

Carlisle Select Board  
Minutes of Tuesday, January 27, 2026  
Clark Room, Town Hall  
66 Westford St, Carlisle MA 01741

Hybrid Meeting

The Select Board met on Tuesday, January 27, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. in the Clark Room of Carlisle Town Hall, 66 Westford St. In attendance were Barney Arnold, Travis Snell, Christine Stevens, David Model, and Scott Triola.

**Staff Present:** Town Administrator Ryan McLane;

**Others:** Representative Simon Cataldo; Conservation Commission members: George Shepard, Nick Ognibene, Melissa Webster, Brian Murphy, Navneet Hundal, and Sylvia Willard; Land Stewardship Committee members: Adam Chojnacki and Warran Lyman

This meeting was livestreamed, the recording may be viewed here: [Town of Carlisle MA - YouTube](#)

The meeting packet is available on our website:  
[carlislema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8200/SB\\_01-27-26\\_Packet](http://carlislema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8200/SB_01-27-26_Packet)

**Call to Order**

Chair Scott Triola opened the meeting at 7:00 PM with all five Select Board members present: Scott Triola (Chair), Barney Arnold (Vice Chair), Christine Stevens (Clerk), Travis Snell (Member), and David Model (Member). Ryan McLane (Town Administrator) was also present.

**Item 1: Community Input**

There was no community input.

**Item 2: Meeting with Representative Cataldo**

Representative Simon Cataldo attended the meeting to provide updates and address questions from the Select Board. He discussed several topics:

- Proposition 2½ - Rep. Cataldo stated that while there were discussions about potential changes to the law, significant changes were unlikely. He noted that only 44% of municipalities have had overrides since the law was enacted. The Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) has suggested phase-ins of increases above 2.5%. He acknowledged that smaller communities face significant costs for overrides.

- Immigration Enforcement - He shared information about Concord's "welcoming communities" bylaw, which provides guidelines for the police department regarding cooperation with federal immigration enforcement.
- Municipal Building Authority - He expressed support for creating a municipal building authority similar to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), which would help fund municipal building projects. This would be especially beneficial for smaller communities like Carlisle that face substantial building costs. Town Administrator Ryan McLane highlighted that Carlisle's building improvement costs represent a similar financial impact on residents as Lexington's recent \$660 million school project.
- Communication - Rep. Cataldo outlined various ways residents can stay informed about his work, including his constituent newsletter, social media, and office hours. He encouraged communication from residents to help him advocate for local priorities with House leadership.
- Literacy Legislation - He discussed his literacy bill that passed the House 155-0, requiring evidence-based literacy instruction in grades K-3. The bill is expected to go before the Senate soon.
- Library Renovation - He mentioned that the state had previously funded a \$200,000 grant for the library through the Mass Cultural Council. He indicated he would consider an earmark for the library this year if that's what the community prioritizes.
- Ferns Country Store - He offered support for the ongoing renovation efforts at Ferns, including potential assistance with Mass DEP processes.
- Home Rule Petitions - He provided an update on the Town's pending home rule petitions, including one related to the Town Administrator's appointment authority (H.4414) and one that was passed in December 2024 authorizing Carlisle to establish a means-tested senior citizen property tax exemption.
- Antisemitism Commission - He discussed the work of the state commission on combating antisemitism, which released a preliminary report on K-12 education in August. He noted that many districts, including Concord-Carlisle Regional School District, have made significant improvements in their procedures for addressing incidents of antisemitism and other forms of hate.

Board members asked several follow-up questions, particularly around Prop 2½ impacts, town earmark priorities, and the prospects for the Municipal Building Authority. Rep. Cataldo committed to continuing to work closely with the town on these issues.

### ***Item 3: Appointments***

The Board discussed amendments to the DPW Building Renovation Committee Charter and appointments to the committee.

The Board considered changing the Board of Health representative position to a Finance Committee representative position. Discussion focused on whether the Board of Health should still have representation on the committee, particularly given environmental and health considerations related to the DPW facility.

**Motion:** To amend the DPW Building Renovation Committee Charter to change the "one Board of Health representative" to "one Finance Committee representative" among the five voting members.

Moved by Barney Arnold, seconded by David Model

Motion passed unanimously

The Board also noted a typographical error in the charter that described "one large members" which should be "one at-large member."

The Board then considered appointing Marc Bernstein to the Finance Committee seat on the DPW Building Renovation Committee:

**Motion:** To appoint Marc Bernstein as the Finance Committee representative to the DPW Building Renovation Committee subject to the subsequent approval of the Finance Committee.

Moved by Christine Stevens, seconded by Travis Snell

Motion passed unanimously

The Board then considered an appointment to the Agricultural Commission:

**Motion:** To appoint Richard Hisey as a member of the Agricultural Commission, term to end June 30, 2028.

Moved by Christine Stevens, seconded by David Model

Motion passed unanimously

The Board also considered an appointment to the DPW Building Renovation Committee:

**Motion:** To appoint Melissa Webster to the DPW Building Renovation Committee representing the Conservation Commission.

Moved by Christine Stevens, seconded by Scott Triola

Motion passed unanimously

***Item 4: Approval of Loan Documents for the Fire Station Renovation Project Design***

Town Treasurer/Collector Sandra Nason presented loan documents for the previously approved \$1.4 million for the Fire Station Renovation Project design. She reported that the town received only one bid from Unibank for Savings at an interest rate of 3.5% for one year.

Ryan McLane noted that the town had conservatively estimated a 4.5% interest rate when budgeting for the project, so the 3.5% rate represented significant savings. He explained that

these funds would be used to pay for the design costs and could potentially be rolled into a larger construction project loan if the town approves the full renovation project.

**Motion:** To approve the motions titled "Vote of the Select Board" and dated January 27, 2026 as presented in the packet.

Moved by Christine Stevens, seconded by David Model

Motion passed unanimously

***Item 5: Joint Meeting with the Conservation Commission and LSC***

Conservation Commission Chair George Shepard called the Conservation Commission meeting to order with members Nick Ognibene, Melissa Webster, Brian Murphy, Navneet Hundal, and Sylvia Willard present. The Land Stewardship Committee (LSC) was unable to form a quorum, but members submitted written comments prior to the meeting (see packet). LSC members Brian Murphy, Adam Chojnacki and Warran Lyman were in attendance.

Chair Triola provided background on the town's conservation lands, noting that Carlisle owns over 30 conservation parcels totaling almost 1,100 acres. The Land Stewardship Committee (LSC) was formed in 2005 as a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission to manage town-owned conservation land.

In May 2024, the Conservation Commission approved a revised LSC charter that delegated additional responsibilities to the LSC, including management of agricultural licenses and issuing land permits. Chair Triola noted that the Select Board has received multiple complaints about how these responsibilities are being managed, with concerns about process, collaboration, and transparency.

Barney Arnold, liaison to both committees, explained that the LSC has difficulty moving forward because there isn't agreement among committee members about the overall purpose and management plan for Carlisle's conservation land. Conservation Commission members expressed concerns about the current arrangement:

- Navneet Hundal stated that the current charter isn't working well and expressed concern about being responsible for decisions that aren't aligned with her views. She recommended that licensing, permitting, and any legal matters should come back to the Conservation Commission.
- Melissa Webster agreed with Hundal's assessment and added that the town lacks visionary statements and long-term plans for these lands.
- George Shepard acknowledged that the operation of the LSC needs to be tied more closely to the Conservation Commission, with the Commission making approvals for LSC decisions.

- Nick Ognibene agreed with these assessments and pointed to the reallocation of the Woodward land license as an example of a decision that was unpopular with key stakeholders.
- Sylvia Willard, who helped establish the LSC, stated that town hall staff and the Conservation Commission should be responsible for legal documents such as agricultural agreements to ensure they're done correctly.

Brian Murphy, who chairs the LSC and serves on the Conservation Commission, agreed that better coordination is needed and suggested joint meetings between the LSC and Conservation Commission every two months.

The Conservation Commission members committed to revising the LSC charter at their next meeting to address these concerns, particularly regarding decision-making authority for licenses, permits, and major land use changes.

Several members of the public commented, emphasizing the need for transparency, process improvement, and better incorporation of community input.

- Warren Lyman, who has a long history with the LSC, emphasized the historical context and communication issues between the LSC and Conservation Commission, suggesting a more collaborative approach moving forward.
- Adam Chojnacki, LSC member, stressed the need for genuine changes to the LSC charter to address issues of autonomy and the lack of collaboration, urging the board to revise the charter to limit autonomy.
- Sam Pietropaolo, Maple Street, highlighted the perception of public discourse as negative and advocated for respectful public input and for current issues like the Foss and Woodward situations to be brought back to ConsCom for further review.
- Susan Pietropaolo, Maple Street, supported the sentiment for respectful discourse and inquired about the Select Board's commitment to a follow-up meeting on the charter.
- Jonathon DeKock, 130 Oak Knoll Road, suggested not rushing the charter revision process and ensuring community input from various stakeholders to make informed changes, stressing the need for deliberate action.

The meeting concluded with a consensus that the Conservation Commission would take the lead on revising the charter and addressing the current issues.

#### ***Item 6: Proctor Road Tower – Cellular Lease***

Ryan McLane presented information about a Request for Proposals (RFP) for cellular leasing on the town's communication pole at 2 Proctor Road. The RFP would allow cellular providers to add equipment to the existing pole, which could improve cell service in town and generate revenue.

McLane noted that town counsel had prepared a boilerplate RFP with a 10-year lease term with subsequent 5-year agreements, but potential bidders had expressed a preference for a 20-year lease. He asked for the Board's feedback on this point, noting that a longer lease term might attract more bidders.

The Board members expressed support for the 20-year lease term and discussed the evaluation criteria for bidders, which include technical competence and aesthetic considerations. McLane explained that the ultimate lease agreement would require town meeting approval.

The Board directed McLane to proceed with the RFP process, aiming to have a lease agreement ready for the May town meeting.

### ***Item 7: Policy Discussion – Volunteer Code of Conduct***

Ryan McLane presented information prepared by Executive Assistant Gretchen Gallimore on developing a code of conduct policy for town volunteers. He explained that the town's insurance provider, MIIA, has a template that many towns use as a starting point, and provided examples from other municipalities.

The Board discussed whether such a policy should include enforcement mechanisms and removal procedures for committee members who violate the code. Ryan McLane noted that removal options differ for elected officials versus appointed committee members.

The Board agreed to review the MIIA template and revisit the topic at a future meeting. They directed staff to investigate the legal enforcement options and procedures that could be incorporated into the policy.

### ***Item 8: Town Administrator Report***

Ryan McLane presented his Town Administrator Report, highlighting:

- Staffing: Three significant retirements were announced:
  - James Powderly, Plumbing and Gas Inspector, will retire March 31 after 18 years of service
  - Linda Fantasia will retire March 1 after 39 years of service
  - Jim O'Shea, Superintendent of Schools, will retire at the end of the year after 10 years of service
- Financial updates:
  - Free cash has been certified at \$4,676,426, representing about 17% of the current year's budget
  - The Finance Committee has completed budget meetings and is working on a second budget draft
- Capital projects:
  - Town Hall bathroom renovation will start the next day
  - Cranberry Bog Dam #1 project is progressing

- Library renovation budget is estimated at \$3.5 million, with trustees planning to request CPA funding
- Police station renovation is on schedule and on budget
- Mid-year financial report:
  - Town has expended 48.22% of the budget at the halfway point
  - Dispatch department has absorbed unexpected IT costs that will require a transfer at the end of the fiscal year
  - Maintenance costs are being monitored and may require an end-of-year transfer
  - Some revenue sources are underperforming, including gas permits and recycling

*David Model briefly left the room.*

The Board considered a Community Preservation Act grant application for legal fees related to the Cranberry Bog House project:

**Motion:** To approve the submission of the Community Preservation Act grant application for legal and administrative fees associated with removal of the Cranberry Bog House and immediately surrounding land from Article 97.

Moved by Travis Snell, seconded by Christine Stevens

Motion passed with four in favor and David Model abstaining

***Item 9: Review of Warrants and Minutes***

The Board reviewed the minutes of the January 13, 2026 meeting, which had been circulated with edits incorporated.

**Motion:** To approve the minutes of the January 13, 2026 Select Board meeting as presented this afternoon.

Moved by Christine Stevens, seconded by Travis Snell

Motion passed with four in favor and David Model abstaining

*David Model returned to the room.*

***Item 10: Cemetery Deeds***

The Board reviewed a cemetery deed transfer:

**Motion:** To transfer land in the public burial ground at the Green Cemetery as described. Deed 866, lot D171, graves 1, 2, 3, and 4, to Deborah and Raymond Gonzales of 19 Bellows Hill Road.

Moved by Christine Stevens, seconded by Travis Snell

Motion passed unanimously

***Item 11: Liaison Reports***

Chair Scott Triola reported attending a School Committee meeting where they discussed the Highland Building. He noted that the School Committee would likely vote at their next meeting to indicate they do not have a use for the Highland Building, which would return the matter to the Select Board for consideration.

David Model reported on the Carlisle Affordable Housing Trust (CAHT) meeting, noting that they are proceeding with plans for the Bog House project but are considering what other housing initiatives they might pursue.

Christine Stevens reported on her attendance at the Massachusetts Municipal Association meeting, where representatives from the Massachusetts Taxpayers Association presented sobering projections about state revenue trends, noting that federal budget impacts would limit state discretionary spending.

***Item 12: Community Input***

There was no community input at this time.

***Adjournment***

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting.

Moved by Christine Stevens, seconded by Travis Snell

Motion passed unanimously

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 PM.

Prepared by

G. Gallimore