



**Town of Ayer  
Ayer Select Board  
Ayer Town Hall – 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Meeting Room  
Ayer, MA 01432**

*Broadcast and Recorded by APAC*

**August 15, 2023**  
**Open Session Meeting Minutes**

**SB Present:** Scott A. Houde, Chair; Shaun C. Copeland, Clerk

**SB Absent:** Jannice L. Livingston, Vice-Chair

**Also Present:** Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager  
Carly M. Antonellis, Assistant Town Manager

**Call to Order:** S. Houde called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM. S. Houde further stated that this meeting/hearing of the Ayer Select Board (SB) will be held in-person at the location provided on this notice. Members of the public are welcome to attend this in-person meeting. Please note that while an option for remote attendance and/or participation via Zoom is being provided as a courtesy to the public, the meeting/hearing will not be suspended or terminated if technological problems interrupt the virtual broadcast, unless otherwise required by law. Members of the public with particular interest in a specific item on this agenda should make plans for in-person vs. virtual attendance accordingly. This meeting will be live on Zoom and Channel 8. The public may access the proceedings by joining Zoom (Meeting ID# 897 9080 0793) or by calling (929-205-6099).

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Select Board members and meeting attendees stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Meeting Agenda:** R. Pontbriand explained that the agenda was amended yesterday because he received notice that Meg Delorier from MassDevelopment was unable to join the Board this evening, so it was removed from the agenda.

**Motion:** A motion was made by S. Copeland and seconded by S. Houde to approve the meeting agenda, as amended. **Motion passed 2-0.**

**Announcements:** None

**Public Input:** Sarah Withee, 11 Groton Shirley Road stated that she felt there was not enough public notice regarding the vote taken by the Parks Commission on August 10, 2023, in regard to Field 6 at Pirone Park and the Senior/Community Center. She has submitted a request for the minutes to the Town Manager's Office. She said she did not attend this meeting and is disappointed because she wants to hear what a citizen-elected board says.

**Introduction and Ratification of Town Social Worker Appointment:** R. Pontbriand introduced Brittany Beaudry, the Town's first Social Worker. Brittany joined the Town on July 24, 2023, R. Pontbriand is seeking ratification of her appointment. R. Pontbriand is hosting a Meet & Greet for Brittany on Thursday September 17, 2023. The Town has invited various community stakeholders. Board members welcomed Brittany. Brittany thanked the Board for the opportunity.

**Motion:** A motion was made by S. Copeland and seconded by S. Houde to approve the ratification of the appointment of Brittany Beaudry as the Town's Social Worker. **Motion passed 2-0.**

**Barbara Tierney, Finance Manager – Tax Collector/Treasurer - Vote on useful life of Ladder**

**Truck and Pumper Truck:** B. Tierney referenced her memos in the meeting packet. She stated that at the Annual Town Meeting on April 24, 2023, Article 11, followed by approval at a town election, authorized the Treasurer to borrow \$1,692,888 for a Fire Department Ladder Truck, which falls under G.L. c.44, §7(1) which stipulates; if the useful life is determined to be longer than 5 years, the Select Board must vote on the useful life. The Finance Manager in consultation with the Fire Chief recommends the useful life of the ladder truck to be 20 years. Similarly, the Town Meeting on April 25, 2022, Article 14, followed by approval at a Town Election, authorized the Treasurer to borrow \$805,000 for a Fire Department Pumper Truck. The Finance Manager in consultation with the Fire Chief recommends the useful life of the pumper truck to be 15 years.

**Motion:** A motion was made by S. Copeland and seconded by S. Houde to approve the 20-year useful life of the Ladder Truck. **Motion passed 2-0.**

**Motion:** A motion was made by S. Copeland and seconded by S. Houde to approve the 15-year useful life of the Pumper Truck. **Motion passed 2-0.**

**Dan Van Schalkwyk, Director, Department of Public Works - DPW Updates (Water Supply and Clearwell Storage Funding, West Main St BRI, Complete Streets Grant):** D. Van Schalkwyk reported that water production has continued to be resilient in the past month as demand is stable and large spikes in usage have not been observed. The weather combined with the water conservation efforts appear to be helping. Wells have had breaks on most weekends and storage tanks are near full on most mornings. The Town has been in contact with the Army about the need to install the Clearwell Storage system at the Grove Pond Facility. The Army has verbally confirmed to the Town that they will pay for the system installation. He reported that Congresswoman Trahan has submitted an earmark request for funding of the West Main Street Bridge. Though the original request was \$3.5M, the earmark has moved through the process, but reduced to \$700,000. The House will take up the bill, then the Senate and then to the President's desk. D. Van Schalkwyk also reported that the Town was awarded a grant in the amount of \$500,000 for a Complete Streets Grant for Sandy Pond Road.

*Sandy Pond Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation – Rescinding of Award* – D. Van Schalkwyk stated that at the last meeting the Select Board awarded the bid to National Water Main. Since that time, the Town was contacted by another bidder who contested the bid. The bid wasn't clear enough on how it would be awarded. After consultation with Town Counsel, D. Van Schalkwyk is requesting that the Board rescind the bid award from the July 18, 2023 meeting.

**Motion:** A motion was made by S. Copeland and seconded by S. Houde to rescind the award of the Sandy Pond Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation that was voted at the July 18, 2023 Select Board Meeting. **Motion passed 2-0.**

**Town Manager's Report - Administrative Update/Review of Town Warrant(s):** R. Pontbriand provided a brief Administrative Update to the Select Board on the various activities, initiatives, and projects of the Town since the Select Board last met and referenced the Town Warrants that are in the Select Board's packet that were approved since the Select Board last met. He stated that he was very happy to have the Town Social Worker on board. He reported that the Building Commissioner will be retiring on August 30, 2023. The Insurance Advisory Committee has recently met and is doing its due diligence looking at different health plans, due to last year's almost 15% increase.

*Authorization to request Minuteman Nashoba Health Group Claims History* – R. Pontbriand is seeking authorization to request claims history from Minuteman Nashoba Health Group.

**Motion:** A motion was made by S. Copeland and seconded by S. Houde to authorize the request to Minuteman Nashoba Health Group for the Town of Ayer's claim history. **Motion passed 2-0.**

*Opening of the October 23, 2023 Special Fall Town Meeting Warrant* – R. Pontbriand is requesting that the Select Board vote to officially open the Warrant for the Special Fall Town Meeting to take place on Monday, October 23, 2023 at 7pm in the Auditorium of the Ayer Shirley Regional High School and to further approve the following schedule with respect to the Warrant for the Special Fall Town Meeting on October 23, 2023:

- August 15, 2023: Select Board officially opens the Special Fall Town Meeting Warrant.
- September 29, 2023 at 12pm (Noon): Deadline for all Warrant Articles and all Citizens Petitions to the Town Clerk.
- October 3, 2023: Select Board to review and approve the Special Fall Town Meeting Warrant.
- October 6, 2023: Special Fall Town Meeting Warrant to be officially and publicly posted and sent to print and mailed to all Ayer households.
- October 13, 2023 by 5pm: Last day to register to vote for Special Fall Town Meeting.
- October 23, 2023 at 7pm: Special Fall Town Meeting takes place in the Auditorium of the Ayer Shirley Regional High School.

**Motion:** A motion was made by S. Copeland and seconded by S. Houde to Open the Special Fall Town Meeting Warrant to be held on October 23, 2023. **Motion passed 2-0.**

**New Business/Select Board Member Questions – September Meeting Schedule – SB Member**

**Houde:** S. Houde stated he is not able to meet the Tuesday after Labor Day. C. Antonellis reported that the Board could meet on September 6, 2023 or September 13, 2023. The Select Board, if needed, will meet at 5:00 PM on September 6, 2023.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by S. Copeland and seconded by S. Houde to approve the meeting minutes from June 20, 2023, and July 18, 2023. **Motion passed 2-0.**

**Adjournment:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by S. Copeland and seconded by S. Houde to adjourn at 6:37 PM. **Motion passed 2-0.**

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Carly M. Antonellis, Assistant Town Manager

Date Minutes Approved by SB: September 6, 2023

Signature Indicating Approval: 