

**Town of Bernardston  
Selectboard Meeting Minutes**



**Board Members**

Brian J. Keir

Stanley D. Garland, Chairman

Kenneth R. Bordewieck

***Minutes for the meeting of November 15, 2023***

Meeting held at Bernardston Town Hall  
38 Church St, Bernardston, MA 01337

**Selectboard Members Present:**

Stan Garland  
Ken Bordewieck  
Brian Keir

**Others Present:**

See sign-in roster

Stan called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

**Warrants**

Ken motioned to approve the Payroll Warrant in the amount of \$71,751.88.  
Brian seconded and the motion was approved 3-0.

Ken motioned to approve the Vendor Warrant in the amount of \$721,613.00.  
Brian seconded and the motion was approved 3-0.

**Minutes**

Ken motioned to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting on October 31, 2023. Brian seconded and the motion was approved 3-0.

Ken motioned to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on November 1, 2023. Brian seconded and the motion was approved 3-0.

Ken motioned to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting on November 7, 2023. Brian seconded and the motion was approved 3-0.

**Calendar and Announcements**

Stan read the calendar and announcements as presented on the attached agenda.

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## Appointment

Randy Crochier, Regional Health Agent, Cooperative Public Health Services (CPHS), FRCOG: Questions were posed at a previous meeting that some booths were shut down at Scarecrow in The Park and the people were unclear about the violations they may have had. Mr. Crochier responded that at Scarecrow in the Park, no one was shut down and one vendor was temporarily closed for about an hour until a person certified in food protection arrived.

A few weeks prior, two vendors were shut down at Hitchcock Brewery for not having persons properly certified in food protection. Massachusetts law requires vendors to have a temporary food permit for foods that are considered dry pantry items.

Updates and/or conclusions were discussed regarding the code violations issued at 72 Brattleboro Road in Bernardston. Randy Crochier concluded that at this time there are no **zoning bylaw** code violations at this property. There are several unregistered vehicles on this property, but they are not leaking. Therefore, he has no grounds to issue a **zoning bylaw** code violation. Under Randy Crochier's jurisdiction as the CPHS Regional Health Agent for Bernardston, he is the enforcing person for **zoning bylaw** violations, **not general bylaw** violations. Bernardston has a **general bylaw** that addresses unregistered vehicles. However, the bylaw does not specify who the enforcing person or agency is. The Town will rewrite the bylaw and consider implementing the non-criminal disposition enforcement procedure in the future. (MGL, Chapter 40, Section 21D)

Bernardston Board of Health Chair, Barbara Killeen, echoed the concern about the lack of enforcement of the unregistered vehicle bylaw violations throughout the Town.

Dave Powers, Bernardston Board of Health (BOH) announced his resignation from the BOH after 24 years due to health reasons. His last day will be December 31, 2023. The BOH will hold a meeting on Tuesday, 21 November, 2023 to discuss Dave's resignation, a possible replacement and next steps regarding the septic/Title 5 work.

Jennifer Reynolds, Director of the COA and Senior Center: DLS is in the process of finalizing grant recommendations for the FY24 Information Technology Grant Application. Nothing is guaranteed here, but a grant of \$50K is likely to be awarded to the Town.

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Jen discussed the proposed project, including the purpose of the grant request, the capital asset needed, projected objectives and the challenges this project would address. She provided two quotes from local vendors: Netlogix and Advantech. The grant could be used for a server (connectivity with shared drives, Cloud storage, records retention), sonic wall security for public information protection from cyber attacks and WiFi access points. The Selectboard agreed that we need to significantly improve our IT infrastructure, network systems and security to prevent the costly issues that could impact the Town's productivity and safety. The grant will cover the purchase of the equipment, installation, and maybe a licensed electrician. Ongoing management costs (not included in the 50K) would include an IT service package to maintain the server, remote and onsite IT support. This could cost between \$500.00 and \$2000.00 a month.

Next step is to wait and see if we receive the 50K grant. If we get the grant, meetings will be scheduled with no less than three vendors and we will include Lou Bordeaux, current IT service provider, for input and guidance.

**New Business**

Retail Liquor License Renewals: Two liquor license certificates for 2024 were signed by the Selectboard.

- Hillside Pizza
- Hitchcock Brewing

Ken motioned to approve the Liquor licenses for Hillside Pizza and Hitchcock Brewery. Brian seconded and the motion was approved 3-0.

Appointment of William Deane to the Board of Assessors: The Board of Assessors would like to appoint William Deane to the Board of Assessors until the next Town election. The lack of a candidate in the third position on the board has, on occasion, caused difficulty in reaching a quorum for a meeting and with signing necessary documents concerning the tax rate setting process. This will help alleviate that issue.

Stan motioned to approve the appointment of William Deane to the Board of Assessors until the next Town election. Ken seconded and the motion was approved 3-0.

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**Old Business**

Bernardston Fire Department Chief: Town Counsel responded on November 11, 2023 that regulations do allow Peter Shedd to continue as a volunteer firefighter, even if appointed Chief, until the legislation is approved but he cannot be on the payroll. There are no further updates on the status of the special legislation. The Selectboard discussed granting Peter Shedd back-pay whether the legislation passes or not.

Ken motioned to approve Peter Shedd as the Fire Chief (without pay) until further notice. Brian seconded and the motion was approved 3-0.

Cannabis Social Equity Policy: On June 29, 2023, the Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) issued guidance on how to create a model Social Equity policy that encourages cities and towns in Massachusetts to consider incentives for increased participation by Social Equity applicants in their local cannabis ecosystem. Based on cannabis Social Equity best practices and guidance from the CCC, the Town's cannabis counsel, Mead, Talerman & Costa has drafted a Cannabis Social Equity Policy for the Selectboard to consider for adoption.

The draft Cannabis Social Equity Policy has generated more questions and the Selectboard would like to schedule a meeting with Mead, Talerman & Costa ((Town's Cannabis Counsel) to gain a better understanding of what is required of the Town and to get some answers to their questions in general.

**Town Coordinator Report**

New Town Website: The website will continue to evolve and improve as we receive feedback from the Town residents and employees. Please forward all comments, recommendations and suggestions to me at [bos@townofbernardston.org](mailto:bos@townofbernardston.org)

Senior Housing Project Funding: At Chairman Garland's request, an email was sent to Jo Comerford's office asking for help in finding funding for a senior housing project in Bernardston. The funding is needed for the purchase of land and new construction of a 6 to 8 (approximate) unit senior housing production. Elena Cohen, District Director for the Office of Senator Jo Comerford responded quickly! She would like to set up a special meeting with the Selectboard to gain a better understanding of what we have already considered and discuss the resources she is familiar with. Then we can figure out if there are any possible avenues to pursue etc.

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FY25 Selectboard Office Budget Review: A special meeting will be scheduled on November 30, 2023 at 4:30pm to review the Selectboard portion of the FY25 Budget.

**Other business unknown at time of posting:**

Recreation Commission Update: Jen Stennes provided an update on the soccer jamboree and donated a picture to the Town of all the Bernardston soccer players. Over 90 kids participated in this year's jamboree. Jen also provided an update on the ongoing fall basketball (50 kids participating) and Cross Fire (35 kids participating) leagues. Craft Fair is set for December 2, 2023 at BES. The summer recreation staff needs an increase in staff next year. A special meeting with the Selectboard will be scheduled to discuss recreation commission staffing concerns and the FY25 budget.

FY24 MVP Action Grant: Andrew Smith called the Selectboard office on Monday, November 13, 2023. As it stands, Leyden and Bernardston are partners on the MVP Action Grant which ends on June 30, 2024. Leyden originally was the lead applicant and partner on the grant. In the course of due diligence, Leyden was not able to find a path forward for managing the grant. The Town Coordinator for Leyden identified procurement considerations that proved to be challenging. As a result, Leyden decided that they cannot manage the grant. Andrew Smith would like to know if Bernardston would be interested in managing the grant and an extension would be granted.

The Selectboard would like to meet with John LePore and Dave Pomerantz before making any final decisions. John and Dave will be invited to attend the next Selectboard meeting on Wednesday, November 29.

Horse-drawn Sleigh Ride for Holiday Event at The Farm Table: The Farm Table is planning an upcoming holiday event on December 17, 2023 from 11:00am to 3:00pm. The Farm Table would like to include a horse-drawn sleigh ride as part of the festivities. The Selectboard decided not to make a decision until they have more details about the route, etc. The Town Coordinator will follow up with The Farm Table accordingly.

Winter Parking Ban: Winter parking ban goes into effect November 20, 2023 thru April 1, 2024. No on-street parking during winter storm events.

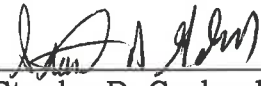
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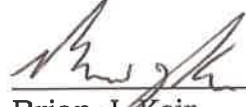
Town Hall Clean-Up: Chairman Garland and the Town Coordinator conducted a walk thru and determined that shelving is needed for storage items on the second floor. The Town Coordinator has obtained three quotes from shredding companies. More to follow in the coming weeks.

With no further business to be discussed, Ken motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:32pm. Brian seconded and the meeting adjourned.

Attested by: Karen Kelly, Interim Town Coordinator

 \_\_\_\_\_, Chairman  
Stanley D. Garland

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Kenneth R. Bordewieck

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Brian J. Keir



## BERNARDSTON SELECTBOARD - MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET

Meeting Date: 11/15/2023

Meeting Time: 6:00 AM/PM

Name	Address	Phone/Email
Jennifer Reynolds	20 Church St.	648-5413
RAUDY GROCHIEL	4125 Fox Hill	413 834 2489 Tyan.earl29@gmail.com
Trisha Earl	26 HERTWELL ST	648 5235
TOM NEWTON	132 Mansfield Rd	648-9148
DAVE POWERS	68 church st	413 772-9659
Debbie DeLaRue	74 Chestnut Rdu	413 522-2178
Breanna Rippen	15 West Rd. Bernardston	413-834-1085
Christina Slocum-Wyck	71 Shedd Rd.	413-522-8725
Bl Shedd	338 Bald mt rd	413-522-8264
Jennifer Stennis		

**Town of Bernardston**  
**Selectboard Meeting Agenda**  
Wednesday, November 15, 2023, 6:00PM



Bernardston Town Hall, 38 Church Street, Bernardston MA

**Board Members**

Brian J. Keir

Stanley D. Garland, Chairman

Kenneth R. Bordewieck

**Call to Order** – 6:00pm

**Warrants**

- Payroll and Vendor; weeks ending November 11, 2023

**Meeting Minutes:** Special Meeting of October 31, 2023; Regular Meeting of November 1, 2023 and Special Meeting of November 7, 2023

**Calendar & Announcements**

- Bernardston Senior Center, Thanksgiving Lunch, November 16th, 2023 @11:45am, Senior Center.
- Board of Assessors Meeting on November 16, 2023 @ 3:15pm, Town Hall
- Planning Board & Public Hearing Meeting, November 20, 2023 @ 6:00pm, Town Hall
- Come meet with the Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans Service District Representative Stacey Geneczko on Monday, November 27th 3:00 at the Senior Center.

**Citizens Concerns**

**Appointments**

- Randy Crochier, Regional Health Agent, Cooperative Public Health Services -
- Jen Reynolds, Director, COA - Community Compact IT Grant Application

**New Business**

- Liquor license renewals
- Appointment of William Deane to the Board of Assessors

**Old Business**

- Fire Chief Update
- Cannabis Social Equity policy
- Non-Criminal Disposition for Bylaw Enforcement

**Town Coordinator Report**

**Other Business Unknown at time of posting**

**Adjourn**

*This meeting was posted on Monday, November 13, 2023 @ 3:27pm*