

**TOWN OF CONCORD  
SELECT BOARD  
MINUTES  
JULY 26, 2021  
6:30 PM**

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, the Concord Select Board convened in a meeting both via Zoom and in person at 141 Keyes Road on June 28, 2021 at 6:30pm.

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

**Call to Order**

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

Ms. Ackerman: Aye  
Ms. Bates: Aye  
Mr. Johnson: Aye.  
Ms. Escobedo: Aye  
Mr. Dane: Aye

**Consent Agenda**

- Minutes to approve: June 1, 2021; June 7, 2021
- Town Accountant Warrants: July 15, 2021; June 22, 2021
- One Day Special Liquor Licenses
  - Heritage Pool & Racquet Club 155 Old Bedford Rd 8/8/21 5:00pm-10:00pm All Alcoholic Beverages
  - Saltbox Kitchen 40 Westford Road 8/28/21 4:00pm-10:00pm Wines & Malt Beverages
  - Saltbox Kitchen 40 Westford Road 8/13/21 6:00pm-8:30pm Wines & Malt Beverages
  - Verrill Farm 11 Wheeler Road 7/28/21 6:00pm-8:00pm Wines & Malt Beverages
  - Verrill Farm 11 Wheeler Road 8/1/21 11:30am-2:30pm Wines & Malt Beverages

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY

**VOTED:** to approve the minutes of June 1, 2021 and June 7, 2021 as amended and redistributed in the packet today.

Ms. Ackerman: Aye  
Ms. Bates: Aye  
Mr. Johnson: Aye.  
Ms. Escobedo: Aye  
Mr. Dane: Present

Mr. Dane voted present on the minutes, as he was not a member of the board.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY

**VOTED:** to approve Town Accountant Warrants: July 15, 2021; June 22, 2021, One Day Special Liquor Licenses to the Heritage Pool & Racquet Club, Saltbox Kitchen, and

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Verrill Farm.

Ms. Ackerman: Aye  
Ms. Bates: Aye  
Mr. Johnson: Aye.  
Ms. Escobedo: Aye  
Mr. Dane: Aye

**Town Manager's Report**

Mr. Crane noted that due to the lengthy agenda, he would not be going through the entire printed report in the meeting materials.

The most notable issue that has come up since the printed report was the poor air quality in the region that is occurring due to the wildfires on the west coast being carried by the jet stream.

**Chair's Remarks**

Ms. Ackerman reported that at the most recent Chair's Breakfast, a number of openings on committees were highlighted. Residents can review opportunities and volunteer for board and committee service on the Town's website:

<https://concordma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/30885/July-26-SB-Packet>

Ms. Ackerman reported that Ag Day will take place on September 11.

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Discussion**

Ms. Ackerman introduced this discussion by stating the goal is to highlight what Concord can do to improve diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in Concord. Ms. Ackerman extended her thanks to the many groups and individuals that have given the Select Board input through written correspondence ahead of this meeting.

Nancy Brown of 96 Forest Ridge Road, speaking on behalf of the League of Women Voters Concord-Carlisle, commented that as much as residents view Concord as a diverse and welcoming community, the town struggles with some of the same barriers as others do. Ms. Brown spoke in support of the League's position that the Town should put together a DEI Commission to outline steps that can be taken to remove socioeconomic barriers in the community.

Erin Fife of Concord-Carlisle Human Rights Council and COAR spoke in support of the Town establishing a DEI Commission, commenting that Concord is a different place for her than it is for her friends of color based on their lived experiences.

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Rose Cratsley of 79 Hillcrest Road commented on the micro assaults that she and others she knows have experienced in Concord. Ms. Cratsley noted the need in town for an organized and cohesive effort to address challenges to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

Pat Brewer from Frist Parish Church and COAR spoke in support of the Town establishing a DEI Commission. Ms. Brewer highlighted the opportunity for the Town to collaborate with private organizations such as the League and COAR on these efforts.

Matt Degreeff of 1400 Lowell Road spoke in support of the Town establishing a DEI Commission on behalf of West Concord Union Church. Mr. Degreeff commented on the inability for many people who work in Concord to afford to live in the community, and highlighted his children's encounters with racism in school.

Superintendent Laurie Hunter introduced Andrew Nyamekye, the new Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for Concord Public Schools. Mr. Nyamekye was previously the METCO Director. Mr. Nyamekye spoke about his excitement to enter this role and for the Town's new efforts in support of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. Mr. Nyamekye will be collaborating with students, school staff at every level, and the broader community to ensure the schools culture to ensure that it is grounded in equity.

Cynthia Rainey of the School Committee spoke of the need for the schools to collaborate with the broader committee in order to be successful in achieving their DEI goals.

Ms. Bates thanked everyone for attending and spoke of the need to not view forming the committee as the final destination, but rather that an initial step in deeper soul searching for the community on this issue. Ms. Bates spoke in support of establishing a DEI Commission.

Ms. Escobedo highlighted the need for all of the existing efforts across town already doing work on DEI to come together to maximize the community's ability to address this issue and effect real change in the broader community and within the municipal organization.

Mr. Dane spoke in support of establishing a DEI Commission to take advantage of the energy that has been exhibited at this meeting tonight amongst residents.

Mr. Johnson highlighted an experience he had in town recently that captured the existing efforts among residents to improve diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. Mr. Johnson stated that there is a role for the Select Board to play on this issue by first establishing a DEI Commission. Mr. Johnson spoke in support creating a more focused definition of diversity in the committee charge.

Mr. Crane highlighted the Town's efforts, both as an employer and through governing, to ensure that Concord is welcoming to people of all backgrounds. The Town's employees are undergoing diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging training.

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Ms. Ackerman concluded the board's comments by stating that this is a journey as many people said this evening, and the board's next step is to determine whether they create a DEI charge and to finalize this charge.

Vivian Tseng of 1128 Old Marlborough Road commented that political affiliation should not be on the charge. Ms. Tseng added that she hopes that additional curriculum relating to DEI at the local level is not one more thing students are burdened by without the appropriate resources allocated to make it successful. Ms. Tseng spoke in support of [H.584 An Act Relative to Anti-Racism, Equity and Justice in Education](#), which includes an introduction of ethnic studies in Massachusetts' public school curriculum.

Tanya Gailus of 62 Prescott Road commented on the efforts in the community and the thought put into the preparation of the DEI Commission charge. Ms. Gailus spoke of the need to not burden minority members of the community by expecting them to serve on this committee, stating that while people of color may be willing to speak to predominantly white groups about racial justice, it is up to white people to do the soul searching and work to address this issue.

The Select Board members all agreed that they would set up a DEI Commission. There was no formal vote to establish the commission, as board members will review the draft charge and come to the next meeting with proposed changes and additions.

**Discuss CMLP Broadband Outage**

Mr. Crane referenced the post-incident analysis prepared by Town staff regarding the broadband outage that occurred between June 25 and June 30. Mr. Crane spoke of the need to be detailed about what occurred, acknowledge what went poorly, how it was fixed, for the Town to hold itself and their vendors accountable, and the ongoing efforts to ensure an outage like this does not occur again. Residents can view the complete report in the [meeting materials](#).

Greg Marcinek, Director of Broadband, apologized to the public for the outage and thanked the CMLP team for their efforts during this time. Mr. Marcinek spoke of the staff changes and technical difficulties that contributed to the length of the outage. Mr. Marcinek stated that CMLP is conducting core network improvements, a full audit of the network, identifying any vulnerabilities that may exist, bringing aspects of the network up to date to meet the service needs of the community, and developing an incident recovery and communication plan.

Dave Wood, Director of CMLP, is preparing a list of investments the department is going to bring to the Light Board in support of the efforts that Mr. Marcinek highlighted.

Ms. Ackerman asked what the incident recovery plan is when it is a weekend, staff is on vacation, or there are absences otherwise. Mr. Marcinek stated that CMLP hires contractors to ensure that there is support in case of such absences.

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Ms. Escobedo thanked CMLP for their forthright and detailed report. Ms. Escobedo asked what communication has been formally done with residents, how this incident affects service backlog and new customer request, and asked if Concord Broadband lost customers. Mr. Marcinek stated that residents have initiated communication with him and his staff, but a letter has not gone out to customers regarding the incident. Mr. Marcinek said that Concord Broadband has lost customers, and will include the number of customers lost in the follow up report to the board. There is no impact on new installs.

Ms. Bates asked if the current migration of emails and information from Town servers was impacted by or a result of this issue. Mr. Marcinek stated that it was not.

Mr. Johnson stated that the post-incident analysis restores trust in CMLP. Mr. Johnson commented on the sheer number of systems that were obsolete, out of support, and were behind on patches, stating that it appears there was not a focus on keeping systems up to date. Jason Bulger, Chief Information Officer, commented that the biggest challenge in this regard had been resources.

Ms. Ackerman concluded the discussion by commenting that that is an ongoing effort, and CMLP will return before the Select Board for another update on their operational improvements in the coming months.

**Write Charge for Citizen Committee – Article 41 Fiber/Broadband Study Committee**

Ms. Ackerman introduced this item by stating that at the 2021 Town Meeting, voters approved Article 41 to develop a Fiber/Broadband Study Committee. There is a draft charge in the [meeting materials](#), which will be finalized at the board's August 9 meeting. The Select Board reviewed changes made before the meeting and proposed additional changes to be incorporated.

Gail Hire of 4 Nancy Road commented that committee members should be from diverse background and have representation from a variety of neighborhoods in order to focus on “the last mile” – getting broadband from the street and into homes.

Lois Suarez of 34 Everett Street spoke in support of Ms. Hire's comment that the biggest challenge to getting broadband for residents in multi-dwelling units is getting service extended to the building from the street.

Mark Howell of 668 Annursnac Hill Road stated that the charge needs to meet the requirements of the 2021 Town Meeting vote, but believes that the deadline for completion by February 2022 is too soon. Mr. Howell spoke in support of the committee's renewal beyond that date if the Select Board is able to do so.

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David Allen stated that there are two different tasks outlined by Article 41. The first is the completion of the fiber buildout in Concord. The second is identifying the barriers and opportunities in Concord Broadband. Mr. Allen commented that this will require two very different sets of skills and the committee membership should reflect this.

Pamela Dritt of 13 Concord Greene commented that Concord Broadband is part of CMLP's broader goal of developing a smart grid, and is in support of the meter connections being wired through the fiber optic system so Concord can maintain control over its own grid.

The Select Board will continue this discussion on August 9.

**Adopt Select Board Annual Goals for 2021-22**

The Select Board held a focused meeting on July 19 to develop goals for Fiscal Year 2022. These goals are included in the [meeting materials](#).

Select Board members offered one grammatical change on the goals.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY

**VOTED:** to approve the Select Board FY22 Goals as drafted on 7/22/21 with the one change discussed and not making the change of economic resilience as proposed under Values & Guiding principles.

Ms. Ackerman: Aye

Ms. Bates: Aye

Mr. Johnson: Aye.

Ms. Escobedo: Aye

Mr. Dane: Aye

**Economic Vitality Division Reorganization – Vote Required**

The Town Manager is proposing that the Department of Planning and Land Management add an Economic Vitality Division in order to codify the operational needs and realities taking place since the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The budget for this reorganization was approved at the 2021 Town Meeting. The budget for Economic Vitality is currently housed in Recreation, but would change to DPLM if the Select Board approves this reorganization.

Mr. Johnson voiced support for an Economic Vitality Division, but raised a concern about how the Visitor Center seems to fit much more neatly under Recreation rather than DPLM, and thought it may make sense to keep the Visitor Center under Recreation. Ms. Rasmussen responded that DPLM works with cultural institutions across town, and the goal is to create synergy between different areas of economic vitality, including tourism, and highlighted successes of the Town's approach on economic vitality since the pandemic began.

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Ms. Ackerman asked if the current Tourism Director / Economic Vitality Coordinator's job description would be approved by the Personnel Board. Mr. Crane responded that it would be subject to a classification review and go to the Personnel Board for their approval.

Ms. Escobedo commented that there seems to be merit in codifying the Economic Vitality Division as proposed, and there can always be adjustments to this new division as dictated by departmental needs and personnel.

Ms. Ackerman offered that she did not feel comfortable approving this reorganization at the meeting given the lack of clarity noted by some board members on the budgetary details. Therefore, the Select Board will postpone a decision on this item until August 9. The Town Manager and Chief Financial Officer will follow up with Ms. Ackerman ahead of the next Select Board meeting.

**Committee Nominations:**

Bradley Hubbard-Nelson of 221 Nashawtuc Road to the Comprehensive Sustainability and Energy Committee for a term to expire April 30, 2024. Sara Pacelle of 1712 Monument Street to the Library Committee for a term to expire on April 30, 2024. Mary-Wren Vander-Wilden of 158 Simon Willard Road to the Library Committee to serve as an Associate Member for a term to expire on April 30, 2022.

**Committee Appointments:**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY

**VOTED:** to appoint 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.

**Town Manager Appointment with Select Board Approval:**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY

**VOTED:** to appoint Paul Kirshen of 38 Longfellow Road, Brian Crouse of 49 Indian

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Pipe Lane, Courtney Eaton of 141 Monsen Road, and Jake Swenson 140 Nut Meadow Crossing to the Climate Action Advisory Board for terms to expire April 30, 2024.

**Committee Liaison Reports**

Committee liaison reports will be postponed until the August 9 Select Board meeting.

**Miscellaneous Correspondence**

Miscellaneous correspondence was included in the meeting materials.

**Public Comments**

Mark Gailus of 62 Prescott Road commended the careful discussion of the Economic Vitality Reorganization, commenting that there are parts of the reorganization that do not fit as proposed. Mr. Gailus recommended that the proposed department should be included under the Town Manager or Deputy Town Manager and not the Department of Land Management.

**Adjourn**

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

Ms. Ackerman: Aye  
Ms. Bates: Aye  
Mr. Johnson: Aye.  
Ms. Escobedo: Aye  
Mr. Dane: Aye

**Meeting Materials:** <https://concordma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/30885/July-26-SB-Packet>

**Minuteman Media Network Coverage:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FSni6uxNvIA&list=PL1TTzrWEKOOkHKXNLQprEz0f0ofHYKj8-&index=3&t=74s>