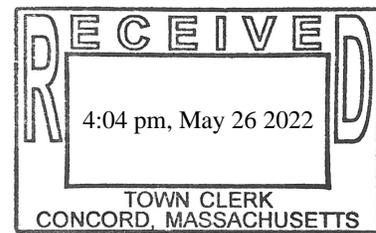


**Town of Concord
Select Board
Minutes
May 9, 2022**



Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, the Concord Select Board convened in a meeting in the Second Floor Meeting Room and via Zoom on May 9, 2022 at 6:30pm.

Present were Terri Ackerman; Chair, Matthew Johnson; Clerk; Henry Dane, Linda Escobedo, and Mary Hartman. Also present was Kerry Lafleur, Interim Town Manager

Call to Order

Chair Ackerman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Welcome New Member, Mary Hartman

Chair Ackerman and the Board welcomed Mary Hartman, who had been elected to the Select Board at the April 12, 2022 Annual Town Election. Ms. Hartman thanked the Board for their welcome and stated that she looked forward to working with the Board.

Consent Agenda

- Town Accountant Warrant: April 28, 2022
- Minutes: May 1, 2022
- One Day Liquor License Applications:
 - Gaining Ground Donor Appreciation party at 341 Virginia Road on June 16, 2022 from 5pm to 7pm, all alcoholic beverages
- Extension of Hours for Saltbox Kitchen on May 21st (from 9:30PM) to 10PM
- Extension of Hours to Trails Ends Café, LLC (dba Nosh) on May 20th (from 11PM) to 1AM
- Proclamations:
 - May 15-21: Concord Public Works Week
 - June 12: Race Amity Day

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY **VOTED:** to approve the consent agenda with amendments made to the May 9, 2022 as discussed.

Interim Town Manager's Report

Ms. Lafleur reviewed the Interim Town Manager's report included as part of the Select Board's meeting packet. Ms. Lafleur welcomed two new employees, Michael Gibbons, who had been hired as the Senior Administrative Assistant in the Town Manager's Office, and Melanie Dineen, who had recently been appointed to the position of Public Health Director.

Introduce New Health Director

Ms. Lafleur introduced the New Health Director Melanie Dineen to the Board. Ms. Dineen explained her experience which included approximately 7 years working as a public health official. Ms. Dineen noted her gratitude to have been appointed to the position and her desire to continue to better Concord's public health efforts.

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Chair's Report

Chair Ackerman thanked the Board for their spirit of cooperation and their dedication as her appointment as Chair was ending. Mr. Johnson thanked Chair Ackerman for her leadership despite the challenges she and the Board faced throughout her tenure as Chair, including those brought on by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Choose Officers

The Board discussed the need to elect officers to serve for the next year, specifically a Chair and a Clerk.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
VOTED: to elect Matthew Johnson as Chair of the Town of Concord's Select Board.

Chair Johnson nominated Ms. Ackerman to serve as Clerk, citing her recent experience as Chair and her knowledge of Select Board procedures.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
VOTED: to elect Terri Ackerman as Clerk of the Town of Concord's Select Board.

Meet with Tax Fairness Committee to Decide Next Steps

Chair Johnson invited David Karr, Chair of the Tax Fairness Committee, to explain his committee's desire to be dissolved. Mr. Karr explained that the Tax Fairness Committee felt that they had accomplished their initial charge, and goal, of trying to create a more equitable taxation system in Concord. The Committee had presented legislation to Town Meeting in 2020 which aimed to petition the State legislature to ratify the Senior Means Tested Exemption. He explained that the exemption allowed senior residents of Concord to apply for some real estate tax relief based on a series of criteria that the Committee and staff of the Assessing Division had come up with. Mr. Karr noted that the Home Rule Petition, which he previously described, was still pending at the State level, but that he was hopeful that it would be passed.

Reinier Beeuwkes, of 1360 Monument Street, and member of the Tax Relief Committee, reviewed the original charge of the Tax Fairness Committee, and noted some of the work the Committee had undertaken since they were established. Mr. Beeuwkes noted that they had explored the establishment of a local income tax but added that a constitutional amendment would be needed at the State level, which would require the cooperation of several communities and local officials. Mr. Beeuwkes stated his belief that a local income tax could combat some of the tax inequity in Concord and thought the pursuit of such an amendment was worthwhile.

Virginia McIntyre, of 26 Simon Willard Road and member of the Tax Relief Committee, shared Mr. Beeuwkes desire for the Town and State to explore a constitutional amendment to allow municipalities to levy a local income tax, noting that income taxes can be much more indicative of a citizens ability to pay as compared to property taxes. Both Ms. McIntyre and Mr. Beeuwkes

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encouraged the Select Board to closely consider adopting the Residential Exemption at the Classification Hearing held in conjuncture with the Board of Assessors in the Fall.

Chair Johnson thanked past and present members of the Tax Fairness Committee for their work in establishing the Senior Means Tested Exemption and noted that the Select Board could consider adding a proponent of tax fairness considerations to their annual goals. Ms. Escobedo noted that upon the dissolution of the committee, committee records should be submitted to the Town Clerk's Office to be archived. Ms. Ackerman thanked the Committee for raising the consciousness of Town residents regarding tax fairness and noted that representatives from the Massachusetts Municipal Association may be contacting the members of the Tax Fairness Committee to discuss state-wide efforts on tax fairness, such as the Senior Means Tested Exemption.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
VOTED: to dissolve the Tax Fairness Committee, with great thanks for their service to the Town.

Review 2022 General Obligation Bond Issue

Ms. Lafleur reviewed the memo included in the Select Board's meeting packet regarding the 2022 General Obligation Bond Sale. Ms. Lafleur noted that interest rates had risen sharply, giving the example that the "true interest cost" was 0.68% this time last year, while this year's "true interest cost" was 3.25%. The Board and Ms. Lafleur discussed the potential impacts of the rising interest rates on borrowing, especially as it related to the upcoming Middle School Building project. Ms. Lafleur reminded the Board that they had used an interest rate of 4.0% in their estimates for the project, and that the increasing rate were not likely to have a large impact on the project.

Ms. Lafleur also informed the Board that the bond rating institution Moody's had completed their review of the Town's financial position and would be issuing the Town's bond rating in the coming week. Ms. Lafleur noted that following their meeting with representatives from Moody's, the Town was informed that the Town's draw down of reserve funds was something they had taken note of.

The Board and Ms. Lafleur also discussed the process by which items approved at Town Meeting was then financed, and how financing through bonding affected the Town.

Discuss Proposed Liaison Assignments

Mr. Johnson presented the proposed Select Board liaison assignments to the Board and asked if any members would prefer to take on an additional board or committee or seek reassignment of any of their proposed assignments. After discussion, the Board approved of the proposed assignments with the following amendments:

- Mr. Johnson would become the liaison to the Council on Aging and would not be the liaison to the White Pond Advisory Committee
- Ms. Escobedo would become the liaison to the West Concord Advisory Committee and would not be the liaison to the Council on Aging.
- Ms. Hartman would become the liaison to the White Pond Advisory Committee and would not be the liaison to the West Concord Advisory Committee. Additionally, Ms. Hartman would not be the representative to the MAPC or the MBTA, as the Select Board had

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recently appointed Keith Bergman and Ira Goldman to those committees, respectively. Additionally, the Board discussed their roles as liaisons, and how best to present their reports to their fellow members at Select Board meetings. Finally, Chair Johnson asked Ms. Lafleur and the Town Managers Office to inform all Boards and Committees of their new assigned Select Board liaisons.

Discuss Draft 2022-2023 Select Board Goals

The Board reviewed the 2022-2023 Select Board Goals Draft which was included as part of the Select Board's meeting packet. As part of their considerations the Board reviewed the previous year's goals and discussed which items should be included in the goals for the coming year. The Board discussed various items which they believed should be included or amended as part of their goals for 2022-2023, and Chair Johnson asked that each member send him what they considered to be their top ten goals for the year. Ms. Lafleur noted that the Select Board goals were likely to be more achievable if their top ten items tended to be in alignment and were generally agreed upon.

The Board decided that each member would forward their top ten goals to be included to Chair Johnson, who would compile them for consideration at their next meeting, where it was his hope that the Board would vote to approve their 2022-2023 goals.

Discuss Town Manager Transition Progress to Date and Next Steps

Chair Johnson stated that Ms. Lafleur had been serving as Interim Town Manager for several months and that the contract that the Board and Ms. Lafleur had agreed upon was set to expire on June 30, 2022. He noted that, unlike the process for a full-time appointed Town Manager, there was no formal review process for an Interim Town Manager and asked the Board to consider next steps in the search for, and hiring of, Concord's permanent Town Manager.

Mr. Dane stated that he had worked with Ms. Lafleur extensively and that she had always dealt with any concerns responsively, maturely, and effectively. Mr. Dane shared his opinion that Ms. Lafleur was exactly the type of Town Manager Concord needed.

Ms. Hartman added that she had worked with Ms. Lafleur and appreciated Ms. Lafleur's understanding of Concord's citizenry.

Ms. Ackerman stated that Ms. Lafleur had been incredibly accessible, transparent, and honest and had dealt with difficult issues creatively. She added that she has received positive feedback from staff and from the public.

Ms. Escobedo noted Ms. Lafleur's ability to creatively handle staff transitions and turnover. Ms. Escobedo added that while she was very comfortable with Ms. Lafleur and her performance as Interim Town Manager, she had not yet heard from staff on their opinion of Ms. Lafleur as Town Manager.

Chair Johnson stated that Ms. Lafleur had helped the Town while they were in crisis and added that the last three years had helped the Town to realize the qualities they were seeking in a Town Manager.

Chair Johnson asked the Board if they would like to move forward with contract negotiations with

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Ms. Lafleur, should she be interested, to fill the permanent position of Town Manager. The Board confirmed that they would be interested in entering negotiations with Ms. Lafleur.

Ms. Lafleur stated her interest in filling the position of Concord's Town Manager, and that she looked forward to continuing to serve the Town.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
VOTED: to enter contact negotiations with Ms. Lafleur to fill the position of Town Manager and to designate Chair Johnson to negotiate on behalf of the Select Board.

Committee Nominations

Sue Felshin, of 19 Sunnyside Lane to the Planning Board.

Committee Appointments

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
VOTED: to reappoint Vincent Carlson of 34 Everett Street to the PEG Access Advisory Committee with a term ending April 30, 2025.

Select Board Member Liaison Reports

Ms. Ackerman reported that she had attended the Finance Committee and that they had appointed a new Chair, Peggy Briggs. Ms. Ackerman also attended the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Committee meeting and noted that the Committee would be coming before the Select Board soon to report their recommendations on Junction Park; she added that the Select Board will likely be invited to perform a site walk. Ms. Ackerman also reported that the Personnel Study Task Force had one member resign, and that they were hoping to finish their work by June of this year.

Mr. Dane reported on his attendance at the Civil War Monument Task Force meeting, noting that they had undertaken extensive research and had compiled a list of names that may be added to the monument. He added that the Task Force estimated the cost to recast the bronze plaque was \$25,000. Mr. Dane also reported that the 250th Executive Committee would be holding their first meeting on Thursday May 12, 2022.

Ms. Escobedo reported that she had attended the Economic Vitality Committee meeting where it was noted that the communication between the Committee and the Town had improved greatly.

Mr. Johnson reported that he had attended the meetings for the Trails Committee, Municipal Light Board, and Tax Fairness Committee.

Public Comment

Diane Proctor, of 57 Sudbury Road and Chair of the Community Preservation Committee, asked if there would be a chance for public comment regarding ARPA funding in the future. The Board assured Ms. Proctor that there would be.

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Mary Hartman, of 16 Concord Greene Unit 6, informed the Board that the Superintendent of Concord Public Schools had filed a complaint against the school committee. She advised the Town to allow the process to be handled through the proper channels.

Adjournment

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
VOTED: to adjourn at 9:28 p.m.

Meeting Materials: <https://concordma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/36576/Select-Board-packet-May-9-2022>