

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 12/05/2023 with a roll call vote of 5-0

6:00 p.m. – November 7, 2023

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

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

Public Forum – John Belculfine 75 Leland Hill Road- Mr. Belculfine talks about the dangers on Leland Hill Road with narrow curves a lot is due to trees and utility poles. There have been many MVA's- he is concerned the next could result in a fatality. Last week an oil truck flipped and he is concerned if oil got into a nearby brook. Mr. Belculfine mentions the new 4-foot law where vehicles must keep 4 feet away from walkers, bicyclist and cars pulled over.

Vice Chair Hall motions to accept as presented the October 24, 2023 Select Board meeting minutes Select Person Bannon seconds passes 5-0 with roll call vote

Vice Chair Hall motions to accept as presented the October 24, 2023 Executive Session Select Board meeting minutes not to be released until related matter closed- Select Person Bannon seconds passes 5-0 with roll call vote

Public Hearing Assessors Tax Classification Hearing- present is Principal Assessor Tracey Tardy and Robert Nunnemacher- Select person Limanek reads the Public notice into record. Tracey reads the FY24 Tax Classification information. This is done yearly to see if we want to continue with a single tax rate for the 4 classes of property or shift to a split tax rate where commercial, industrial and personal would pay more than the residential. New growth was approved by DOR at \$792,184. The new value of the town is \$2,278,911,540. - the tax levy limit for FY24 is \$28,909,395. Tracey goes on to say if the tax rate is approved there will be a decrease of \$1.17 from FY23 bringing it to \$12.68 but there will be an increase in values. Vice Chair Hall says we have had a single tax rate for years which helped us bring in businesses – Dave still stands by the single tax rate- a split tax rate would be a burden on commercial/industrial. Dave states 87% of our properties are residential. Select person Limanek says the bulk of taxes are paid by residents – there are things that go into setting the rate such as home sales from the previous year. Jesse feels a single tax rate is overall good for the town. Jesse does ask if there was a split rate would it bring more revenue to the town- Knick Nunnemacher replies- no. Select person Bannon says it is a difficult concept for residents to understand- Jeff asks Knick to explain new growth as well as the tax levy. People get confused when they hear the tax rate went down yet the taxes have increased- it is all based on the value of the house. Jeff agrees with a single tax rate. Select person Champigny asks how the Assessor's office comes up with the values of homes- Tracey replies it is through new growth and the LA4 form that goes to DOR. Chairperson Anderson asks if we did a split rate would commercial have to be the 150%? Tracey replies no- it could be anywhere from 101 to 150%. Jonathan says why do the residents always have to share the burden- maybe we should not raise the 2.5%- maybe we should shift some of the burden towards businesses- Tracey states it would also affect the small mom & pop stores as well as property in forestry restrictions/open space would share in the increased split. Chairperson Anderson says it makes sense to continue with the single rate. At this time John Belculfine- 75 Leland Hill Road comments that if a house and a business have a fire it would cost more for the fire dept to respond and aid the business with the fire. Mr. Belculfine feels commercial businesses should pay more for fire protection. Hearing no further comments- Select person Limanek motions to close Public Hearing for the Tax Classification Hearing Select person Champigny seconds passes 5-0 with roll call vote. Select person Limanek motions to approve a single tax factor for FY24 Vice Chair Hall seconds passes 5-0 with roll call vote.

Appointment of Custodian of Property- Treasurer/Collector Lisa Lynch is present. Town Manager Smith states this is required for the foreclosure of tax title properties per MGL Ch 60 sec. 77B. With this appointment Lisa will be authorized to hold auctions of the tax title properties. Vice Chair Hall asks how many properties are we talking about- Lisa replies at least 20 but there are several more in tax title. Lisa goes on and says she tries to work with residents by arraigning payment plans before it goes to auction. Select person Limanek questions why this has not been done already- Town Manager Smith replies it usually will take a few years letting the new treasurer/collector get acclimated to position and then COVID hit which put everything off. Select person Bannon just assumed this would fall under the position- he did not realize it was an appointment. Chairperson Anderson appreciates that Lisa works with the residents. Jonathan asks who sets the interest rates on the tax title or foreclosed properties- Lisa replies the state- it is 14% on delinquent bills and 16% on properties in tax title. Select person Bannon motions to appoint the Town Treasurer Lisa Lynch as Custodian of Property for the Town of Sutton, Select person Limanek seconds passes 5-0 with roll call vote.

Vaillancourt Folk Art request for outdoor live music during 3 holiday events- 9 Main Street- present is Gary & Luke Vaillancourt. Luke explains they would like to add the music for the German Christmas feel. There will be carolers as well as Steve LeClaire's big band. The Select board all voice their positive comments regarding the Vaillancourts and all the extra touches they do for the town. Their family is woven in to the fabric of the town. Selectperson Champigny motions to approve the request from Vaillancourt Folk Art- 9 Main Street, Sutton for 3 outdoor live music events Nov 10th 11am-8pm; Nov. 11th 10am-6pm & Dec. 9th 4pm-8pm Select person Limanek seconds passes 5-0 with roll call vote

Board of Health Appointment- Colleen Rosales is present- Town Manager Smith states this is a vacancy left by John Silverberg who chose not to be reappointed after 16 years. Jim offers his thanks to John Silverberg at this time. Colleen introduces herself along with her qualifications. Vice Chair Hall asks why the Board of Health- Colleen replies she has worked alongside of Cheryl Rawinski and DPH and is knowledgeable with safety and sanitation compliance. The Select board all offer thanks to John Silverberg and welcome Colleen onto the Board of Health. Vice Chair Hall motions to appoint Colleen Rosales to the Sutton Board of Health with a term to expire June 30, 2026 Select person Bannon seconds passes 5-0 with roll call vote

Holiday schedule for all Alcohol license holders- as read by Select person Limanek. Select person Limanek motions to approve as read the 2023 Holiday hours for all alcohol licenses in the Town of Sutton Vice Chair Hall seconds passes 5-0

Town Manager Update:

- Town Hall septic- Peter Amorello Construction was the winning bid- the awarded base bid was \$405,585., alternate 1 (grinder pump at Rufus Putnam Building) \$62,313 and alternate 2 (grade around Rufus Putnam Building and pave rear parking lot) \$98,526. for a total cost of \$566,424.- we are using ARPA funds to fund this project.
- Restoration Work at Armsby Cemetery- Sutton Historical Society recently completed work at Armsby Cemetery- there are 398 burials at this cemetery that have all been cleaned. Of the 398 sites, 330 gravestones have been reset and 74 repaired. Thank you to Ross Weaver, Brian Stevenson, David Pizzi, John Belcufine and all the volunteers.
- Jingle Jaunt 5K- Howie Bottomly is holding the 10th annual jingle jaunt on Dec. 9th, 2023 at 1030am. From the Town Common. We thank Howie for all his efforts with this road race as well as the time he puts in at Shaw Farm.
- Fire Dept Training on Hatchery Road house was held on Sat. Oct. 28th. The Sutton Fire Dept conducted live fire training on Hatchery Road. We had support staff from Brocton, Lynn, Stoneham, Clinton, Southbridge, Auburn, Lawrence, Cambridge, Worcester, Millbury and Grafton. There was also support from Dept. of Fire Safety and Med Star EMS.
- FY2025 Budget and Capital process- handouts given at the Dept Head meeting held earlier today- with due date for FY25 Capital due back Dec. 15th. On Dec. 5th FY25 budget instructions will be to Dept Heads with a due date back January 12, 2024. The preliminary budget to the Select Board will be February 20, 2024.

Announcement's / Round Table:

- Select person Limanek commends the Halloween event O My Gourd held in the center – it was a great event. The fundraiser held at the Dudley Gendron Locals for Lukis raised \$3700.00 in tips- Thankyou to all that attended. Sat. 11/4 was a food drive at Mkt 32- there were 3 pickup trucks full of food that was delivered to the Food Pantry- at this time Jesse reads the list of items needed at the Food Pantry.
- Select person Champigny thanks Jesse for the Mkt 32 food drive – people in town may be house rich but have difficulty in other areas there is a lot of effort in town to help people- we see a lot of goodness.

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

Meeting adjourned 8:14pm