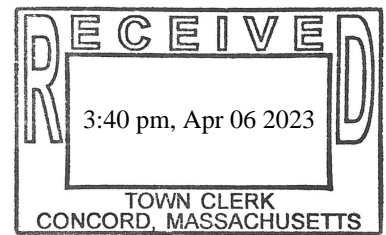


**Town of Concord
Select Board
Minutes
March 27, 2023**



Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, the Concord Select Board convened in a meeting both via Zoom and in person at 22 Monument Square on March 27, 2023 at 6:30 PM.

Present were: Matthew Johnson, Chair; Terri Ackerman, Clerk; Henry Dane, Mary Hartman

Call to Order

Select Board Chair Matthew Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Legislative Update from State Senator Mike Barrett

State Senator Mike Barrett appeared before the Select Board to provide a legislative update. Senator Barrett began with an update on the 250th American Revolution Anniversary Celebration, stating that there was a regional meeting last Friday, March 24, 2023 to discuss the state aid that would be available for local events. Senator Barrett continued that Governor Healey's Administration has committed \$2,000,000.00 for funds for the celebration through a FY23 supplemental budget, though there was an administrative error, so the funds may end up in the Fiscal Year 2024 budget instead. More money from the state is still needed and private sector fundraising will also be key. Senator Barrett stated that he is feeling positive about the Governor's commitment to the celebration, but that there are always unknowns in the legislative process.

Senator Barrett transitioned to other legislative updates, such as the continuance of remote meetings for municipalities through 2025 and the fossil fuel-free infrastructure pilot program that Concord will participate in.

Mr. Dane asked a question regarding the Home Rule petitions to provide funding for affordable housing.

Senator Barrett responded that several communities have submitted similar Home Rule petitions, so he believes the legislature may pass a statewide bill and each community can accept by local option.

Ms. Ackerman thanked Senator Barrett for his work in the community.

Senator Barrett noted that he is still advocating for the Town and neighboring communities of Hanscom Airfield and that rather than the airfield increasing their flight capacity with additional hangars, he would like to see the airfield be a national model for the transition to electric aviation.

Ms. Ackerman noted that after 11:00 PM, there is an additional fine for flights due to noise and asked if a similar model could be implemented for fossil fuel jets.

Senator Barrett responded that while this is a positive idea, Massport would have to agree to the fines.

Annual Town Meeting Public Hearing continued from Monday, February 27, 2023

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Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY **voted**: to resume the Public Hearing from Monday, February 27, 2023 for Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article 5 – New Classification and Compensation Plan for Regular Status Positions and Article 6 – Amend Classification and Compensation Plan for Regular-Status Positions.

Elizabeth Cobbs and Bill Mrachek, Co-Chairs of the Personnel Board, appeared before the Select Board to present on Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article 5 – New Classification and Compensation Plan for Regular Status Positions and Article 6 – Amend Classification and Compensation Plan for Regular-Status Positions. The full presentation and final draft of the Classification and Compensation Plan from GovHR are included in the Select Board meeting packet.

Ms. Hartman asked if the Personnel Board has received feedback from staff on the Classification and Compensation Plan.

Ms. Cobbs responded that there was a reconsideration period with staff regarding the plan. Most requests for reconsideration will not impact the integrity of the plan.

Ms. Hartman noted that the starting salaries in the range are in the 85th percentile and asked what percentile our actual salaries are in.

GovHR Chief Executive Officer, Joellen Cademartori, appeared before the Select Board and responded that the salaries presented are a range and not the actual salary because they don't know the staff members' tenure, performance, or market conditions at the time of hire.

Ms. Ackerman asked how many article reconsideration changes or amendments are anticipated at Town Meeting.

Ms. Cademartori responded that only a handful of these changes or amendments are anticipated.

Ms. Ackerman asked about staff reconsiderations and the future of the plan.

Ms. Cobbs responded that the plan is foundational yet dynamic and should be assessed annually.

Chair Johnson asked if there is any data regarding the increase from former salary midpoints to the proposed salary midpoints.

Ms. Cademartori responded that data on the increase in midpoints was not specifically collected, but that all midpoints have likely increased.

Chair Johnson noted that most of the salary ranges recommended are above comparable communities. He questioned why we want to be in the 85 percentile of these communities that are already top tier in the state.

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Ms. Lafleur responded that it has been standard practice for the town to have the salary ranges in the 85th percentile and that while the study on benefits has not yet been started, there is a general sense that the town's benefits, such as health insurance, are less than other comparable communities.

Mark Howell of 668 Annursnac Hill Road appeared before the Select Board and voiced concern regarding the timeframe to implement the plan, regarding the Fair Labor Standards Act, and how in his experience with Information Technology positions, the applicant pool is not just from comparable communities, but regional and from the private sector as well. Mr. Howell continued that regarding the standard practice of salary ranges being in the 85th percentile, he believes this standard is something that should be determined by the Personnel Board.

Human Resources Director, Amy Foley, appeared before the Select Board and responded that she is not concerned about the timeframe to implement the plan. Ms. Foley continued that more analysis will be performed regarding the Fair Labor Standards Act in coming weeks.

Ms. Cobbs added that the Personnel Board still needs to discuss its philosophy regarding salary ranges.

Ned Perry of 362 Bedford Street appeared before the Select Board and noted that in the past, the town has prided itself with providing salaries that are top in the state, especially for senior staff members. Mr. Perry continued and asked if there will be a 3% increase in salary for all staff members.

Ms. Lafleur responded that the next phase of the plan will be to determine the implementation policy, but that she anticipates a 3% increase in salary for all staff members and there may be additional increases based on merit.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
voted: to close the Public Hearing for Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article 5 – New Classification and Compensation Plan for Regular Status Positions and Article 6 – Amend Classification and Compensation Plan for Regular-Status Positions.

Consent Calendar Discussion for Annual Town Meeting with Town Moderator

Town Moderator, Carmin Reiss, appeared before the Select Board to present a draft Consent Calendar for Annual Town Meeting. The full draft is included in the Select Board meeting packet. Ms. Reiss noted that while the Select Board has not voted recommendations on all articles yet, if there is not a unanimous vote on an article that is currently on the draft Consent Calendar, it will be removed. (Article 43 was later removed---see below)

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
voted: to approve the Consent Calendar as included in the Select Board meeting packet.

Massachusetts 250th American Revolution Anniversary

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Commission Update from Mike Lawson**

Agenda item tabled to a further meeting.

Concord 2025 Executive Committee Update

Mr. Dane introduced the topic of the Concord 2025 Executive Committee update. Jennifer Schunemann, Concord 2025 Executive Committee Communications Subcommittee member, appeared before the Select Board to present on current plans and estimated financials for the 250th Anniversary Celebration. The full presentation is included in the Select Board meeting packet.

Mr. Dane referenced Senator Barrett's discussion earlier this meeting, noting that funding assistance from the state will be hard to predict so the town should not count on it at this stage. Mr. Dane added that the Concord 2025 Executive Committee will also be working with the Public Ceremonies and Celebrations Committee throughout planning.

Ms. Hartman asked a question regarding estimated revenue from the celebration.

Ms. Schunemann responded that the estimates included in the presentation were conservative estimates, but that she does not think that the town should take a conservative approach with infrastructure for the celebration. Ms. Schunemann continued that she believes that revenues from meal taxes will increase, but noted that there are capacity limits in town with lodging and other aspects of tourism. Ms. Schunemann added that the presentation included in tonight's meeting packet was put together in a short amount of time and that she would be willing to perform a deeper analysis.

Ms. Ackerman noted that she does not favor the use of \$500,000 of ARPA funding for the celebration, although she might consider a smaller amount, and that she also thinks that the Committee should be more ambitious with its fundraising goals. Ms. Ackerman added that the Committee should create a handout or presentation for Town Meeting, even if Article 25 does not get moved, as it would be beneficial for the residents to understand the 3-year plan.

Ms. Hartman asked about alternative funding options for Article 25.

Town Manager Kerry Lafleur clarified that she did not suggest that ARPA funding be used for the article, but just that she would not oppose it. Ms. Lafleur continued that there is a possibility that there could be additional Free Cash to be used for the article, but that she requests more time to investigate this.

Mr. Dane noted that if it becomes clear that Free Cash is available for the article, they will move it at Town Meeting.

**Continue Discussion and Vote of Recommendations for Annual
Town Meeting Warrant Articles**

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Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
voted: to recommend affirmative action on Article 2 – Hear Reports.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
voted: to recommend affirmative action on Article 3 – Meeting Procedure.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
voted: to recommend affirmative action on Article 7 – Use of Free Cash.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
voted: to recommend affirmative action on Article 24 – Light Plant Expenditures and Payment in Lieu of Taxes.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
voted: to recommend affirmative action on Article 27 – Community Preservation Act – Rescind and Reappropriate Funds.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
voted: to recommend affirmative action on Article 38 – Solid Waste Disposal Fund Expenditures.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
voted: to recommend affirmative action on Article 39 – Sewer System Expenditures.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
voted: to recommend affirmative action on Article 40 – Sewer Improvement Fund Expenditures.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
voted: to recommend affirmative action on Article 41 – Water System Expenditures.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
voted: to recommend affirmative action on Article 42 – Authorize Expenditure from PEG Access and Cable-Related Fund.

After discussion, it was agreed that the Board needs more information on Article 43, which the Town Manager plans to present at an upcoming meeting. There was a consensus to remove Article 43 from the Consent Calendar.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
voted: to recommend affirmative action on Article 44 – Authorize Expenditure of Revolving Funds Under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 53 E 1/2 .

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY

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voted: to recommend affirmative action on Article 5 – New Classification and Compensation Plan for Regular-Status Positions.

Chair Johnson opened the discussion on Article 26 – Community Preservation Committee Appropriation Recommendations.

Diane Proctor, Chair of the Community Preservation Committee, appeared before the Select Board to provide an update on Article 26, noting that for Item E regarding Warner’s Pond, the Committee supports moving \$550,000.00 toward dredging and/or removing the dam. She added that the state could provide additional funding if the dam is removed, but that would be on a reimbursement basis.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY **voted:** to recommend affirmative action on Article 26 – Community Preservation Committee Appropriation Recommendations.

Chair Johnson opened the discussion on Article 10 – DEI Director. Chair Johnson noted that there is already \$75,000.00 allocated in the budget to hire a consultant to perform similar work and also aid the town in taking its next steps toward hiring a DEI Director. Chair Johnson continued that the town should consider a regional position for the DEI Director, which has worked well for the Regional Housing Services Office. Chair Johnson suggested that the Board present an amendment on the floor at Town Meeting and report its recommendation of the article then.

Approve 2229 Main Street Advisory Task Force Charge

Ms. Ackerman opened the discussion on the 2229 Main Street Advisory Task Force charge. The full charge is included in the Select Board meeting packet. Ms. Ackerman continued that along with the highlighted change in the charge included in the packet, she would like to increase the membership from 7 to 9 members.

Ms. Hartman noted that the charge membership should also include a member with a background in economic development.

Ms. Ackerman concurred.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY **voted:** to approve the 2229 Main Street Advisory Task Force charge as highlighted in the Select Board meeting packet and to increase the membership from 7 to 9 members, one with background in economic development.

Consent Agenda

- Meeting Minutes: February 27, 2023
- Proclamation for the 125th Anniversary of Concord Municipal Light Plant

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- Gift Acceptance of Recreation Scholarship Funds in the amount of \$2,940.00 raised from the raffle at the Concord Recreation Department's Annual Shamrock Ball
- Tour Guide License for James Nager
- One Day Liquor License for Wine and Malt Beverages Only for 51 Walden Incorporated at 51 Walden Street for the Pops Roof Fundraiser on Friday, April 14, 2023 from 8:00 PM to 11:00 PM
- One Day Liquor License for All Alcoholic Beverages for Julia Elliott at the Nashoba Brook School Discovery Barn for the Thoreau Elementary Social on Friday, April 1, 2023 from 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM
- Liquor License Extension of Hours Requests for Nashawtuc Country Club at 1861 Sudbury Road:
 - Sunday, April 9, 2023 for service of alcohol to begin at 10:00 AM for an Easter Brunch
 - Sunday, May 14, 2023 for service of alcohol to begin at 10:00 AM for a Mother's Day brunch
 - Sunday, December 3, 2023 for service of alcohol to begin at 10:00 AM for a Holiday Brunch

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY **voted:** to approve the Consent Agenda.

Town Manager's Report

Town Manager Kerry Lafleur presented a Weekly Operations Report for the week ending March 26, 2023. The full report is included in the Select Board meeting packet.

Chair's Report

Chair Johnson reported that upcoming events in the next month include the Patriots Day Parade on Monday, April 17, 2023 and an event for Holocaust Remembrance Day on Sunday, April 23, 2023.

Committee Nominations

There were no committee nominations.

Committee Appointments

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY **voted:** to appoint Susan Spinale McCrory of 59 Lee Drive to the Concord 2025 Executive Committee for a term to expire December 31, 2026.

Correspondence

Chair Johnson acknowledged the correspondence in the Select Board meeting packet.

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Select Board Liaison Reports

Chair Johnson reported on:

- School Strategic Plan Committee – Final meeting to discuss the metrics that will be used to measure the strategic plan
- Diversity Equity and Inclusion Commission Community Coffee – Encouraged individuals to think about something they can do to make Concord a more welcoming community

Ms. Ackerman reported on:

- Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Regional Meeting of the Friends – Going to meet quarterly moving forward
- 250th American Revolution Anniversary Celebration Regional Meeting
- Personnel Board – Preparation for the continued Annual Town Meeting Public Hearing
- Hanscom Meeting

Mr. Dane reported that he has been working frequently with the Concord 2025 Executive Committee, which is in collaboration with several other boards and committees.

Ms. Hartman reported on:

- Municipal Light Board – Discussed Annual town Meeting Article 22 – Municipal In-Town Solar Generation Task Force and they plan to propose an amendment at Town Meeting.
- Attended the Honored Citizen Ceremony for Phebe Ham
- Diversity Equity and Inclusion Commission Community Coffee – Chair of the Concord Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Keith Bergman discussed the parcel at 91B Main Street and that it may be beneficial for the town to send a letter to Representative Lori Trahan regarding a discounted price of the parcel for affordable housing

Public Comment

Ellen Quakenbush of 206 Prairie Street appeared before the Select Board to voice concern about the principles adopted by the Public Ceremonies and Celebration Committee for inclusion in parades and urged the principles to be revised with the inclusion of public input.

Stephan Bader of 7 River Street appeared before the Select Board and noted that in relation to Ms. Hartman's comments on the parcel at 91B Main Street, the parcel is owned by the state, but that the state acquired the parcel using federal highway funds, which is where the requirement that the parcel be sold at a value reflecting market price comes from.

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Mark Howell of 668 Annursnac Hill Road appeared before the Select Board and noted that the second Finance Committee Public Hearing materials are not posted on the Town website.

Adjournment

Chair Johnson adjourned the meeting.

Meeting Packet: <https://concordma.gov/3302/March-27-2023>

Meeting Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hr7BScFP3hU>