

IN SUDBURY SELECT BOARD

THURSDAY APRIL 9, 2026

7:00 PM

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

ZOOM Meeting

Present: Chair Lisa Kouchakdjian, Vice-Chair Janie Dretler, Select Board Member Dan Carty, Select Board Member Charles Russo, Select Board Member Radha Gargeya, Town Manager Andrew Sheehan,

CALL TO ORDER

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

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

Opening Remarks by Chair

Chair Kouchakdjian thanked Select Board Office Staff for coordinating the Liberty Ledge/Sewataro Advisory Committee interview sessions.

Chair Kouchakdjian noted that Select Board questions to the candidates would be taken in alphabetical order, with exception to her questions which would be taken last.

A. Miscellaneous

1. Interviews with candidates for Liberty Ledge/Sewataro Advisory Committee (may be taken out of order):

1. William Atkeson

2. Kay Bell

3. Rachel Henschel

4. William Pimentel

5. Jonathan Harding

6. David Henkels

7. Christine Vitkauskas

Interview with William Atkeson (Granger)

Mr. Atkeson presented his professional background, highlighting his experience on Park & Recreation Commission (PRC) and liaison to the CPC (Community Preservation Committee).

Board Member Carty asked about the perspective that Mr. Atkeson brings to the Committee. Mr. Atkeson stated that he knew very little about the site and would bring a fresh perspective to the Committee and would bring experience of other Town organizations to the table as well.

Board Member Carty asked Mr. Atkeson if he had ever been opposed to the Camp Sewataro Town purchase. Mr. Atkeson responded not.

Vice-Chair Dretler asked Mr. Atkeson what related criteria he would use. Mr. Atkeson stated that he would try to consider what the future might look like and share related information with the Advisory Committee.

Vice-Chair Dretler asked if the candidate had any connection to the Camp. Mr. Atkeson responded not.

Board Member Gargeya inquired how Mr. Atkeson would approach when presented with perspectives different from his own. He stated that the Committee would explore all options. Mr. Atkeson responded that he would anticipate and consider all options as a private citizen of the Town.

Board Member Gargeya asked what related experience the candidate would bring to the Committee. Mr. Atkeson responded that he had considerable HR experience and can appreciate the accessibility needs of the community as he has a disabled child. He mentioned that he would like to be involved with the accessibility aspect when examining needs at the site.

Board Member Russo asked if the candidate could be realistic when considering the site in light of monetary restraints in the Town currently. Mr. Atkeson responded that he understood such limitations and would consider all possible options based on all conditions.

Board Member Russo asked what the candidate regarded as important questions. The candidate responded that what was voted on at Town Meeting was important and how best to meet the needs of the residents should also be the focus.

Chair Kouchakdjian asked how the candidate would approach such a contentious Town topic. Mr. Atkeson responded that he would be willing to listen to all opinions and is familiar with various opinions as presented with PRC; he would work through it.

Interview with Kay Bell

Board Member Carty asked about the perspective that the candidate would bring to the Committee. Ms. Bell responded that she would take a broad view of the property and has the willingness to listen to residents. She added that she would take the accessibility perspective for the most part, noting that the site had great potential.

Board Member Carty asked Ms. Bell about her direct experience in the accessibility light and how would she help to advance additional accessibility at the site. Ms. Bell responded that rest room accessibility and

parking. She commented that retrofitting was more difficult when compared to the Fairbanks Community Center which is new.

Board Member Carty asked the candidate if they were ever opposed to the Camp or the Camp operator. Ms. Bell responded not.

Vice-Chair Dretler asked the candidate how they viewed the primary purpose of the Committee and the Mission Statement. Ms. Bell responded that part of the purpose involved looking at the current conditions at the site and determine how to proceed; residents will offer ideas/input. She stated that she was particularly interested in related financials and does have that experience as well.

Vice-Chair Dretler asked if any family members attended the camp or were associated with the Camp. Ms. Bell responded not.

Board Member Gargeya asked the candidate about her experience in accessibility and serving on the Sudbury Housing Trust and related finance projects. Ms. Bell explained that she is currently working on accessibility regs at the State Level and she has served on non-profits for a number of years and does understand elements involved in such budgets.

Board Member Gargeya asked how the candidate would react to various opinions expressed. Ms. Bell stated that she understands that there would be different opinions and she would listen to what people might say and everyone should be very clear in their presentations. She stressed that she would accept a final vote.

Board Member Russo asked if the candidate could be realistic when considering the site in light of monetary restraints in the Town currently. Ms. Bell stated that via the purchase, the Town was ready to develop a long-term designation and if changes are recommended there may be possibilities for implementing various usage over a planned period of time; incremental improvements.

Board Member Russo asked what the candidate regarded as important questions. Ms. Bell responded that maximizing passive recreation would be important for people of all ages and abilities, she stressed additional outreach.

Board Member Russo acknowledged that Ms. Bell has been advocating accessibility at the site for a long time. Ms. Bell explained her connection with accessibility and connection with the ADA Center of New England. Board Member Russo asked if Ms. Bell could be objective if appointed to the Committee. Ms. Bell responded in the affirmative.

Chair Kouchakdjian asked how the candidate would approach such a contentious Town topic. Ms. Bell responded that she is open to hearing what people have to say and would "gather it all."

Interview with Rachel Henschel

Ms. Henschel explained that she and her family moved to Sudbury in 2019 and loves her neighborhood, her kids are very involved, and she is active in PTA. Ms. Henschel provided related professional experience in light of city planning and the management of very large budgets. She stated that she partnered with MA Builders Association and now works with multi-family development/housing and meeting State housing objectives.

Board Member Carty asked about the perspective that the candidate would bring to the Committee. Ms. Henschel responded that she would maintain a fresh viewpoint and would be interested in assuming the housing-related study for the Committee.

Board Member Carty asked the candidate if they were ever opposed to the Camp or the Camp operator. The candidate responded not.

Vice-Chair Dretler asked the candidate how they viewed the primary purpose of the Committee and the Mission Statement and related funding opportunities for the site. Ms. Henschel responded that she would first examine what the Town needs are and then would focus on the financial value associated with those needs.

Vice-Chair Dretler asked if any family members attended the camp or were associated with the Camp. The candidate responded that her children have attended the Camp.

Board Member Gargeya asked how she understood the mission statement. She mentioned that given the Candidates experience, could she help with a Committee Advisory Report. Ms. Henschel responded that a history of the site must be examined and understood with documentation before a possible Report would be drafted. She stressed that any such report would focus on benefits vs. costs and what residents want and need.

Board Member Gargeya mentioned that the candidate had great planning experience and asked if she had other skills as well. Ms. Henschel responded to previous questions about disparate thoughts and that she was trained in consensus planning/building, which includes best alternatives to agreements.

Board Member Russo asked if the candidate could be realistic when considering the site in light of monetary restraints in the Town currently. The Candidate responded that her work in sustainability and experience with big business vs. environmentalists showed her that compromise worked on most plans with adjustments made. She stated that lower cost options would be important in consideration of the down municipal budgets.

Board Member Russo mentioned the negative impacts of social media on kids and a lead speaker in town has advocated for open space and camps. Ms. Henschel agreed that social media can negatively impact children, and a number of camps which are more affordable could be considered by young families.

Chair Kouchakdjian asked how the candidate would approach such a contentious Town topic. Ms. Henschel responded that she deals with such divisions all the time in her work, and is an even-tempered type of person.

Interview with William Pimentel

Mr. Pimentel explained his professional experience in investment financing and had a great interest in health care also. He stated that if chosen to serve on the Advisory Committee, he would like to be involved in the finance aspect.

Board Member Carty asked the candidate if they were ever opposed to the Camp or the Camp operator. Mr. Pimentel responded not and stated that he would bring a fresh perspective to the Committee and had related experience.

Vice-Chair Dretler asked the candidate how they viewed the primary goal of the Committee. Mr. Pimentel replied that things could be improved at the site and he could help with plans for maximizing assets and evaluating the site in a way which might help the Sudbury community. Vice Chair Dretler asked if any family members attended the camp or were associated with the camp. Mr. Pimentel said his children attended the camp.

Board Member Gargeya asked how the candidate viewed the mission statement of the Advisory Committee. The candidate stated that he understood the mission statement as representing what is best for the Town. He stated that the Camp has been a mainstay in town and continues to be so.

Board Member Gargeya asked how the candidate would react to various opinions expressed. Mr. Pimentel confirmed he has such exposure at work and listens to others in order to understand their perspectives and would look forward to that opportunity.

Board Member Russo asked if the candidate could be realistic when considering the site in light of monetary restraints in the Town currently. Mr. Pimentel responded that additional costs might be complicated at this time and the Town might not want to assume additional capital expense.

Chair Kouchakdjian asked the candidate about their role on the Committee might be. The candidate stated that he can be objective/impartial and commented that to date, the Camp has been good for the Town.

Chair Kouchakdjian asked how the candidate would approach such a such a contentious Town topic. Mr. Pimentel stated that he views strong opinions as representative of people with great passion about a particular topic.

Jonathan Harding

Mr. Harding was not present.

Interview with David Henkels

Mr. Henkels shared his community experience, including being in the insurance industry for some time, serving on the Sudbury Conservation Commission, the Land Acquisition Committee and the Master Steering Committee as well. He stressed that he has the ability to listen to people intensively and would look forward to discussions regarding the site.

Board Member Carty asked the Candidate what he might bring to the Committee and if he had ever been vocal about the Camp or the Camp Operator. Mr. Henkels stated he would apply his natural resources background if voted to be on the Committee. He noted that he is always involved in budgeting on the farm and MCAA. He confirmed that he never spoke against the Camp or the Camp Operator.

Vice-Chair Dretler asked what criteria the candidate would use when assessing future use of the site. The Candidate responded that the infrastructure associated with the site would be an important factor when considering additional development and that he would want to understand the functionality of all resources on the site. He mentioned short-term and long-term advancements.

Vice-Chair Dretler asked if any family members were associated with the Camp. Mr. Henkels responded not.

Board Member Gargeya asked if there were any additional skills that could help the Committee. Mr. Henkels responded that he had a part on the recent implementations at the old Medfield State Hospital site, which now is an extraordinary venue for the arts, events and is a welcoming place. He explained the many difficult permitting processes involved in that project.

Board Member Gargeya asked how the candidate would react to various strong opinions expressed. The candidate responded that he would be as open-minded as possible and believes in collaboration will serve best when advancing long-term and short-term plans for the site.

Board Member Russo asked if the candidate could be realistic when considering the site in light of monetary restraints in the Town currently. Mr. Henkels responded that he could not provide a succinct response until Committee discussion began and proposals/suggestions are brought forward.

Chair Kouchakdjian asked how the Candidate would respond if people try to sway his opinion. The candidate responded that he would listen to those people and treat them with respect.

Interview with Christine Vitkauskas

Ms. Vitkauskas explained that she lived in proximity to the Liberty Ledge/Sewataro site and does love her neighborhood and frequently walks through the Camp. She mentioned possible added uses at the site including a coop for gardening perhaps. She stated that she was thankful that the Town bought the property.

Board Member Carty stated that Ms. Vitkauskas represented a fresh voice as did several other candidates.

Board Member Carty asked the candidate what a fresh voice such as hers, might bring to the Committee. Ms. Vitkauskas detailed that given her project/program management background, she approaches projects with an analytical eye and uses data to examine related costs, mitigation, etc. and does have an MBA. She stated that she would consider other possible or concurrent uses at the site.

Board Member Carty asked if the candidate ever spoke against the purchase of the site, renewal terms or spoke against the Camp Operator. The candidate responded not.

Vice-Chair Dretler asked what the candidate saw as the primary purpose/function of the Advisory Committee and what the Committee should and should not be responsible for. Ms. Vitkauskas responded that she viewed the primary purpose involved examining the property and ensure that Committee recommendations would benefit the community and taxpayers. She added that the Committee was responsible for all members of the Committee review and consider all presented options for the site, vet the pros and cons for all options and agree on analysis method so members can make informed decisions/recommends to present to the Select Board.

Vice-Chair Dretler asked if the candidate had any family members who attend/attended the Camp. Ms. Vitkauskas responded not and at some point, her grandsons were considering going to the Camp.

Board Member Gargeya asked about other related experience. The candidate detailed that she worked as a portfolio manager and has been involved with budgets for various programs; she noted that several years ago she considered volunteering at the Camp.

Board Member Gargeya asked how the candidate would react to opinions different from her own while serving on the Committee. The candidate responded that she was open-minded and always listens to all points of view and acknowledges that with such a committee there would always be differences of opinion and with her job, objectivity is key.

Board Member Russo asked what questions should the Committee consider. The candidate responded that all questions must be considered and the organizational skills that she possesses would be essential as well as the ability to really listen to others.

Board Member Russo asked about possible related risks that the Town should avoid. Ms. Vitkauskas responded that to avoid risk, she would research and gather all information before she could answer that question.

Chair Kouchakdjian asked how the candidate would respond to various perspectives and how would she react to individuals reaching out to her privately. The candidate stated that she would ask the individual/s additional questions regarding their position and would be open to what they may say.

Chair Kouchakdjian stated that in light of the candidate's open support of Camp Sewataro, could she consider other options for the site. Ms. Vitkauskas repeated that she could be objective and wants to do the right thing for the community/taxpayers and consider any possible investment.

Chair Kouchakdjian recommended that the Select Board Office reach out to Mr. Harding to see if he would be interested in being interviewed at the upcoming Select Board meeting. Town Manager Sheehan was in agreement.

Review and release attorney-client privileged communication between Town Counsel and Town Manager

Town Manager Sheehan presented the public records request to release Attorney-Client information between the former Town Manager and Town Counsel.

Board Member Russo asked who submitted the public records request regarding this matter. Town Manager Sheehan responded that resident Maura Carty made the request.

Vice-Chair Dretler struck the first motion due to additional language agreed upon by the Board Members.

Vice-Chair Dretler motioned to release the Attorney-Client privileged communication between the Town Manager and Town Counsel with materials as provided by Town Manager Sheehan to the Select Board on Friday, April 3, 2026. Board Member Carty seconded the motion.

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

VOTED: To release the Attorney-Client privileged communication between the Town Manager and Town Counsel with materials as provided by Town Manager Sheehan to the Select Board on Friday, April 3, 2026

Per request by the Board, Town Manager Sheehan confirmed this information with the public records request would be added to tonight's Select Board Packet as supplemental packet information and will be posted to the website.

Adjourn

Vice-Chair Dretler motioned to adjourn the April 9, 2026 Select Board meeting. Board Member Carty seconded the motion.

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

VOTED: To adjourn the April 9, 2026 Select Board meeting

There being no further business, the Select Board meeting was adjourned at 9:29 PM.