

SELECT BOARD



L-R: Henry Dane, Chair; Mary Hartman, Clerk; Terry Ackerman, Mark Howell, Linda Escobedo, with Congresswoman Lori Trahan

The Select Board entered 2023 with Matt Johnson as Chair, Terri Ackermann as Clerk and Linda Escobedo, Mary Hartman and Henry Dane as members. At the conclusion of the Annual Town Meeting, Mr. Johnson retired from the Board and Henry Dane was elected as Chair, Mary Hartman as Clerk and Mark Howell joined as the Board's new member. Starting with the new fiscal year, the Board made a concerted effort to keep discussion focused on items on which it was ready to act, to keep meetings at an efficient duration and to post agendas and materials at least a week prior to each meeting. The meeting dates and submission deadlines were posted on the Town website, and we made considerable progress in meeting our administrative goals.

The Select Board is, by way of analogy, the Board of Directors of the Town. Its five members are chosen at the Town Election in April to serve for staggered three-year terms. The Town Charter, Bylaws, and the General Laws of Massachusetts grant the Select Board broad powers to govern the Town. It appoints and supervises more than 40 boards and committees, is the primary policy-making body of the Town for management, the provision of services and economic development. Like a typical Board of

Directors, it is responsible for the appointment of and evaluation of the Town's chief executive officer, the Town Manager. The Board recommends the budget at the Annual Town Meeting, determines the placement of Articles on the Warrant, approves the reorganization of Town departments, provides oversight for matters in litigation, and acts on licenses and permits. The Select Board also enacts Rules and Regulations for such matters as traffic control and parking.

The following is a partial list of matters coming before the Board during the past year:

Opposition to the expansion of Hanscom Field Private Jet Facilities which has included both advocacy and engagement of Special Counsel to pursue Freedom of Information requests from Massport and joining with adjacent towns in sending a letter of opposition to the Governor.

In support of the Town's 2025 Executive Committee, pursuing efforts at the Federal, State, and local levels to obtain financing to support the Town's celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution, to ensure public safety and

accommodation, and to direct the focus of the event.

Management of Litigation regarding public access to Estabrook Road which resulted in a Decision of the Land Court in favor of the Town; and response to Appeal filed by the property owners which is awaiting hearing before the Appeals Court at the time this report is being written. In this and other pending legal matters, we have been careful to manage the costs incurred while still protecting the interests of the Town.

Adoption of Hazard Mitigation Plan presented by the Town's Public Safety agencies.

Adoption, under statutory authority granted to the Board, of a Residential Tax Exemption of 10 percent for Fiscal Year 2024. Under this program, a portion of residential property tax assessments is shifted from eligible homes assessed below approximately \$2.1 million to those above that value. All owner-occupied homes are eligible, and the most significant benefit is to owner-occupied properties with the lowest assessed values.

Worked with the Planning Board on the MBTA Zoning Initiative to minimize the negative effect of the proposed zoning changes.

Review and comment on Comprehensive Permit (Ch. 40B) applications for two large multi-family projects for Baker Avenue and Forest Ridge Road.

Review and approve Fiscal Year 2024 Select Board, Town Manager and Department goals.

Review and approve spending priorities to implement the Housing Production Plan.

Review and support a new Personnel Policy resulting from the work of the Personal Study Task Force.

Licensing of two new restaurants: West Village Tavern and Bandoleros.

Appointed the Solar Implementation Task Force, following a unanimous vote at the 2023 Annual Town Meeting to urge the Select Board to establish the Task Force.

Provide funding authority for consulting and legal services to the 2229 Main Street Advisory Task Force.

Authorize Town Manager to withdraw from the Acton Concord Regional Emergency Communications Center.

Discussed Warrant Article for Town Meeting Study Committee to be appointed by Moderator.