

David Hall, Chairman  
Wendy M. Mead, Vice Chair  
Jesse Limanek, Clerk  
Jonathan Anderson  
Jeffrey Bannon



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James A. Smith, Town Manager

Town of Sutton  
Board of Selectmen  
Meeting Minutes

**Minutes Accepted and filed with the Town Clerk on 9/17/2019 by a vote of 3-0**

7:00 p.m. – September 3, 2019 (Chairman Hall & Vice Chair Mead absent)  
Sutton Town Hall, Meeting Room 1A

Members in Attendance:

Chairman David Hall, Vice-Chair Wendy Mead, Clerk Jesse Limanek & Selectmen Jonathan Anderson & Jeffrey Bannon  
Town Manager James Smith & Deb Jacques, secretary

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Forum: Willem Edwards (last year 351 Ambassador) and Katherine Fields (this year 351 Ambassador) are here to discuss a September 11<sup>th</sup> remembrance to be held at the Dudley Gendron on Wednesday Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. Willem says there will be speakers and then refreshments. This event is open to the public. The BOS offer their thanks to Will and Katie, there will be members of the BOS that will be in attendance on the 11<sup>th</sup>. The Board all comment that these two individuals were not even alive on the 9/11 attack yet they are carrying on the remembrance.

Selectman Bannon motions to accept as presented August 20, 2019 meeting minutes, Vice Chair Mead seconds passes 5-0

Deed Acceptance: Hunters Court & Partridge Hill Road & related easements: Town Manager Smith states that these acceptances were approved at the May 2019 Town Meeting. Once these deeds are approved and filed the Town will take over care of the roads. These added roads will count towards our Chapter 90. Hearing no questions or concerns Selectman Anderson motions to accept the deeds for Partridge Hill Road and Hunters Court and related easements pursuant to May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Town Meeting vote, Selectman Limanek seconds passes 5-0

Review & Approve the Housing Study & Production plan: present is Jen Hager, Sutton Planning & Economic Director. Jen gives a brief background of the process that was involved. A committee was formed and worked along with CMRPC using a grant to conduct a residential housing needs study. These meetings were to identify gaps in the housing market as well as see if there was a need for affordable housing. Residents were included with a survey that was available on the Town's website or hard copies in the Town Hall. The information collected was used to meet the town's current and future residents. Jen is present tonight to present to the BOS and request they adopt the recommendations plan. If adopted, the plan will be submitted to DHCD for approval, this is one of five conditions needed to claim protection Sutton from 40B projects that are not consistent with the town's needs. By HUD standards 10% of the town needs to be 40B (fair housing act), in the Town of Sutton it is 1.5%. This means we are vulnerable for an unfriendly 40B come in to town with very little the Town can do. Some of the housing needs addressed were for the aging population that would like to downsize or just being priced out of the town with unexpected life events. If we can show we are working towards 40B compliance we can call our own destiny. Presented are the recommendations that include Capacity Building Strategies, Zoning Strategies and Housing Development Strategies (attached to final minutes). Selectman Limanek says excellent presentation looking out for the best interest of our community. Massachusetts has the most expensive housing in the country but Jesse states he does have some concerns with what comes from Beacon Hill. Wilks and Manchaug are already pretty dense with population but those are the areas that have water and sewer. Jesse is concerned for the most vulnerable- the seniors. He goes on to say the senior are the ones that have paid for the schools, the Police Station; Jesse will not endorse anything imp articular in this but does endorse the adoption of this and put forth to the residents. Vice Chair Mead asks if a new Sr. complex would help in meeting with the 40B. Jen replies on the Fall Town Meeting there will be a proposed bylaw change to remove language in CCRC (continued care retirement communities) which currently excludes

under 18 year olds. This would include the Villas, Woodbury Ville Condos and Forest Edge. Adding a Cottage Housing bylaw will also be asked for at the fall town meeting. This would be 1 or 2 bedroom units which is great for seniors or single professionals. These changes will allow us to work on the look and feel of projects. Residents say Sutton has a feel, it has a look. This would help increase the diversity of housing. Wendy states we are not only aging out of our town we are pricing out and in talking with other communities the CPA is so critical in allowing what can be done, no one wants a surcharge but what we are preserving and working towards outweighs the 1-3% tax. Selectman Anderson says this is a complex issue, as a region we are one of the most expensive in the country what the state is achieving to do is to solve the affordability of the region but there are only two ways, one is to build more by relaxing the zoning or do what the state chose to do with 40B. 40B actually increases the cost of housing. The state set a goal of 10%, we could take a risk and do nothing and have an unfriendly 40B come in, the bottom line is we can do nothing or work within the boundaries. There is a human component, elderly downsizing, kids growing up and staying in town, access to jobs. We need to move forward in a thoughtful way and not have this forced on us. It is really important to keep moving forward with what works for Sutton. We would not want them to rewrite the building code. The state would determine what is right for the Town of Sutton. Jonathan says he will endorse this so we can look at our options. If we vote to run the sewer to the school that could bring in a 40B project. Selectman Bannon says if we ignore this it is at our own peril. On the overall plan to go forward and recommend for future consideration how does that stop us from an unfriendly 40B. Jen replies if we adopt this we could ask for Safe Harbor status. Jen discusses the 5 steps that we must meet to be under the safe harbor act. Selectman Bannon is in favor of going forward for discussions. We are all heading towards life changing status. Chairman Hall thanks Jen for all her efforts. Dave states he has strong feelings on both sides, kids affording to live in town as well as aging and wishing to down size. Selectman Bannon motions to adopt the recommendations of the Housing Needs Study and submit the study to the Dept. of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for approval Selectman Anderson seconds passes 5-0

#### Town Managers Update:

- Donna Wood and Erin Chinappi- thankyou to both of them for running the Treasurer's office over the last few months with Lisa Troast and Amanda Perrault leaving. Jim would like to make some changes to increase the succession plan. Donna Wood is currently the Asst Collector; Jim would like to make her Asst Collec/Asst Treasurer. The new Treasurer Lisa Lynch will train Donna for this role. When Donna retires hire someone that could potentially rise to Treasurer. Erin Chinappi will increase hours from 25 to 35 and add Human resources. Erin will become a dept. head as there will be confidentiality of the HR director. Erin will leave the union.
- New Sewer/Accounting Clerk- Darlene Thebearge started Aug 26th. She is a good fit for that office.
- EEE- aerial spraying for mosquitos took place Aug. 26. The state will continue to monitor. If the temp drops the mosquitos are less active and the first frost kills them. Continue to use precautions when outside. Code Red was used to get this call out to residents.
- LED Lighting Upgrade at Town Hall and Fire Station- Town Electrician Larry Morris took advantage of free LED lights, This will decrease the cost of lighting at the Town Hall by approx. \$3,000. a year.
- The Blackstone River Valley Greenway Challenge will be held on Sept 28<sup>th</sup>. This takes place in South Sutton from Northbridge into Douglas.
- Finance and Warrant Committee- welcome two new members Sarah Clemens and Anthony Piltzecker. Thank you to Geoffrey Cushner and Tom Divine.
- Sewer Betterment release signed by the BOS

#### Selectmen's Roundtable:

Selectman Limanek thanks the 1<sup>st</sup> Cong. Church for the annual Labor Day Breakfast. Also mentioned was work done by the Historical Society in the cemetery behind the Town Hall. Approx. 20 residents attended. Special thanks to Brian Stevenson, the next date will be September 14<sup>th</sup>. Waters Farm will hold a walking tour on Sept. 8<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to St. Marks for their continued donations to the Sutton food Pantry.

Vice Chair Mead thanked the Cong. Church for the annual breakfast, she said it was a joyful event with a great turnout. She also enjoyed Dan Chauvin and his folk tunes.

Selectman Anderson thanks the Cong church for their continued role in bringing the town together with events like the Strawberry Festival and the Labor Day breakfast.

Chairman Hall announces Wendy Mead and himself will not be at the next BOS meeting, Jesse Limanek will fill in as Chair. Dave at this time would like to ask the BOS under an old business topic if they are ready to push forward with the Sewer Expansion on the Fall Town Meeting. Town Manager Jim Smith states Don Obuchowski has contracted with McClure to dig a well to ensure there is enough water to replace the gray water system. We should have these results by the next BOS meeting at which time the draft warrant will be presented. The one question is are we ready to support now or in the future. Selectman Limanek has no problem putting it forward on the Fall Warrant. Jesse feels communication to residents is an issue. We do not want residents to feel it is being rammed through. It could pass at town meeting and fail at the ballot. Vice Chair Mead is not opposed to getting more information out but it is clear the waste water treatment plant at the school is at end of life. Wendy is comfortable having it on the fall warrant. Selectman Anderson is

torn; he would be comfortable putting off until the spring to hash out his concerns which involve development in the center of town. Jonathan asks if the flow will be affected during the summer months when school is closed, Town Manager Smith replies that will not impact the sewer lines. Selectman Bannon feels his questions were answered but agrees more communication needs to happen. Jeff questions if the figure used at the last meeting for increase in taxes (\$84.00) yearly is accurate. Town Manager Smith states that is based on a \$400,000. home. It was calculated by Assessor Knick Nunnemacher. This does not include other debt such as the Police Station. Chairman Hall says the cost of having to fix the septic at the town hall as well as to fix or replace the waste water treatment plant at the school and the yearly cost of maintenance for the school- financially it is the way to go. Dave feels the one-part plan rather than the original two-part plan is a complete plan and he is ready to move forward.

8:35 PM Selectman Limanek motions to adjourn, Vice Chair Mead seconds passes 5-0