



Select Board Meeting Minutes

Date: November 30, 2020

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: Conducted by Remote Participation

Present: Mr. Hurd, Chair, Mr. Curro, Vice Chair, Mrs. Mahon, Mr. DeCoursey, Mr. Diggins

Also Present: Mr. Chapdelaine, Mr. Heim, Ms. Maher

1. Executive Order on Remote Participation

Mr. Hurd opened the meeting by explaining that due to the current State of Emergency, to lower the risk of the spread of COVID-19, the Town has been advised and directed by the Commonwealth to suspend public gatherings, and as such the Governor's orders suspends the requirement of the Open Meeting Law to have all meetings in a public and accessible location. Public bodies may meet entirely remotely as long as the public can access the meeting. The meeting reference materials and how to access the remote meeting are posted on the Town's website. The Chair asked participants that would like to speak, to use their full name rather than a nickname.

Mr. Hurd wanted to go over some business ground rules for effective and clear conduct of the meeting and to ensure accurate meeting minutes:

The Chair will introduce each speaker on the agenda, after they conclude their remarks; Mr. Hurd will ask each member of the Board for their remarks or a motion. Please wait until your name is called. Please remember to mute your phone or computer when you are not speaking and to speak clearly. For any response, please wait until the Chair yields to you and state your name before speaking. Anyone wishing to speak to someone must do so through the Chair.

CONSENT AGENDA

2. Minutes of Meetings: November 4, 2020; November 9, 2020; November 16, 2020

Mrs. Mahon moved approval.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion by Mr. Heim.

Mrs. Mahon:	yes
Mr. DeCoursey:	yes
Mr. Diggins:	yes
Mr. Curro:	yes
Mr. Hurd:	yes

SO VOTED (5-0)

PUBLIC HEARINGS

3. 7:00 p.m.

a. Vote: MW RA Debt Shift

b. Discussion and Vote: Property Tax Classification - Tax Rate

Paul Tierney, Director of Assessments

Kevin Feeley, Chair, Board of Assessments

Mr. Tierney would like to thank the Board of Assessors as well as his office staff for all their hard work and support during the year. Mr. Tierney spoke in regards to the memo that was provided to the Board prior to the meeting. Mr. Tierney stated that they have the FY 2020 levy limit where they add 2.5%. They had new growth of \$850,163 which gives them a FY 2021 levy limit of \$126,766,962 to that they have the school debt exclusion and the water and sewer debt so the maximum total to be raised is \$138,212,969. Mr. Tierney explained that they are raising \$138,199,499 which will be divided by the total taxable assessed value that will give us our proposed tax rate of \$11.34 for \$1,000 dollars value. Mr. Tierney explained the minimum residential factor computation which will be used to determine the split rate if we so choose. If we adopt 1% and leave a flat rate, the rate will pose to be 11.34, if we adopt 5% split rate the tax rate will decrease under the residential to \$11.31 and increase on the commercial industrial and personal property to \$11.91 which in turn will increase the commercial industrial personal property taxes by \$283 and decrease the residential by \$16.25. Mr. Tierney stated that if we adopt a 20% residential exemption that will increase the tax rate for everybody to \$14.10, if we do 15% it will be \$13.37, 10% will be \$12.71 and 5% will be \$12.11. Mr. Tierney stated that not many communities in Massachusetts use this; it is usually just for cities and towns that have a lot of apartment buildings and summer homes. Mr. Tierney explained that the breakeven point will be \$801,315 where if we shifted it, you would not see any impact to your tax bill. Ms. O'Connor stated that they provide the Select Board with the information for the Select Board to make the determination as to whether they want to split tax rate or classification. Ms. O'Connor noted that the strength in this town continues to be the residential tax base is continuing and is strong and homes are selling over the asking price even during the pandemic.

The Board would like to thank the Board of Assessors as well as the Assessor's Department for their hard work. Mr. Curro noted that they usually do not do a split tax rate and feels this is not the year to do it. Mr. DeCoursey questioned if the Select Board votes on the factor and the Assessor's determine the tax rate. Mr. Heim stated that in substance that is correct. Mr. Heim stated that the Select Board is setting the factor which yields the rate. Mr. DeCoursey stated that this year included in the total levy we have water and sewer debt of \$3,691,454. Mr. DeCoursey noted that over the past year there was some discussion in regards to shifting the debt from the real estate tax bills onto the water bills. Mrs. Mahon questioned in the current state of the pandemic if they know of any current opportunities beyond the usual avenues for citizens to seek relief. Mr. Tierney stated that there will not be any other sort of resources for this year since assessments are retrospective and these assessments came out before the pandemic.

Mr. Curro moved approval to set the tax rate to \$11.34 with a residential factor of 1.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion by Mr. Heim.

Mrs. Mahon: yes
Mr. DeCoursey: yes
Mr. Diggins: yes
Mr. Curro: yes
Mr. Hurd: yes

SO VOTED (5-0)

Mr. Curro moved to set the debt shift to \$3,691,454

A roll call vote was taken on the motion by Mr. Heim.

Mrs. Mahon: yes
Mr. DeCoursey: yes
Mr. Diggins: yes
Mr. Curro: yes
Mr. Hurd: yes

SO VOTED (5-0)

APPOINTMENTS

4. Open Space Committee

Emily Nink (term to expire 6/30/2023)

Ms. Nink appeared before the Board to express her interest in serving on the Open Space Committee. Ms. Nink recently moved to Arlington in the summer and is excited in potentially participating and helping with the needs of the Open Space Committee. The Board thanked Ms. Nink for her interest in serving on this committee and look forward to hearing about her experiences.

Mr. Diggins moved approval.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion by Mr. Heim.

Mrs. Mahon: yes
Mr. DeCoursey: yes
Mr. Diggins: yes
Mr. Curro: yes
Mr. Hurd: yes

SO VOTED (5-0)

TRAFFIC RULES & ORDERS / OTHER BUSINESS

5. Discussion & Approval: MBTA Proposed Service Reductions

Adam W. Chapdelaine, Town Manager

Mr. Chapdelaine stated the recently the Board spoke in regards to an advocacy letter regarding the impact that the proposed MBTA cuts will have to Arlington. Mr. Chapdelaine stated that he along with a team consisting of Deputy Town Manager, Sandy Pooler, Director of Planning and Community Development, Jenny Raitt and Senior Transportation Planner, Daniel Amstutz drafted a letter that was read by the Board last week and then put together a revised letter that was uploaded to Novus and circulated to the Board today. Mr. Chapdelaine stated that the team consulted today with our State Senator and two state representatives about what they saw as a path for effective advocacy and the advice that was given was to state our case plainly and

directly and what our concerns were about potential losses of service from the T. They also expressed a willingness to sign on to a letter with the Board if the Board did endorse a letter. Mr. Chapdelaine suggests if it is approved he could sign along with the Board Chair and the 3 members of our delegation. Mr. Chapdelaine stated that in the letter it is an outline of our concerns about the cuts that are proposed to the headways in the 77 potential elimination of the 79 and the 350 are concerned with being labeled as an inner core community. Mr. Chapdelaine stated that throughout the letter you will see their concern about the impacts these proposed cuts will have on our long standing goals for shift people out of their cars into other modes of transit.

The Board thanked Mr. Chapdelaine along with the team that have worked on this memo and the revisions they have made and feels it is important for the Town to respond to this. Mr. Diggins stated that his concern is that he understands the need to advocate for Arlington but our argument is one that is going to be made by other municipalities. Mr. Diggins stated that the number of people using public transportation in other communities that have a larger population and the number of people who will be affected by it are higher. Mrs. Mahon would like to see some language included in the letter that states what our assessment is and if the MBTA chooses to go ahead with these cuts to the commuter service in Arlington that we present a factor of how much we are overpaying, how much the cut is and what the difference is. Mrs. Mahon stated that we seek through our delegation in the State House to modify Arlington's contribution to the MBTA to that amount. Mrs. Mahon stated that since Arlington makes such a big contribution to the MBTA that we ask our Senator and two representatives to hold a meeting with the general manager along with the Town Manager to talk in regards to how we cannot suffer these cuts or get a truer MBTA assessment for what Arlington should be paying. Mr. Chapdelaine stated that if the Board is okay with it they sent a letter to our legislative delegation 3-4 years ago, that specifically called out the contrast between Arlington's assessment and service and Quincy's. Mr. Chapdelaine stated that he could take that letter and add a line suggesting that our concern remains about this issue and if unresolved we will seek potential avenues for legislative relief if the Board is amendable to that. Mrs. Mahon asked if they can amend letter to include their comments in the beginning of the letter and perhaps discussing this issue at a future Board meeting.

Mr. DeCoursey moved to send letter and authorize the Chair along with Town Manager to sign letter along with the addition of the wording amended by Mr. Chapdelaine.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion by Mr. Heim.

Mrs. Mahon:	yes
Mr. DeCoursey:	yes
Mr. Diggins:	yes
Mr. Curro:	yes
Mr. Hurd:	yes

SO VOTED (5-0)

6. Discussion & Vote: Minuteman High School Athletic Complex Project Borrowing Notification

Adam W. Chapdelaine, Town Manager

Mr. Chapdelaine stated that the Board may recall when we entered into the revised regional agreement for Minuteman, rather than Town's via their Town Meeting needing to proactively approve borrowings the section in regards to borrowing was changed in the regional agreement to allow towns within 60 days of the Minuteman School Committee voting to borrow to have the Town call a Special Town Meeting to oppose that borrowing. This would then trigger the ability for the district to go to the district wide ballot question like occurred during the building project several years ago. Mr. Chapdelaine stated that the building is done but finalizing the athletic fields is not yet complete. With remaining funds from the project and other funding sources as are outlined in the presentation, Minuteman is not fully able to go forward with the project and is seeking to borrow an additional sum of money. Mr. Chapdelaine stated that they are also proposing to be able to offset future debt service associated with that borrowing with the revenue from renting out the facility. Mr. Chapdelaine explained if that did not work out the maximum amount that we would be impacted on would be \$77,000 in debt service. Mr. Chapdelaine stated that the Finance Committee supported this and they recommend that the Town does not stand in the way of this expenditure. Michael Ruderman, Minuteman School Committee Representative, stated that the Minuteman School Committee has looked at the money we have left over from the building project we have in excess of about five million dollars which they are going to devote that to athletic fields both because it increases the usefulness of the physical plant and it provides equity for their students as well as future possibilities for hosting community wide events.

Mr. Curro moved to approve the requested borrowing.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion by Mr. Heim.

Mrs. Mahon: yes

Mr. DeCoursey: yes

Mr. Diggins: yes

Mr. Curro: yes

Mr. Hurd: yes

SO VOTED (5-0)

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

7. Traffic Concerns re: Intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Bates Road
Timur Kaya Yontar, 58 Bates Road

Mr. Curro moved receipt and to refer to TAC.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion by Mr. Heim.

Mrs. Mahon: yes

Mr. DeCoursey: yes

Mr. Diggins: yes
Mr. Curro: yes
Mr. Hurd: yes

SO VOTED (5-0)

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Curro stated that we marked the second anniversary of their former colleague Mr. Greeley's passing. Mr. Curro raised the possibility of exploring a proper time and manor to memorialize his contributions. Mr. Greeley holds the record for length of service on the Select Board and is one that will be hard to match. Mr. Curro stated that he will not be running for his term that will be expiring in April. Mr. Curro stated that it has been a great honor to serve with them and is something that in the future they will discuss but wanted to make it official.

Mrs. Mahon stated that the Board will remain in session and will reconvene with the commencement of Special Town Meeting and will remain in session from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Next Scheduled Meeting of Select Board December 7, 2020

A true record attest

Ashley Maher
Administrative Assistant

11/30/2020

Agenda Item	Document Used
1	Executive Order on Remote Participation
2	Draft Minutes 11.4.2020 Draft Minutes 11.9.2020 Draft Minutes 11.16.2020
3	Draft Property Tax Classification 2021
4	E. Nink Reference
5	Letter to MBTA
6	Letter to Select Board re Debt Fiance Committee Memo Minuteman Town Review Presentation
7	Correspondence from T. Yontar