



TOWN OF KINGSTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
OPEN SESSION MINUTES
TOWN HOUSE-26 EVERGREEN ST. ROOM 200 & VIA ZOOM
January 14, 2025

6:00 p.m. – CALL TO ORDER – ROOM 200

Chairman Eric Crone called to order the meeting of the Board of Selectmen at 6:00 p.m.—selectmen in attendance: Tyler Bouchard, Kimberley Emberg, Donald Alcombright (virtual), and Melissa Bateman.

The Board began with a roll call.

Staff Present: Keith Hickey, Town Administrator and Patricia Tucker, Assistant to Town Administrator and Board of Selectmen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Happy New Year!
2. This meeting is being recorded by The Local Seen. Anyone who intends to make an audio or video recording of this meeting should notify the Chair at this time.
3. Financial Assistance Applications are available on the town's website or by calling the Selectmen's Office.
4. For anyone interested in volunteering, there are several vacancies on various boards and committees. Please check the website for a listing. There is an opening on the Wage and Personnel Board, Capital Planning and Finance Committee.
5. Please check our website for any additional events or notices www.kingstonma.gov
 - o Town Meeting – April 26, 2025
 - o Town Election May 17, 2025
6. Water Department Memo Regarding Rate Increase.

OPEN FORUM:

There was nobody in attendance for Open Forum.

APPOINTMENTS:

Presentation of Proposed Snow Plowing on Unaccepted Road Policy

Mr. Crone mentioned that that Town Planner Valerie Massard is recommending an update to the policy for plowing unaccepted roads in Kingston. The policy was accepted on August 29, 2023. Included in the meeting packet is the updated draft policy for the Board's consideration.

Valerie Massard, Town Planner was in attendance to discuss the amendment which states "Unaccepted private ways constructed 2020 or later are not eligible for snow removal."

Ms. Bateman noted that on #8 it states "DPW will perform yearly inspections of private roads prior to September 15th annually and post a list of roads on the Town's website and local newspaper that do not meet the minimum requirements" Ms. Bateman asked what the date was that this would be done by and it was answered November 1st to posted to the website.

Motion by Ms. Emberg, seconded by Ms. Bateman and a 5-0-0 vote, roll call vote,

VOTE: I move to approve the policy for plowing unaccepted roads presented this evening as amended with November 1st date for the notification.

Authorize Police Chief to Make Conditional Offers to Two Patrol Candidates to Fill Two Open Positions

Mr. Crone discussed that Chief Holmes is requesting the Board to Authorize conditional offers to two candidates in a two-part process.

Chief Holmes was in attendance discussed they are looking to offer a conditionals offer is subject to passing a CS PAT, psychological and medical CS pre-employment screening. Once successfully completed the candidate is then given a tentative offer which encompasses completion of a basic MPTC recruit academy, academy pre-screening physical fitness exam [cooper standards] and upon completion of the academy the successful completion of the department's Field Training Program as well as a one-year probationary period beginning upon the date of swearing in.

Chief Holmes provided a brief introduction of each candidate.

The Board had no questions.

Motion by Mr. Bouchard, seconded by Ms. Emberg, and a 5-0-0 vote, roll call vote

VOTE: I move that the Board authorize Chief Holmes to tender both conditional and tentative offers of employment to Kevin Carlson and Matthew Bennett consistent with the terms in the letter on behalf of the Board of Selectmen and report back periodically as to their progress.

Acceptance of Donation for Council on Aging

Mr. Crone discussed that the Council on Aging received and is requesting the Board accept a donation of \$50.

Motion by Ms. Emberg, seconded by Ms. Bateman and a 5-0-0 vote, roll call vote

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen accept the following donations:

- \$50 from Elizabeth Smart.

Acceptance of Resignation from Affordable Housing Trust and Community Preservation Committee

Mr. Crone stated that the office was notified by Nathan Hedberg that he is no longer a Kingston resident and resigned immediately from both committees.

Motion by Ms. Emberg, seconded by Mr. Bouchard and a 5-0-0 vote, roll call vote

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen accept the resignation from Nathan Hedberg from the Affordable Housing Trust as well as Community Preservation effective immediately.

Appointment of Streets, Trees and Parks, CDL Driver/Laborer Position

Mr. Crone discussed that due to recent transfers within Streets, Trees and Parks the position of CDL Driver/Laborer position is vacant.

After completing the recruitment process, the Interim Superintendent is recommending the hiring of William Duggan to the position of CDL Driver/Laborer Position.

Motion by Mr. Bouchard, seconded by Ms. Emberg and a 5-0-0 vote, roll call vote

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen appoint William Duggan to the position of CDL Driver/Laborer Position a Grade 3, Step 6 nonexempt position as part of the Kingston Town Employee Union – Labor with and anticipated start date of January 27, 2025, consistent with the terms in the offer letter.

Open Session Meeting Minutes

Mr. Crone stated that the following meeting minutes need approval December 17, 2024

Motion by Ms. Bateman, seconded by Mr. Bouchard, and a 5-0-0 vote, roll call vote

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen approve the open session meeting minutes of December 17, 2024

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Hickey read from his report:

Financial Updates

- The Capital Planning Committee begin their review of the FY26 Capital Improvement Plan on Wednesday evening, January 15th. The Capital Planning Committee will meet every two weeks through mid-February.
- The Finance Committee will meet on the Wednesdays that Capital Planning is not meeting into April. The Finance Director and I plan to attend all meetings of both committees.

Project Updates

- There are no project updates this week.

Personnel Update

- Interviews for Director of Elder Affairs candidates will begin next week. I expect to present a recommended candidate to the Board of Selectmen on February 11th.

Miscellaneous Updates

- I will be attending the annual Massachusetts Municipal Conference on Friday and Saturday, January 24th and 25th.

6:15PM Public Hearing: Petition from Verizon New England Inc. and NSTAR Electric Company dba Eversource Energy, proposing to place new facilities on Maple Street

Mr. Crone discussed that Verizon New England Inc. and NSTAR Electric Company dba Eversource Energy, is seeking to install one mid span pole on Grove Street, proposing to place new facilities – Pole 119/1.5 on Grove Street. Interim Superintendent Shawn Turner has spoken with Eversource and reviewed the request and has no objections. It was noted that abutter notifications were sent on 12/23/2024.

Mr. Crone read the public hearing notice

Notice is hereby given that the Kingston Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing on the Petition W/O# 19272420 from NSTAR Electric Company dba Eversource Energy, requesting the installation of one (1) new pole on Grove Street. NSTAR Electric Company dba Eversource Energy requests permission to locate and relocate poles, wires, cables and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, to be owned and used in common by your petitioners, along and across the following public way or ways:

Install one (1) new POLE NO. 23/1 on Grove Street.

The hearing shall take place on Tuesday, January 14, 2025, and the meeting will begin at 6:15 p.m. in Room 200 at the Town House, 26 Evergreen Street, Kingston, MA. People interested are invited to attend and be heard in this matter.

Motion by Mr. Bouchard, seconded by Ms. Bateman and a 5-0-0 vote, roll call vote

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen open the public hearing

Ms. Emberg did a follow-up regarding a previous pole approval around the same location, and she discussed that has been completed and cleaned up.

Julie Longa of Eversource was in attendance via zoom for discussion.

Motion by Ms. Emberg, seconded by Mr. Bouchard and a 5-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen approve the request from NSTAR Electric Company dba Eversource Energy, installation of one (1) new pole on Grove Street. To locate and relocate poles, wires, cables and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, to be owned and used in common by your petitioners, along and across the following public way or ways:

Install one (1) new POLE NO. 23/1 on Grove Street

Motion by Mr. Bouchard, seconded by Ms. Emborg and a 5-0-0 vote,
VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen close the public hearing

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

Presentation of Town Administrator's Recommended FY26 Budget

Mr. Hickey presented his recommended proposed FY26 Budget to the Board. This budget is a 4.12% overall increase does not require a proposition 2 ½.

Mr. Hickey shared his screen, with a PowerPoint presentation that is in the Board packet. The presentation has also been uploaded to the town's website for review.

Mr. Hickey presented an overview of the Town Administrator's Proposed Budget. This is the first night the Board has seen the budget, so this was an overview discussion as the Board has not had a chance to review. The Board briefly discussed slides as Mr. Hickey presented.

The Board briefly discussed the process of a possible proposition 2 ½ which would require the Board to vote to put on the Town Meeting warrant as well as town election ballot.

The Police and Fire Chief were both in attendance to discuss the impact on their budgets.

Chief Douglass discussed the Fire budget and stated that they could reduce sick leave overtime in the Fire Budget and if someone was to call in sick the fire department will be down one person if someone calls in sick.

Chief Holmes addressed the Board and discussed his growth plan and asked the Board if they had any questions regarding what he is asking for.

Mr. Hickey discussed some of the changes:

- The transfer station currently has 7 Saturdays to accept brush, proposal is 3 Saturdays.
- Propose to close Transfer Station - Mondays - to close at 3:45pm instead of 7:45pm
- \$25,000 cut from the library
- Proposal to combine the PT Assistant Planner and FT building admin and eliminate the PT Assistant Planner. Employee to do the Planning Board agendas and minutes as a stipend which is addressed in the budget.

Mr. Crone discussed the FY26 Levy Limit Calculation, regarding the low number of new growth.

Mr. Crone discussed that the Fire, Police, and School department proposed budgets would all require a proposition 2 ½ override. It was noted that the biggest cuts in the Town Administrators budget are public safety.

Mr. Crone discussed additional meetings regarding the budget as well as discussing the time frame as to which the school budget will come in.

SELECTMEN COMMENTS:

Mark your calendars for Town Meeting on Saturday, April 26th

Motion by Mr. Bouchard, seconded by Ms. Bateman and a 4-0-0 vote, (Mr. Alcombright had left the meeting)
VOTE: I move to adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Tucker

