

IN SUDBURY SELECT BOARD

TUESDAY MARCH 10, 2026

7:00 PM

REMOTE

(Meeting can be viewed at [www.sudburytv.org](http://www.sudburytv.org))

Present: Chair Lisa Kouchakdjian, Vice-Chair Janie Dretler, Select Board Member Dan Carty, Select Board Member Radha Gargeya, Select Board Member Charles Russo, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Victor Garofalo, Town Manager Andrew Sheehan

Chair Kouchakdjian called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Roll call: Dretler-present, Carty-present, Gargeya-present, Russo-present, Kouchakdjian-present

**Opening Remarks by Chair**

- Hoped all enjoyed the last two spring-like days
- Thanked DPW for their work this past winter
- Shared that she and Board Member Gargeya will host Select Board hours at noon on Wednesday,
- LSRHS Agreement Subcommittee Members continue work on the LSRHS Agreement; members will present at an upcoming Select Board meeting

**Reports from Town Manager**

- Acknowledged work done by Sudbury DPW and first responders during the significant storm two weeks ago
- Announced that the IT Department was awarded The Certificate of Achievement under the MA Cyber Securities Training Program; important to build good cyber vigilance with staff and thanked Mark Thompson and his team for related efforts over the past years.

**Reports from Select Board**

Vice-Chair Dretler

- Reminded that then Open Space and Recreation Survey is now open and accessible on the Town website during month of March, she thanked all who presented and attended the Open Space and Recreation on February 26, 2026
- Accepting applications this month for those interested in being members of the Seward/Liberty Ledge Advisory Committee

- Has volunteered to participate in the “Ready for Life & Reality Fair” on Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at the LSRHS, to help seniors prepare for the future after graduating from LSRHS

Board Member Carty:

- Acknowledged that many resident comments regarding the LS Superintendent position, budgeting matters, as well as SPS budget matters were submitted. He commented about a related meeting in September between the Town Manager and the chairs of the SPS School Committee and Select Board and formally requested that an open discussion about what was discussed at the meeting noted, and requested that information be presented at the March 17<sup>th</sup> Select Board meeting

Board Member Gargeya:

- Explained that two weeks ago, Sudbury DEI and other local communities conducted a “Building Connections” program – highlighting related workshops including an effective listening workshop. He and Board Members Kouchakdjian and Dretler attended this sharing of information workshop
- Announced several Sudbury 250<sup>th</sup> events: On March 15 a presentation regarding the life of noted Sudbury Patriot and innkeeper, Ezekiel How, as to be presented by historian Tony Howes at the Fairbank Community Center; Sudbury 250<sup>th</sup> Day gala at the Town Center on May 15<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am to 3:00 PM

Board Member Russo:

- Provided shout out to Sudbury Cultural Counsel, with arts check list and funding information on the Town Website; he recommended that everyone review the site
- Announced that Annual Town Election will take place on March 30th
- Mentioned he will be leaving the meeting for a short while and will return

Vice-Chair Dretler recognized that staff devoted two Saturday afternoons to DEI meetings/session on their own time.

Chair Kouchakdjian thanked the DEI Commission for being part of such informative “Building Connections” program, and thanked Members Dretler and Gargeya for their participation.

### **Public Comment**

Resident Manish Sharma mentioned recent DEI funding and asked that such funding be shared with the community. He added that he is still awaiting financial documentation regarding LSRHS and SPS budgets.

### **1. Vote to Proclaim “Be Like Zach Day” in Sudbury**

Present: Jonathon Wall and Jennifer Wall, parents of Zach Wall and co-founders of Sach’s Bridge

Mr. and Mrs. Wall discussed the struggles and challenges presented to Zach who died of cancer in 2021 at age seventeen.

Mr. Wall presented Zach's Rules for Life, which included:

Rule #1 - Tell those you love, that you love them

Rule #4 – Be compassionate and have empathy

Rule #5 – Be like Zach; keep moving forward

Rule #8 – Give back to others and volunteer

Mr. Wall thanked the Town of Sudbury for helping Zach.

Board Member Carty thanked Mr. Wall for sharing and requested that Mr. Wall read all of Zach's Rules for Life. Mr. Wall read the remaining Rules and agreed to submit the listing to the Select Board Office.

Board Member Russo thanked Mr. and Mrs. Wall for helping to turn grief into these meaningful actions/rules.

Board Member Gargeya thanked Mr. and Mrs. Wall for sharing Zach's story with the Town and was honored to support the proclamation.

Chair Kouchakdjian recommended posting Zach's Rules for Life at least once a year.

Vice-Chair Dretler advocated that the Proclamation should be recognized every year on May 3. Board Members were in agreement.

Vice-Chair Dretler motioned to Proclaim every May 3<sup>rd</sup> be designated as "Be Like Zach Day" in Sudbury. Board Member Carty seconded the motion.

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

VOTED: To Proclaim every May 3<sup>rd</sup> be designated as "Be Like Zach Day" in Sudbury

**2. Vote to appoint Doug Caplan, 20 Revolutionary Road, to the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee (CIAC) with a term to expire 5/31/2028**

Present: Doug Caplan, 20 Revolutionary Road

Mr. Caplan summarized his background including experience in management and finances.

Vice-Chair Dretler motioned to appoint Doug Caplan, 20 Revolutionary Road, to the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee (CIAC) with a term to expire 5/31/2028. Board Member Carty seconded the motion.

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

VOTED: To appoint Doug Caplan, 20 Revolutionary Road, to the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee (CIAC) with a term to expire 5/31/2028. Board Member Carty seconded the motion.

Board Members thanked Mr. Caplan for his willingness to volunteer.

**3. Vote to appoint Isabelle Kane, 21 Tanbark Road, to the Sudbury Cultural Council with a term to expire 10/31/2029**

Present: Isabelle Kane, 21 Tanbark Road

Ms. Kane summarized her background as chief marketing officer and years of involvement with arts and culture for students in Sudbury.

Board Member Russo left the meeting at approximately 7:53 PM.

Vice-Chair Dretler motioned to appoint Isabelle Kane, 21 Tanbark Road, to the Sudbury Cultural Council with a term to expire 10/31/2029. Board Member Carty seconded the motion.

It was on motion 4-0; Dretler-aye, Carty-aye, Gargeya-aye, Kouchakdjian-aye

VOTED: To appoint Isabelle Kane, 21 Tanbark Road, to the Sudbury Cultural Council with a term to expire 10/31/2029

Board Members thanked Ms. Kane for her willingness to volunteer.

**4. Vote to appoint Sumeet Keswani, 148 Pantry Road, to the Zoning Board of Appeals as an Associate Member with term to expire 5/31/2027 and to the Earth Removal Board as a Member with a term to expire 5/31/2027**

Present: Sumeet Keswani, 148 Pantry Road

Mr. Keswani summarized his background in engineering and has great interest in matters covered by the Sudbury ZBA.

Vice-Chair Dretler motioned to appoint Sumeet Keswani, 148 Pantry Road, to the Zoning Board of Appeals as an Associate Member with term to expire 5/31/2027 and to the Earth Removal Board as a Member with a term to expire 5/31/2027. Board Member Carty seconded the motion.

It was on motion 4-0; Dretler-aye, Carty-aye, Gargeya-aye, Kouchakdjian-aye

VOTED: To appoint Sumeet Keswani, 148 Pantry Road, to the Zoning Board of Appeals as an Associate Member with term to expire 5/31/2027 and to the Earth Removal Board as a Member with a term to expire 5/31/2027

**5. Discussion of Town Manager's proposed FY27 Budget**

Town Manager Sheehan stated he had presented the Proposed FY Budget presentation to the Finance Committee last week. He provided primary Budget highlights, including:

- Home Rule Charter
- Financial Strength & Transparency – S&P Global Ratings – AAA Rating
- Budget Calendar
- Revenues – Real Estate and Personal Property Taxes, State Aid, Local Receipts
- Free Cash – compared FY25 to FY27, recognizing the increase in local receipts this year (excise tax)

- Expenditure items
- FY27 Operating Budget – Education – 61.22%, Employee Benefits -14.89%, Public Safety- 8.31%, Public Works-5.08%, Town Debt Service-3.99%, General Government-3.22%, Culture & Recreation – 1.32%
- Town Manager’s Budget: Town Manager’s Office, General Government, Public Safety, Public Works, Human Resources
- Budget Highlights – Revenue – Local Receipts Increase – 13.79%, State Aid increase-2.51% (will not know exact percentage before July), Transfer Ambulance Receipts - increase of \$180,000
- Budgets Highlights – Expenditures – Budget steps for eligible employees, bargaining agreement, Level service budget, no new initiatives (elimination of full-time position in the Accounting Department) – part-time IT Department - GIS Position, Conservation – part-time seasonal help
- Creation of Health and Community Services Director to oversee Health, Social Workers, Recreation and Veterans Agent, Reorganization of Health and Recreation areas
- Budget Highlights – Town FTE’s reduction when Sudbury joined regional dispatch and services in Holbrook
- Sudbury Public Schools – 4.17% increase in FY26 Operating Budget, (11.41% increase when compared to School FY26 Employee Benefits
- LSRHS Assessment – FY27:86.87%, FY26 87.31%, FY 87.44% - Budget decline in Sudbury students
- Vocational Education-FY27 Budget \$580,000 increase of \$180,000 – Increase in FY26 and transportation
- Debt Service – FY27 Budget - \$5,266,335 Increase for regarding Atkinson Pool, Nixon and Haynes School Roofs
- Unfulfilled Vacancies - Public Works (3), Police-Sergeant (1), Fire-Inspector/Fire Prevention Officer (1) and Combined Facilities Project Manager/Assist Director
- Free Cash Usage – Good/robust – strength in excise and investment properties.- do not expect a \$9,395,877 Free Cash fund next year; earmark of \$750,000 FY26 Snow Deficit (Estimate)
- Financial Policies – Free Cash – about \$2.8 million above target balance and carrying over in FY27
- Financial Policies – Stabilization Fund – Maintaining a minimum balance of 5% - proposing \$300,000 for FY27
- Financial Policies – Capital Stabilization Fund – Proposing \$275,000 – FY27
- Looking Ahead – Challenge is that Revenue will be insufficient to meet the expenditures; long-term plan needed for a sustainable operating and capital budget (likely will need an override in upcoming years and structural pressures continue

Board Member Russo rejoined the meeting at approximately 9:05 PM.

Board Members asked various questions and agreed this financial reporting presented was very thorough and much appreciated; they thanked Town Manager Sheehan and Assistant Town Manager Victor Garafolo.

**6. Review and discuss order of 2026 Annual Town Meeting articles and take positions; Identify presentations from other parties**

Town Manager Sheehan stated that the Finance Committee wished to vote on Articles at the next Select Board meeting.

Article 15 - Terminate Revolving Funds

Vice-Chair Dretler motioned to support Article 15. Board Member Carty seconded the motion.

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

VOTED: To support Article 15

Article 16 – Resolution: Sudbury 250

Vice-Chair Dretler motioned to support Article 16. Board Member Russo seconded the motion.

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

VOTED: To support Article 16

Article 17 – Resolution: Full Inclusion and Accessibility Resolution

Vice-Chair Dretler motioned to support Article 17. Board Member Russo seconded the motion.

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

VOTED: To support Article 17

Article 21 – Council on Aging By-Law Revision Article 3 Chapter 5

Vice-Chair Dretler motioned to support Article 21. Board Member Russo seconded the motion.

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

VOTED: To support Article 21

Chair Kouchakdjian recommended putting Article 21 on the Consent Calendar; Board Members agreed.

Article 23 – Amend Bylaw Chapter 117, Article II – Animals (Ollie’s Law)

Vice-Chair Dretler motioned to support Article 23. Board Member Gargeya seconded the motion.

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

VOTED: To support Article 23

Article 25 - Digital Publication of Legal Notices – Home Rule Petition

Vice-Chair Dretler motioned to support Article 25. Board Member Gargeya seconded the motion.

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

VOTED: To support Article 25

Town Manager Sheehan stated that Sudbury could follow the format of other neighboring communities. Board Members were in agreement, and concurred the Article would be placed on the Consent Calendar.

#### Capital Items

##### Article 29 – Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus Replacement

##### Article 30 – LSRHS Wastewater Treatment Facility Control Panel

##### Article 31 – School Classroom Instructional Equipment Replacement

Vice-Chair Dretler motioned to support Articles 29, 30, and 31. Board Member Russo seconded the motion.

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

VOTED: To support Articles 21, 29, 30 and 31

Board Members agreed that Articles 21, 29, 30 and 31 should be put on the Consent Calendar.

Town Manager Sheehan mentioned that Town Counsel Lee Smith would be sharing the Haskell Field opinion regarding proposed solar array at the next Select Board meeting. He added that Combined Facilities Director Sandra Duran would be reporting on Articles 33 – 35, and that Article 39 would be discussed at the Finance Committee meeting on 4/21/26.

Board Member Carty commented that he would want to present Article 18 at Town Meeting, and that Board Member Gargeya would likely want to present Article 16 at Town Meeting.

Board Members agreed to present Articles 1 through 14 at the next Select Board meeting.

##### Article 37 – Community Preservation Act Fund – Reversion of Unspent Funds

Member Carty motioned to support Article 37. Board Member Russo seconded the motion.

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

VOTED: To support Article 37

#### **7. Discuss and vote to approve Board and Committee Handbook**

Board Members agreed to continue such discussion at an upcoming Select Board meeting.

#### **8. Rescind policy on Training For Dispensers and Sellers of Alcoholic Beverages**

Chair Kouchakdjian noted that the Select Board Policy Subcommittee made this recommendation. Andy presented the existing policy adopted/amended in in 2003 and revised within the “Town of Sudbury Board of Selectmen Rules and Regulations Training for Dispensers and Sellers of Alcoholic Beverages.” Revised Policy adopted last month.

Vice-Chair Dretler motioned to rescind policy on Training For Dispensers and Sellers of Alcoholic Beverages. Board Member Carty seconded the motion.

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

VOTED: To rescind policy on Training For Dispensers and Sellers of Alcoholic Beverages

**9. Review and Approve Minutes: December 16, 2025, February 23, 2026, February 24, 2026, Liberty Ledge/Sewataro Subcommittee January 28, 2026**

**December 16, 2025**

Board Member Carty noted that he would include additional edits based on edits made by Vice-Chair Dretler and Town Manager Sheehan, to be reviewed at the next Select Board meeting.

**February 23, 2026**

Board Member Carty motioned to approve the February 23, 2026 Select Board Minutes, as amended. Board Member Gargeya seconded the motion.

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

VOTED: To approve the February 23, 2026 Select Board Minutes, as amended

**February 24, 2026**

Vice-Chair Dretler motioned to approve the February 24, 2026 Select Board Minutes, as edited. Board Member Carty seconded the motion.

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

VOTED: To approve the February 24, 2026 Select Board Minutes, as amended

**Liberty Ledge/Sewataro Subcommittee January 28, 2026 Minutes**

Board Member Carty motioned to approve the Liberty Ledge/Sewataro Subcommittee January 28, 2026 Minutes, as amended. Vice-Chair Dretler seconded the motion.

It was on motion 2-0; Dretler-aye, Carty-aye

VOTED: To approve the Liberty Ledge/Sewataro Subcommittee January 28, 2026 Minutes, as amended

**10. Upcoming Items**

**2/17/26 Agenda**

- Town Counsel Lee Smith, Combined Facilities Director Sandra Duran and FinCom to address Town Meeting Articles
- Select Board Newsletters review
- Board Member Carty's previous request regarding transparency with SPS meeting/s

**Adjourn**

Board Member Carty motioned to close the 3/10/26 Select Board meeting. Vice-Chair Dretler seconded the motion.

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

VOTED: To close the 3/10/26 Select Board meeting

There being no further business, the 3/10/26 meeting of the Select board was adjourned at 10:42 PM.