

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 12/19/2023 with a roll call vote of 5-0

6:00 p.m. – December 5, 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 –

David Pizzi- 55 Fairway View Drive- follow up to the Oct. 24th 2023 meeting regarding parking along the common. Next year Sutton will be 320 years old- Sutton is so unique with its rural heritage. At the Oct. 2015 Select Board meeting an initial survey was shown cutting in about 6 feet to have parallel parking. At that time the Historical members offered some other suggestions with employee parking. This was put on hold for further evaluation. Dave says with the current septic project install- no parking was allowed on that side of the road- people found other areas to park. The only change to the common should be maybe the curb being raised up. Dave has some concern with what can be done without changing the common. Chairperson Anderson thanks Dave for sharing his thoughts and says we are in the preliminary stages we are not sure when this will be moving forward.

Vice Chair Hall motions to accept as presented the November 7, 2023 Select Board meeting minutes Select Person Bannon seconds passes 5-0 with roll call vote

Yearly license renewals for FY2024- Select person Limanek reads as posted the renewals for Common Vic., Liquor Licenses, entertainment, Class I & II- the list as posted & read is attached to the final minutes. Vice Chair Hall comments the last 2 years there were significant concerns with the Red Roof Inn- are we all satisfied now? Town Manager Smith replies Fire, Building and BOH said it is in the best condition it has been in- all previous issues have been resolved. Select person Limanek asks if the 911 issue has been resolved at the Red Roof Inn- Town Manager replies yes- the system was upgraded- Jesse asks about the smoke detectors at the Red Roof Inn- Town Manager Smith has no additional information but will follow up. Select person Champigny asks if there have been any infractions with the Liquor license- Town Manager says not with in last 2 years. Select person Limanek motions to approve as read & posted the 2024 License Renewals in the Town of Sutton Vice Chair Hall seconds passes 5-0 with roll call vote.

5-year Financial Forecast power point (attached to final minutes): Town Manager Smith gives this snapshot in time every 6 months. It began approx. 6 years ago for the S&P rating- it shows where we stand now and what the future looks like. There has been consistency with the 5 year forecast predicting deficits – FY25 deficit looks smaller than previously thought due to the large new growth received in FY24. Jim shows a list of forecast assumptions that include payroll increases, Worc. Regional increases 14% per year, health care 12%, new growth & TIF roll off, BVT & Norfolk Aggie, State Aid & Ambulance service increases. Also displayed are the Tax Levy Assumptions for the current year as well as the next 5 years, Out of District Spec Ed & Revenue Projections (FY25 shows deficit of \$87,576. - FY26 shows a deficit of \$526,003 and continues to increase in half million increments). We have gone 17 years without debt exclusion overrides- we will need to think of an override or decrease the level of services provided. Vice Chair Hall says we have been fortunate with the building projects and good fiscal management- what are your priorities- be prepared- we will need to make critical big decisions in the future. Tim Harrison states at the dept head meeting earlier today- Planning Director Jen Hager said there are only 5 parcels left to develop in town. Select person Limanek comments that S&P years ago said FY25 was going to be a challenge- Jim says we have been able to use new growth to offset that- 2008 to 2010 we managed to get by in a sustainable fashion. The school salaries are above 2 ½ percent and the town side is looking at 2 ½ % that will add to the problem and become unsustainable especially with the current number of employees. Times get tough and decisions must be made. Out of District placement funding is

forecast to decrease but for the FY24 Out of district spending- Beacon Hill passed a supplemental budget – there is targeted money to help municipalities. Will that be circuit breaker or UGGA? Jim replies he is not sure what impact it will have- he believes it will just come in as revenue thru the state. In regards to Unified- building 3 is almost complete- Jim replies yes they should prob. get occupancy the end of this month and building 2 is still happening but not breaking ground yet. Jesse states we will see a bump in revenue with completion of 2&3- In regards to Unified TIF voted on last Dec- it was an 18 month TIF negotiated on having building 1- currently there are no plans for building 1- what happens if there is no building 1. Jim replies they will have to come before the board and renegotiate the TIF. Select person Bannon says there are an awful lot of moving parts- Jeff anticipated alot worse- the decrease in SPED was a pleasant surprise. Jim replies we do have some kids aging out of the program. This number can change any given day. Jeff states there is also aid available to districts that have migrants- Jim will let the board know if he hears anything. In regards to BVT the overall cost went up but the number of students went down so there was a savings to the town. We vote the BVT budget in within our budget- Jim informs the board there is some upset among the BVT communities and the budget impact on our towns. Jeff is glad there is some proactive input from other towns in regards to the BVT budgeting. Town Manager Smith replies Towns/managers have spoken up about frustration over BVT's budgeting- there will be a meeting in the near future with the 13 communities to discuss what is asked for and what we have the means to provide. Select person Champigny says in regards to the 4-5 buildable parcels – is there any type of pipeline companies coming in with water and sewer- Jim replies Scannel- developer of Blackstone Logistics is a major corp. they are dealing with a tenant or two- we will get 38% of that revenue once a tenant is announced. Normand goes on to say there are no frivolous expenses- it's on target- well projected. Chairperson Anderson says thank you for this snapshot it shows us where we are now and what challenges we face. The assumption of an override is a tall stretch- in regards to payroll- 4% increases put pressure from one group to the other. It is fine during the good years but some years we may be in the deficit. We do not want to see people losing their jobs. Jim replies it is a balancing act- to value employees and their work- and to try not to balance the budget on the back of the employees. Jonathan says we need to think long and hard about giving out any more TIFs. In regards to the BVT debt exclusion- part of his frustration - it has drifted to prep classes- has it lost its ability to teach the trades. Jim Smith replies that is an issue other towns are having as well.

Town Manager Update:

- Unified Global Packaging Group (UGPG) check for Food Pantry- as a result to the updated community partnership with UGPG the Friends of Sutton Elders received \$77,531.85 for the Food Pantry. These funds were what was left after the 8 claims were paid out totaling \$72,468.15 out of the \$150,000. That was created for this fund. The town thanks Art Mahassel and the entire UGPG team for this donation.
- CMRPC – we have invited CMRPC to a Select Board meeting to present the Central Turnpike Corridor study. We have tentatively scheduled them for the January 2nd, 2024 meeting.
- New Highway Dept. supervisor vehicle- a new electric lightning Ford F-150 was delivered Nov. 22 as part of the FY24 Capital Plan- we will be adding an additional charging station at the Highway barn. The former superintendent vehicle (Ford escape) will be sold on Municibid.
- FY25 Dept. budget requests were provided to department heads earlier today at the Dept. Head meeting. I let them know what we are facing for the next budget season.
- Town Hall holiday party will be Wed. Dec. 20th- we would like to close the Town Hall at noon and reopen at 1:30- the board is invited to attend.
- Transportation from the Red Roof Inn to grocery stores- SCM Elderbus along with WRTA will provide shuttle service from the Red Roof Inn to Mkt 32 and the Walmart in Northbridge beginning Dec. 5th from 10:30am-2:30pm every Tuesday. This comes after months of discussion with leaders within the 146 corridor. The head of MA DOT Barry Lorian created this group to deal with migrant housing at the Red Roof Inn.

Announcement's / Round Table:

- Select person Limanek thanks all that attended and volunteered at Chain of Lights. This Sunday from 8am-noon in the center the Dudley Gendron will have a hat drive for the 414 Family fund. Jesse reads the list of needed items for the food pantry.
- Select person Bannon congratulates the Sutton Girls soccer for winning the State Championship
- Select person Champigny will be in Manchaug Dec. 9th for a Christmas Cultural Event- he likes to see the Christmas spirit around town.

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

Meeting adjourned 8:20pm