

**BOARD OF
SELECTMEN
MEETING
MINUTES**

January 24, 2023

Chair Brett Simas; Select member Stephen A. Matellian; Select member Maureen Dwinneil; Town Manager Joseph Laydon; Executive Assistant Sandra Hakala.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER/ PLEDGE OF ALEGENCE

Chair Simas opened the regular meeting at 7:04 PM an lead the pledge of allegiance.

DEPARTMENT/BOARD UPDATES AND REQUESTS

Police Chief - Swearing in Ceremony for new Upton Police Officers

A swearing in ceremony was held for new officers who recently joined the Upton Police Department. Chief Bradley introduced new officers Ryan Connors, Jay Deiana, and Michael Stanley to the Board of Selectmen and the citizens of Upton. He also thanked Town Manager Joe Laydon and HR Director Sandra Hakala for their assistance with moving the candidates through the hiring process in an expedited manner.

The Chief relayed one of the biggest challenges that municipalities face is recruitment and retention, especially in public safety. Three highly qualified candidates for the position of Police Officer were chosen, individuals with high character and a commitment to public service.

Officer Deiana joins the town with over six years of law enforcement experience from the Hopkinton Police Department and Simmons College Police Department and holds an Associate Degree in Criminal Justice from Mass Bay Community College. The officer resides in Upton with his family.

Officer Stanley enters the department with over ten years of experience and law enforcement and Corrections, most recently with the Medfield Police Department. Officer Stanley also served six years as a military police officer in the United States Airforce, reaching the rank of Staff Sergeant.

Officer Connors comes to us with over four years of experience in law enforcement and corrections, most recently with the Middlesex Sheriff’s Department. Officer Connors is also a certified firefighter/EMT and served on the Upton Fire Department as a call member for approximately ten years.

Library Director – Request to Expend from Lora Dearth Library Trust Fund

The Board reviewed a copy of the request and the Lora Dearth Library Trust Fund.

Maureen Dwinneil MOVED that the Board approve the approve the request of the Upton Library Director to expend up to \$500 from the Lora Dearth Library Trust Fund in FY 2023 for the purchase of books for

37 the library collection.

38

39 **Second: Select member Matellian, Unanimous, Chair Simas.**

40 **Maureen Dwinnell aye, Steve Matellian aye, Brett Simas aye.**

41

42 **LICENSING**

43 **One Day Liquor License, Blackstone Valley Vocational School District, Applicant**

44 The Board reviewed a one-day license applications for Wine & Malt Beverages only to be held
45 on March 16, 2023, for the Superintendent’s Gourmet Dinner at Blackstone Valley Vocational
46 Regional High School, located at 65 Pleasant Street, Upton, MA.

47

48 **Steven Matellian MOVED** that the Select Board vote to approve the application submitted by
49 Michael F. Fitzpatrick for the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District for a special
50 1-day Wine & Malt only (pouring) license for a fundraising event to be held on March 16, 2023
51 under *M.G.L. c.138 §14*; to be held at 65 Pleasant Street, BVVRSD Competition Center, Upton,
52 MA.

53

54 **Second: Select member Dwinnell, Unanimous, Chair Simas.**

55 **Maureen Dwinnell aye, Steve Matellian aye, Brett Simas aye.**

56

57 **TOWN MANAGER REPORT/ UPDATES**

- 58 • Tax season, finalizing budgets.
- 59 • Reviewing budget narratives.
- 60 • Warrant closes on Friday.
- 61 • COA van was delivered, special thanks to Chief Marchand in finding the vehicle.
- 62 • Public hearing for 25% design RTE 140 transportation project this week.

63

64 **PUBLIC INPUT/BOARD MEMBERS’ UPDATES**

65 Linda Gay, resident voiced that she has submitted a citizen’s petition.

66

67 **COMMITTEE/ BOARD APPOINTMENT/RESIGNATION**

68 **Appointment - Cultural Council**

69 An application from Kate Baden was considered for appointment to the Cultural Council.

70

71 **Maureen Dwinnell MOVED** that the Board of Selectmen vote to appoint Kate Baden as a Full
72 Member on the Cultural Council for the remainder of the term to expire June 30, 2023.

73

74 **Second: Select member Matellian, Unanimous, Chair Simas.**

75 **Maureen Dwinnell aye, Steve Matellian aye, Brett Simas aye.**

76

77 **Resignation – Housing Authority**

78 Linda Jones has submitted her resignation from the Upton Housing Authority. The Board of
79 Selectmen must vote to place the vacant seat on the upcoming 2023 election ballot for the
80 remainder of the term until 2026.

81 **Steve Matellian MOVED** that the Board of Selectmen vote to accept the resignation of Linda
82 Jones from the Upton Housing Authority, with regrets.

83

84 **Second: Select member Dwinnell, Unanimous, Chair Simas.**

85 **Maureen Dwinnell aye, Steve Matellian aye, Brett Simas aye.**

86

87 **Steve Matellian MOVED** that the Board of Selectmen vote to request the vacated seat on the
88 Upton Housing Authority be placed on the upcoming May 2023 Election Ballot, for the
89 remainder of the term that expires in 2026.

90

91 **Second: Select member Dwinnell, Unanimous, Chair Simas.**

92 **Maureen Dwinnell aye, Steve Matellian aye, Brett Simas aye.**

93

94 **BOARD OF SELECTMEN DISCUSSION**

95

96 **MURSD Strategic Plan**

97

98 The Board reviewed an email from Maureen Cohen, Ed.D informing the Boards of Selectmen in
99 Mendon and Upton of a spot for each community on the Strategic Planning Committee. The
100 email also includes a link for providing initial and future feedback regarding the school districts
101 strengths and future needs.

102

103 Maureen Dwinnell will attend the first meeting as she is the liaison to MURSD. The town
104 manager will also reach out to potential parties interested in representing the town at future
105 meetings.

106

107 **Worcester Regional Retirement System - Consideration and Approval of 2% COLA**

108 The Board of Selectmen is being asked by the Worcester Regional Retirement Service (WRRS) to
109 approve an additional 2% COAL for Fiscal Year 2023 to system retirees. The increase, as
110 calculated by our Finance Director, the 2% increase retroactive to July 1, 2022 equated to \$320
111 to each Town retiree and beneficiary. A 3% COLA was already approved. Included in the Board's
112 packet is an email from Finance Director Kenny Costa commenting on an email from WRRS and
113 a memo from WRRS addressed to Member Unit Boards of Selection. Governor Baker had signed
114 a law on November 16, 2022, authorizing an additional 2% cost-of-living adjustment but it
115 requires approval of 2/3rds of Chief Executive authorities from member towns. The additional
116 2% COLA is only based on the first \$16,000 paid to retirees.

117

118 The Board will defer until the next meeting to collect additional information. Who will benefit
119 from this benefit, and how will it affect future retirees.

120

121 **Draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles**

122 The town manager reviewed a list of articles slated for the May 4th Annual Town Meeting
123 Warrant on Monday, January 23rd. The deadline to file for the warrant is January 27th at noon.

124

125 The Board discussed the place holder on the warrant to fund the deficient in the treasurer
126 expense account. The town manager will work with the finance director to find a solution and
127 work toward clarifying policies moving forward.

128

129 Mike Moran, animal control officer, is requesting an amendment to a bylaw with an article to
130 better define a hunting dog and off leash determinations.

131

132 **Upton Route 140 TIP Project – Project 608490 – Main Street/ Milford Road/ Upton
133 Center**

134 The Town Manager provided an update on the project in anticipation of the Public Hearing
135 scheduled for January 26th.

136

137 Comments are received for 30 days, and they can provide an update to the DOT.

138

139 Off street parking is a principal concern.

140

141 **Recreation Financial Assistance Program – Trust Fund Request**

142 The Board considered a request from the Recreation Department and Elder and Social Services
143 Department to establish a financial assistance program to assist families in need to participate
144 in the 2023 Kids@Play Sumer Program. Final details will need to be worked on the form of the
145 application, setting up financial systems, and how to balance assistance versus potential need.

146

147 **Maureen Dwinell MOVED** that the Board of Selectmen vote to approve the request submitted
148 by the Recreation Director and Elder and Social Services Director for \$10,000 from the Risteen
149 Trust Fund to establish a financial assistance program.

150

151 **Second: Select member Matellian, Unanimous, Chair Simas.**
152 **Maureen Dwinell aye, Steve Matellian aye, Brett Simas aye.**

153

154 **MINUTES**

155 Passed over.

156

157 **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

158 **Brett Simas MOVED** that the Select Board vote to enter into Executive Session to 1. Review
159 executive session meeting minutes for approval and 2. pursuant to MGL c.214, S. 1B and MGL c.
160 4, S. 7, Clause 220 26c to discuss financial assistance to residents in need, and not reconvene in
161 open session.

162 **Ms. Dwinell aye, Mr. Matellian aye, Mr. Simas aye**

163

164 The Board will adjourn directly from Executive Session and not reconvene in open session

165

166 **ADJOURNMENT**

167 **Steve Matellian MOVED** to adjourn the meeting of January 24, 2023, at 9:15 PM.

168 **Second: Select member Dwinell, Unanimous, Chair Simas.**

169

170 Respectfully submitted,

171 Sandra Hakala, Executive Assistant