

Select Board Minutes
Monday, March 13, 2023 - 6:30 PM
Meeting to be held as hybrid with both an in-person and with a remote participation option in accordance with Chapter 107 of the Acts of 2022.

Present: Scott C. Wrenn, Sara K. Rufli, Daniel S. Carpenter and Steven Chambers
Also Present: Town Manager Ed Kazanovicz

Chair Scott Wrenn called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

Mr. Wrenn announced that this Open Meeting of the Town of Auburn Select Board was being conducted *both in person and remotely*, consistent with Chapter 107 of the Acts of 2022, which suspends the requirement of the Open Meeting Law to have all meetings in a publicly accessible *physical* location. Further, all members of public bodies are allowed to participate remotely as long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting.

For the public to join the meeting remotely by telephone, 1-408-650-3123 and Access Code 235-235-861. Or, the public can join via computer at <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/235-235-861>.

All supporting materials that have been provided to members of this body are available on the Town's website. The public is encouraged to follow along using the posted agenda.

The Chair announced that all Board members were present in person and that the meeting was being recorded by Auburn Cable Television.

The Board led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments

There was no one wishing to speak under Public Comments.

Public Hearings/Presentations

There were no items.

Communications

Letter from Commonwealth of Massachusetts Governor's Office re: Auburn's Allocation of Chapter 90 Funds

The Town received a letter from the Massachusetts Office of the Governor about Chapter 90 funds. The letter certified that Auburn's Chapter 90 apportionment for Fiscal Year 2024 would be \$606,057.28 provided that the legislature approves the \$200 million annual bond authorization.

Select Board General Items

Gift Acceptances in Accordance with MGL Chapter 44, Section 53A

There were no items.

Proclamations and Recognitions

There were no items.

Town Manager Items

Traffic Study Report on Pinehurst Avenue

Police Chief Todd Lemon was present and discussed the traffic study report on Pinehurst Avenue. The study was conducted after a resident's request to lower the speed limit on the street. He said that the first study was done initially, and a subsequent study was conducted expanding the parameters on request of the Select Board to include that part of the street closer to Worcester. The Chief gave his opinion that the street was not the most problematic in Town and not of major concern in terms of the number of crashes on Pinehurst Avenue.

Chief Lemon discussed the question of the Select Board's prior vote to change the speed limit from 30 mph to 40 mph several years ago. He said that he would like to know the reason for the Board making that change.

Ms. Ruffli asked if it would be unreasonable if the town meeting agreed to change the speed limit to 30mph.

Chief Lemon replied no, but it might not change the driving behavior in that area. He said that drivers speed through the Worcester portion of the road, and that part is 30mph.

Some board members expressed that it might not be a problem or concern with respect to accidents, but they could understand that residents would like to feel that they could cross the street safely.

Mr. Carpenter suggested doing one more study when the weather becomes warmer and more people are out for potentially bringing the matter to a town meeting.

Mr. Carpenter made a motion that the Board requests through the Town Manager for the Police Chief to do another traffic study as discussed and report back to the Board at a future meeting for a potential vote to bring the matter to a town meeting, and that the Town Manager discusses the issue of crosswalks on Pinehurst Avenue with the Town Engineer. Mr. Chambers seconded the motion and the Select Board voted in favor 4 to 0.

Legal Opinion from Town Counsel regarding Pinehurst Avenue

The Board discussed the legal opinion from Town Counsel regarding Pinehurst Avenue. In summary, the opinion noted that since the Special Speed Regulation (No. 7021) that includes Pinehurst Avenue is part of the revised bylaws adopted by the town meeting on March 24, 2015 the Town Meeting is the authority to rescind the existing Special Speed Regulation for Pinehurst Avenue.

Discussion on Flag Committee Vacancy

The Board discussed the vacancy on the Flag Committee and Tristan Laliberte's offer to serve in a remote manner as he is still a registered voter in Auburn. Some members expressed the

concern that other volunteers might seek to be committee members remotely too. Mr. Kazanovicz stated that there was the question about the legality of the practice. He also said that the State Legislature may not extend the ability for hybrid meeting participation beyond the expected expiration date of March 31st.

There was consensus to table the item until the first meeting in April to see what happens at the state legislative level.

Vote to Authorize, Accept and Expend Grant Funds from the Stanton Foundation for Capital Improvements to the Dog Park.

The DDIS Director Darlene Coyle was in attendance and explained the grant opportunity from the Stanton Foundation that allows the Town to apply for grant funds for capital improvements to the Dog Park. She said that the Town was eligible for a total of \$37,500.00.

Mr. Carpenter asked what types of items were eligible for funding. Ms. Coyle replied that eligible items included: equipment, agility enhancement items and additional signage.

Mr. Carpenter asked if there was a time limit to expend the funds. Ms. Coyle replied that she didn't know the answer to the question, but she would find out.

Mr. Kazanovicz spoke to the mini-grant aspect of it and he said that he understands that the mini-grant takes place to start at the end of year 2 and goes through year 4. But he said that he was not sure if, once the town banks it, whether that condenses the time period or not.

Mr. Chambers asked if there were matching funds required. Ms. Coyle replied that there was no match required.

The Select Board voted to authorize, accept and expend grant funds from the Stanton Foundation for capital improvements to the Dog Park up to \$37,500.00 (Motion made by Mr. Carpenter; motion seconded by Ms. Rufli) voted in favor 4 to 0.

Development Agreement Update – Perry Place

Chair Scott Wrenn noted that there was no other information on this item beyond that the draft agreement is being reviewed by attorneys for both parties.

WooSox Event-Announcement of Auburn Night at Polar Park Wednesday June 21, 2023

Town Manager Ed Kazanovicz announced the event at Polar Park, this year to be on Wednesday June 21, 2023. Auburn has named our non-profit as Auburn Youth & Family Services, which will get \$5.00 on each ticket purchased.

Tabled Items

There were no items.

Select Board Member Items

Student Rep Position – by Mr. Carpenter

Mr. Carpenter gave an update on the item, including the School Committee's thoughts about the position. He said that there would be more information available during the next school trimester.

Chair Scott Wrenn asked if there were any edits or comments on the minutes of February 13, 2023. There being none, the Chair accepted the minutes of February 13, 2023.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 P.M. (Motion made by Mr. Carpenter; motion seconded by Ms. Rufli) voted in favor 4 to 0.

Submitted: Sharon A. Kwiatkowski
Adm. Assistant to the Town Manager

The following documents were part of the Select Board's Meeting of March 13, 2023 and are retained in the Executive Office of the Town Manager:

- March 13, 2023 Agenda
- Letter dated February 28, 2023 from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Governor's Office re: Auburn's Allocation of Chapter 90 Funds
- Traffic Study Report on Pinehurst Avenue
- Legal Opinion from Town Counsel regarding Pinehurst Avenue Speed Limit Vote of the Select Board
- Minutes of February 13, 2023