

SUDBURY SELECT BOARD

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2024

ANNUAL SELECT BOARD GOAL SETTING MEETING

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

Present: Chair Jennifer Roberts, Vice-Chair Daniel Carty, Select Board Member Lisa Kouchakdjian, Select Board Member Charles Russo, Select Board Member Janie Dretler, Town Manager Andrew Sheehan, Mel Kleckner, Facilitator – UMass Collins Center for Public Management

The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, the meeting was convened at 5:37 PM, at the Sudbury Police Station Meeting Room.

Chair Roberts announced the recording of the meeting and other procedural aspects. Select Board roll call: Kouchakdjian-present, Carty-present, Dretler-present, Russo-present, Roberts-present

Opening Remarks by Chair – none

Reports from Town Manager – none

Reports from Select Board

Vice-Chair Carty – none

Board Member Russo – none

Board Member Dretler

- Board of Health - sponsored overdose presentation this evening at the Sudbury Grange Hall

Board Member Kouchakdjian - none

Public Comments

Manish Sharma, 77 Colonial Drive, spoke of Town finance items and possible financial rebates for the Sudbury Public Schools.

Review of Mission/Values Statements/Priority Goal Categories

Mr. Kleckner read the following:

“Select Board Mission Statement: The Select Board, as the chief policy making body for the Town of Sudbury, Massachusetts, will maximize and ensure the quality of life and well-being of Sudbury residents, today and in the future. To accomplish this, the Select Board shall set strategic direction, appoint certain boards, establish policies, and develop goals that deliver the highest quality municipal services in a fiscally responsible manner to the community that it serves and advance its values. The Select Board relies upon the Town Administration, volunteers, residents, and other stakeholders to implement the policies and initiatives while promoting an atmosphere of mutual respect, collaboration, and inclusion.”

Mr. Kleckner referenced his outline document (compilation from various communities) reflecting values grouped within goal categories:

Effective Governance and Communications

- Protect and enhance the professionalism of the Town's staff, boards, and committees.
- Foster respectful civic engagement; promote transparency and effective communications.
- Protect and promote a climate of acceptance, equity, inclusion and belonging.

Town Services and Infrastructure

- Encourage responsible long-term capital management and strategic planning to support, maintain, and enhance Town infrastructure and services.
- Protect and enhance educational excellence.
- Ensure equitable access to Sudbury facilities, programs, information, and services.
- Promote and ensure public health and safety within the community.

Financial Management and Economic Resilience

- Protect and enhance Sudbury's fiscal health and financial stability.

Open Space, Recreation and Historic Assets

- Protect and enhance the unique sense of place offered by the Town.

Transportation, Mobility and Housing

- Encourage and pursue a wide range of housing options that accommodate the diverse needs of individuals across age and socio-economic demographics.
- Promote access to transportation options and advocate for bicycle and pedestrian alternative travel.

Environmental Health and Wellness

- Promote and enhance Sudbury's environmental resources and sustainability.

Review of Progress on 2024 Goals

Mr. Kleckner presented the Select Board 2024 Goals.

Board Members discussed the elimination of various goals from last year (namely the MBTA Communities Zone goal) and spoke of combining and changing the language associated with those goals. Board Members concurred that the most of the top five 2024 goals would continue as 2025 Select Board goals.

Mr. Kleckner noted that it was not unusual to consider that last years' goals remain a priority for the Select Board.

Identification of 2025 Goals

Summary of Town Manager and Department Head Input

Town Manager Sheehan summarized the long-term comprehensive plan to fund and manage the Operating and Capital Budgets Goal, with focus on maximizing revenues and reviewing expenditures. He noted that with inflationary times on the increase, the operating and capital budgets are affected.

Mr. Kleckner stated that Town department head comments expressed concerns about cooperation and cohesiveness between Select Board Members. He noted that another department head comment involved communication.

Chair Roberts stated that the information within the Town website is complete and continually providing updates, in addition to quarterly updates and Select Board Office hours held on a monthly basis.

Board Member Kouchakdjian recommended that the Select Board participate in Professional Development (PD) and ethics training. Board Members concurred.

Mr. Kleckner indicated that staff expressed concerns regarding succession planning and related workload. He commented that related health/safety aspects, work space, etc., were general municipal concerns. Town Manager Sheehan commented that the health concerns are also reflective of the times and the general tenor of the world and nation.

Board Member Dretler acknowledged that office improvements were made in the Health Department, SPS and Recreation department offices in the Fairbank Community Center. She recognized staff who work in the Flynn Building. Town Manager Sheehan anticipated the completion of the Combined Facilities report in the next several months which addresses Town buildings.

Vice-Chair Carty stated that the lack of emotional safety increases employee stress which can lead to health issues.

Chair Roberts asked what the Select Board could do to help the staffing aspect. Town Manager Sheehan responded that vocal Select Board support would help with consideration of funding for such improvements.

Board Members discussed the elimination of various goals from last year and spoke of combining and changing the language associated with those goals.

Discussion of SMART Goals

Mr. Kleckner stressed the importance of SMART Goals when considering goal-setting for the Town, and the adherence to the Select Board Mission Statement and Values.

Mr. Kleckner spelled out the acronym SMART: S = Specific, M = Measurable, A = Attainable, R = Relevant, T = Time Bound, and such importance to the goal process.

Break

Board Member Dretler motioned to recess for ten minutes and return to the meeting at 7:00 PM. Vice-Chair Kouchakdjian seconded the motion.

It was on motion 5-0; Kouchakdjian-aye, Russo-aye, Carty-aye, Roberts-aye, Dretler-aye

VOTED: To recess and return to the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Ranking of 2025 Select Board Goals

Board Members resumed the meeting at approximately 7:00 PM.

Board Members discussed individual priority choices. Chair Roberts advocated for language-specific goals and noted that a 6th goal item might be considered by the Board

Mr. Kleckner presented the “Possible 2025 Goal” chart with associated categories.

Select Board Discussion

Board Member Kouchakdjian stressed the importance of retaining the Vocational Education Goal, adding that six or seven students and their families were interested in Vocational school placement. Board Member Dretler commented that Select Board Member Kouchakdjian should not be responsible for all communications with the vocational schools and suggested that this goal be regarded as an operational task. Board Member Russo commented that when Select Board members help with a particular Select Board goal, it keeps the goal on Select Board radar and provides for informational updates. Board Member Russo mentioned that he is in favor of vocational education placements in Sudbury, but would not be in favor of inclusion as a 2025 Select Board Goal.

Vice-Chair Carty stated that the LSRHS Agreement states that LS is responsible for such placement in Sudbury. He recommended that a clarifying LSRHS documentation be submitted to the Board and the Town Manager.

Board Member Kouchakdjian opined that this would be a good time to modify the Vocational Education Goal language to read: “To seek Vocational Education placement.”

Town Manager Sheehan agreed that the Vocational Education Goal was an educational issue and an 8th grader seeking such placement is not a Select Board or Town Administration task.

Chair Roberts suggested that a mechanism be put in place for the Select Board to be notified of such placements.

Board Member Russo provided summary of his goal listing:

Town Building/Property Management Plan

Board Member Russo commented about the timeliness of the completed Facilities Town Building Assessment report for determination of an associated Management Plan timeline.

Utilization/Optimization of Fairbank Community Center Building

Economic Development

Board Member Russo commented about inclusion of the Master Plan, Open Space, Recreation, Housing Production Plan, and perhaps having the economic development goal included in the Town property management plan.

BFRT Process/Completion

Board Member Russo spoke of the gap time between the Eversource project completion and the partnership between the Town and MA DCR.

Town Wastewater Plan

Board Member Russo noted that a wastewater plan would help direct any economic development for the Rte. 20 Corridor planning. He added that several neighboring towns have completed such economic development plans for Rte. 20.

Staffing Needs and Succession Planning

Board Member Russo recognized that various Select Board goals are linked to such planning.

Chair Roberts agreed with Fairbank Community Center optimization, with Park & Recreation addressing after school care programs. She indicated that she wanted to retain the economic development topic as a separate Select Board Goal.

Board Member Kouchakdjian provided summary of her goal listing:

She provided detail about restructuring of the goals as they presently appear.

Fiscal Sustainability Goal

To include language regarding the operating and capital budgets, staffing needs-succession plan.

Building a More Inclusive Sudbury Goal

To include DEI, Transportation, Housing, ADA Transition Plan, Municipal Vulnerability Planning

Energy and Sustainability Goal

To include environmental health/wellness aspects, and stretch code implementation

Recreation Goal

Include policies to enhance Sudbury recreation – rail trails, Fairbank Community Center Optimization

Economic Development Goal

To be part of the Recreation Goal or to stand alone

Governance Goal

To advance Select Board functions (Professional Development to be shared with the community). Possible inclusion of the Vocational Education goal.

Chair Roberts stated that the presented goal outline might be too general and somewhat broad, when compared to the current goal-setting process.

Board Member Kouchakdjian stressed the importance of Board Member self-assessments. Vice-Chair Carty agreed with the self-assessment need.

Vice-Chair Carty presented a summary of his goal listing:

Long-Term Comprehensive plan to fund and manage Operating and Capital Budgets Goal

He stressed the importance of providing milestones and deliverables.

Town Properties Management Program Goal

To track progress of capital projects and maintain project portfolios and plans.

Expand and fund a Transportation Option Goal

To be in coordination with housing production planning and the Master Plan.

Vocational Education Access Options Goal

As directed by the LSRHS Regional Agreement

Updating of the LSRHS Agreement Goal

Chair Roberts stated that the KPI process could be utilized with the operationalization of the Capital Plan.

Board Member Kouchakdjian mentioned the benefit of a separate goal to address capital and fiscal sustainability.

Board Member Dretler presented a summary of her goal listing:

Develop a Long-Term Comprehensive Plan to fund and manage the Operating and Capital Budgets Goal

Vocational Education Access Options Goal

Address Staffing needs and Succession Planning Goal

Rail Trail Development and Completion Goal

Economic Development Goal

To focus on the Rte. 20 study

Board Member Dretler stressed the importance of complete staffing, which might result in an override. She mentioned the importance of working with Town Counsel to establish PD programming for the Board Members.

Mr. Kleckner stated that the next step in the goal setting process would be for each Board Member to submit their written goal listing to him.

Break

Board Member Kouchakdjian motioned to recess for ten minutes. Vice-Chair Carty seconded the motion.

It was on motion 5-0; Kouchakdjian-aye, Russo-aye, Carty-aye, Roberts-aye, Dretler-aye

VOTED: To recess and return to the meeting at 8:47 PM.

The meeting resumed at 8:47 PM. After reviewing Board Member listings, Mr. Kleckner read the Select Board order of Goals:

- Long-Term Comprehensive plan to fund and manage Operating and Capital Budgets
- Staffing Needs and Succession Planning
- Utilization/Optimization of Fairbank Community Center Programming

- Vocational Education Access Options
- Expand (Normalize) and fund a Transportation Option, especially for vulnerable populations

Mr. Kleckner indicated that he would further analyze the Select Board voting results; he stated that he would provide the Board with related suggestions.

Chair Roberts confirmed that related discussion would resume at an upcoming Select Board meeting, with possible inclusion of a 6th Select Board Goal.

Vice-Chair Carty motioned to adjourn the Select Board meeting. Board Member Kouchakdjian seconded the motion.

It was on motion 5-0; Kouchakdjian-aye, Russo-aye, Carty-aye, Roberts-aye, Dretler-aye

VOTED: To adjourn the Select Board meeting

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8:54 PM.