



**TOWN OF BILLERICA
SELECT BOARD MINUTES
APRIL 12, 2023**

Members Present: Chair Michael Riley, Vice Chair Kimberly Conway, Secretary Andrew Deslaurier, Michael Rosa, and John Burrows

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Assistant Town Manager Clancy Main, and Director of Administrative Services Robert Maynard

Chair Riley stated that the meeting is being held via Zoom. All votes will be taken by roll call.

Call to Order 12:00 PM

Chair Riley called the meeting to order at 12:01 and did a roll call for attendance: Vice Chair Conway present, Secretary Deslaurier present, Member Rosa present and Member Burrows present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

1. Armenian Genocide Commemoration Flag Raising in Billerica, Saturday, April 22, 2023 at 10:00 AM

MOTION - Secretary Deslaurier made a motion to approve the raising of the Armenian Genocide Commemoration Flag on Saturday, April 22, 2023 at 10:30 AM. The motion was seconded by Member Rosa and unanimously voted 5-0-0. On a roll call: Secretary Deslaurier voted Aye, Member Rosa voted Aye, Vice Chair Conway voted Aye, Member Burrows voted Aye and Chair Riley voted Aye.

2. 2023 Community Funds

Chair Riley stated that the Board voted to rescind the \$38,000 in Community Funds that was given to Community Caregivers. This past Monday, he and Secretary Deslaurier met for a subcommittee and came up with the recommendations that were presented today. He also spoke with all the applicants and spoke with representatives from EMD Sereno. All the previous awards will stand, it will be just the money that was given to Community Caregivers.

Member Rosa stated that this should have been done at a regularly scheduled meeting. He understands the timing, and we want to get the checks issued but this should have been at a regular meeting. Member Rosa asked why the dog park is short \$25 from what they asked. Chair Riley stated that we had to make the numbers work, so we gave applicants as much as we could. They are asking for the money for a new vendor during Yankee Doodle and they were glad to have whatever we could give them. Member Rosa stated that he is glad that the subcommittee followed the policy. Chair Riley stated that there are two other applicants that were a little short of what they requested and they were ok with it. Member Rosa stated that the VFW does great work and they should have received something but he is glad that the other two veterans' organization got funded. By requesting the grant for building repairs, it freed up money for other projects. Chair Riley stated that only two of the organizations asked for building upgrades. Member Rosa stated that the playground project received \$6,000, and that should be funded through the school budget. Member Rosa stated that the BMHS Performing Arts Department application said \$5,995 was for a used light and \$10,000 for a new light. The High School had access to cable grants for this type of equipment. Chair Riley stated that the cost includes shipping and handling. EMD agreed to this applicant. Member Rosa stated that EMD Sereno is not a stakeholder, they received \$6 million dollars in tax breaks. We should give \$6,000 for the used light and use the additional funds to fund the VFW or Rec Department. Member Rosa stated that with Shawsheen Tech, is the \$2,000 to be used for something specific or just how they see fit. Chair Riley replied how they see fit. Chair Riley added that they also took into account if funds were previously received. Member Rosa stated that he has an issue with the Hajjar PAC application. If this technology is so important, the School Department should fund it across all schools. This is creating a disparity between elementary schools. Member Rosa stated that we should give the Recreation something. This is an important piece of equipment. We could reduce the award for the BMHS Arts Department to \$6,000 and eliminate the Hajjar award and give the Recreation Department and VFW so money.



**TOWN OF BILLERICA
SELECT BOARD MINUTES
APRIL 12, 2023**

Chair Riley stated that he spoke with Mr. Grubb from recreation. The \$3,500 would not cover the entire cost of the item, only a portion of it. The goal is to have the new Recreation Center solution soon.

Secretary Deslaurier stated that this is good distribution of the \$38,000 and he is glad to have EMD Serono's involvement. He is glad that they can assist so many good organizations.

Member Burrows stated that this is making the best out of a bad situation and we are helping out multiple organizations. He is concerned that the subcommittee met last week and he didn't know about it and he didn't get the entire list. There is no communication on this Board. He is going to abstain because the whole process is tainted and he wants to be transparent. The school was given 20 violations for their playgrounds from the AAB and he wants to know how these funds will affect that.

Chair Riley stated that the subcommittee did not meet until this past Monday at a posted meeting. He interviewed the applicants by himself. The meetings were posted and procedures were followed.

Vice Chair Conway stated that this was an unfortunate incident and we will be looking to modify the policy in the future. She is also concerned with the one-sided comments. It's ok to give the Recreation Department money but we shouldn't give the schools money. They are both town departments with budgets and we should be consistent. Vice Chair Conway agrees that EMD Serono is a great partner and the regulations don't say that a subcommittee must be at least 2 people, it could be just the Chair. Each company has their own philanthropic policy. If the entire process was followed, this issue would not have been caught. She appreciates that we are spreading the funds out as much as possible. She also understands having this meeting due to the timing and wanting to get the checks to the recipients as quickly as possible. It isn't perfect but it's a good compromise.

Member Burrows stated that there is a difference in the school and recreation is that the school budget goes up by \$3 million but the recreation building is falling apart and the community can't use the schools.

Member Rosa stated that the subcommittee can't be more than 3 members because that would be a quorum of the Board, so it has to be two. The policy states that the entire Select Board has the final vote on the award. In this case, EMD Serono saved \$6 million in tax revenue by giving us \$50,000. He doesn't think their philosophy should be the final say. Vice Chair Conway stated that for clarification, the subcommittee could be 1 member of the Select Board and 1 member from each company. The vote here today is the vote of the entire Select Board as recommended by the subcommittee.

MOTION - Secretary Deslaurier made a motion to approve the recommendation of the subcommittee for the reallocation of the remaining \$38,000 Community Funds as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Conway and voted 4-0-1. On a roll call vote: Secretary Deslaurier voted Aye, Vice Chair Conway voted Aye, Member Rosa voted Aye, Member Burrows abstained and Chair Riley voted Aye.

MOTION - Secretary Deslaurier made a motion to adjourn the April 12, 2023 Select Board meeting at 12:45 PM. The motion was seconded by Member Rosa and unanimously voted 5-0-0. On a roll call vote: Secretary Deslaurier voted Aye, Vice Chair Conway voted Aye, Member Rosa voted Aye, Member Burrows voted Aye and Chair Riley voted Aye.

*Respectfully Submitted by Dawn McDowell,
Recording Secretary*



**TOWN OF BILLERICA
SELECT BOARD MINUTES
APRIL 12, 2023**

Exhibits for the Select Board Meeting – April 12, 2023

Call to order 12:00 PM

- 1. Armenian Genocide Commemoration Flag Raising in Billerica, Saturday April 22, 2023 at 10:00 AM –**
Email from S. Dulgarian dated 4/4/23
- 2. 2023 Community Funds – Discussion and Vote – Distribution of Remaining \$38,000 – 2023 Community Fund**
Applicants Spreadsheet, Community Funds Applications

Approved On: May 15, 2023