but need to provide verification. If we are unable to verify, DEP will allow us to repair to 1982 standard. The transfer station needed to be shut down.

Mr. Crowley asked if there is documentation of the 1982 standard and Mr. Pelletier believed it exists. Mr. Crowley asked who has the contract for the testing. Mr. Pelletier stated we hired Weston & Sampson to do the analysis. We submitted the plan for testing to the state which they returned within thirty days. We have received approval from the State to test. Mr. Pelletier stated we need permission from the Conservation Commission to begin the testing because of the wetlands and some of the testing pits are within land controlled by the Conservation Commission. We will need to remove trees to get to some of the testing areas. Initial costs are \$15,000 with a total of \$36,000 for filing the permit, the report regarding test pits, borings and oversight. The Town is doing a lot of the work in-house. The amount of \$35,000 is coming out of the solid waste account. Mr. Crowley stated we will still not have a license for the transfer station.

Mr. Boynton stated that the test pits will identify the location of the capped area, the material used and safeguards. Additionally, monitoring wells may be required. DEP will review the data from Weston & Sampson and will instruct the Town to prepare a report and a plan based on those findings. At that point we should know the scope and cost of the project.

Mr. Crowley asked if anyone was aware of what is required in the 1982 standard. Weston & Sampson and DEP will have that information. Mr. Pelletier said it is simply clay and topsoil. He believes the monitoring wells will cost approximately \$100,000.

Mr. Pelletier stated that after the post-closure plan we can apply for the transfer station license. Mr. Boynton believes the State will not approve that license as the Town offers curbside pickup. We will be allowed to continue the recycling center. Mr. Rossi asked if any communities offer curbside and a transfer station. Mr. Pelletier said no; towns usually have one or the other.

Mr. Alessandri asked about the impact from the storm this weekend. Mr. Rossi stated any water will go through the topsoil but roll off the clay. It is important we continue to show progress and keep an open dialogue.

Mr. Boynton stated the Board could receive an update every meeting as the conversations with the DEP are complicated. Mr. Crowley asked if the residents had any issues with the closure. Mr. Pelletier stated calls have slowed down and people are getting used to the prices. Lawrence Waste has been very accommodating and helpful.

Approval: Hanlon Field Project – Authorization of \$30,000 for Electrical Service Work (Medway Schools)

The Board reviewed: Memo from Superintendent and Electrical Proposal & Invoices

Mr. Boynton stated the project is complete and there is \$34,000 left in the Hanlon Field Project account. Mr. Boynton said the school needed new electrical work out at Hanlon Field. They would like to transfer \$30,000 out of the account to cover the costs incurred by the school.

Mr. Trindade moved to authorize transfer of \$30,000 out of the Hanlon Field Project to Medway Schools, seconded by Mr. Crowley. VOTE: 4-0-0.

Contract Approval: Haley and Ward, Inc. for On-Call Professional Services

The Board reviewed: Memo and Haley and Ward, Inc. Contract, Haley and Ward, Inc. Letter of Understanding, Memo and Woodard & Curran Amendment, Dore + Whittier Amendment

Mr. Pelletier stated Haley and Ward are used for water and sewer work, with more work on water. They did the pump house upgrades. Mr. Pelletier stated we need a three-year contract. The Town has a long-standing relationship with the company. Mr. Alessandri asked about a certificate of insurance and Mr. Pelletier stated the company provided one.

Mr. Trindade moved to approve the contract with Haley and Ward, Inc. for on-call professional services, seconded by Mr. Rossi. VOTE: 4-0-0.

Approval: Haley and Ward Letter of Understanding for Lovering Tank Rehabilitation Project - \$235,200

The Board reviewed: Haley and Ward, Inc. Letter of Understanding

Mr. Pelletier stated the tank requires rehab and would like to hire Hale and Ward to assist with that work as they are familiar with the tank. The majority of the contract consists of construction. The rehab will buy us another 20-30 years of use. Mr. Alessandri asked if there were any additional costs. The construction total will be \$1.8 million. Mr. Crowley asked if the Town received two proposals, i.e., remodel or complete rehab. Mr. Pelletier stated the less expensive option only provides an additional 15 years of use.

Mr. Trindade moved to approve the Letter of Understanding with Haley and Ward for the Lovering Tank Rehabilitation Project in the amount of \$235,200, seconded by Mr. Crowley. Vote: 5-0-0.

Approval: Woodard & Curran Contract Amendment #1 for Stormwater and Culvert Asset Management Plan - \$37,800 Reduction.

The Board reviewed: Memo and Woodard & Curran Amendment

Mr. Trindade moved to authorize the Town Manager to sign the Woodard & Curran Amendment #1 for the Stormwater and Culvert Asset Management Plan, seconded by Mr. Rossi. Vote: 5-0-0.

Approval: Dore + Whittier – Contract Amendment #1 for Property Survey at 120 Main St. - \$44,000

The Board reviewed: Dore + Whittier Amendment

Mr. Boynton stated that the original contract was approved by the Select Board, so the amendment requires Board approval as well. Mr. Boynton stated we knew about these add-ons and they were included in the budget. We got a proposal for a traffic study at a cost of \$50,000 through Dore + Whittier but Vanasse provided a quote of \$18,000 for the traffic study so we will go with them.

Mr. Trindade moved to approve the Dore + Whittier Contract Amendment #1 for a Property Survey at 120 Main St., seconded by Ms. White. Vote: 5-0-0.

Discussion: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Final Sewer Permit re: 4.5 Million Gallons per Day (MGD) Summer Flow Average

The Board reviewed: 2025 Sewer Permit

Mr. Pelletier stated the permit for 4.5 million gallons was from the 90's. The DEP left the summer flow at 4.5 million and there has been no change in that amount. We have exceeded the 4.5 million a few times and that amount is not sufficient for anticipated summer flow volumes. The district filed an appeal with the EPA on January 14. The district has upgraded to 5.7 million for the extra discharge. Mr. Boynton said it is important we lend support to the district with their appeal to the EPA. We have sufficient funding in the sewer budget to absorb any legal services.

Mr. Alessandri asked when we can expect to receive a response and Mr. Pelletier responded most likely 30 days. We have not hit the 4.5 million limit for several years. However, with all the building in surrounding communities, there will be issues. The plant has the capacity but the EPA is limiting the flow to the Charles River.

Mr. Boynton expressed frustration as the State pushes for additional housing but then sets unrealistic restrictions. Mr. Alessandri asked when the 4.5 million threshold was passed. Mr. Pelletier believed that happened between 2008 and 2015.

Approval: Withdrawal from Mass. Strategic Health Group as of June 30, 2026, and Joining of Southeastern Mass. Health Group as of July 1, 2026

Mr. Boynton stated the Town has been accepted into the Southeastern Mass. Health Group. Active employees will begin coverage as of June 30th. Retirees will be accepted on December 31st.

Mr. Alessandri asked about money still owed to the Town from the Mass. Strategic Health Group. Mr. Boynton stated we will have a sense of that figure as of June 30th. There will need to be a secondary conversation about what to do with those funds.

Mr. Trindade moved to approve the withdrawal from Mass. Strategic Health Group as of June 30, 2026, and joining of the Southeastern Mass. Health Group as of July 1, 2026, seconded Ms. White. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Approval of Minutes: December 15, 2025

The Board reviewed the December 15, 2025, Draft Minutes

Mr. Trindade moved the Board approve the December 15, 2025, minutes as presented, seconded by Ms. White. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Town Manager's Report

Mr. Boynton discussed the budget with regard to winter storms and to date we have spent about \$200,000. Salt has been required and contractors were used this past Saturday night. There is a storm

forecast for Sunday into Monday. Mr. Boynton stated he received a lot of positive feedback regarding the state of the roads.

The FY27 budget is close to ready. The budget workshop is February 28th. We are working on road and sidewalk projections for the next several years. The Summer St. project is the largest as well as Matondi Square. The projects will start after Memorial Day. Mr. Crowley will meet with Mr. Pelletier to make sure residents and the Town are on the same page.

Mr. Boynton provided a municipal complex update. The design team has put forth a design and the square footage is larger than anticipated. The project will need to be scaled back. Tim Harris has been dedicating a great deal of time to the project. Mr. Boynton visited the Norfolk fire station and noted there was not a lot of excess. Norfolk's design was effective and he feels that the Town's plan is similar to Norfolk.

Mr. Trindade noted the complications as each group has unique needs. It was noted that all of the committees that were formed are necessary for this project. Mr. Boynton stated that we do not want to be doing renovations 15 years from now. Construction Manager interviews are up next and we will be hiring someone by mid-February. Mr. Crowley stated we are still on track to bring this to Town Meeting in May of 2027.

The Holliston Road project will start during April vacation and the street will be closed about a week. Mr. Crowley asked about the detours and stated outreach to the community is critical. The Timbercrest development will exit on and off Holliston. Access on Fairway will be strictly emergency use. Mr. Crowley suggested speaking with the Town of Holliston to work with them to mitigate traffic.

Mr. Boynton stated there are two new ambulances in production and the Town should receive them in three months. We will be looking to donate the 2012 and 2016 ambulances. Possible recipients are Mansfield Emergency Management team and the Somerville Auxiliary Fire Dept.

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

Ms. White asked about on street parking during storms. There are parking bans in place during storms and cars on the street cause operational hazards. Vehicles will have to be towed. Mr. Trindade stated we should be putting notices on cars now and Mr. Alessandri recommended a social media outreach.

Select Board Reports

None.

At 9:00PM, Mr. Trindade moved that the Board enter Executive Session, with no intent of returning to public session, pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A Section 21(6) to consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property, if the Chair declares that an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body. Declared by Mr. Alessandri, seconded by Ms. White. Voted by roll call; Mr. Alessandri- Aye, Mr. Crowley-Aye, Ms. White-Aye, Mr. Rossi-Aye, Mr. Trindade, Aye. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Precobb