

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 p.m. in the Select Board Conference Room of the Town Offices. Present were Chair Karen Van Welden-Herman, members Tom Adams, Elaine Clements, John Hess, Melissa Litton, Assistant Town Manager / Town Clerk Austin Simko and Town Manager Andrew Flanagan; also present was Kathryn Forina, Assistant to the Town Manager.

Also present were Cara McCarthy-Hutchins and Craig Grant of Communications, Ink.

Town Seal Subject Survey Results:

Ms. Forina reviewed the Town Seal Subject Survey Results. The three-question survey was launched on April 11, 2023. The survey focused on subjects of an alternative town seal. Respondents were required to answer all questions. The survey was open from April 11, 2023 to May 1, 2023. The survey collected 418 total responses.

The first question asked respondents if they prefer an iconic building, natural landscape or text only similar to the original 1855 Town Seal as the subject of an alternative Town Seal. Iconic Building received 160 Votes, Natural Landscape received 159 Votes and Text Only Similar to the Original 1855 Seal received 99 Votes.

The second question asked respondents to rank their choice of an iconic building and allowed for respondents to add their own choice of a building to the ranking. The majority of respondents ranked Old Town Hall as their preferred #1 with Memorial Hall Library ranking #2 and 20 respondents preferring a building other than the library and Old Town Hall as the #1 choice. Fifty respondents provided answers for an "other" iconic building that they would like considered.

The third question asked respondents to rank their choice of a natural setting and allowed for respondents to add their own choice of a natural setting to the ranking. The majority of respondents ranked Ballardvale Mill Pond as their preferred #1 with an Elm Tree #2 and Rivers #3. 18 respondents preferred a natural setting other than those listed as the #1 choice. Fifty-six respondents provided answers for an "other" natural landscape that they would like considered.

Ms. Van Welden-Herman noted that respondents gave a large variety of options. She asked Ms. McCarthy-Hutchins how the Committee should handle this and what her team sees with these results. Ms. McCarthy-Hutchins noted that everything seemed perfectly split. She stated that the tie is not concerning because they will do multiple exercises. She stated that what stood out for her that the majority of landscape choices centered around water.

Mr. Flanagan asked if the Committee intends to choose the options now or if they should the public forum be held first. Ms. McCarthy-Hutchins stated that the Committee should go to the public first with these results. Mr. Simko asked how this should be framed for the forum and if the choices should be driven by most meaningful or what looks good on the seal. Mr. Flanagan stated that the choices need to be driven by what will look good on the seal and this should be expressed to the public at the forum.

Ms. Van Welden-Herman noted that there have been suggestions for multiple buildings to be placed on one seal, however she noted that the Committee will need to stress that simplicity would work best. Ms. McCarthy-Hutchins agreed that detail does not interpret well, and the Committee may even choose to go with a depiction of something instead of a literal interpretation. She advised that the seal should be something that unites Andover generationally and across different forums.

Town Seal Community Forum:

The Committee discussed the agenda for the Town Seal Community Forum taking place on Tuesday, May 23rd at 7:00 p.m. in Memorial Hall of Memorial Hall Library.

Mr. Flanagan stated that the forum should begin with the presentation of the history of the seal that was given at the first forum. The Committee's process over the last 18 months will be discussed and then Ms. McCarthy-Hutchins and her team will discuss the process going forward. Finally, the survey results will be discussed. Mr. Simko added that the forum is for an alternative seal, not to discuss keeping the current seal. We already know that keeping the current seal will be an option at Town Meeting. Ms. Van Welden-Herman added that the public will still be able to contact the Committee throughout the rest of the process with their opinion by emailing the entire Committee at townseal@andoverma.us.

Mr. Flanagan discussed the schedule and work that will have to take pace once a design is chosen leading up to the vote at Town Meeting.

Meeting Minutes:

On a motion by Mr. Hess seconded by Mr. Flanagan the Committee approved the meeting minutes of April 10, 2023 as submitted. Vote Unanimous 7-0.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Mr. Flanagan seconded by Mr. Hess the meeting was adjourned at 5:49 p.m. Vote Unanimous 7-0.

Documents: Draft Minutes of April 10, 2023
Town Seal Subject Survey Results