



Select Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 23, 2026, at 6:30 PM

Town Offices, Select Board Room

36 Bartlet Street, Andover, MA 01810

Meetings are televised on Comcast Channel 22 and Verizon Channel 45

I. Call to Order – 6:30 P.M.

Chair Alex Vispoli called the meeting of February 23, 2026, to order at 6:30 P.M. The meeting was held remotely. Members Present: Alex Vispoli, Chair, Ellen Townson, Vice Chair Melissa Danish, Clerk, Laura Gregory and Kevin Coffey.

Also present: Town Manager Andrew Flanagan, Deputy Town Manager Mike Lindstrom, Deputy Town Manager and Town Clerk Austin Simko, Town Counsel, Doug Heim. Brittney Lavoie, Deputy Town Manager of Operations, Police Chief Keefe, and Phillip Geoffroy, Director of Communications.

II. Opening Ceremonies

A. Moment of Silence/Pledge of Allegiance

A moment of silence was observed followed by followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Kari Belson.

B. Recognition of Kari Belson, Eagle Scout from Troop 73

Mr. Vispoli introduced and spoke briefly of Kari's leadership and accomplishment at becoming the first female Eagle Scout in Andover. Her Troop Advisor, Mike Harvey spoke of her leadership, and Kari talked about her Eagle Scout project partnering with Challenge Inc. to produce videos on creative problem solving, while also being involved with community garden raised beds. Mr. Vispoli read a letter of Recognition from the Select Board, and Ms. Townson thanked Kari for being part of the scouting community which helps the town with various projects.

Mr. Vispoli thanked both Kari and Mr. Harvey.

III. Town Manager Report

Mr. Flanagan thanked DPW crews now in their 25th hour dealing with the snowstorm, and announced school will be cancelled tomorrow mainly due to sidewalks. Planning is ongoing as another storm due Wednesday. Thanked community for its patience. Noted fire hydrant shoveling for access. There has been a lot of staff turnover and use of contract workers, so Town will work to fix resident plowing issues as needed.

Positive news regarding West El, in addition to coming in under budget they attained the Lead Gold Certification, a noted Sustainable Building Design standard.

A public forum on redesign of town website will be held Tuesday March 10, at 5:30pm Town Seal Room. More information to follow.

Winter Fest was a success, this year over a thousand attendees over the day. Great collaboration between Conservation, Recreation and Youth Services.

Information meeting on synthetic turf issues on March 12 at 6:00 PM in the Select Board Room. Questions can be submitted in advance through the website.

A Weekend budget workshop will be held March 14th

Recruitment for three Director Level positions; Director of Conservation and Director of HR which are not in the final review stages, and a Director of Public Health to replace Tom Carbone. This position is complicated due to the changes in the field of municipal public health itself. It has been evolving beyond core needs within communities and services have likewise expanded. The fit needed is one where a job candidate can both meet existing job requirements and help grow the position into a broader scope going forward.

The Town contracted with BME, a firm specializing in local public health, to assess and improve the department with this broader scope in mind. As a result, there is renewed interest in this position due to clarity of the role and the support structure for it. Also, there will be an Interim Director, and the Select Board will have advice from Sigalle Reiss, former Brookline Health Department Head, leading up to Town Meeting.

Mr. Flanagan announced Phillip Geoffroy's title change from Director of Communications to Chief Communications Officer and explained some of the crossover functions within communications, technologies and HR Functions that will be better integrated. Mr. Geoffroy's strength in municipal communications will assist this process and in turn benefit the community. A Civil Media Division and Andover TV have led the way for further data input and communications.

Mr. Coffey asked about the role of the Director of Health regarding upcoming community discussions on PFAS in existing and proposed turf fields, and Mr. Flanagan said the new Health Director would be conversant in PFAS issues and will be available to interact with the community at the upcoming forums. Part of the hiring process involved a PFAS assessment to prioritize that assessment. Also, Sigalle Reiss, mentioned above, is one of the most experienced people in the area regarding PFAS.

A. [Update on Town's Coordination with National Grid](#)

Mr. Lindstrom gave an update on the reliability work National Grid has been working on. He said they have had a strong present in Andover during these recent storms and were not available to be at tonight's meeting due to the weather. He showed a slide of recent Outages January 2024 to December 2025, and the seven neighborhoods identified at an earlier meeting in need of services which have now had tree trimming, fuse replacement, sensors called FLISRs installed to isolate outages, and other improvements which will finish in April.

Mr. Coffey asked about damage to residences and businesses over a month ago, and whether measures described in the update would have prevented that damage. Mr. Lindstrom responded that a private tree caused that earlier damage and he will share the official statement from National Grid with the Board.

Mr. Simko announced the Annual Town Election will be held one month from tomorrow, and the Clerk's office is preparing mail-in ballots for those requesting them and they will go out next week.

Ms. Nicosia said she supports Melissa Eusdon regarding a second reading on the proposed EV Policy.

IV. Communications/Announcements/Liaison Reports

Ms. Danisch noted the Tree Committee, in support of the 250th celebration, will be giving away free trees to the public on Arbor Day this April. Also, AYS is having its third annual job/ volunteer and career fair March 11 from 4-6PM. She also thanked all for keeping streets clear.

Ms. Townson thanked the Town for its departmental collaboration with the Winter Fest which went from 40 to nearly 1000 attendees just in the last year or so. She said it was a great success and is looking forward to next year's event.

Mentioned trees in reported in Tree Committee giveaway are bigger than the saplings given away last year.

Ms. Gregory gave kudos to those involved in Winter Fest and noted Mass Save is hosting a Program on Sustainability at 7 pm at the Memorial Hall Library, February 26, 2026.

Mr. Coffey the noted the street plowing in town and said there was very little traffic. He also suggested a committee be set up to respond to concerns in an email from Jesse Jacobson outlining ideas for reducing cut through traffic and improving safety in Andover. Mr. Vispoli said direct meetings with the person who wrote letter have taken place.

Mr. Vispoli noted the March 7,2026, Second Coffee with Select Board event at the Robb Center.

V. Public Comment

Michael Silverman 54 Tewksbury Street said the DPW did a good job with roads, but some plows today plowed only one side of the road and in some instances hit cleared asphalt. Mr. Vispoli will put Mr. Silverman in touch with Carlos Jaquez.

VI. Public Hearings

A. National Grid – Lowell Junction Road

Board to review and consider voting to approve an application from National Grid and Verizon requesting permission to locate, erect and maintain poles, wires, and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, along and across the public way hereinafter named in accordance with the plan filed herewith marked - Lowell Junction Road - Andover, Massachusetts.

Mr. Simko said National Grid was not present tonight due to snowstorm; this item was kept on the agenda to continue to a date certain which would be the next Select Board meeting on March 9.

Ms. Townson moved to continue the National Grid-Lowell Junction Road Hearing to the Select Board Meeting on March 9, 2026. Ms. Gregory seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

Roll Call: Mr. Coffey, Y; Ms. Danisch, Y; Ms. Townson. Y, Ms. Gregory, Y; Mr. Vispoli, Y.

B. Eversource Gas – Kathleen Drive, Marie Drive, Highland Road and Summer Street

Board to review and consider voting to approve an application from Eversource Gas of Massachusetts to trench the length of Kathleen Drive, Marie Drive, and Highland Road from Summer Street to Kathleen Drive for the purposes of abandoning 4,714' of existing

bare steel and unprotected coated steel main and replacing it with 4,985' of HDPE gas main. All associated services will be replaced or tied over as part of the project.

Tanner Hyslop an Engineer with Eversource Gas, gave an update on this project. A slide of Eversource Energy Street Overview was shown. The gas mains of steel at Kathleen Drive and Marie Ave. are being replaced with high pressure plastic pipes. Summer and Highland are included in the permit as the pipes will go from those streets to Kathleen and Marie. Old mains will be deactivated and abandoned with service tied over to the main lines.

Mr. Vispoli asked about sequencing and Mr. Hyslop said this project is likely to get pushed to 2027 with an April start date. It will take most of the construction season and work with local police and residents to avoid hold ups. There is a lack of construction crews at this time.

Mr. Heim said he didn't think we had to act on approval within a specific timeframe since we are being given notice of delay. Mr. Vispoli asked how residents would be informed if the project is ongoing a year from now, and Mr. Hyslop said letters will go to residents.

Ms. Danisch asked about oversight to ensure there is not another construction project glitch like the gas explosions, but Mr. Hyslop responded those were caused by proximity to pressure regulation stations-- which is not a situation in this project. If pushed to next year all stakeholders will be involved.

Mr. Coffey asked whether leaving abandoning pipe in the ground was standard practice and it is for gas companies.

There was no public comment.

Miss Danish moved to approve the application from Eversource Gas of Massachusetts to trench the length of Kathleen Drive Marie Drive and Highland Road from Summer Street to Kathleen Drive for purposes of abandoning 4,714' of existing bare steel and unprotected coated steel main and replacing it with 4,985' of HDPE gas main. Ms. Townson seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

Roll Call: Ms. Townson, Y; Ms. Gregory, Y; Ms. Danisch, Y; Mr. Coffey, Y; Mr. Vispoli, Y.

Mr. Vispoli thanked Mr. Hyslop and asked to be informed when sequence of project is known.

C. De Minimis Impact Determination

Upon request of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, Board to consider a De Minimis Impact Determination for the permanent and temporary easements on Shawsheen River Conservation Area adjacent to the Tewksbury Street Bridge since this parcel is protected under Section 4(f). Board to consider voting to approve position to support.

Sam Campbell, Environmental Department Head from Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. (GPI) and Michael Shustack, PE, Director of Structural Engineering & Project Manager from Mass DOT, gave a brief overview of the Tewksbury Street Over CSX Railroad Bridge Replacement Project. Mr. Shustack presented photos of the bridge built in 1980 and noted the poor condition of the underneath beams which now result in load restrictions. The new bridge will be safer, eliminating a dangerous sight

distance line. in the middle of the bridge, provide sidewalks add an extra travel lane. The process will be three years with construction taking two years, and bridge replacement will be done in stages for a minimum impact to the area.

Also, the Town is being asked for a letter of support for this project and a section 4f determination that use of easements to be placed on public-owned conservation land would be de minimis --meaning the conservation area would be only minimally impacted by easements for grading, erosion control and alterations to the property. Also, less than 1 % of the seven-plus acres would be impacted at the 126 Tewksbury Street project site formerly owned by Reichold Chemicals. Easement areas were highlighted on plans shown to the Board. Concurrence from the Board and signature from Board Chair in support are next steps.

Mr. Heim added there was a design hearing in May 2025, regarding this protected land. All town and other permissions must be in place to establish this small area for a permanent easement. Conservation Commission approvals will be sought at a later time. Mr. Vispoli noted that the Town purchased this land which then became Conservation Commission property through a dog park land swap. Erosion controls will be in place.

Mr. Coffey asked whether the Select Board should get Conservation Commission's position before rendering a Select Board position, and Mr. Heim said the matter of the de minimis finding is the narrow issue before the Board now. Conservation has been involved in this process. Access will not be impacted throughout and after this process is completed.

Ms. Danisch moved to authorize the Chair of the Select Board to transmit a letter of support for Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Tewksbury Street Bridge Replacement Project on behalf of the Board. Ms. Townson seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Coffey, Y; Ms. Danisch, Y; Ms. Gregroy, Y; Ms. Townson, Y; Mr. Vispoli, Y

VII. Regular Business

A. Zero Emission First Vehicle Policy – 2nd Reading

Board to receive a presentation by Director of Sustainability and Energy and consider voting to adopt the Zero Emission First Vehicle Policy. Mr. Vispoli gave the second reading.

Mr. Flanagan said the proposed ZEV policy differed from existing policy, but it is likely only one in ten vehicles currently in the fleet would be subject to review for alternate electrified vehicles, and, from both cost and service levels, there would not be much impact. The vehicles would not involve emergency response vehicles, rather small transport vehicles such as meals on wheels vans might be impacted. Also, EV vehicles and charging stations might be available at no cost through grants. The Town Manager would still be able to review vehicles for an electric option.

Mr. Coffey asked about the estimated cost and placement of the proposed charging stations. Mr. Flanagan responded that charging stations might be placed at the public safety center and town yard for town vehicles grandfathered, and at this point there may be an opportunity for grant-funded municipal vehicles.

Mrs. Townson said she knows most vehicles in fleet that would not qualify but asked if there were initiatives for some of the bigger vehicles, and Melissa Eusdon said bucket trucks and other DPW vehicles are being electrified-- but this is a slow process.

Ms. Gregory moved to approve the Zero Emission First Vehicle Policy as presented. Ms. Danisch seconded. The motion passed 5=0.

Roll Call: Mr. Coffey, Y; Ms. Danisch, Y; Ms. Gregory, Y; Ms. Townson, Y; Mr. Vispoli, Y.

B. March 24, 2026 Annual Town Election Warrant

Board to consider voting to approve March 24, 2026, Annual Town Election Warrant.

Mr. Simko noted warrant in packet. The candidates are on the ballot.

Ms. Danisch moved to approve and vote to sign the March 24, 2026, Annual Town Election Warrant. Ms. Townson seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Roll Call: Ms. Townson, Y; Ms. Gregory, Y; Ms. Danisch, Y; Mr. Coffey, Y; Mr. Vispoli, Y.

Mr. Simko said this warrant must be signed by Board members and he will email the Board a reminder.

C. Designation of Emergency Election Polling Place

Board to consider delegating to the Town Clerk the authority to designate an alternate election polling location(s) in the event of an emergency.

Mr. Simko said when Board approves the warrant and if polling place needed to be changed then Clerk can make the choice of an alternate polling place in the event of an emergency.

Ms. Townson moved to approve the Board's delegation to the Town Clerk, the authority to designate an alternate election polling location(s) for all the elections in 2026 in the event of an emergency. Ms. Danisch seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Roll Call: Mr. Coffey, Y; Ms. Danisch, Y; Ms. Gregory, Y; Ms. Townson, Y; Mr. Vispoli, Y.

D. Annual Town Meeting Articles

Board to consider voting to take a position on the following articles:

P11	<p>Dissolution of Revolving Funds—Mr. Flanagan said every year Town Meeting reauthorizers existing revolving fund. Asking Town Meeting to dissolve professional development revolving fund as its limited use (specific curriculum) no longer needed. Interim Superintendent is on Board.</p> <p>Ms. Townson moved to recommend Town Meeting Approval of Article P11 "Dissolution of Revolving Funds". Ms. Danisch seconded. The motion passed 5-0</p> <p>Roll Call: Ms. Townson, Y; Ms. Gregory, Y; Ms. Danisch, Y, Mr. Coffey, Y; Mr. Vispoli, Y,</p>
P12	<p>Minor Financial Articles (A through E) Mr. Flanagan listed these articles which include overlay surplus, additional costs for 250th celebration, Spring Grove Care recommended \$106K with updated planning and capacity for perpetual care, Town meeting cost offsets for primaries, and multiple elections, Silverman fireworks ensure funds for 30-minute show.</p>

	<p>Mr. Coffey questioned the \$100K planning amount for Spring Grove cemetery and Mr. Flanagan will get more info to Board prior to Town Meeting to support DPW recommendation.</p> <p>Ms. Danisch moved to recommend Town Meeting Approval of Article P12 “Minor Financial Articles (A through E.) Ms. Gregory seconded. The motion passed 5-0.</p> <p>Roll Call: Ms. Townson, Y; Ms. Gregory, Y; Ms. Danisch, Y; Mr. Coffey, Y, Mr. Vispoli, Y.</p>
P18	<p>Water Treatment Plant Maintenance: Mr. Flanagan said P18 and P19 one water, one sewer, both annual articles. Maintenance for both funded in maintenance articles is \$650K total for water and \$350K for sewer.</p> <p>Ms. Danisch moved to recommend Town Meeting Approval of Article P18 “Water Treatment Plant Maintenance”. Ms. Townson seconded. The motion passed 5-0.</p> <p>Roll Call: Mr. Coffey, Y; Ms. Danisch, Y; Ms. Gregory, Y; Ms. Gregory, Ms. Townson, Y; Mr. Vispoli, Y.</p>
P19	<p>Sewer Collection System Maintenance—Mr. Flanagan appropriated from rates \$350K same amount as previous years.</p> <p>Ms. Danisch moved to recommend Town Meeting Approval of Article P19 “Sewer Collection System Maintenance.” Ms. Townson seconded. The motion passed 5-0.</p> <p>Roll Call: Ms. Townson, Y; Ms. Gregory, Y; Ms. Danisch, Y; Mr. Coffey, Y. Mr. Vispoli, Y.</p>
P20	<p>Indemnification of Public Safety Medical Costs—Mr. Flanagan said this is basically Public Safety worker’s comp and can vary in amount from year to year. Town pays medical expenses for public safety personnel. Mr. Coffey whether funds from levy and it is.</p> <p>Ms. Danisch moved to recommend Town Meeting Approval of Article P20 “Indemnification of Public Safety Medical Costs.” Mr. Coffey seconded. The motion passed 5-0.</p> <p>Roll Call: Ms. Townson, Y; Ms. Gregory, Y; Ms. Danisch, Y, Mr. Coffey, Y; Mr. Vispoli, Y.</p>
P23	<p>Bylaw Amendment – Soliciting Permits—Mr. Heim said P23 goes along with P24. Andover has an outdated Solicitation By-Law as it is too restrictive. No criteria for vendors who solicit door to door to sell goods/services, and this has been highlighted by some vendors. Updates would be straightforward and would address First Amendment concerns. Reason for solicitation can vary, and hours may need to be extended.</p> <p>Chief Keefe said he would be in favor of a “no solicitation list” to be given up front to solicitors. Ms. Danisch said difference between solicitation vs.</p>

	<p>canvassing and the Registry would not cover non-commercial purposes. Mr. Heim said to include language as to what Solicitation means.</p> <p>Mr. Coffey asked what the Registry would look like and how and when it would be updated operationally. Mr. Heim said voluntary list to be updated and electronic updates to reside with the Town Clerks Office. Electronic version to authorized vendors. Chief Keefe said there could be a reach out to towns that have such lists and see how they handle. Mr. Vispoli said this will bring the Town into compliance and thanked Chief Keefe and to Mr. Heim for putting the information together. Ms. Gregory asked about annual updates. New lists each season should be checked by solicitors.</p> <p>Ms. Gregory moved to recommend Town Meeting Approval of Article P23 "Bylaw Amendment -No Soliciting." It was seconded by Ms. Danisch. The motion passed 5-0.</p> <p>Roll Call: Ms. Townson, Y; Ms. Gregory, Y; Ms. Danisch, Y; Mr. Coffey, Y; Mr. Vispoli, Y.</p>
P24	<p>Bylaw Amendment – No Solicitation Registry Mr. Heim said this would allow collection of information on those who do not want solicitors at their house.</p> <p>Ms. Gregory moved to recommend Town Meeting Approval of Article P 24 "Bylaw Amendment No Solicitation Registry." Ms. Danisch seconded. The motion passed 5-0.</p> <p>Roll Call: Mr. Coffey, Y; Ms. Danisch, Y; Ms. Gregroy, Y; Ms. Townson, Y; Mr. Vispoli, Y.</p>
P31	<p>Home Rule Petition – Bylaw Amendment – Electric Bicycle Registry</p> <p>Mr. Heim explained that the Select Board could petition the General Court for a home rule petition for a bylaw to create an e-bike registry and explained how that would impact users including visitors to Andover. There is a sticker program indicating registry with the Town. A registry would be a useful tool to help with safety concerns raised by Chief Keefe about these bikes. Licenses are not needed unless e-bikes are modified to fall outside that classification and become more like motorbikes which do require licenses and insurance. There would also be an opportunity to educate the public about speed regulations and road use. Ms. Danisch submitted suggestions and noted a registry would assist the APD with enforcing rules and noted some e-bikes are used for commercial delivery service which falls outside the 14-day rule for visitors. Mr. Vispoli said this initiative complements some of the educational pieces undertaken in town such as Bike rodeos that emphasize safety. Ms. Gregory and Ms. Townson discussed whether a legal definition of bikes would be helpful. Chief Keefe agreed a definition should be in the bylaw and Mr. Heim said there is a state law definition of class 1 and 2 vehicles. Ms. Gregory said it would be a good idea to have this in the bylaw.</p>

<p>Ms. Townson moved to recommend Town Meeting Approval of Article P31 "Home Rule Petition-Bylaw Amendment-Electric Bicycle Registry." With the addition of comments discussed and agreed upon this evening. Ms. Danisch seconded and the motion passed 5-0.</p> <p>Roll Call: Mr. Coffey, Y; Ms. Danisch, Y; Ms. Gregory, Y; Ms. Townson, Y; Mr. Vispoli, Y.</p>

VIII. Approval of Minutes

- A. Board to approve minutes from the following meeting:
 1. February 9, 2026

Ms. Danish moved to approve the meeting minutes from February 9, 2026, Select Board Meeting. Ms. Townson seconded. The Motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Coffey, Y; Ms. Danisch, Y; Ms. Gregory, Y; Ms. Townson, Y; Mr. Vispoli, Y.

IX. Adjourn

Mr. Coffey moved to adjourn the meeting AT 9:34pm. Ms. Danisch seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Roll Call: Mr. Coffey, Y; Ms. Danisch, Y; Ms. Gregory, Y; Ms. Townson, Y; Mr. Vispoli, Y.

Summary of Town Manager Staff Appointments

The Town Manager is pleased to announce the following appointments:

Department	Name	Position	Date of Hire	Rate/Term
Administration & Finance/Human Resources	Julie Zielinski <i>(Christine Barraford)</i>	Administrative Coordinator	02/23/2026	\$81,000/year
Community Services	Molly Lowell <i>(Lisa Van Campen)</i>	Business Coordinator	02/23/2026	\$86,082/year
Community Services - Recreation	Laura Downs <i>(Hannah Wilen)</i>	Kid Care Programmer	03/02/2026	\$68,361/year