

SUDBURY SELECT BOARD

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

7:00 PM

(Meeting can be viewed at www.sudburytv.org)

ZOOM Meeting

Present: Chair Jennifer Roberts, Vice-Chair Daniel Carty, Select Board Member Lisa Kouchakdjian, Select Board Member Charles Russo, Town Manager Andrew Sheehan

Absent: Select Board Member Janie Dretler

The statutory requirements as to notice having been compiled with, the meeting was convened at 7:07 PM, via Zoom telecommunication mode.

Chair Roberts announced the recording of the meeting and other procedural aspects included in the meeting.

Call to Order

Select Board Roll Call: Carty-present, Kouchakdjian-present, Russo-present, Roberts-present

Opening Remarks by Chair

- Welcomed Senator Jamie Eldridge and Representative Carmine Gentile to the meeting
- Emphasized the seriousness of EEE and provided preventative measures
- Announced Park & Recreation Halloween “Trunk and Treat” scheduled for October 19th at the Fairbank Community Parking lot; directed to Town website for additional information
- Announced Town Flu shot clinics with the first clinic scheduled for Wednesday, September 25th, directed to Town website for additional information

Reports from Town Manager

- Announced the 23rd September 11th Memorial to take place tomorrow at 8:40 AM at the Heritage Park
- Traffic signal lights at Peakham Road are fully working; DEP will be monitoring the signals for the next couple of weeks
- Close to finishing the BFRT section

Reports from Select Board

Vice-Chair Carty:

- Recognized the 9/11 Memorial Committee, Town officials and safety departments for their efforts in conducting the 9/11 Memorial commemoration

Board Member Kouchakdjian:

- Announced she was looking forward to a good meeting tonight

Board Member Russo:

- Stated looking forward to a full agenda; nothing further to add

Public comments

No public comments

Consent Calendar

1. Vote to sign proclamation recognizing September as National Service Dog Month.

Member Russo requested that consent item #1 be discussed later in the meeting.

2. Vote to grant a 1-day Wine & Malt license to Sudbury Valley Trustees, to accommodate the Beer in the Barn at Wolbach Farm Event on Saturday, October 5, 2024 from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at Wolbach Farm, 18 Wolbach Rd, subject to the use of a TIPS-trained bartender and a receipt of a Certificate of Liability.

Vice-Chair Carty motioned to approve Consent Calendar #2, as included in the 9/10/24 Select Board packet. Member Kouchakdjian seconded the motion.

It was on motion 4-0; Carty-aye, Russo-aye, Kouchakdjian-aye, Roberts-aye

VOTED: To grant a 1-day Wine & Malt license to Sudbury Valley Trustees, to accommodate the Beer in the Barn at Wolbach Farm Event on Saturday, October 5, 2024 from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at Wolbach Farm, 18 Wolbach Rd, subject to the use of a TIPS-trained bartender and a receipt of a Certificate of Liability

Miscellaneous

Annual legislative update with Senator James Eldridge and Representative Carmine Gentile

Present: Representative Carmine Gentile, Senator James Eldridge

Representative Gentile and Senator Eldridge addressed several important topics, as brought forth by Board Members:

1. Do you see any state reform coming up in vocational education, given the admissions demand in excess of supply of seats, and the calls to change admissions policies such as Senate Bill 257, filed by Sen. John Cronin?

Representative Gentile responded that legislators are aware of the state-wide vocational education facility shortages and are interested in finding solutions. He added that Senate Bill 257 is now in Ways and Means. He stressed that lottery contributions could further help with this shortage and one option being considered includes building larger schools as space is a primary obstacle at this time.

Board Member Kouchakdjian expressed her concern about many Sudbury students needing vocational education placement. She asked if Representative Gentile's office would consider reaching out to several vocational schools on behalf of Sudbury students. Senator Eldridge and Representative Gentile agreed to speak to colleagues, as well

as to Senator Barrett, the former Senator representing Sudbury. Board Member Kouchakdjian acknowledged that the Town of Sudbury withdrew from membership at the Minuteman Regional Vocational School and has not been able to get membership into another vocational school since that time.

2. Do you see any state reform around the pension deadline of full funding by 2040? Do you see any state assistance pending to help municipalities reach full pension funding?

Representative Gentile responded that he had reached out to officials and discovered that most municipalities are funded some 85% and that perhaps some will receive full funding in 2038. He detailed that he did not see the State providing full funding in the near future.

3. Given the recent site visit to Hager Pond dam, and the recent success of the Klamath Dam removal in Oregon, which led to significant, positive environmental and societal effects, do you see any state dam removal/renovation programs coming up? What do you think it would take for alewives to spawn in the Sudbury section of the Sudbury river once again?

Representative Gentile stated that he and Senator Eldridge have reviewed the dire conditions at the Hager Pond dam and are continuing their work with FEMA, DCR to secure funding for the dam.

4. Can you itemize state budget earmarks you were able to dedicate to Sudbury?

Representative Gentile responded that he helped secure \$62,000 for the Fairbank Community Center kitchen equipment in consideration of emergency situations; \$62,000 has been earmarked for transportation; \$50,000 for the 250th Sudbury anniversary celebrations. He mentioned the passage of a 5.2-million-dollar bill, earmarking \$500,000 for the Sudbury Housing Trust and \$100,000 for the Sudbury Housing Authority.

5. After school care availability

Representative Gentile stressed that after school care availability is an important issue and that MA was the only state to continue such program funding under the Massachusetts Department of EEC (Early Education and Care). He stated he would be open to further discussion regarding this matter.

6. Housing and transportation issues

Representative Gentile detailed that part of the housing bond bill will help to fund renovation of the Sudbury Musketahquid Village housing units. Senator Eldridge mentioned the passing of the recent State ADU law, which supports ADUs "by right."

Representative Gentile mentioned the Fair Share programs, which helps reduce transportation fares based on income levels. Senator Eldridge mentioned the MWRTA transportation program expansion in Sudbury.

7. What legislation do you plan on submitting or supporting that will have direct impact on or to Sudbury?

Representative Gentile stated all legislation he supports would somehow effect Sudbury, such as: higher education funding (15 community colleges are free), all public universities be debt-free, reduction in the cost of home care services for residents and increase wages of such home care health workers.

Senator Eldridge stressed that all bills that he and Representative Gentile will support have positive impacts on Sudbury; such as reform of the regional health care system (with special consideration of Nashoba Hospital closure), and also supporting a Medicare bill which would help fund health care for all.

8. Many communities are struggling to support basic services and operations under the pressure of inflation, competition for employees, wages, and supply chain cost increases. Can you talk about if legislators on Beacon Hill are aware of this and what is being done to help?

Representative Gentile and Senator Eldridge confirmed that State legislators are aware of increased inflation and associated impacts. They agreed that increase in unrestricted local aid was included in the FY25 State budget, due in part to the funding from the millionaire's tax.

Vice-Chair Carty mentioned the correlation between the millionaire's tax and many seniors leaving the state, according to CBS news and BU sources. Senator Eldridge responded that the population leaving the state are mostly the working-class folks who would not be impacted by the millionaire's tax. It was noted that the unexpected increase (\$2 billion) was not anticipated and has been used to sponsor many educational and transportation needs. Senator Eldridge commented that a closer examination of seniors leaving the state requires further review.

Chair Roberts mentioned the challenges municipalities are facing, with people being increasingly stressed about money. She stated that Sudbury has not been able to keep up with inflation, which causes internal friction. She stressed the importance of relief for the community.

9. Are there any specific programs being developed to aid communities in their environmental sustainability goals? Please explain.

Senator Eldridge stated that the climate bill and the economic development bill might likely take priority this year. The legislators acknowledged that supplemental bills can be passed outside of formal session.

Board Member Kouchakdjian inquired about the food allergy bill not passing. Representative Gentile stated he filed legislation for such training for restaurant employees; the MA Restaurant Association supports the bill and an amendment was endorsed. He detailed that on August 1st many house members ignored the bill, he vowed that he would continue to push for the bill and will continue to bring it forward.

10. Finding vocational education options for students in Sudbury continues to be a major challenge. Existing vocational education schools simply do not have space. What do you believe are solutions for this? Are there any legislative efforts to address it?

Senator Eldridge mentioned the Senator Cronon Bill and indicated that this bill would likely increase such school funding. He mentioned the benefits of expanding existing vocational schools in the area.

11. What is the status and timeline of the Municipal Empowerment Act and what are your positions on that legislation?

Representative Gentile provided related information regarding the Municipal Empowerment Act, for hybrid and live meetings referencing a list of common issues that municipalities are seeking to improve. He explained that his bill would allow Sudbury to split vendor services in order to allocate the preferred vendors for various aspects. Representative Gentile stated he would continue advocating for improvements to the Act.

Other Questions from the Select Board

Board Member Kouchakdjian inquired about mental health impacts of cell phones on young people. She asked about related preventive initiatives at the legislative level. Representative Gentile mentioned the Federal Communication Commission guidelines, adding that more could be done at the state level with help from the Boston teaching hospitals. Representative Gentile mentioned that efforts for such funding could be promoted by municipal superintendents and school committees.

Senator Eldridge stated that associated funding would likely be deferred to local school districts and advocacy from school superintendents would be beneficial.

Board Member Russo suggested that if related opportunities are mentioned in state legislation, that Senator Eldridge and Representative Gentile become actively involved in the passing of such bills. Representative Gentile indicated that something could be crafted. Senator Eldridge said he would fully support such guidelines/bill, which might require Federal action.

Vice-Chair Carty commented that he recently spoke to Superintendent Crozier who confirmed that SPS does not allow cell phones to be used in class and some funding to limit cell phone use had been received.

Board Members thanked legislators for their support with the Sudbury 250th anniversary events.

Discussion on 2024 Goal #1 to develop long-term comprehensive plan to fund and manage the operating and capital budgets

Town Manager Sheehan referenced the “Select Board 2024 Goal 1 Update” PowerPoint presentation in consideration of addressing financial challenges and maintaining programming/services for the Town.

Board Members asked related questions regarding the new budget, timeframe, and budget cycle timing. Town Manager Sheehan detailed that the budget schedule and Financial Condition of the Town would be presented in November.

Related discussion took place.

Chair Roberts stated that she was glad to see that the Financial Condition of the Town presentation would take place in November before the official budget season. She mentioned staff needs, unmet needs and capital investments. She suggested that this topic be included on upcoming Select Board agendas. Board Members agreed.

Discussion and update on ARPA allocations, expenditures, and balances. ARPA funds are required to be allocated by 12/31/24 and spent by 12/31/26 (votes may be taken)

Town Manager Sheehan stated that since the ARPA balance was last presented to the Board, \$100,000 of ARPA funding for Haynes and Curtis schools HVAC improvements had been allocated. He added the contract for the project would be signed in a couple of weeks.

Town Manager Sheehan mentioned the return of approximately \$400,000 from the Fire Station 2 project and possible reallocation of that funding to the Fairbank Community Center project.

Other possible ARPA allocation options were discussed by the Board.

Discussion of allocation of \$10,000 in ARPA funds to be expended for "Parenting Today's Super Connected Kids" presentation, featuring the esteemed speaker Dr. Jean Twenge, PhD., scheduled for Tuesday, November 12, 2024, under the direction of the Select Board/Town Manager's Office.

Present: Psychologist Jacqueline Barry, 87 Water Row, representing concerned parents and community members

Ms. Barry presented an abbreviated presentation regarding impacts of cell phone use on Sudbury students, as presented to SPS Superintendent Crozier:

- Smartphones having a negative impact on our youth:
 - Decrease in academic performance
 - Increase in mental health symptoms (anxiety, depression, isolation)
 - Decrease in time spent with friends
 - Impacts on sleep patterns
 - Impacts on exercise routines

Ms. Barry referenced US Surgeon General comments regarding student increase in smartphone usage, including: effects of social media and suicide, increased cheating on tests, global trend for decreased academic performance.

Ms. Barry mentioned data results from the 2021 MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey.

Ms. Barry referenced associated recommendations from US Surgeon General:

- Foster open dialogue
- Equip parents and caregivers with resources to address parental stressors and support services
- Create opportunities to cultivate supportive social connections
- Elevate the voices of parents and caregivers to shape community programs
- Strengthen and establish school-based support programs

Ms. Barry detailed the relevant experience and recommended "Sudbury for Digital Balance" to be presented by Dr. Jean Twenge, Ph.D. Ms. Barry provided detail regarding the request to contract with Dr. Twenge, tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, 11/12/24 at the Curtis Middle School. She informed the Board Members that the speaking fee was \$14,000, plus travel and lodging fees. Ms. Barry added that Superintendent Crozier has scheduled the speaking engagement.

Board Member Kouchakdjian stressed that the cell phone issue impacts all students and asked if Dr. Twenge would be addressing related issues with special learning students. Ms. Barry did not know if that aspect would be included in the talk and stated she would ask Dr. Twenge about covering that issue.

Board Member Russo mentioned 30 parents submitted emails to the Select Board Office in support of the presentation. Board Member Russo inquired about coverage by SudburyTV. Ms. Barry said she would look into the recording aspect. Board Member Kouchakdjian stated there was a way to record the event. Board Member Russo extended his support of the program, and indicated that the program would comply with ARPA funding in terms of Sudbury health aspects and endorsement by the Town Social Worker.

Vice Chair Carty asked what would happen if the Board voted not to allocate ARPA funding for the presentation. He opined about the origin of the proposed request and indicated that the request did not conform to established process. Town Manager Sheehan stated that the speaking engagement request came from the Sudbury Social Worker and the related working group who met in the last week and reached out to the Select Board Office. Chair Roberts endorsed the program and noted that a rigorous review/decision process had been used for the initial projects. A process does not exist for the remaining funds at this time.

Vice-Chair Carty motioned to allocate \$10,000 in ARPA funds to be expended for "Parenting Today's Super Connected Kids" presentation, featuring the esteemed speaker Dr. Jean Twenge, PhD., scheduled for Tuesday, November 12, 2024, under the direction of the Select Board/Town Manager's Office. Board Member Kouchakdjian seconded the motion.

It was on motion 3-1; Russo-aye, Carty-no, Kouchakdjian-aye, Roberts-aye

VOTED: To allocate \$10,000 in ARPA funds to be expended for "Parenting Today's Super Connected Kids" presentation, featuring the esteemed speaker Dr. Jean Twenge, PhD., scheduled for Tuesday, November 12, 2024, under the direction of the Select Board/Town Manager's Office

Board Member Russo suggested that Town Manager Sheehan present a possible A and B option for this request.

Discussion on follow-up and next steps after 9/3/24 Select Board Goals Session

Members agreed to continue the discussion at the next goal setting meeting.

Vote to review and possibly approve open session minutes of 5/28/24 and 7/30/24

5/28/24 Select Board Minutes

Chair Roberts stated that the 5/28/24 minutes would be reviewed at the next Select Board meeting.

7/30/24 Select Board Minutes

Vice-Chair Carty motioned to approve the 7/30/24 Select Board minutes, as edited. Board Member Russo seconded the motion.

It was on motion 4-0; Russo-aye, Carty-aye, Kouchakdjian-aye, Roberts-aye

VOTED: to approve the 7/30/24 Select Board minutes, as edited. Board Member Russo seconded the motion.

Upcoming agenda items

9/24/24 Meeting:

- Code of conduct policy
- Policy Subcommittee progress/status
- Select Board goals discussion
- ZBA candidate interview

- CPC candidate interview

Topics to be included in October:

- Historic markers update
- MWRA Expansion Study update

Topics to be discussed in November:

- Town Manager's Financial Condition of the Town presentation
- Town Manager's goals
- Transportation discussion

Consent Calendar Item 1

Board Member Russo queried if there should be a policy on this item and proclamations in general. Chair Roberts noted that the Board could review the citation/proclamation policy.

Vice Chair Carty motioned to approve Consent Calendar Item #1- Vote to sign proclamation recognizing September as National Service Dog Month. Board Member Kouchakdjian seconded the motion.

It was on motion 4-0; Russo-aye, Carty-aye, Kouchakdjian-aye, Roberts-aye

VOTED: To approve Consent Calendar Item #1- Vote to sign proclamation recognizing September as National Service Dog Month

Vote to close Open Session and enter Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares, pursuant to General Laws chapter 30A, §21(a) (exception 3).

Vice-Chair Carty motioned to close open session and enter Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares, pursuant to General Laws chapter 30A, §21(a) (exception 3) and not return to open session. Board Member Russo seconded the motion.

It was on motion 4-0; Russo-aye, Carty-aye, Kouchakdjian-aye, Roberts-aye

VOTED: To close open session and enter Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares, pursuant to General Laws chapter 30A, §21(a) (exception 3) and not return to open session

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:33 PM.

SB Meeting 9/10/24 -Documents & Exhibits

1. Vote to sign proclamation recognizing September as National Service Dog Month.

Attachments:

1.a Proclamation Natl Service Dog Month

2. Vote to grant a 1-day Wine & Malt license to Sudbury Valley Trustees, to accommodate the Beer in the Barn at Wolbach Farm Event on Saturday, October 5, 2024 from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at Wolbach Farm, 18 Wolbach Rd, subject to the use of a TIPS-trained bartender and a receipt of a Certificate of Liability.

Attachments:

2.a Beer in the Barn at Wolbach Farm_Application_SB
2.b Department Feedback_SVT Wolbach 2024_1 Day Wine Malt

3. Annual legislative update with Senator Jamie Eldridge and Representative Carmine Gentile.

Attachments:

3.a QUESTIONS FOR LEGISLATORS

4. Discussion on 2024 Goal #1 to develop long-term comprehensive plan to fund and manage the operating and capital budgets

Attachments:

4.a Goal 1 Update 2024-08-27

5. Discussion and update on ARPA allocations, expenditures, and balances. ARPA funds are required to be allocated by 12/31/24 and spent by 12/31/26 (votes may be taken).

Attachments:

5.a ARPA Status 07-22-24 - AS Comments 8-28-24

6. Discussion of allocation of \$10,000 in ARPA funds to be expended for "Parenting Today's Super Connected Kids" presentation, featuring the esteemed speaker Dr. Jean Twenge, PhD., scheduled for Tuesday, November 12, 2024, under the direction of the Select Board/Town Manager's Office.

Attachments:

6.a Sudbury for Digital Balance Presentation Slides 9.5.24
6.b Select Board Memo- Sudbury for Digital Balance KW
6.c ARPA Funding Request Memo _Jean Twenge_SDB

8. Vote to review and possibly approve open session minutes of 5/28/24 and 7/30/24.

Attachments:

8.a SB_draft1_5.28.24_min.for.review
8.b SB_draft_7.30.24_min.for.review

9. Upcoming agenda items

Attachments:

9.a Upcoming agenda.items 09.10.24

11. Continue executive session to review and approve executive session meeting minutes pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7) "[t]o comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements" ("Purpose 7"), citing to the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §§ 22(f), (g).

Attachments:

11.a SB Executive Session for review 4.30.24
11.b SB Executive Session for review 6.11.24
11.c SB Executive Session for review 6.11.24B
11.d SB Executive Session for review 7.16.24
11.e SB Executive Session for review 5.28.24
11.f SB Executive Session for review 5.14.24