Board of Selectmen
Tuesday, September 13, 2022 at 8:00 a.m.
Remotely via Zoom
Meeting Minutes

8:00 a.m. Regular Session

First Selectwoman Lyons called the Regular Session of Tuesday, September 13, 2022 to order at 8:00 a.m. Also, in attendance were Selectman Goldberg, Selectwoman Kokoruda, Selectman Murphy, and Selectman Wilson.

1. Pledge of Allegiance.
   First Selectwoman Lyons led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. First Selectwoman’s Updates.
   Selectwoman Lyons spoke about potential updates to the EV Charger Stations Plan and the Sustainable Materials Management grant. The Board discussed the option of sending out mailers for the referendum, but felt a follow-up article in The Source would be more effective. Selectwoman Lyons will follow-up on what information can be presented at the polls.

3. Liaison Reports/Selectmen Comments.
   None.

4. Citizen comments.
   None.

5. Consent Agenda:

   MOVED by Selectman Murphy and seconded by Selectman Goldberg to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:
   b. Appointments:
      i. Blythe Swift, Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Regular Member, Term End January 1, 2025
   c. Discuss and take action to accept an Absentee Ballot Support Grant in the amount of $9,112.04 for the 2022 General Election in November from The Office of Secretary of the State; pending Board of Finance approval

   VOTE: this motion was approved unanimously.
6. Discuss and take action to approve a recommendation from the Academy Community Center Building Committee to award Colliers Project Leaders as the Owners Project Manager for a fee in the amount of $338,732.00.

MOVED by Selectwoman Kokoruda and seconded by Selectman Murphy to approve a recommendation from the Academy Community Center Building Committee to award Colliers Project Leaders as the Owners Project Manager for a fee in the amount of $338,732.00.

VOTE: this motion was approved unanimously.

7. Discuss and take action to approve changes to the charge for the Academy Community Center Advisory Committee

MOVED by Selectman Wilson and seconded by Selectman Murphy to approve changes to the charge for the Academy Community Center Advisory Committee

VOTE: this motion was approved unanimously.

8. Discuss and take action to approve the following appointments to the Academy Community Center Advisory Committee:
   d. Rosalyn Fahey
   e. John Lamirande
   f. Joan McPherson, Vice Chair
   g. Lisa Nee
   h. Beverly Sobran
   i. William Stableford, Chair

MOVED by Selectman Wilson and seconded by Selectman Murphy to approve the following appointments to the Academy Community Center Advisory Committee: Rosalyn Fahey, John Lamirande, Joan McPherson (Vice Chair), Lisa Nee, Beverly Sobran and William Stableford (Chair) Discussion: Selectwoman Kokoruda stressed the importance of a recreation presence on the committee and also requested all resumes prior to the meeting.

VOTE: this motion was approved unanimously.

9. Discuss and take action to approve a special appropriation request from Madison Public Schools in the amount of $138,336.24 to fund additional school security personnel.

MOVED by Selectman Murphy and seconded by Selectman Wilson to approve a special appropriation request from Madison Public Schools in the amount of $138,336.24 to fund additional school security personnel, pending Board of Finance and Town Meeting approval

Discussion:

Dr. Cooke, Superintendent, spoke about ongoing conversations with the Madison Police Department on expanding the current School Resource Officer program. He noted that since school started he has heard only positive responses from parents and students. Will see a return of about $156,000 and the Board of Education has begun conversations of including this in the budget moving forward.
Selectmen Wilson asked about rate increases that were not included in the budget. Dr. Cooke explained the rate increases are attached to the assuming position of armed security and there is a different/lower rate for security who are not armed. Will possibly be able to slightly decrease staffing in 2025.

Selectwoman Kokoruda thanked the schools for their support and communication and asked for the status of the grants. Dr. Cooke responded the Board will have fully expanded the $1.2 million over the 3-years trajectory (next year).

**VOTE:** this motion was approved unanimously.

10. **Discuss and take action to approve a recommendation from the Ad-Hoc ARP Funding Committee to fund Round 9 ARP Funding in the amount of $15,000.00; pending Board of Finance approval.**

    **MOVED by** Selectman Murphy and seconded by Selectman Wilson to approve a recommendation from the Ad-Hoc ARP Funding Committee to fund Round 9 ARP Funding in the amount of $15,000.00; pending Board of Finance approval.
    **VOTE:** this motion was approved unanimously.

11. **Discuss Senior Tax Relief Programs.**

    First Selectwoman Lyons and Austin Hall (Director Senior Services) presented slides on Tax Discount Programs for Senior and Disabled Residents (attached) and discussed the need to re-evaluate the Town’s three Senior Tax Relief programs to ensure we help as many residents as possible who need assistance. She thanked Town Staff for their assistance. The board discussed creating a joint working group with the BOS, BOF and Town Staff to evaluate the programs, determine how they overlap with each other, and assess their success in achieving goals, but agreed they need to find out the Board of Finance’s intentions first.

12. **Update on Madison Center Project.**

    First Selectwoman Lyons gave an update on the Madison Center Project (attached). The town was able to coordinate and have all easements signed. Next steps include; coordinating with local property owners on property specific electrical work and with Eversource to transition electrical service from the poles to underground conduit. Final electrical work is expected to launch this fall and poles are targeted for removal after work is complete and weather depending. The Town met with Eversource in March 2022 to confirm work proposal and Eversource agreed to fund pole removal (est. $12,000). She noted work has been completed up the Fire Department and Phase 3 will complete the remaining area, which the town is actively pursuing grants for. A cost estimate was presented to the board. She thanked staff for their work in this process.

13. **Discuss and take action to approve an application for a Responsible Growth & Transit Oriented Development Grant application for the Madison Center Project Streetscape Improvements Phase III.**
MOVED by Selectman Wilson and seconded by Selectwoman Kokoruda to approve an application for a Responsible Growth & Transit Oriented Development Grant application for the Madison Center Project Streetscape Improvements Phase III. 
VOTE: this motion was approved unanimously.

14. Discuss and take action to approve an application for a Responsible Growth & Transit Oriented Development Grant application for the Woodland Road, Rt. 79 and Bradley Road Sidewalk Construction.

MOVED by Selectwoman Kokoruda and seconded by Selectman Murphy to approve an application for a Responsible Growth & Transit Oriented Development Grant application for the Woodland Road, Rt. 79 and Bradley Road Sidewalk Construction. 
VOTE: this motion was approved unanimously.

15. Citizen comments.
None.

16. Executive Session
The board entered into Executive Session at 9:24 a.m., and First Selectwoman Lyons invited the following to join: Gabe Jiran, Shipman & Goodwin, LLP; Ira Bloom, Berchem Moses PC; Deborah Ferrante, Town Human Resources Manager; Edward Dowling, Board of Police Commissioners, chair.

j. Discuss Personnel Matters, Madison Police Department
k. Discuss Pending Litigation, SXS v. Town of Madison

The Board exited Executive Session at 10:29 a.m. No motions were made.

17. Adjournment.
There being no objection the Board adjourned at 10:30 a.m.
Respectfully submitted,
Jaclyn Lehet
Madison Center Project Update

• Utility Work Status
  • Southside Easement
    • 690 & 710 Boston Post Road, 21 Samson Rock Drive… all one property owner
    • Easement completed and filed Fall 2021
    • Contract awarded for electrical infrastructure work in June 2022. Most work completed August 2022
  • Northside Easement
    • One easement incorporates 3 properties with three different owners.
    • Could not record final easement map until ALL property owners signed easement and related agreements.
    • Easement completed and filed August 2022
    • Electrical work part of a contract addendum. Work expected to be completed September 2022

• Next steps
  • Coordinate with local property owners on property specific electrical work
  • Coordinate with Eversource to transition electrical service from the poles to underground conduit
  • Final electrical work expected to launch this fall. Poles targeted for removal after work is complete and weather depending
  • Met with Eversource March 2022 to confirm work proposal. Eversource agreed to fund pole removal (est. $12k)
Madison Center Project: Cost

• Original Streetscape Project Estimate (2015)¹ $2.5 M

• Project Expenditures/Funding through 2019 ² $2.9 M
  State Grants $1.9 M
  Planning Reserve Funds $150 K
  Additional $19 K

• Est. to Complete Utility Work (Phase 2) ³ ~ $356K

• Est. to Complete Streetscape Work (Phase 3) ⁴ ~ $1.6 M

• Recent State Grant Applications:
  STEAP: $500K
  TOD: $761K to $1.2 M

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¹ Includes all streetscape work from Wall Street to Rte. 79. Excluded cost estimates for underground electric and telecommunication infrastructure, pole removal and service connections.
² Project scope reduced into phases to meet budget constraints. Based on financial reports in June 2020.
³ Based on CIP as of December 2020. Actual likely to be higher due to recent material & labor cost escalations.
⁴ Updated estimate as of August 2022. Includes extending project to Rte. 79.
Madison Center Project: Phase 3
Madison Center Project: Phase 3

Lasting Impressions I
Madison Center Project: Phase 3
Tax Relief Programs for Senior and Disabled Residents
Why are we here?

• Re-evaluate the Town’s three Senior Tax Relief programs to ensure we help as many residents as possible who need assistance
  • 
  • Town spends approximately half the cap allotted for senior tax relief programs based on current participants
• Meet obligations under the relevant ordinances to assess the Abatement and Tax Freeze programs
  • Tax freeze program 5 years old – ordinance requires BOF special committee to review
  • Abatement requires BOS review in conjunction with every revaluation
• Discuss opportunities for expanding current programs to help more vulnerable residents
  • Some qualification requirements have created barriers to assist
• Ensure those residents with longevity in Town are getting adequate assistance
• Address inconsistencies to qualify for the different programs
  • Many residents prefer the freeze concept over the abatement program, but more immediate relief is offered through the abatement program
• Streamline the application process, consider lifting some restrictive qualifiers for residents, and remove administrative burdens for staff
Current Programs

- **Local Tax Abatement Program***
  Goal: to help some of our most vulnerable residents who are income limited
  Eligible participants receive a credit on the new tax bill for the upcoming fiscal year.
  Bi-annual application process unless applicants income changes or percentage of ownership changes.

- **Local Tax Freeze Program***
  Goal: tries to recognize residency by assisting long term residents. Targets an expanded audience
  of residents who are not able to receive relief from the Tax Abatement Program. Helps eligible
  applicants predict expenses.
  Eligible participants gross taxes are frozen at the original base year.
  Adjustments are made if the assessment is reduced. Annual application process.
*These benefit amounts are compared. Participants receive the greater benefit.

- **Local Deferral Program**
  Goal: to assist the most vulnerable residents or those who need extra assistance in a given year
  or over time.
  Eligible participants are able to defer paying up to $8,000 in taxes
  secured with a lien on the property, current interest rate 1%

- **State Circuit Breaker Program**
  Goal: to assist the most vulnerable residents
  Eligible participants receive a credit on July tax bill
  bi-annual application process unless the income changes or percentage of ownership changes.
Guideline Similarities

• Age- 65 years or older by the end of the previous calendar year
• Disability status
• Ownership of at least one year. Real property is house and house lot in Madison for which relief is claimed. It must be the legal domicile
• Residency status. Property must be the primary residence and occupied for 250 days or more per year
• Surviving spouse of previously eligible owner, 60 years of age or older
• Spouse of homeowner living in a nursing home on a permanent basis who is 60 years of age or older
• Joint ownership tax relief will be proportional to the legal interest in the property
• Applicant with life tenancy and/or property in trust may be eligible.
Local Tax Abatement Program

• BOS Ordinance adopted in 2005. Currently 324 households are receiving the benefit.
• Qualifying resident between one and four consecutive years with income up to $72,960 may be eligible for $100.00 in tax relief.
• Qualifying resident of five or more consecutive years may be eligible for tax relief as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCOME</th>
<th>TAX RELIEF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$21,216 and under</td>
<td>$1,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$21,217 - $43,780</td>
<td>$1,182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$43,781 - $58,372</td>
<td>$873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$58,373 - $72,960</td>
<td>$562</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Income calculations based on CPI and adjusted annually. Maximum originally set at $50,000 in 2006
• To be reviewed by BOS in conjunction with every revaluation. BOS to make recommendations for changes to BOF and Town meeting.
Tax Freeze Program

- BOS Ordinance adopted in 2016. Currently 30 households are on the program.
- Maximum assessed value of home cannot exceed $391,250 (market value of $558,929) based on current average assessed home value, adjusted annually.
- Incomes based on 2019 Median Income of $113,798 times % for each tier.

**Income Guidelines for GL 2021**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Residence</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Married</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to 4</td>
<td>$18,208 (16%)</td>
<td>$22,760 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 9</td>
<td>$36,415 (32%)</td>
<td>$45,519 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 15</td>
<td>$45,519 (40%)</td>
<td>$56,899 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to 19</td>
<td>$54,623 (48%)</td>
<td>$68,279 (60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 or more</td>
<td>$72,831 (64%)</td>
<td>$79,659 (70%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Participation likely to grow as qualifying households increase years of residency and switch from Abatement to Freeze Program to maximize benefit.
- After first 5 years, ordinance requires BOF to establish 5 member special committee including 2 members of BOF. Committee to report to BOF, BOS on program effectiveness, make recommendations for changes.
Tax Deferral Program

- Resolution by Town Meeting dating back to 1989 in accordance with state statute. Most recently updated by BOF in 2015. Currently 14 households defer their taxes
- Maximum Income: $72,960
- Eligible participants may defer 100% of their real estate tax not exceeding $8,000 in one tax year.
- Deferrals will be secured with a lien on the property currently set at 1.00%
- Total amount deferred cannot exceed the assessed value with all other liens.
- An applicant cannot have a reverse mortgage applying and cannot have other liens exceeding the assessed value of their homes.
- Taxes are not due until the sale of the property or death.
- Program reviewed annually and revised as required by the Board of Finance.
State Circuit Breaker Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Over To $</th>
<th>Tax Credit % Married</th>
<th>Tax Credit % Unmarried</th>
<th>Tax Credit Maximum Married</th>
<th>Tax Credit Maximum Unmarried</th>
<th>Tax Credit Minimum Married</th>
<th>Tax Credit Minimum Unmarried</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0- $19,100</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>$1,250</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$400</td>
<td>$350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19,100- 25,600</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$750</td>
<td>$350</td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,600- 31,900</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>$750</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$250</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31,900- 38,100</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$250</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38,100- 46,400</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>-0%</td>
<td>$250</td>
<td>-0-</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>-0-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- State mandated program that is not reimbursed to the Town
- If an applicant qualifies for a benefit from this program, it is additive to either the Tax Abatement or Tax Freeze Benefit
- 147 households currently qualify
Currently, the program is at 0.46% of the approved budget.

The cap for the program is set annually at 1% of the approved budget – today $913,601.
Next Steps

• Meet obligations under the relevant ordinances to review the effectiveness of the Abatement and Tax Freeze programs

• Create a joint working group with the BOS, BOF and Town Staff to evaluate the programs, determine how they overlap with each other, and assess their success in achieving goals
  
  • *BOF has appointed members for required special committee for the Tax Freeze*

• Staff has identified some opportunities for improvement. Some are administrative and some are policy driven

• Target approval of any final changes to be in effect by February 1, 2023 - the start of the next application period.