

**Stoneham Select Board  
Open Meeting  
Tuesday, April 8, 2025  
7:00 p.m.**

**Open Session**

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

**Also Present:** Town Administrator Dennis Sheehan

**Document List:** Proclamation for Autism Acceptance Month, Letter from Stoneham Bank dated 4/3/25, Site Plan review application materials for 371 Main Street; Letter from Erin Wortman dated ; Minutes dated 3/25/25; Warrant for Town Meeting.

**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**

Parker thanked Seibold for his many years of service to the Town. She stated that he is a mentor and a friend and his input on all things Stoneham is invaluable. Parker welcomed Foreman to the Board. She thanked the Board for recognizing her as Chair. Parker passed the gavel to Sheehan before reorganizing.

**Agenda Item 3: Reorganize Select Board** Parker moved to nominate Waitkevitch to be Chair of the Board. Bilbo seconded the motion. Waitkevitch stated that he accepted the nomination. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting in favor:

Timothy Waitkevitch  
Heidi Bilbo  
Raymie Parker  
David Pignone  
Ryan Foreman

Motion Passes (5-0)

Sheehan thanked the Select Board for its leadership over the last year and handed the gavel back to Waitkevitch.

Parker moved to nominate Pignone to be Vice Chair of the Board. Bilbo seconded the motion. Pignone stated that he accepted the nomination. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting in favor:

Timothy Waitkevitch  
Heidi Bilbo  
Raymie Parker  
David Pignone  
Ryan Foreman

Motion Passes (5-0)

Parker moved to nominate Foreman to be Clerk of the Board. Pignone seconded the motion. Foreman stated that he accepted the nomination. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting in favor:

Timothy Waitkevitch  
Heidi Bilbo  
Raymie Parker  
David Pignone  
Ryan Foreman

Motion Passes (5-0)

**Agenda Item 4: Proclamation for Autism Acceptance Month** Waitkevitch read a proclamation for Autism Acceptance Month.

**Agenda Item 5: Donation to Stoneham Police Department from Stoneham Bank** Chief James O'Connor thanked Stoneham Bank for its generous donation stating that he never saw a family room before coming to the Stoneham Police Department. He stated that Former Chief Passaro was important to the Town, the police department, and Stoneham Bank and he is thrilled that it is named for him. Former Chief James McIntyre stated that it is a credit to Former Chief Passaro that he had the foresight to design a headquarters with a family room.

Bilbo moved to accept the gift of \$3819.92 from Stoneham Bank. Parker seconded the motion. Voted unanimously.

**Agenda Item 6: Citizens' Comments** Waitkevitch opened public comment for 40 minutes. The following residents spoke: Dolly Wilson, 181 Central Street; Elizabeth Cleaveland, 6 Mount Vernon Street; Amanda Tsapatsaro, 3 Denby Road; Todd Fickes, Lawndale Road; Melissa Jackson, 40 Treamont Street; Jor Mulchen; Kristen Spence, Director of the Senior Center; Amanda Costain, Outreach Coordinator of the Senior Center; Jeanne Grieve, 1 Erickson Street; Patrick Bolger, 16 Emerald Court; Linda Lome, 8 Seward Road; Erin Kennedy, 2 Congress Street.

**Agenda Item 7: Site Plan Review – 371 Main Street** Bilbo read the notice of hearing. Charles Houghton appeared for the applicant stating that his client would like to change the current use of 371 Main Street from food service to wellness and fitness which requires site plan review. He stated that there are five parking spots in the back of the building as well as ample downtown parking. He stated that there will be no change in the footprint of the building. Bilbo asked the number of customers that will be present at one time. Waitkevitch stated that this is a business use in the center of town with plenty of parking. Houghton stated that he is not sure how many customers will be in the building. Pignone moved to approve the site plan for 371 Main Street. Foreman seconded the motion. Voted unanimously.

**Agenda Item 8: Marble Street/Food Revolution Commercial Improvement Program**

**Request** Director of Planning and Community Development Erin Wortman appeared with the applicant, owner of Food Revolution, Lisa Farrell. Farrell is requesting to spend up to \$11,000 of the remaining \$12,816 from the Commercial Improvement Program with a \$3000 match to improve the facade of 3 Marble Street. Parker stated that she is not in favor of such a large commitment because it is not fair to those who only received \$3000 per the guidelines and those who wish to use the fund in the future. Bilbo asked whether the Board had approved other large funding requests and stated her concern that the program would be out of funding. Pignone stated that he would be more comfortable with a smaller number and a larger match. Farrell stated that she could get to a \$5000/\$5000.

Parker asked for an additional plan with details of what has been given out and to place this on the next agenda. Waitkevitch stated that he would like to see what has been given out. Foreman stated that the Town appreciated Farrell's business and willingness to make an investment in the Town.

**Agenda Item 9: Approve Minutes – 3/25/25** Bilbo moved to approve the minutes from 3/25/25. Parker seconded the motion. Voted 3-0-2 with Pignone and Foreman abstaining.

**Agenda Item 10: Override Results and Path Forward** Waitkevitch thanked everyone who worked on the override and having in depth discussions. He stated that there was a great turn out for the vote and he thanked the Clerk and her staff for their work on the election.

Parker thanked everyone for coming to board meetings and engagement sessions and speaking. She stated that she does not want to close the senior center, the library, or the recreation department, but we have to figure out what to cut in order to move forward. She stated that the residents spoke and said no to an override. She stated that the Board presented the Finance and Advisory Board with a balanced budget.

Foreman stated that he pushed hard for the \$14.6 million number. He stated that the number would have filled the needs of the town, but that there is distrust and fear of mismanagement. He stated that there may be a way to save some money, but the only way forward is an override. Foreman continued that inflations has outpaced the arbitrary 2.5% tax increase allowed by law. He stated that the only option before the Town right now is an override. He stated that we have

to identify a number that does not overburden the residents and meets the needs of the Town. He asked the residents to stay engaged.

Bilbo stated that on multiple occasions she stated that the Town will get the good, the bad, and the ugly, but that the voters must tell her what to do. She stated that the voters voted to go back to the original budget without the override – the vote was no and we need to listen to the voters. She stated that we need to feel the pain and fight with the state to fix the broken education system. She stated that she wants an override, but not now after the voters said no.

Sheehan stated that the recommended budget was balanced and continuing down the same path of approvals that happened every year. The Finance and Advisory Board reviewed the proposed budget and are in the process of making recommendations to Town Meeting.

Waitkevitch stated that he does not want the town to be in this position. He stated that residents went to the ballot and told the Select Board that they cannot pay for the override – they made a choice and we have to honor it. He stated that we have to make cuts rather than go back to the residents because we don't like how they voted. Waitkevitch stated that in the context of the world and the uncertainty of a recession, residents stated that they can't make the override work. He stated that he has a duty to respect the democratic process.

Sheehan stated that if there is an appetite to request another override we will do it, but it should not be rushed. Parker stated that she would like to wait 8 months to a year. Bilbo stated that jumping to a smaller number will put the town in a difficult position. Pignone stated that we had real conversations about what is required to take care of the town, but that they never heard from the no voters.

Foreman stated that trust goes both ways and that it is time for a resident advisory committee and that he would ask the committee to find a number that works. He said that he would like to understand the real numbers and try again. Parker stated that the boards have had 18-20 meetings, put information on line, played the meetings on Stoneham TV. She stated that every decision was very public and people had the opportunity to participate. Foreman asked why they could not try again. Bilbo stated we tried and we spend a year doing it and listening to a vocal minority. She stated now a large group has stated that they cannot afford the override. Foreman asked for a survey and said the town could lose everything.

Parker stated that she would like a department head meeting to see what each department could save. She stated that the Board does not have the financials to move forward tonight. Foreman asked Sheehan to provide the cost of a special election, a time line, the cost of a mailing, and the details of a residential committee. Sheehan stated that it is critical to have an approved budget by 7/1.

**Agenda Item 11: FY26 Budget Discussion** Sheehan stated that he met the Council on Aging, the library, and the recreation department and is trying to get a list of line items that can be reasonably cut. Foreman stated that he intends to work collaboratively to meet the needs of the Town.

**Agenda Item 12: Town Meeting** Sheehan stated that all recommendations do not need to be made tonight and clarified that if there are too many residents at town meeting, the meeting would be continued to the high school on another night. The Board voted unanimously on articles 7, 8, 9, and 12. Sheehan stated that articles 13 and 14 are citizen petitions and that the Board generally does not make a recommendation on the same. He stated that if the petitioner withdrew article 13 and it would likely be indefinitely postponed.

**Agenda Item 13: High School building Project Update** Sheehan stated that the athletic fields are in progress and showed pictures of site work.

**Agenda Item 14: Town Administrator's Report** Sheehan stated that he is working with the procurement officer to award the contract to install the ADA compliant bathroom at the arena.

**Agenda Item 15: Non-Deliberative Announcements and Scheduling** Parker announced that there is a financial resource fair at the Senior Center on 4/15/25. She stated that the Sapphire Award nominations open on 4/15/25.

**Agenda Item 16: Adjourn** Bilbo moved to adjourn. Pignone seconded the motion. Voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Dava Feltch Kilbride, Office Manager