



# Select Board

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## Select Board Meeting Minutes September 18, 2023

**Quorum present:** Select Board Members; Kathleen Keresey, Chair, Andrew Krouss, Andrew Potter, and Town Administrator Marie Ryan.

Kathleen opened the meeting at 6 PM.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

Andy Potter made a motion, seconded by Andy Krouss, to approve the minutes from August 21 and September 5, 2023.

All were in favor, minutes approved.

### **Citizen Speak:**

None.

### **Special Town Meeting Approval:**

Andy Potter made a motion, seconded by Andy Krouss, to hold a Special Town Meeting on October 23, 2023 to vote on the 8 Town Regional School District Merger.

All were in favor, motion approved.

### **Set Trick or Treat Date and Time:**

Andy Potter made a motion, seconded by Kathleen, to set the Trick or Treat on Tuesday, October 31<sup>st</sup> from 4 PM – 6 PM and allow the Parks & Recreation Commissioners to also host a party at Town Hall starting at 6 PM.

All were in favor, motion approved.

### **Methods of Disseminating Information to the Public:** Kathleen

Kathleen asked the Board for any thoughts they may have on how to get information out to the Public in a more efficient way.

Andy Potter suggested that the Town purchase and use Code Red. Code Red is used in many other towns and this process sends out messages to the public through emails, text and calls using whatever information each resident puts in the system. The public needs to sign up for the service but the Town pays to have it maintained. Marie will gather information on the program and the cost. Andy Krouss and Kathleen both agreed this sounds like a great idea.

**Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) Membership:** Marie

**Background:**

When we joined the Great Barrington Transit program (Tri-Town Connector) we were able to give them use of our Council on Aging van that was handicap wheelchair accessible. After we gave the van to them it started to have mechanical issues. We brought it back to Troy's Garage but after they looked it over, due to the age of the van and the amount of work that needs to be done, it is not worth fixing at this time. The Tri-Town Connector receives Federal funds and they have use of two handicap wheelchair accessible vans. The condition for them to use federal funds and use the BRTA vans is that each town that is part of the program either has have their own wheelchair accessible van or have a membership with BRTA, we have neither now so we can no longer be in their program at this moment.

I am asking the Board to vote to become a member of BRTA at no immediate cost to the Town. Once we vote in favor, I will send a letter in regard to the vote and their Board will vote to accept at their meeting on September 28<sup>th</sup>. When we are members of BRTA we can again be part of the Tri-Town Connector. This means our residents that are seniors (over 60 years old) and /or have a disability with mobility impairments will have two available modes of transportation and all other residents may use the Tri-Town Connector.

This is under MGL Chapter 161B Sec. 3 (attached).

**Benefit:**

The senior residents (over 60 years old) and all persons with mobility impairment disabilities are able to sign up for services as a user of the BRTA Para-transit Service with an application. This service will pick them up and drive them wherever they request. The cost to them is \$7.50 for the first town they drive through and \$2.50 for every town after that. When they sign up they will have an online account set up with their bank account information, that is where the money will be deducted from each time they use the service. At the end of the year the Town will be assessed a small fee for the number of users of the service (ie: last year Sheffield was charged \$164.00). This amount is deducted from our Cherry Sheet money at year end. Once we are approved, the Select Board will need to appoint a representative to the BRTA Board which will have voting rights and should attend all their Board meetings (6-7 per year).

Andy Potter made a motion, seconded by Andy Krouss, for the Town of West Stockbridge to join the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority to enable residents of the Town to use the BRTA's services per MGL 161B Section 3.

All were in favor, motion approved.

**Select Board Speak:**

Kathleen informed the Board that at their Special Board meeting on September 28<sup>th</sup>, she has invited Leigh Davis, Great Barrington Select Board member, to give a presentation on Real Estate Transfer Fees that could benefit the Affordable Housing Trust. These are fees that are paid for by the buyer and seller of a real estate transaction over a certain threshold. Kathleen will be asking the Board to vote at their regular meeting on October 2nd whether or not to place this as a warrant article for the Special Town Meeting on October 23rd. She stated this

is not binding if it goes to Town Meeting and passes, but it allows the Town to file a home rule petition with the State Legislature, which would allow the Town to decide at a later date whether or not to institute the program and what the specifics would be. She will contact the Affordable Housing Trust Chair, Mark Webber and fill him in on the issue for further review and possible support by the Affordable Housing Trustees.

Andy Potter made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Andy Krouss at 6:20 PM.  
All were in favor, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*Marie y. Ryan*

Marie Y. Ryan  
Town Administrator