BOARD OF SELECTMEN

P.O. Box 372
West Brookfield, Massachusetts 01585

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, AUGUST 22, 2023 – 6:00 PM

PRESENT: Mr. Roland Sickenberger; Chairman, Mr. Eric von Bleicken; Vice-Chair, Mr. Brad Merkel, Clerk and Mr. Ronald San Angelo, Town Administrator

CALL MEETING TO ORDER IN OPEN SESSION at 6 PM

APPOINTMENTS – EARTH REMOVAL & CULTURAL COUNCIL

Motion to appoint the following individuals to Earth Removal and Cultural Council as presented on Attachment A and to further amend the previous motion for Pamela Gemme to the Cultural Council, appointing her to June 30, 2026, made by Mr. von Bleicken; second: Mr. Merkel – unanimous.

AMY DUGAS – DISCUSSION ON THE LONG-TERM LEASE FOR THE QUABOAG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Ms. Dugas was before the Board this evening to discuss the next steps moving forward considering the affirmative vote at Town Meeting allowing the town to enter into a long-term lease agreement on the building located at 27 Front Street. Mr. San Angelo stated that town counsel provided further information about the process in which M.G.L. c. 30B, §16 would be applicable to this vote. Therefore, in addition to the authorization at Town Meeting, the town must determine the value of the lease and solicit RFP's if the value exceeds $35,000 (not the amount the Town expects to receive from the lease but the total market value for 99 years).

Mr. San Angelo went through the last lease on file, which expired February 15, 2017. Ms. Dugas expressed frustration as this has been a long process and doesn't want to find herself back in front of the board in 6 months' time. Mr. San Angelo will work with her on this matter and thanked her for all her work throughout the years in preserving the Quaboag Plantation's history. With no further discussion the following motion was made:

Motion to move forward with the RFP process in conjunction with Town Meeting vote for the property located at 27 Front Street made by Mr. von Bleicken; second: Mr. Merkel – unanimous.

KELLY HITT – SENIOR CENTER DIRECTOR – DISCUSSION ON COA VEHICLE

Ms. Hitt requested that the Board consider disposing of the COA vehicle that was purchased through a grant. The car is not being utilized and feels that the funds that the town could get in return would be more beneficial. She contacted the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, and they advised that seeing that the car is in excess of 5 years old, the town can dispose of it. She did contact three Ford dealers and without seeing the vehicle, they all were in the range of $8500 to $10,000. The funds would be returned to the general fund. With no further discussion, the following motion was made:

Motion to allow the sale of the COA vehicle for the best price with funds to be returned to the general fund made by Mr. von Bleicken; second: Mr. Merkel – unanimous.

DECOMMISSIONED POLICE CRUISER

As a follow up to the last conversation on this matter, Mr. San Angelo has provided three options to the Board for consideration:

1. For the Police Department to use the vehicle as a Detail Car. This would require the town to maintain the insurance and maintenance.
2. Sell the vehicle outright – approximate value is $1,000.
3. Donate the vehicle to the West Brookfield Rescue Squad. Mr. McCall spoke with Mr. San Angelo earlier today and explained that it could be used as a Fly Car for emergencies. This would allow less utilization of the ambulances. This would also assist the residents in West Brookfield as the ambulances are called out to other towns for mutual aid. The town would be released from all liability.

With an understanding of the options, the following motion was made:

Motion to donate the decommissioned police vehicle to the West Brookfield Rescue Squad made by Mr. von Bleicken; second: Mr. Merkel – unanimous.

MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 8, 2023, FOR APPROVAL

Motion to approve and sign the Minutes of August 8, 2023, as written made by Mr. Merkel; second: Mr. von Bleicken – unanimous.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. San Angelo provided an update on the following:

- Treads for the Town Hall stairs will be ordered this week.
- The Town Clerk will be coming before the Board to discuss the expenditure of new voting machines.
- He has received two applications for Treasurer/Collector (interviews have been scheduled)
- Work continues on both the phone system and with the website committee.
- Discussion with the Board of Assessors on the decommissioning of the new solar project. More information to follow.

TREASURY WARRANTS

Motion to approve and sign the Warrant No. 24 P #4 and 24 W #4 dated August 24, 2023, in the amounts of $80,163.96 and $61,856.26 respectively made by Mr. von Bleicken; second: Mr. Merkel – unanimous.

COMMENTS & CONCERNS - NONE

Next Regular Meeting Date: September 5, 2023 – 6 PM

Motion to Adjourn made by Mr. von Bleicken; second: Mr. Merkel – unanimous at 7 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Acerra

Rebecca Acerra
Assistant to the Board of Selectmen/
Town Administrator

Brad Merkel, Clerk

Date Approved: 9/12/23

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING – AUGUST 22, 2023
AGENDA ITEM #1 – ATTACHMENT A

DEPARTMENT/BOARD/COMMITTEE	NAME	TERM
CULTURAL COUNCIL	A.J. Kiernan	Expires: June 30, 2024
	Diane Vayda	Expires: June 30, 2024
	Pamela Gemme*	Expires: June 30, 2026
	Jane Higgins	Expires: June 30, 2026
	Susan Rowden	Expires: June 30, 2026
Earth Removal	Brad Merkel -BOS Representative	Expires: June 30, 2026

- *Amended Motion to reflect 3-Year appointment.*