

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



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TOWN OF AVON
2023 SEP -8 A 11:17
TOWN CLERK

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 2023
6:30 P.M.**

Members Present: Eric S. Beckerman, Chairman
Shannon M. Coffey, Associate

Others Present: Jonathan L. Beder, Town Administrator
Shanna M. Faro, Executive Assistant/HR Coordinator
Joseph S. Lalli, Esq., Town Counsel
William Fitzgerald, DPW Director
Brian Martin, Assistant DPW Director
Police Chief Jeffrey Bukunt
Deputy Police Chief Christopher Bartolotta
Bruce Lane, Historical Commission
Terry Brophy, Daughters of the American Revolution

Chairman Beckerman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Selectman Suzor was absent from the meeting. 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.

Michael Guilbault led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Participation

Owen Carrel, Sr. of One Carrel Court approached the Board to discuss the status of the 40B projects in town. Mr. Carrel stated that he has done some research and the town has an opportunity to claim a Safe Harbor Act to prevent developers from proposing further 40B projects in town. Safe harbor status is available to municipalities that have met either the General Land Minimum, achieved when housing units eligible for inclusion on the states subsidized housing inventory exist on sites comprising 1.5% or more of a municipality's total land area; or the Housing Unit Minimum, achieved when a municipality's subsidized housing inventory units exceed 10% of its total housing units. Mr. Carrel requested the Board research this matter as he believed the town is already at the 1.5% capacity. Mr. Beder stated that he is aware of the Safe Harbor Act. He stated that the town does need to verify the numbers for accuracy. To that effect, he has reached out to the Old Colony Planning Council for their assistance with this matter. Mr. Rick Jordan, attending the meeting virtually, encouraged the Board to research the matter further.

Mr. Carrel also requested the Board reach out to Chief Bukunt regarding the truck traffic on Page Street despite it being a heavy vehicle exclusion route. He requested bigger signage that the street is a truck exclusion route. He also said the number of motor vehicles speeding has risen drastically as well on Page Street.

6:35 p.m. – Daughters of the American Revolution – Avon Cemeteries Project

Mr. Lane of the Historical Commission introduced Terry Brophy of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Mr. Lane stated that through their research, it is believed that there is an unmarked cemetery at the end of King Street which holds the remains of 21 people including two veterans of the American Revolution. Mr. Lane requested permission for a search team to enter the woods at the end of King Street on town property in hopes of uncovering the cemetery.

Ms. Terry Brophy introduced herself to the Board. She informed the Board that the Daughters of the American Revolution (“DAR”) is a women’s service organization dedicated to promoting historic preservation, education, and patriotism. Members are descendants of the American Revolutionary War Patriots.

Ms. Brophy stated that in May 2022, her chapter received a request from a descendent of Quock Martrick to place a DAR marker at this grave. Research revealed that Mr. Martrick is buried in Avon. Ms. Brophy stated that after discussion with the Avon Historical Commission and the Stoughton Historical Society confirmed that the location of the cemetery is in an inaccessible location and the graveyard and graves are not marked. Research for alternatives for marker placement began.

Ms. Brophy stated that research revealed that two American Revolution veterans of color were discovered to be buried in Avon at the inaccessible location. Quock Martrick was a free black man born in Ghana. He owned 52 acres of land in East Stoughton (now Avon). He served in the continental army from 1780 to 1782. Sampson Dunbar was a free black man also buried in the inaccessible cemetery. Mr. Dunbar was a member of the militia from Braintree and Stoughton. He was a blacksmith and lived in East Stoughton.

Ms. Brophy requested permission from the Board to place two memorial headstones, which will be provided by the Veterans Administration, in the East Main Street Cemetery. Installation of the headstones will be done by the Town of Avon. Ms. Brophy also requested permission to place two DAR markers at the headstones. Finally, Ms. Brophy requested permission to conduct a DAR ceremony, likely in 2024 once this project is complete. The Board agreed with the requests from Ms. Brophy on behalf of the DAR and will look forward to the dedication ceremony.

Meeting Minutes

Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the July 6, 2023 (Regular Session) meeting minutes as written. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Citation for DPW Highway Foreman

Chairman Beckerman acknowledged DPW Foreman Michael Guilbault for his exemplary performance and commitment to public service. Ms. Coffey read the Proclamation which stated that Mr. Guilbault went above and beyond his duties during the first week of July when he noticed an elderly man sitting down and looking disoriented in the summer heat. Mr. Guilbault located a family member of the man and did not leave his side until the relative arrived at the scene. Chairman Beckerman presented Mr. Guilbault with a Citation on behalf of the Board of Selectmen in recognition of his outstanding performance and valuable contribution to the community. He thanked the entire Guilbault family including Michael's grandfather Eugene and father Charlie for their service to the town. Michael is the third generation of the Guilbault family to be a public servant for the town.

Streetlights Update

Mr. Martin informed the Board that the DPW made a list of streetlights that had burnt out or were not converted to LED lighting throughout the town. Mr. Martin stated that after the information was gathered, he, Mr. Fitzgerald, and Mr. Beder met with Joseph Cardinal from National Grid regarding this matter. As it turns out, only one streetlight was left to be converted to LED lighting. All other streetlights that had not yet been converted are utilities that are not paid for by the town and are privately owned. Mr. Martin stated that there were 15 lightbulbs that had burnt out which National Grid issued work orders for and have since been completed. Chairman Beckerman asked if there was a way that the town could reach out to the privately owned streetlights to see if they would be interested in converting to LED lighting for uniformity.

Vacation Carryover Request

Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the carryover request of Administrative Assistant Susan Monahan for 14.58 vacation hours above the contractually approved 70 hours of carryover time allowed into Fiscal Year 2023. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Policer Officer Hiring Policy

Chief Bukunt presented the Board with a policy and procedures for the recruitment and selection of sworn police officers. Chief Bukunt stated that this policy was drafted with the assistance of labor counsel and the Town Administrator. It is reflective of the town's departure from Civil Service on July 1, 2023. It has been approved by the Police Union. Chief Bukunt requested one minor deletion from section 3.3.20. Mr. Beder recommended that the Board approve this policy. One approved, he recommended a footer be placed on the policy with the date that the Board approved the policy. He also requested an external company be hired to assist with the written examination required in the policy for new police officers. Chairman Beckerman asked why an external company is needed. Chief Bukunt stated that there are several companies that specialize in writing these types of exams and the questions provided by the company will help provide valuable insight as to the intellect and reasoning of the police officer candidates. Chief Bukunt stated that he would get pricing from two to three companies and report back to the Board. Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the Police Officer Hiring Policy with the requested revisions from Chief Bukunt. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Town Planner Job Description

Mr. Beder presented the Board with a job description for the new Town Planner position. Mr. Beder informed the Board that the job description has been reviewed and approved by Labor Counsel, DPW Director, Human Resources Coordinator, and Planning Board Chair. Mr. Beder informed the Board that a Town Planner position was crucial to the town to assist with many projects for the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. The Town Planner would also assist with the various 40B projects underway, assist with community development, and proposed bylaw changes. Mr. Beder proposed this position be a 35 hour per week position at a Grade 16, Step 1 at a starting salary of \$82,343. Ms. Coffey recommended a starting salary range closer to \$75,000 as she felt that salary range was comparable with neighboring communities seeking a Town Planner. Mr. Rick Jordan of the Finance Committee attended the meeting virtually and stressed the importance of this position to the town.

Mr. Beder requested approval of the job description by the Board to move the process forward and being advertising for the position. Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the Town Planner job description as written. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Update on Harrison Boulevard/Pond Street Project

Mr. Martin informed the Board that the MassDOT Harrison/Pond project ran into unforeseen underground construction difficulties due to soil conditions in May of this year. This issue necessitated a detailed process of designing a solution for new road base, approvals, negotiation on the costs, and final approval which has been submitted to MassDOT Boston. The town has received notification that these efforts are ongoing, and the State understands the critical nature of the project. Mr. Martin stated that the contractor has issued a work order to the state to resume construction which is currently awaiting approval from MassDOT. Once that happens, the contractor will resume work on the project and provide us with a new schedule for remobilizing and finishing the job which we now expect to be during September/October 2023.

Street Opening Permit Applications from Eversource

Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the Street Opening Permit from Eversource Gas Company for a proposed 4' x 6' road cut to repair a gas leak on the main at 19 Bartlett Street. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the Street Opening Permit from Eversource Gas Company for a proposed 4' x 6' road cut to replace the gas service line and move the meter inside to outside at 509 Page Street. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the Street Opening Permit from Eversource Gas Company for a proposed 4' x 6' road cut to replace the gas service line and move the meter inside to outside at 259 East High Street. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the Street Opening Permit from Eversource Gas Company for a proposed 4' x 6' x 3' road cut for gas main end cap remediation at 226 Bodwell Street. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the Street Opening Permit from Eversource Gas Company for a proposed 4' x 6' road cut to abandon the stub at the gas main at 186 East Spring Street. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the Street Opening Permit from Eversource Gas Company for a proposed 4' x 6' road cut to abandon the stub at the gas main at 161 West High Street. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the Street Opening Permit from Eversource Gas Company for a proposed 4' x 6' road cut to abandon the stub at the gas main at 212 Page Street. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the Street Opening Permit from Eversource Gas Company for a proposed 4' x 6' road cut to abandon the stub at the gas main at 188 Page Street. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the Street Opening Permit from Eversource Gas Company for a proposed 4' x 6' road cut to replace the gas line and move the meter from inside to outside at 196 and 198 East Main Street (serviced from Spring Street). Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the Street Opening Permit from Eversource Gas Company for a proposed 4' x 6' road cut to repair the gas leak on the main at 228 East Spring Street. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the Street Opening Permit from Eversource Gas Company for a proposed 4' x 6' road cut to abandon the stub at the gas main at 160 Page Street. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Appointment of Election Workers for Fiscal Year 2024

Ms. Coffey made a motion to reappoint the following individuals as election workers for Fiscal Year 2024 pursuant to the request of the Town Clerk Patricia Bessette:

Name	Position
Michael Sandy	Warden/Checker
Jean Kopke	Warden/Checker
Joanne Grenham	Deputy Warden/Checker
Maria Piccirilli	Deputy Warden/Checker
Carol Geary	Checker
Julia Fasano	Checker
Margaret Rudy	Checker
Patricia Olson	Checker
Kristen Maguire	Checker
Jennifer Mayo	Checker
Elaine Dombrosky	Checker
Lynne McKenney	Checker
Elaine Flanigan	Checker
Linda Carrel	Checker
Shanna Faro	Checker
Brooke von Ehrenkrook	Checker
Jean Zarrillo	Checker
Anthony Famalore (<i>new appointment</i>)	Checker

Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Appointment to Historical Commission

Ms. Coffey made a motion to appoint Tracey Pavao to the Historical Commission, term to expire June 30, 2025. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Temporary Sign Permit Application

Ms. Coffey made the motion to approve the Temporary Sign Permit of St. Pauly Textile Inc. for one 25" x 24" sign on the corner of VFW Drive and Harrison Boulevard and one 24" x 36" sign on the corner of School Street and the VFW parking lot advertising a clothing drop off location to benefit the VFW from August 11, 2023 through November 11, 2023 with the stipulation that the permit not be distributed until a permission letter authorizing the signs is provided from the owners of the VFW and the fee is paid. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Gift Acceptance Form

Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the gift acceptance form from the Avon Civic Association for a multi-purpose pavilion for use at DeMarco Park at the estimated value of \$38,000 with the stipulation that the town will control the use of the pavilion. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Request from the Avon Civic Association to use DeMarco Park

Mr. Chute informed the Board that now that the Summer Concert Series is completed, the Avon Civic Association is working on vendors for the fall events and needed to book the dates.

The Board approved the request of the Avon Civic Association to use DeMarco Park on October 7, 2023 from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. for the Oktoberfest celebration. The rain date will be October 8, 2023.

The Board approved the request of the Avon Civic Association to use DeMarco Park on December 2, 2023 from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. for the Holiday Festival. The rain date will be December 3, 2023.

Surplus Equipment Forms

Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the request from the Human Resources Coordinator to declare surplus two ripped and torn office chairs in the Selectmen's office. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ms. Coffey made a motion to approve the request from the Town Administrator to declare surplus one old Ricoh copier, model number MPC6501SP in which replacement parts are no longer made. Chairman Beckerman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Announcements

Chairman Beckerman announced the September meetings of the Board as September 7, 2023 and September 21, 2023.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Beder informed the Board that he has contracted with Full Circle Technologies to implement Permit Eyes, an e-permitting software program that will enable the town to electronically receive applications, collect electronic payments, conduct inspections, and issue permits. Building, Fire, Board of Health, and Planning/Zoning are the first town departments being fitted with this technology. The initial funding for this program is through the Community Compact Grant for Information Technology.

Mr. Beder informed the Board that the Town Offices Feasibility Committee has been formed and their first meeting will be on August 17, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. There is still one vacancy on that Board. This group will review possible renovations or new construction of a Town Hall.

Mr. Beder stated that he, Mr. Lalli, Mr. Fitzgerald, and tank consultant Greg Elridge met and reviewed the lease agreement as proposed by T-Mobile by the Central Street water tank. Once the lease is finalized, it will be placed on an agenda for the Board to review.

Mr. Beder informed the Board that he met with representatives from the Town of Stoughton at the end of July to discuss an emergency water connection and potential sewer connection alternatives. Mr. Beder stated that he provided them with a draft Intermunicipal Water Supply Emergency Agreement for a connection located off IKEA Way.

Mr. Beder stated that he has reviewed correspondence from Brian Winner of Mead Talerman and Costa to the Zoning Board of Appeals regarding the Safe Harbor law for 40B projects. There is a process that must be followed to invoke a safe harbor. However, if the town can validate the 1.5% the ZBA can deny or condition a 40B application and the Housing Appeals Court will uphold. Mr. Beder stated that he has reached out to Old Colony Planning Council requesting assistance regarding this matter.

Mr. Beder informed the Board that all copiers are being reviewed for consolidation amongst town buildings. Multiple leases and service contracts have expired and the goal is to consolidate all copiers to the IT department's budget.

Mr. Beder stated that the Department Heads are updating the FY21-25 Capital Improvement Plan.

Mr. Beder stated that Tata & Howard is developing a sewer presentation for the Board's first meeting of September.

Town Counsel's Report

Mr. Lalli informed the Board that his office is busy reviewing contracts. He is also closing out some files for cases that have been resolved and finalized.

Adjournment

At 8:03 p.m., Ms. Coffey 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. (Town Accountant). Chairman

Beckerman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,



Shanna M. Faro
Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

1. August 10, 2023 Meeting Agenda
2. July 6, 2023 Meeting Minutes
3. Powerpoint Presentation on Avon Cemeteries Project
4. Citation for DPW Highway Foreman
5. Vacation Carryover Request of Susan Monahan
6. Memorandum from Chief Bukunt regarding Police Officer Hiring Policy
7. Amendment to Drug & Alcohol Policy – Clearinghouse Procedures
8. Town Planner Job Description
9. Street Opening Permit Applications from Eversource (19 Bartlett Street, 509 Page Street, 259 East High Street, 226 Bodwell Street, 186 East Spring Street, 161 West High Street, 212 Page Street, 188 Page Street, 196 & 198 East Main Street, 228 East Spring Street, 19 Bartlett Street, 160 Page Street)
10. Appointment of Election Workers for FY 24
11. Request from Tracey Pavao to be appointed to the Historical Commission
12. Temporary Sign Permit Application of St. Pauly Textile Inc. for Frank M. Noyes VFW Post 8892
13. Gift Acceptance Form from Avon Civic Association
14. Request from Avon Civic Association to use DeMarco Park for Oktoberfest and Holiday Festival
15. Surplus Equipment Forms for Town Hall (office chairs in Selectmen's office and copier in West Wing)
16. Town Administrator's Report