

# BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

**July 12, 2023**

Chair Maureen Dwinnell; Select member Brett Simas; Select member Laura Hebb; Town Manager Joseph Laydon.

## CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Dwinnell opened the regular meeting at 7:00 PM.

## Police Chief - Swearing in Ceremony for new Upton Police Officers\*

The Board and Police Chief held a swearing in ceremony for a new officer, Bianca Nalon, who recently joined the Upton Police Department.

## JOINT MEETING WITH FINANCE COMMITTEE

### Year End Transfers - Kenny Costa, Finance Director

As FY 2023 ends, there are several individual accounts that require transfers to eliminate deficits. Transfers are needed to cover increased utility bills and wages to support our buildings, increases wages associated with beach lifeguard services and within our Veterans Office, and to cover FY22 Elected Officials Stipends approved at Annual Town Meeting.

FY 23 END OF YEAR TRANSFERS		DOC DATE 07/12/2023				
GENERAL FUND	AMOUNT	FROM	ACCOUNT #	TO	ACCOUNT #	JUSTIFICATION
TRANSFER #1	\$ 500	Town Manager Misc. Expense	0100-123-5400-5426	Moderator Salary	0100-114-5100-5111	FY22 Elected Officials Stipend not paid.
TRANSFER #2	\$ 10,000	Town Counsel Expense	0100-151-5200-5302	Town Building Expense	0100-192-5400-5421	Unanticipated increase in utility bills for FY23
TRANSFER #3	\$ 250	Veterans Service - Expense	0100-543-5400-5421	Veterans Service - Wages	0100-543-5100-5100	Deficit is due to additional hours worked for Upton Veterans support not budgeted. Transfer is within the Veterans Department.
TRANSFER #4	\$ 2,500	Recreation - Site Improvements	0100-630-5800-5810	Recreation Beach Wages	0100-630-5100-5112	Deficit due to year end Beach - lifeguard services provided not budgeted. Transfer is within Recreation Budget.
TRANSFER #5	\$ 700	Town Counsel Expense	0100-151-5200-5302	Town Building - Wages	0100-192-5100-5100	Deficit is due to additional hours worked for Town Building support not budgeted.
TRANSFER #6	\$ 1,750	Town Manager Misc. Expense	0100-123-5400-5426	Trust Fund Committee - Salaries	0100-950-5100-5110	FY22 Elected Officials Stipends not paid.
TOTAL	\$ 15,700					

**Laura Hebb MOVED** that the Board of Selectmen vote to approve the year end transfers as recommended by the Finance Director/ Town Accountant.

**Second: Member Simas, Unanimous Chair Dwinnell**

## TOWN MANAGER REPORT

The following is the Town Manager's Report for the July 12, 2023 Board of Selectmen Meeting.

**Town Website Redesign** – Staff has completed virtual training sessions and are working at adding new content to the new website, all while maintaining the existing website. To allow staff additional time to update the new website, we are pushing back the “go live” date from July 18th to August 1st.

**Upton Community Center**– Slides are open and being used. Our DPW Director continues to work with the project engineers to resolve HVAC code errors, but the list is dwindling. UCC Building Committee continues to meet to review final close out punch list. The Building Committee has retained the services of Nitsch Engineering to redesign the parking lot to add handicap parking spaces, make traffic one way, and adjust spaces to increase the total number of spaces. The revised plan will need to be reviewed by the Planning Board before it can be implemented. We are scheduling training on using kitchen equipment. ESS Staff and the Town Manager are coordinating a meeting with Tri-Valley to renew the contract for meals on wheels in preparation of moving to the UCC.

**Coffee with the Town Manager** – I’ll be holding a “Coffee with the Town Manager” on August 18th at Millhaus to talk with residents on various senior issues. Will be advertised in the Upton Chronicle, the monthly newsletter published by ESS Staff.

**ADA Improvements** - Work funded by a MOD Grant to complete ADA Access Improvements at the Police Station, Fire Station, and DPW Admin Trailer is nearing completion. Police, Fire, and Town Hall improvements have been completed. The ramp at the DPW Admin Trailer has been removed and the new ramp is partially installed. Installation will be completed on Friday, July 14th. Total value of work paid for by the Grant is nearly \$40K.

**Human Resources** – A kick off meeting was held today with GovHR for the update to the Town’s Classification and Compensation Plan. A meeting with Town Employees will be scheduled for Tuesday, August 1st. The process will take approx. 4 months to complete.

**Housing Production Plan** – The Housing Production Plan Steering Committee will be meeting July 20th to review and approve draft Housing Production Plan. Next step will be to schedule a joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board to present the plan for their approval. Joint meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 22nd.

**DPW** – Fiske Ave Water Main Project is out to bid. Town was notified that it was awarded \$110,000 to conduct the Service Line Inventory and LSL Replacement Plan.

**Kiwanis Beach Closure** - On Monday, no algae was observed so the Board of Health Office reached out to the state to get the water tested. Testing is scheduled for the morning of Thursday, July 13th. If the test is negative, the water will be tested again one week later on the 20th. Depending on the results, including speed of getting test results, the beach may be able to be open as early as the 21st for water activities.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

John Saulen stated he wanted to make public comments regarding the operations of the Senior Center. Chair Dwinnell said that the Board cannot receive public comment regarding municipal employees.

## **BOARD OF SELECTMEN DISCUSSION**

### **Economic Development Earmark – Review and Approval of Economic Development Priority Projects**

The Economic Development Committee has worked with staff to identify priorities for the use of earmark funds. The proposed projects have been identified for approximately \$125,000 of the chapter funds. Below, in order of priority, is a list of the projects the Committee has identified:

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1	Parking Plan and engineering for a gravel or pervious surface parking lot at the proposed VFW pedestrian bridge site.	\$45,000	The next step in achieving the vision for Upton Center. Staff has submitted a grant application for full funding of \$18,800 for a survey and resource delineation of the site in support of this goal. If grant funds are received, the town can proceed with engineering. If the grant is not funded, the cost identified here can be used to obtain those pre-permitting survey prior to engineering.
2	West Upton Visioning Project	\$45,000-\$50,000	A Dodson-Flinker (as a reference) Visioning workshop and plan for West Upton. Similar as what was done for Upton Center. To include a review of infrastructure capacity to support development and an update on the existing Dodson-Flinker visioning map for Upton Center. The update should include everything on the map that has happened since it was created in order to show a more accurate vision.
3	Expanding Façade Program	\$15,000-20,000	Due to the success of the pilot program, there is opportunity to invest additional funds into the program and assist local businesses.
4	Infrastructure Capacity Analysis	\$20,000-\$30,000	To identify available capacity to serve new uses as an economic development marketing tool. This information can be used for economic development and to support appropriately sized residential

			development along Route 140.
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**Brett Simas MOVED** the Board approve the economic development priority projects identified by the Economic Development Committee and authorize the Town Manager to execute necessary contracts for funding with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

**Second: Member Hebb, Unanimous Chair Dwinnell**

#### **Review and Approval of Maple Ave Sidewalk Project Scope of Work\***

Chair Dwinnell said she wanted to pass over this until the Town Manager and DPW Director have a chance to talk to Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) Dr. Fitzpatrick. The scope that was provided by the engineering consultant was more than what was anticipated than what would be within a scope of work for a feasibility Study. The Board asked that the matter be brought back before the Board once discussions happened with BVT. The Board reviewed possible alignments to connect the schools to Maple Ave and Victoria Circle.

**Laura Hebb MOVED** the Board vote to postpone discussion of the Maple Ave Sidewalk Project until the August 22, 2023 meeting.

**Second: Member Simas, Unanimous Chair Dwinnell**

#### **Designation as Surplus Equipment**

The Board's considered designating one vehicle and one piece of equipment as surplus equipment and authorization for their disposal pursuant to MGL 30B Uniform Procurement Act.

**Brett Simas MOVED** the Board vote to designate the former 2010 Senior Center Van and the Land Use and Inspectional Services copier/printer as surplus equipment and authorize for their disposition pursuant to MGL 30B Uniform Procurement Act.

**Second: Member Hebb, Unanimous Chair Dwinnell**

#### **Review of MURSD Lease Renewal for Memorial School**

The Board considered a draft of a lease agreement between the Town and MURSD. The term of the lease renewal is for twenty (20) years.

**Laura Hebb MOVED** the Board vote to execute the Lease Agreement between the Town of Upton and the Mendon-Upton Regional School District for the premises known as Memorial School.

**Second: Member Simas, Unanimous Chair Dwinnell**

#### **Discussion of Family Medical Leave Act and Paid Family and Medical Leave**

Member Simas said that in talking to the Town Manager, he wanted to bring up the current policy concerning maternity leave benefits and that we should be able to re-evaluate our policies to work better for families and pay. He wanted to be able to provide for 12 weeks of paid maternity/paternity leave. He acknowledged that it would require more examination and analysis. Member Hebb said that the leave should be expanded to include medical leave and that we should study this as a benefit for employees and their families.

The Town Manager did say that it was worth further analysis to see what would work and perhaps a hybrid solution, especially when not all kinds of leave may be covered under the Town's short term disability policy. He said that Sandy is working on getting quotes for a private plan (a lower MA PMFL rate and bundling discount on STD) and we will provide information when it is available.

The Town Manager said that he and the HR Director will start to look into added benefits and report back to the Board.

#### **MINUTES**

Passed over.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Brett Simas MOVED** to adjourn the meeting of July 12, 2023, at 8:37PM.

**Second: Select Member Hebb, Unanimous, Chair Dwinnell.**

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Hakala, Executive Assistant