

**Stoneham Select Board  
Open Meeting  
Thursday, August 28, 2025  
6:00 p.m.**

**Open Session**

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

**Also Present:** Town Administrator Dennis Sheehan, Town Counsel Robert Galvin

**Document List:** MGL c. 53 sec. 18B; Memo from Robert Galvin dated 8/11/25; DLS Proposition 2 ½ Ballot Questions; Memo from Maria Sagarino dated 6/25/25; Email from Dennis Sheehan dated 8/7/25; Memo from Maria Sagarino dated 7/16/25; Email from Maria Sagarino dated 8/28/25; Ballot questions from Winthrop and Melrose.

**Agenda Item 1: Call to Order:** Waitkevitch called the meeting to order at 6:00 9.m. Parker moved to open the meeting. Foreman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting in favor:

Timothy Waitkevitch  
David Pignone  
Ryan Foreman  
Heidi Bilbo  
Raymie Parker

Motion passes (5-0)

**Agenda Item 2: Pledge of Allegiance**

**Agenda Item 3: Citizens' Comments** No comments were offered.

**Agenda Item 4: Override Updates a. Override Study Committee Update** Sheehan stated that the Override Study Committee has met with several department heads over the last few weeks and have begun the process of writing the report for the Select Board. The Committee voted to support an override 6-1 at its last meeting. Sheehan stated that the school budget presentation may not allow the Committee to complete its report by the 9/30 deadline set by the Select Board. He stated that the Committee will be meeting next week to continue its work on the report and discuss ongoing expenses. Bilbo stated that the Committee will be pushing forward with the goal of completing its report by the 9/30 deadline. She stated that the general consensus is that an override is necessary.

Foreman expressed his gratitude to Bilbo, the Committee and the department heads, stating that it has been helpful to hear the needs of each department in a real way. Sheehan stated that he would like the Select Board to be cognizant about discussing an override amount prematurely so that the Committee can finish its work. Waitkevitch stated that he has tried to be very mindful about creating agendas that do not compete with the work of the Committee.

**b. FY27 Budget Process** Sheehan stated that there is a uniform desire from the Select Board and the Override Study Committee to initiate the FY27 budget process and the 5 year forecast. He stated that the process generally begins in November and continues through February. He stated that in order to begin the process sooner there will need to be estimates and certain assumptions made and once the necessary information has been gathered he will begin to discuss numbers. Sheehan stated that if the process is completed prematurely there will need to be many changes made and that will lead to differing interpretations of the budget and override numbers.

Waitkevitch stated that he would like the feedback from the Committee as well as the Town Accountant before the Board starts talking numbers. He stated that he also would like an understanding of the assumptions that are behind the forecast so that there is context. Foreman stated that he would rather have the budget numbers sooner with an appropriate understanding of the context and accuracy of the same. Foreman stated that there needs to be an understanding that a forecast made eight months in advance of a fiscal year will not have 100% certainty.

Parker stated that she wants there to be two tracks moving ahead and a range would be very helpful. She stated that as the Committee is moving forward so is the Select Board.

**c. Public Outreach** Sheehan thanked Town Clerk Maria Sagarino for updating the website with all the presentations. He stated that there will be an outreach session on 9/2/25 at 5:30 at the fire station. Parker asked about the Board hosting an engagement session. Sheehan stated that he was considering Town Day. Parker suggested that the Board select a date in October at town hall or the senior center and requested that this be an agenda item for the next meeting.

**Agenda Item 5: Adoption of MGL c. 53 sec. 18B** Galvin stated that if Town Meeting adopts section 18B it will allow a summary of the override ballot question as well as arguments for and against each question. He stated that there are a number of time lines and certain printing expenses involved with the adoption of this section. Bilbo confirmed that if this section is adopted at Town Meeting it is applicable on the next ballot. Foreman confirmed that the Town would be able to summarize the ballot question as well as what a yes and no vote would mean for the Town and that both the for and against groups would also be able to submit their arguments. Galvin stated that he would need to approve all submissions before printing.

Sagarino stated that the cost of printing and mailing would be between \$5000 and \$7000. Foreman stated that creating the mailing will also allow the Town to confirm accuracy. Sagarino stated that it will give the Town the opportunity to spell out what a yes/no vote could mean in terms of non-mandated positions. Sheehan stated that every time there is a ballot question the Town would be required to do a mailing and that is a hidden cost. Galvin stated that a Town Meeting vote could remove the requirement. Galvin stated that the statute requires that the

information be “sent” to registered voters and that would include email. However, in order to reach everyone the information should be mailed as well.

Bilbo stated that communication has been an issue and is constantly discussed as a Town issue and this will help alleviate those concerns. Parker stated that it gives residents the time to digest the information. Foreman stated that it is money well spent and that the mailer can then be readily shared. Galvin stated that he does not work with any Towns who have adopted this statute, but he is always in favor of more information. Waitkevitch stated that he favors more communication and that Towns do not spend enough on communication. Pignone stated that he would like to table this item until the Board discussed a date for the ballot.

Parker moved to table this matter until the Board discusses a date for the ballot. Foreman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting in favor:

Timothy Waitkevitch  
David Pignone  
Ryan Foreman  
Heidi Bilbo  
Raymie Parker

Motion passes (5-0)

**Agenda Item 6: Form of Question** Parker stated that she likes one question so that the amount is for the entire Town. Bilbo stated that she does not want the question to pit the town against the school, but there are levels that can be added. Waitkevitch stated that he likes the tiered question with growth vs. keeping the lights on.

The Board discussed the sample questions in the Proposition 2 ½ Ballot Questions booklet put out by the Division of Local Services. Waitkevitch favored example 2 on page 17. Pignone stated that he would like to keep the ballot question simple. Foreman stated that he likes the idea of breaking out police, fire, DPW, and town offices. Parker and Foreman agreed that examples 2 and 3 may work with modifications.

Parker suggested picking a date and coming back to form at the next meeting. Foreman would like a breakdown from Sheehan with the needs of each department.

**Agenda Item 7: Date of Election** Parker stated that her preference is to have the override election early – 11/18/25. Pignone agreed that he would like to see the election on 11/18/25 to give all departments the time they need to budget. Sheehan stated that if the Board selects 11/18, the chapter 53 will not be an option because of the required lead time. He continued that if the Board locks in a date it may be difficult to push it out if the Override Study Committee does not make its recommendation by 9/30. Foreman stated that he wants to put chapter 53 before Town Meeting, wants resident feedback from Town Meeting, and time to review the Committee’s

report. He stated that he is in favor of a date in December (12/3, 6, or 9) to give everyone the time they need to process the Committee's report. Waitkevitch agreed stating that a November date only gives the Board four days to process the Committee's report. Sheehan stated that the school department needs time to get school open and set a preliminary budget. Foreman and Parker stated that they are in favor of a Tuesday date. Parker moved to set a 12/2/25 election date. Foreman seconded the motion.

Bilbo stated that the Board will not be able to debate the Committee's report until the end of October. Sheehan stated that he strongly encouraged the Board to not select a date right now. He stated that he understands that the Board wants to take action, but you do not have the benefit of the Committee's report. Sagarino asked the Board to keep an open mind about January and February. Parker stated that she withdraws her motion, but does not want to wait until mid-winter to act.

Foreman stated that there is general agreement that the Board wants the vote in 2025 and is open to December and that chapter 53 will be on the warrant. He stated that the Board has made forward progress just narrowing those things down. He stated that he is in favor of 12/9, but would like to table this vote until he hears more from the Committee. Sheehan stated that he would meet with Sagarino and put together a list of possible deadlines/dates.

Foreman moved to formally request that the Town Administrator prepare to add MGL c. 53 sec. 18B, to the warrant for October Town Meeting. Bilbo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting in favor:

Timothy Waitkevitch  
David Pignone  
Ryan Foreman  
Heidi Bilbo  
Raymie Parker

Motion passes (5-0)

**Agenda Item 8: Town Administrator's Report** Sheehan thanked the 300<sup>th</sup> Committee for the events that occurred last weekend. He stated that the Conservation Commission is considering working with the Friends of the Fells on the management of Whip Hill. Chief Grafton will be giving a tour of the fire station on 9/2/25 at 5:30.

**Agenda Item 9: Non-Deliberative Announcements** No announcements were made.

**Agenda Item 10, 11, 12: Adjourn to Executive Session** Bilbo moved to enter into executive session not to return to the Select Board to discuss strategy with respect to litigation (including as may be demonstrably likely) pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, sec.21(a)(3) with respect to and/or

directly arising from the national opioid litigation and settlement and to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiation with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiation with nonunion personnel pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, Sec. 21(a)(2) to wit: Town Accountant. Foreman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting in favor:

Timothy Waitkevitch  
David Pignone  
Ryan Foreman  
Heidi Bilbo  
Raymie Parker

Motion passes (5-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Dava Kilbride – Office Manager