

Remote- Select Board Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, September 7, 2021 - 7:00 p.m  
Remote

**Select Board Members Present via Zoom:** Chair Marc Strange, Steve Marantz, Joshua Levine, Mark Gold, Thomas Lachiusa.

**Present via Zoom:** Lyn Simmons, Michael Barbieri, Corrin Meise-Munns, Erica Brunell.

Chair Strange called this meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Due to COVID-19 concerns and the Governor's executive order, and changes to Open Meeting Law remote participation, this meeting was held remotely with residents having the option of calling in or sending in their comments. All votes were taken by roll call. LCTV was also utilized to broadcast and record the meeting.

Chair Strange confirmed that all members and persons anticipated on the agenda were present and could hear and be heard throughout the meeting. Ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless law requires such participation. This meeting allowed for public comment.

### **Announcements**

Citizen Petition Articles for the Fall Special Town Meeting are due in the Select Board's office no later than 12:00 p.m. on September 17, 2021. In order for a petition to be guaranteed placement on the Special Town Meeting warrant, 100 names/signatures/addresses of registered Town voters are required, and must be certified by the Town Clerk. Forms and instructions to be used for petition articles are available on the homepage of [longmeadow.org](http://longmeadow.org) and also on the Select Board's page. Petition articles will be printed in the warrant verbatim, so citizens are asked to review the forms and instructions carefully. You can view the full article submission memo and warrant schedule on the newsflash of the homepage. Please contact the Select Board's office or email [adminassistant@longmeadow.org](mailto:adminassistant@longmeadow.org) if you have any questions.

LONGMEADOW CULTURAL COUNCIL SEEKS GRANT APPLICATIONS The 2022 Local Cultural Council grant application cycle opens September 1, 2021 and runs through October 15, 2021. Online applications are accepted for cultural projects and programs related to the arts, sciences, and humanities to include grants for operating support, ticket subsidies, field trips, artist residencies, public art, fellowships, community events/programs, site-specific projects, and other activities, based on local priorities. The Longmeadow Cultural Council gives highest priority to programs which occur in the Town of Longmeadow and are submitted by Longmeadow residents or organizations and with dates and venues already secured. Due to the unpredictability of the COVID19 situation, the Council will consider the difficulty in securing a venue. If your project or performance has the potential to be offered virtually, please let us know in your application. We are encouraging applicants to think of new ways to enrich the cultural lives of our community. The Longmeadow Cultural Council is part of a network of 329 Local Cultural Councils serving all 351 Massachusetts cities and towns. Each year, the state legislature allocates funding to the Massachusetts Cultural Council, which then apportions funds to each Massachusetts community thereby helping to provide enriching programs and activities for the benefit of all Massachusetts residents. For online grant applications, and/or additional information, please go to: [www.mass-culture.org](http://www.mass-culture.org). For questions, please email Peg Landon, LCC Chair at: [peglandon@comcast.net](mailto:peglandon@comcast.net)

Trash Collection: Trash will not be collected on Monday, September 6, 2021 in observance of Labor Day. Pickup for all routes this week will be delayed by one day due to the holiday.

Get Wise About Your Lawn! The Connecticut River Stormwater Committee at [thinkblueconnecticutriver.org](http://thinkblueconnecticutriver.org) offers some great lawn and garden tips to help curb stormwater pollution. Good practices around your home and garden that eliminate contaminated storm flows will help reduce costs associated with water pollution and get

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us to fishable and swimmable lakes and rivers in the Pioneer Valley Region. Please view the post on the homepage of the town website for more information.

### **Planning Board Vacancy Interview**

This agenda topic was moved to the next meeting on September 20 for a joint meeting with the Planning Board to interview candidates for the vacancy.

### **Resident Comments**

Carla Gunn, resident and member of the Rules Committee was present to discuss the upcoming Electronic Voting Demo. The demo will be held on September 9 at 5:00 p.m. The intent is to demonstrate how electronic voting may look and work at a future Town Meeting. Ms. Gunn invited residents and members of the board to attend the upcoming demonstration.

Michele Marantz, of 117 Rugby Road, spoke about the Eversource Gas Pipeline. Ms. Marantz is a member of the Pipeline Awareness Group. Ms. Marantz stated that an Eversource representative told her that they plan to hold two virtual open houses at the end of September to explain the pipeline expansion project. Eversource will notify both communities, stakeholders, business leaders, and owners of properties on abutting routes. Eversource will also notify residents through a press release, Ms. Marantz stated. Ms. Marantz urged the board to be aware that Eversource's decision to hold these open houses is a response to the state requirement to fulfil the siting board process. Ms. Marantz believes that the reliability project is excessive and proposes a safety, health, and financial threat to our community. Ms. Marantz suggested that Eversource go back to the drawing board to present a less expensive and safer alternative project that maybe incorporates renewable energy.

### **Select Board Comments**

Mr. Strange suggested that the Town invite Eversource to present their proposed project to the Select Board before holding the open houses.

Mr. Marantz stated that Springfield City Council's subcommittee for environmental protection is having a hearing on September 23. Mr. Marantz suggested that the Town hold our hearing on October 4 concerning the Eversource gas expansion plan. Mr. Marantz stated that the hearing would allow residents to ask questions, and as a community could be informed as to what is going on. Mr. Marantz stated that the reliability project explains that a new point of delivery would be installed in a non-residential area in Longmeadow. Mr. Marantz stated that Longmeadow Country Club is a residential area. Mr. Marantz stated that he has fielded many complaints by residents about additional gas replacement projects that Eversource has done in town, and the damage caused to the tree belts.

Mr. Lachiusa suggested that considering location for this hearing and meeting would be important due to the amount of residents that may attend. Mr. Lachiusa also questioned if the town has remedies to restoring the tree belt after unsatisfactory work was completed.

Ms. Simmons requested residents to please email [townmanager@longmeadow.org](mailto:townmanager@longmeadow.org) if there are known addresses where restoration to the tree belt needs to be investigated following the completion of work.

Mr. Gold stated that the board passed a policy on road surfacing and repair that requires compliance for trench work permits on public streets. Mr. Gold suggested that the Town ensures that it is enforcing this policy when work is completed that does not satisfy the details of the policy.

Mr. Gold reported to the board that the letter to the ethics commission concerning the HCRRB had been sent out. The actions that the commission takes would be in confidence and we would not hear back about the actions taken. Mr. Gold explained that we would progressively ask the state ethics commission and attorney general's office to pursue the recouping of funds, and for PERAC to complete an updated audit on the HCRRB. Mr. Gold will report to the board when more information is available.

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Mr. Marantz spoke on the vaccination rates for town employees. Mr. Marantz questioned if departments that are public facing could see vaccine mandates in the near future. Ms. Simmons stated that she is closely watching the situation closely and listening to what other communities are doing. Ms. Simmons is encouraging workers to be vaccinated but are not mandating at this. Ms. Simmons went into the numbers of percentage of town employees vaccinated, and stated that it is optional to submit your vaccination card to human resources.

Mr. Levine asked if the board would be meeting virtual for the near future. Mr. Strange explained that due to the mask mandate, members took part in a poll to gauge interests in in person meetings with masks as opposed to virtual for the time being. Three members chose virtual, and two chose in person.

Mr. Levine spoke about the flooding in town of recent. Mr. Levine questioned how the sewer system is holding up with the storms we have experienced over the past month. Ms. Simmons stated that the town has been proactive in knowing our problem spots for flooding by putting barrels and barricades in place in case of the need to detour roads. We have seen more water in this area over the past month and the severe weather in July has attributed to the flooding according to Ms. Simmons.

### **Town Manager's Report**

**COVID-19 Update** At the time of the publication of this memo, there are 22 COVID-19 cases in town. The Board of Health will be meeting at the end of September to review data, current cases and assess the current state of the town regarding the virus.

**Water, Sewer and Stormwater Billing Changes** The biannual water, sewer and stormwater bill is being mailed on September 9, 2021. This covers the billing period of February – July. This will be the last biannual bill as we switch to a quarterly billing cycle. An insert explaining this change is included in the upcoming bill. Switching to quarterly billing is also a change that DEP would like to see. At an upcoming meeting, we will be presenting a draft bylaw on water conservation, this is also a recommendation of DEP. The bill that will be due in December will only contain 2 months of usage as we transition to the new quarterly system. The schedule moving forward is below and will be included in the next bills being mailed out.

**Crosswalks and Street Line Painting Quotes** for line painting come in on September 9. The painting of crosswalks and stop bars will finish this week. We have had delays in both of these areas related to paint supply. This continues to be an issue and we are on our 3rd vendor trying to source material. Pondside Road Resurfacing – FLAP grant Through the Federal Lands Access Program we were awarded a grant to resurface Pondside Road and replace culverts. This project has been around since 2019 and the area is eligible because it will improve access to federal land in the meadows. There are multiple funding sources for this project including the Federal Lands Access program funding (\$226k), Town of Longmeadow in-kind match (\$11,080), and Federal Lands Transportation program (\$45k). At the Annual Town Meeting in June 2020, a warrant article was passed to go out to bond \$510,000 toward the project (borrowing was done in June 2021). The work is out to bid right now with a due date of September 9. The project needs to be completed by the end of October to satisfy the grant requirements

**Bliss Park Playground** New swings have been ordered for the Bliss Park playground to replace the broken ones and a new slide has been ordered to replace the deteriorated one. Signs have been posted in the park acknowledging that we are working to repair the damaged equipment. We have also blocked the slide from use (again). We anticipate the slide and swings to be delivered this fall and installation will happen shortly after. The age of the structure led to delays in finding replacement parts that would work with what we have.

**New Adult Center** As an update to the August 2 briefing to the Select Board by the Building Committee chair, letters were sent to the contractor regarding the soil conditions and paving and responses from the contractor to both matters have been received. We are reviewing the responses and will be assessing the next steps. Street Paving A request for bids is currently out with responses due Friday. Once we review the bid responses and

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select a contractor we will know what will fit within the budget and the paving schedule will be developed.

When the streets have been determined a list will be posted on the town website.

**Stormwater Asset Management Plan Grant** Working with Tighe & Bond, DPW engineering submitted a Stormwater Asset Management Plan grant application to DEP. If awarded this would provide the Town with a thorough and representative understanding of the condition and vulnerabilities of the Town's drainage system. It will help establish a proactive stormwater system maintenance, repair and replacement program that will help with budgeting needs.

**DPW 21E Lawsuit & Eminent Domain Lawsuit** A motion was filed to consolidate the two cases. A pre-trial hearing in the eminent domain matter is scheduled for the middle of September. The discovery phase has slowed in the eminent domain case and depositions need to be scheduled.

## **Old Business**

### *A. Approve Meeting Minutes*

*M. Gold made the motion to approve the meeting minutes from the Select Board's August 16, 2021 regular meeting with the amendment requested by Mr. Lachiusa. Mr. Lachiusa seconded the motion.*

*Roll Call Vote: Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Levine-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Lachiusa-YES.*

### *B. Cable License Update*

Attorney Epstein was present to discuss the Cable License Agreement with Comcast. The 90-day extension of the contract expires on September 28. Atty. Epstein explained that Comcast has included new proposed language in the agreement that is problematic. Atty. Epstein stated that Comcast plans to include language that details competitive equity. Atty. Epstein explained that this language is asking the Select Board to level the playing field with other providers who offer internet services. The new vendors are title two vendors that do not come under the purview of the issuing authority that Comcast does under section six of the cable communications act. Mr. Levine questioned if fiber to the home through another vendor would be impacted by this agreement. Atty. Epstein stated that a third party provider could come in to offer this. Mr. Gold stated that Comcast is giving the town an opportunity to negotiate around the contract by including this language. Mr. Gold suggested the town come up with a list of items we are looking to propose into the contract during negotiations for improvements in service. Mr. Gold stated that he would not approve this new contract and opposed the new language. Further discussion ensued concerning the licensing agreement with Comcast. *Mr. Gold made the motion that the Select Board advise Atty. Epstein to respectively decline the contract agreement with Comcast. Mr. Lachiusa seconded this motion.*

The motion was never voted on. Mr. Gold withdrew the motion. Atty. Epstein advised the board to make the Comcast License Agreement an agenda topic for the next meeting. Atty. Epstein will set up a meeting with Lyn to discuss before the next meeting where a motion could be made.

## **New Business**

### *A. Energy and Sustainability Recommendations*

Andrea Chasen, resident and member of the Energy Sustainability Committee, was present to give recommendations to the Select Board regarding energy use in Town. The full report presented by Ms. Chasen was included into this agenda packet and video is available on the Town Website as well. Ms. Chasen spoke about energy savings to date, which were reflections of grants that provide financial benefits. Supporting conservation efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is important for the Town to pursue according to Ms. Chasen. A discussion ensued on how to go about educating businesses and residents on the benefit of renewable energy sources. Ms. Chasen hopes with the help of the Select Board to create a subcommittee to create the sustainability plan to support the climate change resolution. Mr. Marantz spoke on the budget for the Energy and Sustainability Committee. Mr. Marantz also explained the proposed article to go to Town Meeting to

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engage a sustainability plan if approved. Mr. Marantz commends Ms. Chasen for the work that the committee has done in this area. Mr. Gold explained balancing the costs between ideal and practicality. Mr. Gold went on to discuss the idea of heat pumps and the ability to increase knowledge on the new technology that is available. Mr. Gold would like to maintain a technical base as well as watching out for the economics as well. New Assistant Town Manager, Corrin Meise-Munns was also present to discuss some of the grant opportunities available pertaining to energy conservation and efficiency.

*B. Letter Supporting House Bill- Crumbling Foundation*

State Representative Brian Ashe, and resident Russ Dupere were present to discuss the House Bill for crumbling foundations. Mr. Dupere was on the Governor's Commission for Crumbling Concrete. Mr. Dupere explained the bill pending before senate (s548). There have been a number of town's that are signed on in support of this letter. The bill would help homeowners with the issue of crumbling foundations. The bill establishes an insurance company that would be able to handle this issue and cases. State Rep. Ashe explained that Senator Lesser and himself are in support and fully aware of this bill and letter of support. The joint committee has to approve first before going to legislation. Mr. Marantz asked if there is mandatory testing of quarries. Rep. Ashe confirmed that there is testing on quarries but not on foundations to this point. Mr. Levine questioned if there were programs in place for testing existing foundations in their homes. Rep. Ashe stated that there was money budgeted before the pandemic occurred, concerning testing foundations.

*Mr. Lachiusa made the motion in favor of sending the letter to state representatives regarding the House Bill for crumbling foundations. Mr. Marantz seconded the motion.*

*Roll Call Vote: Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Levine-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Lachiusa-YES.*

*C. Treasurer's Cash Handling and Turnover Policy*

Town Treasurer, Erica Brunell, was present to discuss the new cash handling and turnover policy. Ms. Brunell hopes that this new policy will allow better financial policy to take advantage of interest rates and get cash into the bank promptly. This would be a uniform policy to improve efficiency and security for the town. The policy will ensure that turnover of cash and checks are completed weekly, and that department heads will sign each turnover for accountability purposes. Mr. Gold asked if this policy is going to be implemented for the school department. Ms. Brunell explained that it was her hope that all departments would follow this policy, but the school department does have the ability to manage their own banks. Mr. Gold was in favor of this policy.

*Mr. Gold made the motion to adopt the new cash handling and turnover policy submitted by the Town Treasurer. Mr. Lachiusa seconded the motion.*

*Roll Call Vote: Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Levine-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Lachiusa-YES.*

*D. Charter Review Update*

Mr. Lachiusa suggested that these items were discussed and voted on at an earlier time in the year. The intent of this discussion was to review the recommendations made by the Charter Recommendation Committee in 2018. It was requested that Michael Barbieri research meeting minutes from the past 12 months to see which recommendations were voted on and what actions were taken. The goal is to add any outstanding charter recommendations to the Fall Town Meeting warrant for approval.

*Mr. Marantz made the motion to table this discussion for the next meeting. Mr. Lachiusa seconded the motion.*

*Roll Call Vote: Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Levine-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Lachiusa-YES.*

*E. Block Party Request*

Raymond Keane, of 109 Ellington Street, has applied to the Longmeadow Select Board to hold a block party on 9/11/21 from 4 p.m. – 10: p.m. with a rain date of 9/12/21. The block party's location is Ellington Street between Longmeadow St. and Laurel.

*Mr. Gold made the motion to approve the Block Party Request for Ellington Street on September 11, 2021 from 4:00 pm – 10:00 pm. Mr. Levine seconded the motion.*

*Roll Call Vote: Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Levine-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Lachiusa-YES.*

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*F. Street Closure Request*

Elizabeth Morgan, coordinator of the Longmeadow Pride Event, has applied to the Longmeadow Select Board for a street closure application on Longmeadow St. east of the green between Longfellow Dr. and Williams St. for the event to be held on 9/12/21 from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. on the Town Green.

*Mr. Gold made the motion to approve the street closure request on Longmeadow St. east of the green for the Pride Event on September 12, 2021. Mr. Marantz seconded the motion.*

*Roll Call Vote: Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Levine-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Lachiusa-YES.*

**Correspondence**

**Adjourn**

*Mr. Lachiusa made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 p.m. Mr. Marantz seconded the motion*

*Roll Call Vote: Mr. Strange-YES, Mr. Marantz-YES, Mr. Levine-YES, Mr. Gold-YES, Mr. Lachiusa-YES.*

**Documents**



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Meeting.pdf

Respectfully submitted,  
Michael Barbieri