

**Stoneham Select Board
Open Meeting
Tuesday, March 11, 2025
7:00 p.m.**

Open Session

Members Present: Raymie Parker – Chair, Timothy Waitkevitch – Vice Chair, Heidi Bilbo – Clerk, David Pignone

Also Present: Town Administrator Dennis Sheehan; Town Counsel Robert Galvin

Document List: Women’s History Month Proclamation; Minutes dated 2/25/25; Minutes dated 3/6/25; Town Counsel’s Report; Warrant for May Town Meeting; Capital Committee chart

Agenda Item 1: Call to Order: Parker called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 2: Pledge of Allegiance

Agenda Item 3: Women’s History Month Waitkevitch read a proclamation for Women’s History Month.

Agenda Item 4: Citizens’ Comments No comments were made.

Agenda Item 5: Approve Minutes Bilbo moved to approve the minutes form 2/25/25 and 3/6/25. Waitkevitch seconded the motion. Voted unanimously.

Agenda Item 6: Memorial Day Events and Street Closings This item was moved to the next agenda.

Agenda Item 7: Appointment of Town Counsel Galvin updated the Board on pending matters including Spot Pond development, Rockville Park development, High Street subdivision, and several pending matters in litigation. Galvin stated that he strives to be responsive and that he enjoys working with the Town employees and the Board.

Parker stated that she always finds Galvin to be responsive and professional and that he has a good understanding of the Board and the Town. Pignone stated that he enjoys working with Galvin and finds him to be responsive. Waitkevitch stated that it is a pleasure working with Galvin and that he trusts his opinion and advice. Bilbo stated that she trusts Galvin work and finds him to be effective. Town Moderator Jeanne Craigie stated that she find Galvin to be a consummate gentleman and very knowledgeable on Roberts Rules and town meeting procedures.

Pignone moved to reappoint Galvin to the position of Town Counsel. Waitkevitch seconded the motion. Voted unanimously.

Agenda Item 8: Capital Committee Recommendations for May Town Meeting Sheehan stated that the Capital Committee met today to finalize its recommendations for Town Meeting. He stated that they decided to pursue a smaller number of recommendations given the override. He stated that the total is \$570,200 which includes \$50,000 for the fire station restoration, \$288,200 for a 6 wheel dump truck, \$132,000 for the middle school bridge restoration, and \$100,000 for streets and sidewalks. He stated that the committee is also recommending that \$66,000 from the sewer fund be used to fund a sewer pump station grinder and \$35,000 from the water fund be used for leak detection equipment. Bilbo stated that the committee is being conservative while it awaits the result of the ballot question.

Agenda Item 9: Accept Warrant Articles/Discuss Location of Town Meeting/Sign Warrant for May Town Meeting Galvin stated article 11 that was accepted at the last meeting can be removed because what it seeks to accomplished is completed with article 10 which also refers to specific exemptions. He stated that the % of the exemption is completed by the legislative body.

Galvin stated that article 9 creates a spot on the tax bill for a tax relief fund for the elderly and disabled. Galvin stated that a committee will need to be formed to determine the use of the funds. He stated that the Select Board creates the committee and the committee creates the rules of distribution. Craigie asked if the approved to receive a donation, will the amount just come off of the recipients taxes. Galvin stated that the funds are simply deducted from the amount owed in taxes. Waitkevitch stated that he is happy to see both 9 and 10 on the warrant and hopes the rules will be clear and that the criteria will not demonstrate favoritism.

Waitkevitch moved to accept the warrant as presented. Bilbo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting in favor:

Raymie Parker
Timothy Waitkevitch
Heidi Bilbo
David Pignone

Motion Passes (4-0)

Waitkevitch moved to sign the warrant for the 5/5/25 Town Meeting. Bilbo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting in favor:

Raymie Parker
Timothy Waitkevitch
Heidi Bilbo
David Pignone

Motion Passes (4-0)

Craigie stated that she wanted to give the Board her thoughts on moving Town Meeting to the high school in anticipation of a larger than average crowd. She stated that all of the venues have roughly the same capacity with the high school gym having the highest capacity. She stated that it is much easier in terms of set up to hold it in the town hall auditorium. She stated that no one can know the number of attendees, but if there are too many Town Meeting can be postponed to Thursday and moved to the high school. All Board members agreed that the town hall auditorium is the preferred venue.

Jill Blakensmith, 23 Maple Street, asked if child care can be arranged. Craigie stated that the Boys and Girls Club will be setting up child care for 30 for a nominal fee.

Agenda Item 10: Override Discussion Sheehan stated that now that the dollar figure has been chosen, staff is fielding comments and simplifying the message. Parker asked Sheehan to create a simple sheet of facts laying out the most important features of the override. Waitkevitch asked that the sheet include a section about what the residents will get in terms of service if the override passes.

Agenda Item 11: High School Building Project Update Sheehan stated that he and the Superintendent sent a letter to the contractor asking them not to pursue installing the turf field prior to the last frost. He stated that the cost of preparing the field would have been \$210,000. He stated that there is a meeting of the building committee on Monday night.

Agenda Item 12: Town Administrator's Report Sheehan stated that the school is organizing walking tours and that the wetlands restoration project is proceeding noting that there is a concept that is being modified.

Agenda Item 13: Non-Deliberative Announcements and Scheduling Parker stated that the 300th Committee is hosting a sip/savor/see event on 3/22 and that there is a financial resource fair at the Senior Center on 4/15.

Waitkevitch moved to adjourn to executive session not to return to discuss strategy with respect to all pending litigation where an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the Town and the chair so declares pursuant to MGL c 30A, sec. 21(a)(3). Pignone seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting in favor:

Raymie Parker
Timothy Waitkevitch
Heidi Bilbo
David Pignone

Motion Passes (4-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Dava Feltch Kilbride, Office Manager