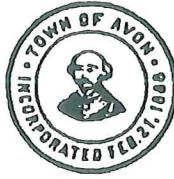


**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
Eric S. Beckerman, Chairman  
Jason L. Suzor, Sr., Clerk  
Shannon M. Coffey, Associate

Jonathan L. Beder  
**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR**

# Town of Avon Massachusetts



Town Offices  
Buckley Center 02322  
(508) 588-0414  
FAX (508) 559-0209

TOWN OF AVON

2023 AUG 11 A 11:06

TOWN CLERK

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**THURSDAY, JULY 6, 2023**  
**6:30 P.M.**

**Members Present:** Eric S. Beckerman, Chairman  
Jason L. Suzor, Sr., Clerk (via videoconference)  
Shannon M. Coffey, Associate

**Others Present:** Jonathan L. Beder, Town Administrator  
Shanna M. Faro, Executive Assistant/HR Coordinator  
Joseph S. Lalli, Esq., Town Counsel  
Fire Chief Robert Spurr  
William Fitzgerald, DPW Director  
Brian Martin, Assistant DPW Director (via videoconference)  
Justine Carroll, Tata & Howard (via videoconference)

Chairman Beckerman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with all members present. Chairman Beckerman announced that this meeting of the Board of Selectmen is being conducted via a hybrid method. The public may attend the Selectmen meetings in-person or may continue to participate via remote Zoom access. Chairman Beckerman reminded the viewing audience that people who would like to view this meeting while in progress may do so by joining the Zoom link for the videoconference. Links to watch the recorded meeting will be available on the Avon Cable Access website

[www.avontv.org](http://www.avontv.org).

Chief Spurr led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **Public Participation**

None

## **6:35 p.m. – Pinning Ceremony for new Firefighter David Freeman**

Chief Spurr was pleased to announce a new addition to the Avon Fire Department. Firefighter David Freeman transferred from a local department. Mr. Freeman has 5 ½ years of experience as a firefighter and 15 years of experience in emergency service as a paramedic. Firefighter Freeman was pinned by Chief Spurr.

## Meeting Minutes

Mr. Suzor made a motion to approve the June 15, 2023 (Regular Session) meeting minutes as written. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

Mr. Suzor made a motion to approve the June 28, 2023 (Workshop Session) meeting minutes as written. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. Ms. Coffey abstained as she was absent for that meeting. A roll call vote was taken. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

Mr. Suzor made a motion to approve the June 29, 2023 (Workshop Session) meeting minutes as written. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. Ms. Coffey abstained as she was absent for that meeting. A roll call vote was taken. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### Vacation Carryover Requests

Mr. Suzor made a motion to approve the carryover request of Assistant DPW Director Brian Martin for an additional 123 vacation carryover hours into Fiscal Year 2024 due to staffing shortages. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

### Ambulance Rates – Recommended Increases

Chief Spurr appeared before the Board to discuss ambulance rates. Chief Spurr stated that after a recent review of the Fire Department's current ambulance rates, he recommended rate increases. Chief Spurr informed the Board that the increases are based on the following criteria. As a background, Avon has historically set rates at 150% of Medicare plus per item billing. Medicare has raised their rates so high this year that the Fire Department's base rate is below 150% of Medicare. Also, per item billing is quickly losing favor as the billing method of choice. Billing rates based on 325% of Medicare with all services, except for mileage, being bundled is becoming the standard practice. Chief Spurr informed the Board that Massachusetts has bills in both houses of the legislature addressing this issue. It is assumed that 325% will be the rate that the lawmakers will choose. Towns below the state rate will likely not be able to immediately raise to 325% if they are significantly below. Chief Spurr stated that the Fire Department will be doing a Medicare mandated cost accounting in Fiscal Year 2024. Preliminary numbers indicate that the town's per transport cost will be very close to the BLS Emergency Base Rate when set to 325%. Chief Spurr stated that the changes in rate will have no effect on Medicare and Medicaid patients. These two payors made up 66% of the Fire Department's billing last year. The change in rates will result in both more revenue and more write-offs. Finally, Chief Spurr stated that Comstar is successfully billing at these rates.

<b>Ambulance Rates</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
BLS Emergency Base Rate:	\$660.00	\$1,550.00
ALS1 Emergency Base Rate	\$800.00	\$1,840.00
ALS2 Emergency Base Rate	\$1,140.00	\$2,665.00



Mileage: \$8.40 \$27.30  
All other services are now included in the base rate.

Mr. Suzor made a motion to approve the increases to the ambulance rates as recommended and instructed Chief Spurr to notify Comstar of these increases. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

#### **Harrison Boulevard/Pond Street Construction Update**

Mr. Martin informed the Board that there were some milling issues in May that placed the Harrison Boulevard/Pond Street construction project at a standstill. There have also been some issues between the contractor and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation over pricing and the cost of the project. Mr. Martin said that through the negotiations, the contractor has committed to resuming the project by first doing some line stripes and addressing some other concerns as addressed by the Department of Public Works such as drainage issues. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that a formal Work Order for the additional costs will need to be approved by MassDOT, which could take up to four weeks and cause further delays. Chairman Beckerman clarified for members of the viewing audience that the Harrison Boulevard/Pond Street construction project is a state project. It has not been botched by the Town. Chairman Beckerman stated that the line stripes for the lanes needs to be done as soon as possible as motorists need clear direction. He also asked for additional signage for the project, especially due to the delay. Ms. Coffey asked for regular updates on this project to be placed on the town's website.

#### **Electronic Signage Update**

Mr. Beder informed the Board that he is working on the electronic message board as requested by Chairman Beckerman. It will be a dual message board (V-shaped) at the high visibility intersection of West Main Street and Harrison Boulevard. Mr. Beder stated that since this was approved at the Town Meeting, there is a budget for this sign. He has already met with a representative from National Grid regarding this project. Mr. Beder will ensure that the electronic signage follows the requirements pursuant to the zoning bylaws. The Department of Public Works will assist with building a decorative base for the message board. He will also contact an electrician. The project will start up this month.

#### **Tree Streets Water Contractor Award**

Ms. Carroll from Tata & Howard introduced herself to the Board. She stated that the bid opening for the On-Call Water Main Project ("Tree Streets") which is a contract for the replacement of 3,500 l.f. of AC water pipe on the streets of Maple, Beech, Oak, and Chestnut, was last week. The Town received a total of seven bids for the project. The lowest bidder was Oliveira Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$711,775.00. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the funds would come from a combination of ARPA money and the \$1.17 million in article funds. Ms. Carroll stated that Oliveira Construction's bid package was complete. Ms. Carroll stated that the company also had good references. Oliveira Construction has also done many of these water main projects, at least one per year since the company was founded in 2005. Most recently, Oliveira Construction completed a project with the Town of Middleboro. The references all stated that the company is very good with timelines and staying under budget for their projects.

Mr. Suzor made a motion to approve and authorize the Board to sign the Notice of Award for the On-Call Water Main Project ("Tree Streets") to Oliveira Construction, Inc. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

Mr. Suzor made a motion to authorize Chairman Beckerman to sign the contract for this project once it is finalized, reviewed by Town Counsel, and signed by Oliveira Construction, Inc. complete with their bond paperwork. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

#### **Gift Acceptance Forms**

Mr. Suzor made a motion to approve the gift donation by Stephen and Nancy Ferreira in the amount of \$50.00 to the Council on Aging for any event that benefits the seniors in memory of Agatha Pals. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

Mr. Suzor made a motion to approve the gift donation by Carol Perkins in the amount of \$50.00 to the Council on Aging for any event that benefits the seniors in memory of Agatha Pals. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

Mr. Suzor made a motion to approve the gift donation by Amy Rice in the amount of \$100.00 to the Council on Aging for any event that benefits the seniors in memory of Agatha Pals. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

Mr. Suzor made a motion to approve the gift donation by Priscilla and Paul Whittall in the amount of \$100.00 to the Council on Aging for any event that benefits the seniors in memory of Agatha Pals. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

A gift donation by the Avon Civic Association to the Board of Selectmen for the multi-purpose pavilion for use at DeMarco Park was tabled for the next meeting of the Board due to the request being placed on an outdated gift donation form.

#### **One Day Special Alcohol Permit for Avon Fish & Game Association**

Mr. Suzor made a motion to approve the one-day Special Alcohol Permit for a club function on July 29, 2023 at the Avon Fish & Game Association. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

#### **Reappointments to Boards and Committees**

Mr. Suzor made a motion to reappoint Jerry Picardi to the Cable TV Advisory Committee. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

Mr. Suzor made a motion to reappoint Jerry Picardi to the Industrial Development Finance Authority. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.



### **Redesignation of Environmental Certifying Officer for the Community Development Program**

Mr. Suzor made a motion to redesignate Town Administrator Jonathan Beder as the Environmental Certifying Officer for the Community Development Program. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

### **New Appointment**

Mr. Suzor made a motion to appoint Anthony Garcia to the position of part-time Circulation Assistant at the Avon Public Library for Grade 3, Step 1 effective July 11, 2023. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

### **Town Administrator's Report**

Mr. Beder informed the Board that he has now met with all Department Heads, visiting each respective location. Discussions included topics such as current operations, staff, budget, and goals. The next Department Head meeting is scheduled for July 10, 2023.

Mr. Beder attended a meeting on June 27, 2023 with the Building Inspector, DPW Director, Zoning Board of Appeals Chair, and Special Counsel regarding the Joanna Hills project. A letter will be sent out to the developer assigning points of contact, outstanding issues, and processes going forward.

Mr. Beder has spoken to the new Veterans Services Officer Vinnie Fountaine. The COLA increase as referenced in the contract would apply only to the salary increases in non-union employees. Mr. Fountaine will have an office in Braintree located at 30 Foster Road. No appointment is necessary to see the Veterans Services Officer.

Mr. Beder stated that the design regarding improvements to DeMarco Park has been approved by the Division of Conservation Services. The DPW Director is working with the design engineer to finalize construction costs. Work on this project will begin next week.

Mr. Beder informed the Board that he has completed a draft of the Mechanic/Laborer job description for the Department of Public Works. Labor counsel will forward to the AFSCME representative for approval. Mr. Beder will begin drafting the Town Planner job description next.

Finally, Mr. Beder stated that there are seven residents interested in serving on the Town Office Feasibility Committee. The names will be forwarded to the Town Moderator for consideration. Upgrades to the Town Hall include new carpeting, lighting, and some office space in both buildings. The HVAC system also needs preventative maintenance.

### **Town Counsel's Report**

Mr. Lalli informed the Board that he has reached out to special counsel for clarification on what the MBTE funds can be used for. While it is with the understanding that the MBTE funds are to be used to protect the Town's water supply, he is looking for specific guidelines.

Mr. Lalli stated Kidde-Fenwal's filing for bankruptcy may impact settlement payment to cities and towns involved in the PFAS litigation.

## Adjournment

At 7:40 p.m., Mr. Suzor made a motion to adjourn the regular session and to convene in Executive Session for the review and approval of executive session minutes to comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements – and more specifically the Open Meeting Law, G.L. Chapter 30A, Sections 22(f) and (g) and to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining (AFSCME, Police, Fire, Call Firefighters) or litigation as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government's bargaining or litigating position. Also, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel. (Fire Chief) Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,



Shanna M. Faro  
Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator

## LIST OF DOCUMENTS

1. July 6, 2023 Meeting Agenda
2. June 15, 2023 Meeting Minutes
3. June 28, 2023 Meeting Minutes
4. June 29, 2023 Meeting Minutes
5. Vacation Carryover Request from Assistant DPW Director
6. Memo from Chief Spurr regarding Ambulance Rates
7. Memo from Tata & Howard regarding Tree Street Water Contractor Award
8. Gift Acceptance Forms (Council on Aging & Avon Civic Association)
9. One Day Special Alcohol Permit for Avon Fish & Game Association
10. Request for reappointment to Cable TV Advisory Committee and Industrial Development Finance Authority by Jerry Picardi
11. Redesignation letter of Environmental Certifying Officer for Community Development Program
12. Personnel Action Form for Part-Time Circulation Assistant
13. Town Administrator's Report