



**APPROVED**

**LANCASTER SELECT BOARD  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
of Monday, October 2, 2023, 6:00 P.M.  
Prescott Building – Nashaway Room and ZOOM**

**ZOOM:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81115278189>

**Meeting ID 811 1527 8189**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Select Board Chair Stephen Kerrigan called the meeting to order at 6:00PM and advised that the meeting was being recorded and broadcast via Sterling-Lancaster Cable Television.

*Additional materials for Select Board meetings are available at <https://www.ci.lancaster.ma.us/administration-select-board> > Meeting Materials.*

Roll call vote taken, Jason A. Allison, present (via remote), Alexandra W. Turner, present, Stephen J. Kerrigan, present. Also present, Kate Hodges, Town Administrator.

**I. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

Ms. Turner moved to accept the minutes of the September 11, 2023 meeting; Mr. Allison seconded the motion. *Vote taken, Jason A. Allison, Aye; Alexandra W. Turner, Aye; Stephen J. Kerrigan, Aye. Motion passed. [3-0-0].*

Ms. Turner moved to accept the minutes of the September 23, 2023 meeting, subject to discussion; Ms. Turner would like additional time to review the minutes against notes she had taken. Ms. Turner withdrew her motion to approve and offered a motion to table approval of the minutes. Mr. Allison seconded the motion. *Vote taken, Jason A. Allison, Aye; Alexandra W. Turner, Aye; Stephen J. Kerrigan, Aye. Motion passed. [3-0-0].*

**III. SCHEDULED APPEARANCES & PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**6:05 PM, Joint Meeting with Lancaster Historical Commission**

Representing the Historical Commission were Judith Elwell, Member, 140 Nicholas Drive; Karen S. Silverthorn, Member, 395 Goss Lane; Marcia Jakubowicz, Member, 500 Hill Top Road; Amy Brown, Member, 218 Sterling Road; John Foster, Member, 9 Otis Street.

Mr. Kerrigan explained that this joint meeting was to help the Historical Commission understand how to appoint new officers and to be able to convene a meeting. Questions were

taken about how to set an agenda and post a meeting, and the bylaw and Master Plan that in part define the role of the Historical Commission. It was verified that the Historical Commission has about a \$5,000 budget that falls under the Select Board budget, and that should the Commission need to use this, Ms. Hodges is available to help with procurement. Some confusion was expressed as to Heather Lennon's role on the Historical Commission; Mr. Kerrigan stated that Ms. Lennon has resigned, and the paperwork has been filed with the Town Clerk. The Commission tentatively decided to meet on October 25.

#### **7:00 PM, Joint Meeting with Lancaster Board of Health**

Jeff Pastor, Chair of the Board of Health, called their meeting to order at 7:04PM. Roll call was taken; Mr. Pastor and Ms. Apgar were present. The purpose of this joint meeting was to fill a vacancy created by the resignation of Denise Hurley. John Farnsworth, former member of the Board of Health, has submitted a letter of interest. This appointment will fill the role until the Annual Election next May. Mr. Kerrigan called for a joint vote. Mr. Pastor asked for a motion to appoint John Farnsworth as a member of the Lancaster Board of Health, term to expire at the next regularly scheduled election. Ms. Apgar made this motion; Mr. Pastor seconded. *Vote taken; Melinda Apgar, Aye; Jeff Pastor, Aye. Motion passed. [2-0-0]*. Ms. Turner moved to appoint John Farnsworth as a member of the Lancaster Board of Health, term to expire at the next regularly scheduled election; Mr. Allison seconded. *Vote taken, Jason A. Allison, Aye; Alexandra W. Turner, Aye; Stephen J. Kerrigan, Aye. Motion passed. [3-0-0]*.

*Ms. Apgar moved to adjourn the Board of Health joint meeting with the Select Board. Mr. Pastor seconded. Vote taken; Melinda Apgar, Aye; Jeff Pastor, Aye. Motion passed. [2-0-0]*.

#### **IV. BOARDS, COMMITTEES, AND DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

##### **Government Study Committee – Town-Wide Survey, Deployment & Information**

Ms. Hodges reported that the Government Study Committee survey was launched online in mid-September. It will be active until the end of October and may be extended. Mr. Kerrigan, currently the Select Board's representative to the Government Study Committee, would like to relinquish his spot; Mr. Allison has expressed interest to Ms. Hodges. Ms. Turner suggested that it might be time to look at the Committee and re-evaluate timelines and charges. Mr. Kerrigan said that yes, he agrees, but would like to make changes now so that when the survey is complete the Committee is in position to react. Ms. Turner moved to appoint Jason Allison as the Select Board's Government Study Committee representative. Mr. Kerrigan seconded. *Vote taken, Jason A. Allison, Aye; Alexandra W. Turner, Aye; Stephen J. Kerrigan, Aye. Motion passed. [3-0-0]*.

##### **Set Date(s) for Joint Meeting Proposal with DPW Board/Commissioners**

It was agreed that a Joint meeting with the DPW Board/Commissioners will be scheduled for October 16 at 5:30PM prior to the 6:00PM regularly scheduled Select Board meeting.

## **V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Opportunity for the public to address their concerns, make comments, offer suggestions, or ask questions.*

Linnea Lakin Survey, 1394 Main St.: Re. Historic Commission. Stated Heather Lennon did not resign from Historic Commission. Stated Mr. Kerrigan is in receipt of a registered letter in which she rescinded her resignation. Stated she would like to know how Select Board can move ahead when Ms. Lennon did not resign. Stated that she checked with Town Clerk's office and that Mr. Kerrigan submitted Ms. Lennon's resignation on the 8<sup>th</sup>. Stated that Ms. Lennon did not speak with Mr. Kerrigan until the 9<sup>th</sup>. Asked if Select Board voted to remove Ms. Lennon, in which case she would be entitled to a public hearing. Stated that there is confusion, things that need to be set straight. Troubling that a volunteer's time and effort can be negated. States that this needs to be answered publicly. Feel like a betrayal of public trust. Requests a formal answer.

Russ Williston, 4 Highfield Drive: Thanked Linnea Lakin for public comment at recent meeting. Shocked at what had been done to Ms. Lennon; following public comment he emailed and called her. Cannot believe that with all the problems in town that Select Board is kicking a member off a committee. States Ms. Lennon did not resign; she got upset on a phone call and said something she regretted immediately. States that per state law she must have submitted resignation in writing. Urged Historical Commission to pursue this issue and to get Ms. Lennon back on Commission.

Carol Jackson, 40 Farnsworth Way: Stated the way volunteers are treated in this town, and also employees, is terrible. Stated that Ms. Lennon has done much for the town and this treatment is deplorable. Stated this town has "a lot of crap" going on and that Board... is just awful. Would like to know how much money has been spent trying to get Ms. Lennon off the Commission. Stated we need Heather back on the Commission.

Wanda Rezac, 125 Harvard Road: Resignation process seems to be of dubious legality. Upset about how Ms. Lennon has been treated and having no response from Select Board is troubling.

Martha Moore, 131 Center Bridge Road: Was on Historic Commission and Town Clerk explained that she had to write to Town Clerk in order to resign. Stated Ms. Lennon did nothing but have a heated conversation with a Select Board member, does not see why it would be different for her.

Karen Silverthorn, 395 Goss Lane: Current member of Historic Commission. Has never worked with a group that had a leader as strong as Heather (Ms. Lennon). Will be greatly missed, a positive influence and a true lover of Lancaster.

Ralph Gifford, 861 George Hill Road: Passionate people bring energy, momentum, and get things done, and sometimes result in "wicked fights" and that sometimes we need to back down on ego. Stated we need to find a way to back off, to rescind Ms. Lennon's resignation and get her back to work.

Keith Kopley, owner of Kalon Farm, 339 Center Bridge Road: Wanted to ask if Board could appoint someone to look at the situation regarding Neck Road. He noted that he and the Town

will be incurring legal fees. Would make more sense to appoint someone to review chronology, as was done in the past with Stanley Starr, this would be helpful.

Rebecca Young-Jones, 94 Barnes Court: Stated she had been confused and dismayed about Heather's (Ms. Lennon's) basic dismissal. She has been a huge asset to the Town of Lancaster, known throughout Massachusetts. Expert in Lancaster. To have a contentious conversation, not witnessed by anyone, resulting in a supposed dismissal, is just awful. Would beg the Board reconsider this and put Ms. Lennon back on Commission.

## **VI. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

- **GRANT AWARDS: Memo Review**

Ms. Hodges reported that thirteen grants have been applied for; some are rolling grants. Some of these include:

- Formula Grant Award – FY25 \$27,258 (COA)
- Housing Production Grant Award – FY24 \$46,600 (Affordable Housing Plan Update)
- Community Infrastructure Grant – FY24 \$80,000 (Community Center)
- Division of Local Services Community Planning Grant – FY24 \$32,000 (DCAMM)
- Community Compact Grant Award – FY24 \$25,000 (Class. & Comp. Update)
- Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development - FY24 \$25,000 (Downtown Revitalization & Wayfinding)

- **Human Resources Updates**

- Treasurer/Collector - Marcia Sands, formerly Assistant Treasurer/Collector has taken the position.
- Community Development & Planning Director - Brian Keating is newly in this position; he sits on the Planning Board in his hometown of Pepperell. Mr. Keating was introduced to the Board and gave an overview of his background.
- Building Commissioner – Mike Silva was introduced to the Board.
- Budget & Purchasing Administrator - Dawn Foster has started in this position. Ms. Foster was introduced to the Board and gave an overview of her background.
- Management Analyst/Asst. Collector (combine proposal resulting in -.75FTE/- \$58K)
- New Initiative w/Enterprise Fund Accounts
- Memo of Agreement Draft – Lancaster Sewer District & Select Board

Ms. Hodges explained that since Ms. Sands was appointed to the Treasurer/Collector position, her prior position needs to be backfilled; the long-time assistant for DPW resigned. There has been consideration for a long time about assigning more collection responsibilities to the Finance team, understanding that funds would continue to be separate. This could save both the Sewer

Commission and the Town considerable money, although the operational complexity might be a problem.

Mr. Kerrigan recognized Sewer Commissioner Jonathan Gulliver, 131 Settlers Path, Chair of the Sewer Commission. Mr. Gulliver reported that the Sewer Commission met last week and thinks that this is a great idea and that they would like to proceed with an MOU/MOA; it appears that this would save \$20,000-\$30,000 annually.

Ms. Turner asked about the changes to existing positions. Ms. Hodges explained the new DPW position would be lower hours at a lesser rate than the position just vacated, because the Sewer Collection responsibility would move to the Finance offices. Ms. Turner asked about current arrangements with the Water Department; Ms. Hodges explained that currently the Water Department pays a share of salaries, and that this might be a topic for discussion when the Select Board meets jointly with the Water Commission.

Ms. Hodges will work with Counsel on drafting an agreement.

- Classification & Compensation Study, Update, Timeline for Report & Deliverables

The Collins Center has reviewed all positions in the municipality (excepting Town Administrator). Some interviews continue, analysis of job descriptions continue. They will update their report and will present it to the Board, probably early in 2024.

- DCAMM Property – Sale Partnership Agreement

- Legislative Update & Needs
- Initial Visioning Sessions/Ideas for Re-Use and/or Potential RFP to Developers

Ms. Hodges presented a PowerPoint presentation explaining the actions to-date regarding the DCAMM Property. Site constraints include areas potentially reserved for future water use, contamination from a former piggery, and a Brownfield site, formerly a power plant. Other topics covered included proposed concepts, reuse of existing/historic buildings, Ms. Hodges is looking for feedback from the Select Board, Planning Board and Finance Committee about what concepts are generally of the most interest; about \$42,000 remains in grant money to do some further design work of one or two options. It was noted that if the Town chooses to retain some of the land for open space, the Town would need to pay the State for that land.

At first glance, Mr. Kerrigan prefers Option 2 – with a few features from Option 3, with some diversification of tax base, preservation of three historic buildings, and the linear park. Mr. Allison also liked Option 2 with some reservations, perhaps with fewer single-family homes. He would especially like to hear from residents who live nearby. Ms. Turner is not in favor of these options because they may limit or restrict potential developers. Ms. Hodges stated that she believes that her charge for the last year is, in fact,

to provide concepts, and to bring these concepts forward to a developer. Ms. Turner would be in favor of more green space, preserving historic buildings, and low income senior housing.

- Division of Local Services – Financial Management Review & Update Report (Sept. '23)  
This review was conducted for the first time since 1999 and seems positive, many of the recommendations have already been put in place. Several areas need to be discussed, such as how Water and Sewer Enterprises integrate into the Town. (Report available for review at <https://www.ci.lancaster.ma.us/administration-select-board> > Meeting Materials). Mr. Kerrigan would like to have this as an agenda item at a future meeting.
- New Initiatives – Connections with Board & Staff, Availability to Public
  - Office Hours – Regular Hours & Open to Public Monday – Friday  
Effective October 1, hours for Town Hall will be 8:30-4:30 on Monday – Thursday and 8:30-12:00 on Friday. Ms. Hodges explained that this will take some re-scheduling since some departments, such as the Building Inspector or Assessors, have in the past used Fridays for necessary offsite work.
  - Goal Setting, Senior Management Team  
Currently initiatives being explored include strategic planning, education, increasing efficiencies, and meeting needs.
  - Regular Agenda Appearances – Pilot Program  
Ms. Hodges noted that some departments would like more opportunity to talk directly with the Select Board. The Board will look to bring in departments for updates at meetings from time to time.

<b>VII. ADMINISTRATION, BUDGET, AND POLICY</b>
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- **Town Administrator Review – TABLED\*\***  
  
Tabled to next meeting.
- **Memorial School RFP (re. assessment & reuse potential) – updated financial information.**

Ms. Hodges brought this topic back to the Select Board to discuss the scope of the RFP that she is scheduled to issue. As it currently stands, the RFP would include a structural analysis and survey. While this would be good for 1-2 years, given the cost of construction, and the fact that the Town has just approved the high school, Ms. Hodges questioned whether the Town should proceed with a structural analysis that will most likely come back with a construction price tag in the millions of dollars. To cover the number of robust uses looked at, the RFP will cost about \$60,000.

Mr. Allison said that he was not sure. Ms. Turner stated that this was a good point, noting that a space needs study had been done for the library, suggesting that Ms. Hodges might issue an RFP with a smaller and tighter scope. Mr. Kerrigan agreed. Ms. Hodges said that

if the RFP were only to deal with the proposal from the Memorial School Reuse Committee, that would be easy and relatively fast. Mr. Kerrigan would like to hear more from residents, especially having received legal clarification on what can be done. It was determined that this will be on a future agenda, at which time the Board will decide if this project should be managed by a facilitator, or by Community Development.

- **Kalon Farms – Right of 1<sup>st</sup> Refusal, continued from 9-18-23 meeting**

Ms. Hodges explained that there had been a house on the property that was lost to fire. A house was re-built, in a different spot. The building permit had been granted by a prior Building Inspector, prior to the ANR (Approval Not Required). Ms. Hodges asked Building Commissioner Mike Silva to explain further. Mr. Silva explained that when the house was built on the 4-acre lot, it was compliant. The issue arises with trying to divide the property into two lots. Mr. Kerrigan asked if there was a way to divide the 4-acre property that would be compliant; Mr. Silva said yes. Ms. Turner said that the complicating factor was the Chapter 61 status. Mr. Kerrigan said that the issue before the Board was whether or not the Town wants to buy the parcel or to assign this right. Lengthy discussion continued about whether or not the Select Board should address the right of first refusal at this meeting, and/or should address Chapter 61A. It was decided that Right of 1<sup>st</sup> Refusal will be determined at the next Select Board meeting.

- **Accounting/Budget Software (tabled from Select Board Meeting 9-5-23)**

Tabled to first meeting in November.

- **Update/Review Town-Wide Fees (tabled from Select Board Meeting 9-5-23)**

Tabled to first meeting in November.

<b>VIII. APPOINTMENTS &amp; RESIGNATION NOTIFICATIONS (Resignation votes not needed)</b>
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**Resignations**

Board of Health – Denise Hurley

Community Preservation Act Committee – Kendra Dickenson, Planning Board Representative

Mr. Kerrigan thanked Ms. Hurley and Ms. Dickenson for their service to the above referenced committees.

**Appointments**

Affirm Planning Board 9/11/23 Appointment of Regina Brown as the Board's Community Preservation Act Committee Representative

Mr. Allison moved to affirm the Planning Board's appointment of Regina Brown as the Planning Board Representative to the Community Preservation Act Committee; Ms. Turner seconded, thanking Ms. Brown for her service. *Vote taken, Jason A. Allison, Aye; Alexandra W. Turner, Aye; Stephen J. Kerrigan, Aye. Motion passed. [3-0-0].*

## **IX. LICENSES AND PERMITS**

*\*\*\* Taken Out of Order prior to 6:05 meeting with Historical Commission \*\*\**

### Application for Town License, Public Entertainment on Sundays and Weekdays

Event: 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Lancaster Holiday Light Show to be held at the Lancaster Fairgrounds, 318 Seven Bridge Road, Lancaster

Sponsored by: Rose Darden, Bolton Fair, Inc., and EJ Dean, Fiesta Shows

Operating Dates: November 24, 2023 – December 31, 2023

Operating Hours: Sunday – Thursday, 5pm-10pm; Friday-Sunday, Holidays, 5pm-11pm.

Ms. Turner moved to approve the above mentioned application for Town License. Mr. Allison seconded. Ms. Turner asked for input from the Police Chief regarding the traffic plan; Chief Moody stated that he has approved the plan. *Vote taken, Jason A. Allison, Aye; Alexandra W. Turner, Aye; Stephen J. Kerrigan, Aye. Motion passed. [3-0-0].*

## **X. COMMUNICATIONS**

- Town Offices will be closed on Monday, October 9, 2023, in observance of Columbus Day/Indigenous People Day
- Select Board's upcoming meetings will be held on Monday, October 16, 2023, and November 6, 2023, both starting at 6:00 PM.
- Ms. Turner noted that a group of women from Armenia will be in the area in two weeks hoping to meet with women in politics.
- Ms. Turner noted that the Board has been invited to an upcoming Open House at the former International Golf Course.
- Miscellaneous Correspondence and Memorandums

## **XI. NEW BUSINESS – Unforeseen by the Board**

Mr. Kerrigan mentioned that the 40R Project in North Lancaster was approved by the Attorney General's office this week. Ms. Turner noted that this will "kickstart" the North Lancaster MOA and requested that this topic is included in an upcoming Select Board agenda.

## **XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Allison moved to enter Executive Session as described below; Ms. Turner seconded the motion.

- a. The Lancaster Select Board will meet in Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a) for the following purpose:
  - i. Purpose (3): to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining, specifically to deliberate regarding the response to a settlement agreement proposed by the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Council 93, Local 3720 – AFL-CIO (Clerical) relative to former employee A. Martin.



As an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Town and its Select Board and will not reconvene in open session thereafter.

*Vote taken, Jason A. Allison, Aye; Alexandra W. Turner, Aye; Stephen J. Kerrigan, Aye. Motion passed; the Board entered Executive Session and would not reconvene in open session. [3-0-0].*

<b>XIII. ADJOURNMENT</b>
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Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Rocco  
Executive Assistant

***APPROVED***

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Alexandra W. Turner, Clerk