

TOWN OF CONCORD  
SELECT BOARD  
MINUTES  
JULY 19, 2021

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, the Concord Select Board convened in a meeting located at 141 Keyes Road and via video conference on July 19, 2021 at 6:30pm.

Present were Terri Ackerman, Chair; Matthew Johnson, Clerk; Henry Dane, Linda Escobedo, and Susan Bates. Also present was Stephen Crane, Town Manager.

**Call to Order**

Select Board Chair Terri Ackerman called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

**Chair's Remarks**

Ms. Ackerman read a statement regarding recent problems that residents have experienced in accessing Town board and committee meetings via zoom. Ms. Ackerman explained that the Town has been working to enhance its current cyber security protocols, and has a spam filtering service that re-writes all incoming hyperlinks to ensure they do not point to malicious content, including the hyperlinks that are used to access public meetings. This software has occasionally been blocking access to these hyperlinks. Anyone wishing to attend a public meeting may, as an alternative to using the hyperlink, input the meeting ID and password on the Zoom website. This will bypass the spam filtering service.

Ms. Ackerman noted that the Town Manager evaluation has been received by staff and completed by the Select Board. The Town Manager is in the process of completing his self evaluation. The Chair will prepare a draft summary for review and comment by Select Board members, and the final evaluation will be schedule for next meeting.

**Annual Goal Setting Session**

Ms. Ackerman noted that the draft FY22 Select Board goals that are in the meeting materials are lengthy, and the board is hoping to consolidate this document tonight and finalize the goals at the next meeting. The Select Board is hoping to discuss deadlines, implementation, responsibility, and how the Select Board can assist others in accomplishing goals.

The Select Board reviewed the draft goals and consolidated it from 69 total goals at the start of the meeting to 49 goals by the end. The goals document that was determined at the end of the meeting is included below.

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**2021-2022 Select Board Goals**  
**DRAFT as of 7/19/21**

**Process**

The Concord Select Board annually affirms its values and guiding principles to align its goals and objectives for improving government as it interacts with the Town Manager, committees, task forces, citizens and other units of government. In so doing, the Board aims to lead and establish strategic priorities, to provide support and guidance and encouragement where appropriate and to be collaborative, open and inclusive at all times.

**Values and Guiding Principles**

Governance: Effective, responsive and transparent governance

Public Health and Safety: Utilization of best practices for the health and safety of all

Financial Stability: Fiscal responsibility, financial stability/sustainability, town-school collaboration and integration

Infrastructure: Sufficient and sustainable, well-maintained and reliable

Quality of Life: High level maintenance of town services for Concord citizens. Dignity and respect for all individuals

Balance and Equity: Balance and equity among divergent individual, neighborhood and town-wide interests

Diversity: Conscious decision making to support economic and social diversity and inclusion

Historic and Cultural Heritage: Preservation and promotion of historic and cultural heritage

Agricultural and Natural Resources: Protection and enhancement

Sustainability and Resilience: Sustainable management of energy resources, reduction of carbon emissions, and regeneration of our natural environment

Economic Resilience: Protecting the vitality of the town and businesses and reducing obstacles to their success

Regional and State Interests: Advancement of Concord's interest in the region and the commonwealth

**Goals and Objectives**

Specifically, the Board supports short and long-term goals and objectives in the following categories:

*Effective Governance, Board Organization, and Communication*

1. Provide ongoing support and advice to the Town Manager on leadership opportunities and issues. Conduct the annual evaluation of the Town Manager's performance and make determination on contract renewal.
2. Continue to support the Town Manager, town departments and town committees as they implement action steps from the *2030 Envision Concord Comprehensive Long-Range Plan* and other new priority areas in their current year goals.

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- a. Work with the Town Manager to lay out a 5-year plan for implementing the relevant action steps of 2030 Envision Concord.
- b. Identify departmental goals and review progress with the Town Manager at the beginning and end of the of the fiscal year.
3. Approve a charge for and seat a new Fiber Broadband Completion Committee (ATM '21 Article 41).
4. Approve a charge for and seat a new study committee to review the current charge, bylaws, and function of the Personnel Committee. Evaluate recommendations and decide future charge of Personnel Board.
5. Provide guidance and resources for all Town volunteers serving on boards and committees to improve consistency and efficiency of public meetings and hearings. Restart annual training session for board/committee members on OML, ethics, and meeting management.
6. Continue to promote open and transparent government through enhanced use of technology and increased public access television.
7. Work to improve citizen communications by reviewing/implementing the citizen correspondence policy drafted in 2021. Continue regular publication of the Town Manager's report.
8. Recruit new committee volunteers that reflect all segments of Concord's citizenry; revisit the Green Card assignment and appointment process as needed. Implement the committee volunteer process drafted in 2021. Ensure that all volunteers are acknowledged for their willingness to serve.
9. Review/revise current committee structure; consider consolidation or elimination of existing committees and review APP10.
10. Support and participate in the public review of all new Public Private Partnership Agreements. Review the Town Manager's Public Private Partnership update to the SB.
11. Advise the Town Manager on opportunities to improve the organization and access to information on the Town website.
12. Work with the Town Manager and his office staff to improve the process of preparation for Select Board meetings.

*Financial Stability*

1. Gain Special Town Meeting and Town Election approval of debt exclusion funding for the new middle school with a target total project cost of \$100 million or less.
2. Brainstorm Town and School strategies for financing the forthcoming new Middle School Building Project to manage the future tax burden on Concord citizens. Identify an action plan to implement these financing strategies.
3. Fully implement the adopted recommendations of the Capital Planning Task Force this year to assist the Town Manager in developing an effective long-term method for understanding and prioritizing the capital and facilities needs of the Town and the Schools, to include timetables, cost estimates, environmental impact, debt forecasting

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and citizen tax burden.

4. Review strategies with the Town Manager for risk assessment and legal budget management and expenses.

*Affordable Housing*

1. Submit an ATM '22 warrant appropriation article for affordable housing if the related special legislation has not been approved.
2. Provide input to the housing production plan update to maximize the equity and diversity impacts of future affordable housing initiatives.
3. Seek alternatives that reduce the real estate tax burden of less affluent homeowners.
4. Develop an alternative or successor to Concord's inclusionary housing bylaw that can achieve the same objective going forward.
5. Support the Planning Board's work to identify best zoning practices to encourage the preservation of smaller homes.

*Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging*

1. Review report from the DEI consultant to better understand the policy implications and implementation priorities.
2. Research and implement diversity, equity and inclusion best practices in town governance. Listen to diverse voices in the community and assess which potential DEI actions the Select Board should take.

*Maintaining Concord's Unique Character, Historic and Cultural Heritage, Agriculture and Natural Resources*

1. Launch development of a multi-year integrated planning process for land use, identifying currently owned and priority acquisitions for municipal and school facility needs, affordable housing, and conservation and acquisition of land to preserve Concord's rural and agricultural culture.
2. Monitor progress of the recreational use and long-term protection of White Pond, the Gerow land, Warner Pond and their ecosystems.
3. Coordinate the efforts of town bodies to support the Complete Streets goals of enhancing pedestrian safety and managing the increased use of bikes and other non-automobile motorized vehicles while protecting our natural conservation areas and trails.
4. Continue to seek resolution for public access to Estabrook Trail. (This matter currently being litigated.)
5. Launch town-wide planning for events celebrating the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the American Revolution: Appoint Executive Committee to oversee the needed structure for the required advance town-wide planning. Executive Committee to produce preliminary plan within 90 days

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*Economic Vitality, Transportation and Communication*

1. Promote town events and commercial activity in the village business districts to ensure their continued success.
2. Consider the establishment of a new municipal Economic Vitality Division.
3. Provide input to the Thoreau Depot business district zoning and development processes.
4. Propose next steps for the Nuclear Metals/Starmet site based upon the recommendations in the committee report.
5. Identify and implement opportunities for enhancing transportation throughout town to support economic, social equity and recreational needs. Increase use of shuttle buses, school buses, on-demand transportation, the rail trail, the Assabet River Pedestrian Bridge, and village center wayfinding improvements.
6. Work with the Town Manager on initiatives to ensure the stability, continuity and continued growth of Concord's municipal broadband Internet service.
7. Monitor potential changes in status or ownership of institutional properties, such the Post Office and the Armory.
8. Work with the Economic Vitality Committee's efforts to re-examine the sewer improvement and parking availability.
9. Review the town's wireless communications policies and provide a definitive plan for addressing the priority safety and access concerns of town center cellphone coverage.

*Regional and State Interests*

1. Continue to work with our State legislative representatives on:
  - a. Special legislation refiled 2021 for ATM'19 Articles 25 and 26 related to affordable housing
  - b. Home rule petition filed 2021 for ATM'20 Article 15: Senior Means-Tested Property Tax Exemption
  - c. Work with our State legislative representatives on special legislation filed for ATM 21 Article 31 Fossil Fuel Infrastructure.
  - d. ATM 20 Article 50: one day liquor licenses
  - e. ATM'18 Article 18: 17-year-olds voting in Town elections
2. Annually invite state legislators to meet with the Select Board.
3. Reinvigorate participation in regional organizations of which Concord is a member such as Hanscom Area Town Selectmen (HATS), Hanscom Field Advisory Committee (HFAC), MPO, MAPC/MAGIC, MBTA, Massport, Cross-Town Connect, the MMA Fiscal Policy Committee, and the Battle Road 250th group.
4. Implement the regional dispatch center proposal dependent on grant funding, taking any additional revenues or resources and expenses such as IT readiness into account.
5. Appoint Concord representative to statewide 250th Commission and continue to work with regional partners in the ad-hoc Battle Road group.

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6. Receive an annual update on Minuteman Regional Technical High School with a focus on OPEB liabilities and Concord's expected long-term enrollment, projected per-pupil and total long-term costs.

*Specific to First Year Post COVID-19 Pandemic Transition for Municipal Functions*

1. Continue to prioritize public health and public safety in decision making to protect Concord citizens and Town employees as we emerge from the pandemic period.
2. Get regular updates and give input on ongoing efforts to re-open Town facilities and the effectiveness of the revised open office hours.
3. Keep town boards and committees apprised of hybrid meeting best practices while supporting a continued virtual (Zoom) meeting option.
4. Relay citizen concerns and interests in new town practices going forward as outcomes from the past 15-month pandemic challenge.
5. Review the Town Manager's annual plan for and use of ARPA funds.
6. Request a semi-annual progress report on filling the significant number of employee vacancies that were carried through the pandemic.

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**Committee Nomination**

Robert Abraham of 81 Plainfield Road to the Hugh Cargill Trust for a term to expire April 30, 2024. Sharon Jones of 8 Eaton Street, Bob Shatten of 116 Indian Spring Road, and Karen Gibson of 1641 Main Street to the Comprehensive Sustainability and Energy Committee for terms to expire on April 30, 2024. Ira Goldman of 130 Monsen Road to the Massport Community Advisory Committee for a term to expire on April 30, 2024. Happy Goethert of 606 Old Bedford Road and Melissa Maxwell of 449 Barrett's Mill Road to the Agriculture Committee for terms to expire April 30, 2024. Amy Kaiser of 289 Commonwealth Avenue to West Concord Advisory Committee for a term to expire April 30, 2024.

**Public Comments**

Pamela Dritt of 13 Concord Greene stated that she was concerned that the goals outlined financial commitments, but did not include sustainability or climate actions. Ms. Dritt expressed concern about the board's focus on climate change, stating that lowering expenses and taxes are important but are not the only goal.

Mark Gailus of 62 Prescott Road stated his appreciation for the board's goals discussion.

**Adjourn**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY  
**VOTED:** to adjourn.

**Meeting Documents:** <https://concordma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/30826/July-19-SB-Packet>

**Minuteman Media Network Coverage:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INRsznamcgw>