

LIBERTY LEDGE SEWATARO ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting Held June 4, 2026

At the Police Station Training Room, 73 Hudson Road

And virtually on Zoom

Present by roll call vote: Dave Henkels, Chairman; Granger Atkeson by Zoom, Kay Bell; Jennifer Pincus; Radha Gargeya, Vice Chair; Debbie Dineen; Bill Pimental by Zoom

Also Present: James Goudie-Murray, Sudbury Management Analyst

Chairman Henkels called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00pm. A quorum was present.

D. Henkels informed everyone that the Listening Session has been scheduled for June 24th at the Fairbanks Community Center. J. Goudie has developed a flyer and a meeting structure document for review. The session will have a hybrid component to allow the maximum number of residents to participate. In addition, the LLSAC Committee will be meeting with the Board of Health, Park & Recreation Commission, Sudbury Housing Trust and the Combined Facilities Director to understand their needs as it might pertain to the Liberty Ledge property.

Following review and comments on the flyer, the Committee voted unanimously in favor of approving the flyer. Motion by J. Pincus; 2nd R. Gargeya.

Responding to K. Bell, J. Goudie-Murray stated that the flyer will be posted to town social media. D. Henkels stressed that public input is needed and greatly encouraged. R. Gargeya stated that flyers should have maximum visibility. J. Pincus suggested public tours of the property, perhaps prior to the Listening Session, if possible.

K. Bell had submitted a question and comment document for Asst. Town Manager Garofalo that he sent to D. Henkels. The Committee agreed that developing an on-going list of questions that will become part of a future agenda is a good idea.

Any questions should be sent to D. Henkels to be forwarded to James Goudie-Murray to be included in the appropriate agenda.

R. Gargeya added that the questions should be sent out to the presenters prior to the meeting.

Mr. Garafalo, Assistant Town Manager, was present via Zoom to discuss town finances with respect to Camp Sewataro. The property was purchased by the Town in 2019.

Since 2020, the total revenue received over the past 5-6 years from the Camp through the revenue-sharing agreement is \$1,918,693. The total debt for the purchase is \$13,673,983. The interest on the bond is 2.5-3%. He noted that this may be able to be reduced in the future. No issues have been reported by the auditor. He also noted that figures may not appear to match exactly as the Town and the Camp run on different fiscal years.

The Town is 6 years into the 20-year bond that matures in 2042. The bond is being paid through a debt exclusion vote (outside of Proposition 2 ½) as approved by 2019 Town Meeting.

The town receives a base amount plus a percentage of revenue each year. He noted that Camp expansion could lead to greater profits which could lead to a larger profit for the town. Mr. Garofalo is not aware of any expenditures for the property by the Town. He did note that there was an insurance claim recently due to tree falling on a building. All maintenance costs are paid by the Camp.

Responding to a question from a committee member, Mr. Garofalo stated that a revolving fund for camp revenues would only make sense if the Town ran the camp. He did not know the value of the residences on the property, particularly 213 Haynes Road and the adjacent fields. The value would likely be lower if the property was sold to the Sudbury Housing Trust. This would also result in lower tax revenues to the Town.

In reply to D. Henkels, V. Garofalo stated that based on the revenues for the past seven+- years, the revenue would not off-set the cost of acquisition over the term of the bond. At the end of the bond term, approximately \$7,000,000 will be received assuming the revenue remains the same over this term. G. Atkeson summed up that the bond expense is approximately 2.5 times the revenue. However, this does not take into account the maintenance costs paid by the camp. V. Garofalo agreed but noted that the maintenance expense is likely more for the camp operations than it would be if the town maintained the property as open space. G. Atkeson noted that the camp uses about 90% of the property. V. Garofalo agreed but added that camp use is seasonal. K. Bell asked if any numbers were available to determine the maintenance expense for camp use vs. what it would be for potentially expanded public programming. V. Garofalo replied that he would have to dig down into camp information to provide this number. K. Bell thought it would be good to know what it would take financially to expand town use of the site.

R. Gargeya noted that the revenue share numbers fluctuate, particularly in 2022 and 2023. V. Garofalo replied that the revenue share is a variable each year and fluctuations could be caused by larger maintenance items. D. Henkels questioned if the Town has been responsible for any costs from 2022-2026. V. Garofalo stated that no maintenance or upkeep has been paid by the town that he has seen so far. He added that the insurance is paid by the camp, however claims are initiated by the Town.

Scott Brody, Camp Operator, clarified that the revenue increases noted in 2022 and 2023 were due to the receipt of federal grant funding from the Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) during Covid that he chose to share with the Town. He added that the camp is responsible for building maintenance regardless of whether or not they use the buildings. He thought the property was in “tip-top” shape and easily accessible to the public due to the upkeep by the camp, including lawn maintenance, plowing of roads, etc.

In response to R. Gargeya, S. Brody replied that the numbers at current full capacity for the existing infrastructure. K. Bell questioned if town activities were expanded, how might the maintenance and revenue numbers be impacted. S. Brody replied that the Selectboard would have to make that decision. He would be willing to work with the Town on a fee structure that would not impact revenue share if town activities or camp enrollment were increased. S. Brody said he would welcome closer partnerships with the town and its citizens to use the property to its full potential. He is open to working on closer partnerships with the Town. He believes the Town is now more comfortable working with the Camp as he is known entity. He added that he works closely with the recreation director at his camp, Everwood, in Sharon. He stated that in Sharon he uses about ½ the 42-acre town site plus a second 20-acre site owned by a non-profit.

Will Adams, 135 Greystone, asked if any other town land purchases have revenue, such as the rail trail or conservation land. V. Garofalo replied that some fields have user fees, but that land was purchased for different purposes. R. Gargeya added that if the land was purchased using CPC funds, the CPC requirements dictate the use. D. Dineen added that although the town does not receive direct monetary revenue from conservation land, other benefits such as water quality protection, clean air, wildlife habitat, and maintenance of town character is provided. These functions are obtained from keeping the land free from development.

Mark Marchionne, 28 Julian's Way, noted that once the bond is paid, all revenue is available to the town. J. Pincus noted that this revenue is in addition to the town's use of the property. V. Garofalo noted that the town has use of the even while paying the debt.

Bill Pimental questioned if there is anything that the town needs that is currently not available. Is there any need that could be fulfilled that might be better use of

town funds? V. Garofalo stated that there is nothing in the 15-year capital plan except the need for more recreational field space. This need could be addressed with current town-owned properties. G. Atkeson added that Liberty Ledge property could be a valuable future town asset for needs such as schools. Etc. V. Garofalo reminded the committee members that the property has no restrictions on future use.

Will Adams, 135 Greystone Ln., noted that there is a 7-year wait list for private swimming facilities in town and there might be some potential there. D. Dineen added that the shallow pools are not used by the public. She thought the fourth lease modification required these pools to be available to the public when not in use by the camp. S. Brody explained that it was a Select Board decision not to have these pools open to the public. For several reasons the swimming program for the public takes place at the swimming pond.

Mark Marchionne, 28 Julian's Way, questioned how unique the fishing pond was for Sudbury. D. Dineen replied that the Wayside Inn has Josephine's Pond that is open to the public for fishing. Conservation land ponds are generally too shallow to support sport fishing. J. Pincus added that the Sudbury River and Willis Pond are all available for fishing. M. Marchionne suggested holding a remote-controlled sailboat regatta on the camp fishing pond. K. Drummey, camp administrator, would encourage more public use of the property. She noted that during Covid the camp was used for Lincoln Sudbury Adult Education classes in pottery, candle making and was a potential site for drone operation class. J. Pincus suggested that the committee get a list from the camp of what non-camp activities and programs have been hosted on the property over the past 6-7 years. D. Dineen suggested an outreach to LS Adult Ed to see if the property could accommodate some additional Adult Ed classes that cannot be accommodated at the high school. K. Bell suggested

that all bookings and events at the property should be included in the on-line Liberty Ledge calendar. K. Drummey agreed that putting all the events onto the calendar would be beneficial.

R. Gargeya stated the importance of gathering input from all entities in town on the current and future use of the property. J. Goudie-Murray reminded the Committee that there is formal Listening Session scheduled for June 24th at Fairbanks Community Center. He reviewed his draft outline for the procedure for collecting comments at the session. These included breaking into smaller groups for idea discussions and then bringing these ideas back to the entire group for vote. D. Dineen felt that approach would work if there are a large number of participants but she questioned how remote participants would be included. J. Goudie-Murray explained that remote participants might be managed with online features. D. Dineen added that graphic images, large maps and aerial photos, might be beneficial to have available. She added that it will be important to make it clear this Committee is only advisory and will be making recommendations to the Select Board for any further action.

G. Atkeson suggested that a vote by listening session participants on options at this point may not be the best approach. He suggested having participants complete a survey as an alternative to a vote. K. Bell suggested that the survey should come after the listening session. Information gathering may help shape the contents of the survey and help prioritize/rank the questions to be included in the survey.

J. Goudie-Murray stated the committee should stress to the public that it is looking for all ideas, not just the popular ones. D. Dineen noted that the committee members should not be participants in the discussions, only be listeners. G. Atkeson questioned how the listening session was treated under Open Meeting Law. Will there be minutes? How does that work with small break-out groups? J. Goudie-Murray replied that there is no legal requirement for minutes and an agenda in this situation, however he

recommends providing these items. R. Gargeya agreed and cautioned LLSAC members that they should “a fly on the wall” and just listen and take notes. J. Goudie-Murray agreed to be the facilitator at the session.

Mark Marchionne, 28 Julian's' Way, questioned the format of the survey. J. Goudie-Murray suggested using the Flash Vote capabilities on the Town website and will investigate other methods. R. Gargeya noted that the best method will be the one, or ones, that gets the maximum participation.

Marion Glenn, 39 Julians' Way, made the following comments/observations:

1. There is not enough advertising of events being held at the property. She suggested utilizing features such as the Facebook event feature which features events close by.
2. Is Park & Recreation interested in hosting more events, such as concerts, theater, etc?
3. The distribution of the survey to as many residents as possible is extremely important.

G. Atkeson noted that the Park & Recreation Commission will be looking at additional event programming at their June 15 meeting. This discussion will continue at their July and August meetings as well.

With no more questions from the Committee or the public at this time, D. Henkels called for a motion to adjourn. Motion by K. Bell; 2nd R. Gargeya; unanimous in favor by roll call vote. The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:15 pm.