

Jonathan Anderson, Chair person
David Hall, Vice Chair
Jesse Limanek, Clerk
Jeffrey Bannon
Normand Champigny



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James A. Smith, Town Manager

Town of Sutton
Select Board

Meeting Minutes
Minutes Accepted and filed with the Town Clerk 3/12/2024 with a roll call vote of 5-0

6:00 p.m. – February 20, 2024

Roll Call vote taken:

Members in Attendance in person:

Chairperson Jonathan Anderson, Vice Chair David Hall, Clerk Jesse Limanek, Select members Jeffrey Bannon & Normand Champigny all present in person.

Also attending in person: Town Manager James Smith, Town Accountant Tim Harrison & Deb Jacques, secretary

Public Forum –

Dave Pizzi 55 Fairway View says this is 4th appearance in Public Forum in regards to possibility of changes made to the Town common for parking. Dave said he has heard there is a grant application pending, has it been approved yet? He read that the job will go out to bid next week. How will the residents be notified if there is any work to be done at the common, will there be a formal vote. Chairperson Anderson states this has not been brought to the board yet- Jonathan asks Town Manager Jim Smith for an update. Jim replies we have not been notified of this being awarded yet- it is not going out to bid next week. When we hear anything this will be brought to the Select board and we will be transparent as we always are. Dave Pizzi asks if the grant is approved then what, how firm are the dates in the application, what is the general theme of communication. Jim replies this would go before the Select board and if there is any work it will all remain in the Uxbridge Road layout.

John Belcufine 75 Leland Hill Road- offers a thankyou to Jim Smith and Matt Stencel for getting the tree work done at Dodge Cemetery- the trees that were going to be a hazard were removed. Mr. Belcufine goes on to ask about Pole Hearings and what the town has jurisdiction over in regards to the distance of the pole. Present in the audience for 2 pole hearings is Jay Lucier with NGrid- he responds he is an engineer with NGrid- there is no actual standard with poles but if roads are widened it does affect the poles.

Brian Stevenson 664 Central Tpk. states he is not happy with the proposed parking on the east side of Uxbridge Road. 8 years ago he provided viable solutions- what is proposed is only putting a dent in the problem. It will still be a hazard crossing Uxbridge Road. The 2 suggestions were to have employees park on the property beyond the red house (14 Uxbridge) or the other side of the center store. People that come in to the town hall are customers – most of the parking issues are caused by employees. We have to keep the aesthetics of the common in mind when we decide to make changes. Brian goes on to say he hopes he does not drive by and see parking spots added with no notice- he is very dissatisfied that other options were not looked into- a lot of people will be disappointed.

Vice Chair Hall motions to accept as presented the February 6, 2024 Select Board meeting minutes Select Person Bannon seconds passes 5-0 with roll call vote

Public Hearing- Pleasant Valley Pole Hearing public notice read into record by Select person Limanek. Jay Lucier is present representing NGrid. This is to install 2 SO poles on Pleasant Valley Road for the current building project (Medical facility). Hearing no comments/questions- Select person Limanek motions to close public hearing Select person Bannon seconds passes 5-0 with roll call vote. Select person Limanek motions to approve Pole Hearing # 30859188 from NGrid for Pleasant Valley Road as advertised in the February 1, 2024 Millbury Sutton Chronicle Select person Bannon seconds passes 5-0 with roll Call vote.

Public Hearing- Central Turnpike Pole Hearing public notice read into record by Select person Limanek. Jay Lucier present representing NGrid. This is to install a pole for the new homes built on Central Tpk. Vice Chair Hall asks general questions about pole locations showing on the map provided with the request. Hearing no other comments or concerns Select person Bannon Motions to close the public hearing Vice Chair Hall seconds passes 5-0 with roll call vote. Select person Bannon motions to approve Pole Hearing # 30800643 from NGrid & Verizon for Central Turnpike as advertised in the February 8, 2024 Millbury Sutton Chronicle Select person Champigny seconds passes 5-0 with roll call vote.

Sign the Presidential Primary Election Warrant- hearing no comments/concerns Select person Champigny motions to sign the Presidential Primary Election Warrant Select person Bannon seconds passes 5-0 with roll call vote

FY2025 Budget Presentation Power point (attached to final minutes) – Town Manager Smith presents the FY25 Preliminary budget of \$38,843,363 (an increase of \$1,023,566 or 2.57% over FY24). Currently there is a \$189,000. deficit on the town side and \$200,000. on the school side. We propose to raise the tax levy by \$925,373. (2 ½% + new growth). There are still some unknowns such as Health Care increase (we have placed a 12% increase as a placeholder), Norfolk Agric., BVT and town unions (Police & Teamsters) negotiations currently underway. A few nonunion pay adjustments have been made due to a salary survey done amongst the surrounding 10-12 towns. SPED is decreasing for the 1st time in 6 years (\$416,000.) and the required contribution to Worc. Reg. will have an 11% increase. We increased School appropriation by \$500,000. and are approx. \$4.5 million over the net school spending required. BVT has forwarded special language for the upcoming warrant- they have 2 articles separate from their normal funding budget. The first is to create a stabilization account to address capital items without relying on towns to vote, the 2nd is to request \$10 million in debt to pay for roof reconstruction and replacement- they will be applying to MSBA for funding- this may require a debt exclusion override. Out of the ARPA funding (2.8 million) we were able to repair the school waste water treatment plant, we are in the process of replacing the Town Hall septic system (\$575,000.)- awarded to Peter Amorello and the Wilks sewer project (\$4,089,526.) was awarded to Ricciardi Brothers and \$50,000. to complete the Wilks extension for the fiber project. Another item introduced at the MMA meeting by the Gov. is the Municipal Empowerment Act which would allow municipalities to increase the lodging tax from 6% to 7%; local meals tax from .75% to 1% and an option to increase the motor vehicle tax by 5%. Our Revenues made up of Local Prop. Tax, state aid and Local receipts for FY25 will total \$38,843,363. State Aid continues to be low (16.9%) with the town picking up 76% of the budget. Employee benefits show an 11% increase in pensions as well as an increase in Health care. The Enterprise Funds show no real change and the Capital Plan for FY25 is \$992,500. A few positive items- the Waste Water Treatment plant debt exclusion of \$600,000. will be paid off in 2025; the town has a solid stabilization fund of \$2,700,000 and the OPEB fund is at \$5,064,000. Vice Chair Hall thanks Jim & Tim for the presentation- the new format looks good- there are a lot of good things but does acknowledge that long term looks a little rocky. Dave says the amount of money from ARPA really benefited to tax payers in Sutton. He appreciates the nonunion pay increases- with inflation it helps to make these positions whole. The financial cliff mentioned for years seems to be a moving target. Dave will review the detailed budget presented to them this evening. Select person Limanek says there are no surprises, there is clear consistency in the budget message. At some point the community will have to make some serious choices. This budget is not using any 1 X money- this is a sound stable budget. The contractual pieces of the budget continue to be moving pieces. Jesse does think the Municipal Empowerment Act is a big ask. Select person Bannon says the presentation sounded good Jeff asks in regards to the 2 articles BVT wants to put on the warrant if they pass would this require an override- Jim replies he is not sure of this- these 2 articles are not for funding they are for the creation of it. Select Person Champigny will take some time and review the detailed budget presented tonight. Chairperson Anderson says this seems straight forward- covering all basis and everything is in alignment.

Town Manager Update:

- Presidential Primary Election early in person voting will begin Feb. 24th 9A-5p at the Town Hall and will continue the week of Feb. 26-Fri March 1- during normal hours.
- Cyber Security training will continue for the 4th year. This is covered under the Municipal Cyber Security Awareness grant.
- OPEB meeting with new actuarial took place on Jan. 30th. The new principle is Parker Elmore with Odyssey Advisor. Our net OPEB liability decreased from \$30,471,117. to \$20,586,642.
- The Annual Audit presentation will be March 12th.

Announcement's / Round Table:

Select person Limanek reads the items needed at the food pantry. Jesse takes this time to thank all the supporters that went to the Meat Raffle at the Dudley Gendron on Sunday to support the Fire Dept.

Chairperson Anderson received correspondence form Anna Wence regarding Earth Day clean up to be held on April 6th. Anna will be at the next Select Board meeting to discuss the event.

Select person Limanek motions to adjourn, Vice Chair Hall seconds- Roll Call vote taken- passes 5-0

Meeting adjourned 7:48pm