



MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA

SELECT BOARD • TOWN HALL

Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts 01944-1399

Telephone (978) 526-2000 FAX (978) 526-2001

MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD

January 21, 2025

6:30pm

Hybrid Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting, Meeting: ID 872 5076 2791 Passcode: 039766 Mobile: 1.646.558.8656

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Harrison – Chair, Mr. Round – Vice-Chair, Ms. Bilotta, Mr. Delaney, Mr. Sollosy (arrived at 7:49pm)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Town Administrator, Mr. Federspiel, Executive Assistant Debbie Powers

Ms. Harrison called the Select Board meeting to order at 6:30pm and four members were in person and stated the meeting is recorded. Mr. Sollosy arrived at 7:49pm

Public Comment: Ms. Bilotta asked what sidewalks are cleared by the town. Mr. Round explained that the DPW has a list of sidewalks plowed which will be posted on the website.

Chairman Report & Actions Items: The Board reviewed the action items.

1. Sustainability Committee Interview – Max Messervy:

Mr. Messervy introduced himself to the Select Board as a candidate for the Sustainability Committee. Mr. Messervy outlined his background, including a master's degree in public policy with an energy and environmental focus from UCLA. He described his professional experience working on sustainability issues in the insurance and investment industries.

Board members asked Mr. Messervy about his previous involvement with town committees, to which he replied this would be his first such role. They inquired about his attendance at recent Sustainability Committee meetings, and Mr. Messervy confirmed he had attended the last meeting.

Mr. Delaney moved that the Select Board appoint Max Messervy to the Sustainability Committee for a term to expire on June 30, 2026; Ms. Bilotta seconded. Mr. Delaney – yes, Ms. Bilotta – yes, Ms. Harrison – yes, Mr. Round - yes

2. Quarterly Reports:

a. **Police Chief:** Chief Fitzgerald provided his quarterly update to the Board. He highlighted the department's recent accreditation and efforts on emergency preparedness, including work on a community emergency response team and expanding regional collaboration.

He discussed staffing updates, including recruitment for parking enforcement and noted community policing initiatives like fundraising for the comfort dog program and website updates to improve access to services. The department's budget remains on track and he selected to attend an antisemitism training program for law enforcement officers to be held at the Holocaust Museum in D.C..

Board members asked questions about the department's website and data management. There was a discussion about coordinating with other town departments on IT systems and websites to avoid duplication and ensure data consistency.

b. **Fire Chief:** Chief McNeilly provided his quarterly update to the board. He reported that the department had completed employee evaluations and made some group changes to optimize strengths and address weaknesses.

He discussed vehicle and equipment updates, including progress on a new engine and efforts to extend the life of existing apparatus through preventative maintenance. He noted staffing is stable and overtime is on target.

The chief highlighted the success of the call firefighter program and implementation of new software systems. He reported on training initiatives and community programs like lockbox installations for seniors. He stated the department's budget is 56% spent for the fiscal year, on track with projections. He praised the collaboration between public safety departments during recent events.

Board members asked questions about wildfire risks in town and emergency preparedness. There was discussion about high-risk areas and pre-planning efforts.

c. **Town Administrator:** Mr. Federspiel provided his quarterly update to the board. He highlighted the recent special town meeting, which had record attendance, and ongoing budget preparation work.

Mr. Federspiel reported on the hiring of consultants for an operations audit and town administrator search. He discussed staffing updates, including a new shared conservation agent with Hamilton and the hiring of a new custodian.

Board members asked questions about the operational audit reception by staff and the timeline for various projects. There was also discussion about balancing different priorities and communication efforts.

3. Review and Consider Adjustment to Water Bill for 33 Harbor Street:

This item was postponed at the request of the property owner, who was unable to attend the meeting. The board agreed to address it at their next meeting.

4. Review and Approve Parks & Recreation Committee's Naming Policy for Fields & Other Recreational Areas:

Parks and Recreation Director Cheryl Marshall presented a draft policy for naming fields and recreation areas. She explained the policy was developed in response to multiple requests to name the new Pine Street field.

Board members provided feedback on the draft policy, including:

- Considering allowing honorary subtitles for fields rather than full name changes
- Adding language to allow naming based on historical events or locations, not just people
- Implementing a public notification process when naming requests are received
- Adjusting the policy to address the naming of entire facilities versus amenities within them

The Board requested that Ms. Marshall incorporate their feedback and return with a revised draft at a future meeting.

5. Discussion:

a. Parking & Resident Stickers:

The Board discussed parking enforcement and resident sticker distribution. Key points included:

- Overall, the summer 2024 parking system worked well
- There were 9 days when the Singing Beach lot reached capacity
- Resident sticker distribution through car registrations has shifted some administrative burden

The board agreed to maintain the status quo for another season while continuing to monitor. There was discussion about potentially delaying mailing of stickers until closer to when they are needed in spring.

Ms. Bilotta requested more enforcement on Pine Street and School Street and discussed options for accommodating businesses with parking needs that exceed time limits on Central Street.

b. Town Administrator Screening Committee Selection Criteria:

The board discussed the process of selecting members of the Town Administrator Screening Committee. They reviewed draft questions to be sent to applicants and agreed on the following approach:

- Send questions 1-4 and 6 to applicants in advance, requesting written responses
- Plan to discuss questions 7-8 in person during interviews
- Request concise responses from applicants
- Hold separate interview sessions for former Select Board members versus other applicants
- Aim to select 2 members from each group (former Select Board and at-large)

The Board agreed to schedule the interviews for January 30th and appointments on February 3rd.

6. Water Ban – Lift Outdoor Ban:

Ms. Bilotta moved that the Select Board rescind the ban on outdoor water consumption effective immediately; Mr. Delaney seconded. Mr. Delaney – yes, Mr. Sollosy – yes, Ms. Bilotta – yes, Ms. Harrison – yes, Mr. Round - yes

7. Liaison Reports

Mr. Round updated that the library trustees are considering next steps after not receiving the grant and the DPW is working on finding another vendor for the wayfinding signs.

Ms. Bilotta stated the Finance Committee is reviewing departmental budgets and revenue estimation methods.

Mr. Delaney updated that the Harbor Advisory Committee is discussing mooring reorganization plans.

8. Consent Agenda:

a. Special Event Permit – Hit the Street for Little Feet, May 16, 2025

b. Approval of a Smaller Library attached to the “Little Library” in Masconomo Park

c. Accept Resignation of Elizabeth Heisey from the Manchester Housing Authority Effective May 19, 2025

Mr. Sollosy moved that the Select Board approve the consent agenda items; Mr. Delaney seconded. Mr. Delaney – yes, Mr. Sollosy – yes, Ms. Bilotta – yes, Ms. Harrison – yes, Mr. Round - yes

9. Town Administrator's Report

- **DPW Facility:** We are waiting for the geotechnical report and recommendations from the engineers regarding the upper School Street location and what might be possible. Hope to discuss it at the board's next meeting.
- **Aggregation draft plan:** Our vendor has drawn up the draft plan. This is pretty much boiler plate language based on state law. This needs to be posted for a 30-day comment period. Once the plan is approved by the state, we will work with our vendor in soliciting price proposals for standard supply, semi-green supply and 100% green supply. Our vendor will then help us decide which proposal to go with.
- **OML Complaint:** Recall that we had a complaint filed about some minor violations. The complainant accepted the response you approved, and the case is closed.
- **Annual Report:** Last year we did not distribute copies to every household but still printed 1200 copies of the report. We had way too many extras. We also publish the report online. For this year we are thinking of printing 4-500 copies (make available at the ATM) and mail the Finance Committee report with the warrant to all households. The Board agreed with this approach.
- **Longevity Benches:** Two locations the board approved are not going forward as the property owners have changed their mind. Lisa Bonnaville is working on alternative locations and will be back with new proposals for your review and approval.

10. Executive Session:

9:08pm *Ms. Harrison moved that the Select Board enter Executive Session per MGL Ch. 30A, Section 21(A)6 to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real estate if the Chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body and will return to open session; Mr. Sollosy seconded. Mr. Delaney – yes, Mr. Sollosy – yes, Ms. Bilotta – yes, Ms. Harrison – yes, Mr. Round – yes*

9:27pm *Mr. Round moved that the Board exit executive session to return to open session; Mr. Sollosy seconded. Mr. Delaney – yes, Mr. Sollosy – yes, Ms. Bilotta – yes, Ms. Harrison – yes, Mr. Round - yes*

Ms. Harrison moved, and John Round seconded, that the Board authorize the Town Administrator to proceed with taking the needed easements by eminent domain unless the property owner of 26 Central Street accepts the Town's last offer provided on Friday, January 17, 2025, by 10am on Monday, January 28, 2025. Mr. Delaney – yes, Mr. Sollosy – yes, Ms. Bilotta – yes, Ms. Harrison – yes, Mr. Round - yes

9:30pm *Ms. Bilotta moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Delaney seconded. Mr. Delaney – yes, Mr. Sollosy – yes, Ms. Bilotta – yes, Ms. Harrison – yes, Mr. Round - yes*

Meeting Materials:

Committee Appointment Form
Quarterly reports
33 Harbor Street water bill information
Draft Naming Policy
Parking & Resident Parking Information
Consent Agenda items