

Select Board Meeting Minutes
February 23, 2026
7:00 PM
Zoom

Select Board Members: Daniel Brosgol; Shawn Hanegan; Bopha Malone; Paul Mortenson; Terrence Parker

Attendees: Matt Hanson, Town Manager; Autumn Ledgister-Cummins, Executive Assistant; Cliff Chuang, Bedford Public Schools Superintendent; Tony Fields, Planning Director; Pamela Brown, Brown & Brown, P.C.; Joanne Callender, Eversource Representative; Matt Porter, Community Media Committee Chair; Brian Hebert, Bedford TV Executive Director; Alethea Yates, Historic Preservation Chair; Piper Pavelich, Bedford Citizen; Bob Dutton; Sarah McGinley, School Committee Chair; Mark Siegenthaler; Emily Mitchell; Beatrice Brunkhorst, Library Trustees Member; John McClain; Ben Thomas; Mike Pulizzi, Library Trustees Member; Elizabeth Hacala, Library Trustees Member; Padma Choudry, Library Trustees Member; Emily Prince; David Goldbaum; David Williams; Brandon Hall; Dillon; Schwartz; Rachel

1. Public Comment

Alison Jimerson, 20 Caribou Street; Emily Mitchell, 4 Heritage Drive; Padma Choudry, 38 Battle Flagg Road, spoke on the Charter amendments.

Beatrice Brunkhorst spoke on the 2.23.26 Select Board meeting materials location.

2. **Public Hearings** – Eversource - Grant of Location Requests

Mr. Brosgol moved to open the public hearings for Webber Avenue, W.O.#22033683 to relocate pole 35/2 approximately 5 feet north of current location and South Road, W.O.# 23594834 to install approximately 15 feet of conduit. Ms. Malone seconded.

The Select Board conducted a roll call: Mr. Brosgol, aye; Mr. Mortenson, aye; Mr. Hanegan aye; Mr. Parker, aye; Ms. Malone, aye. The motion passed 5-0-0.

- a. Webber Avenue, Bedford W.O.#22033683 to relocate pole 35/2 approximately 5 feet north of current location.

David Manugian, DPW Director, and Joanne Callender, Eversource Representative, presented the petition and plan by NSTAR Electric Company dba Eversource Energy for the purpose of obtaining a Grant of Location to relocate pole 35/2.

The Department of Public Works supports the proposed work by Eversource at #10 Webber Avenue to relocate the utility pole. Based on the submitted work plan, no impacts to Town owned public utilities are anticipated.

Mr. Brosgol inquired about the work's timeframe and moratorium. Ms. Callender answered work would commence once the Town grants the location request. Mr. Manugian added that the moratorium is expected to conclude in the middle of April.

Mr. Brosgol moved to close the public hearings for Webber Avenue, W.O.#22033683 to relocate pole 35/2 approximately 5 feet north of current location. **Mr. Parker** seconded.

The Select Board conducted a roll call: **Mr. Brosgol, aye; Mr. Mortenson, aye; Mr. Hanegan aye; Mr. Parker, aye; Ms. Malone, aye.** The motion passed 5-0-0.

Mr. Brosgol moved that the Town approve the petition to construct the utility as described and shown on the Order and Plans, dated August 20, 2025, for 10 Webber Avenue on behalf of NSTAR Electric Company DBA Eversource Energy. **Mr. Hanegan** seconded.

The Select Board conducted a roll call: **Mr. Brosgol, aye; Mr. Mortenson, aye; Mr. Hanegan aye; Mr. Parker, aye; Ms. Malone, aye.** The motion passed 5-0-0.

Mr. Brosgol moved to continue the public hearing. **Mr. Hanegan** seconded.

The Select Board conducted a roll call: **Mr. Brosgol, aye; Mr. Mortenson, aye; Mr. Hanegan aye; Mr. Parker, aye; Ms. Malone, aye.** The motion passed 5-0-0.

- b. South Road, Bedford W.O.# 23594834 to install approximately 15 feet of conduit.

The enclosed petition and plan being presented by the NSTAR Electric Company dba Eversource Energy for the purpose of obtaining a Grant of Location to install 15 feet of conduit in South Road. The work is necessary to provide service to #315 South Road. The Department of Public Works (DPW) reviewed the application and had a number of concerns. It was noted that a contractor appears to have installed a riser on the existing utility pole and trenched across the Town right-of-way to the property line without notifying the Town or Eversource. During this work, a large oak tree within the Town right-of-way may have been damaged.

Due to current snow cover, the extent of the damage cannot yet be fully determined. Once conditions improve, the Department of Public Works will assess the situation and work with the applicant to identify potential alternate routes for the electrical connection. Based on the findings, appropriate mitigation will be determined. DPW anticipates that a clearer assessment will be possible in late March or early April.

Mr. Hanegan inquired about the consequences for performing work without approval from the Town. Mr. Manugian answered that there have been discussions about penalties.

Mr. Brosgol moved that the Town continue the public hearing for the proposed NSTAR/ Eversource Grant of Location at 315 South Road to April 13th at 7PM. **Mr. Hanegan** seconded.

The Select Board conducted a roll call: **Mr. Brosgol, aye; Mr. Mortenson, aye; Mr. Hanegan aye; Mr. Parker, aye; Ms. Malone, aye.** The motion passed 5-0-0.

Materials: SB Cover Memo for GoL WO#22033683 10 Webber Ave; 22033683-Webber Ave Bed Cover Letter; 22033683-Webber Ave- Bed Order; 22033683-Webber Ave- Bed Petition; 22033683-Webber Ave- Bed Plan; Webber Ave Abutter Notice; 315 South Grant of Location Cover Memo 2026-02-17; 23594834-South Rd Abutters List; 23594834-South Rd Bed Cover Letter; 23594834-South Rd Bed Order; 23594834-South Rd Bed Petition; 23594834-South Rd Bed Plan; South Road Abutters Notice

3. Disability Commission Request to change name to “Commission on Disability”

The Bedford Disability Commission voted unanimously to change their name to the “Commission on Disability.” This change aligns with standard terminology used by the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD). Two-thirds of commissions in Massachusetts identify as CODs. The remaining commissions either use Disability Commission or another name, for example, “Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Committee” or “Accessibility Advisory Committee”. The terminology described uses people-first language (PFL), a practice that places the person or group before the disability rather than using disability as an adjective that defines the individuals.

Mr. Parker moved that the Select Board change the name of the “Disability Commission” to the “Commission on Disability”. Ms. Malone seconded.

The Select Board conducted a roll call: Mr. Brosgol, aye; Mr. Mortenson, aye; Mr. Hanegan aye; Mr. Parker, aye; Ms. Malone, aye. The motion passed 5-0-0.

Materials: DC Name Change to COD

4. **Presentation** Community Media Committee PEG Budget – Matthew Porter

Matthew Porter, Community Media Committee Chair, presented the PEG Budget to the Board. On January 28, 2026, the Community Media Committee (CMC) reviewed the budget proposed by Bedford Community Access Television, Inc. (BCAT) for continued operation of the community access television studio and the local access channels on the town’s cable television providers.

The Board voted to recommend to the Select Board that \$303,286 be included in the FY2027 town budget to support BedfordTV. Of that total, \$252,536 is designated for BCAT operating expenses, \$35,000 for rent of the studio space located in Old Town Hall, and \$15,750 for capital expenditures for production equipment to be used by BCAT. This recommendation is contingent on sufficient revenue into the PEG access special revenue fund/account (SRA) from the cable TV providers. The consensus of the committee was that forecasted revenue should come from the Finance Committee as it seems that this is what has happened in previous years. However, the committee will be reviewing finances from the SRA going forward as part of deliberations on future budgets.

The overall request represents an increase of 4.2% from the FY26 budget. The allocation for the operating expenses is increased by 3.0%, driven primarily by salary and insurance adjustments, some of which is offset by increases in class revenues paid to BedfordTV. The capital expenditure budget is increased by 44.9% and supports the purchase of a system to provide captions that will be required by ADA regulations on government programing starting in April 2027.

Mr. Mortenson inquired about the funding. Mr. Porter answered that currently there's sufficient funding. Mr. Parker inquired about the contributions from cable companies. Mr. Porter answered funding for Bedford TV is dependent on the fee provided through cable TV. As more people pivoted to streaming services, contributions have been lowered. Mr. Hanegan inquired about alternative sources of revenue. Mr. Porter answered that other sources of revenue have increased, but advertisements and sponsorships could not be procured due to legality.

The Board thanked Mr. Porter and Mr. Hebert for the presentation.

Materials: FY27 Budget Memo; FY27 Budget Memo Slides

5. **Public Hearing:** General Bylaw & Charter Amendments

Mr. Hanegan moved to open the public hearing for the general Bylaw and Charter amendments. Mr. Brosgol seconded.

The Board conducted a roll call. Mr. Mortenson, aye; Mr. Hanegan, aye; Mr. Brosgol, aye; Mr. Parker, aye; Ms. Malone, aye. The motion passed 5-0-0.

Mr. Mortenson spoke on the Charter amendments regarding the Town Manager's authority on the hiring/supervision of departments with elected boards. The language clarifies that appointments of department heads shall be made subject to consultation with the respective elected board.

Padma Choudry, spoke on the new edits to 5-1b. The Library Trustees proposed edits expanding on limiting the Town Manager's power of those listed in Section 3 of Article 3 to respective employees. Mr. Hanson asked for clarification on the new addition since it wouldn't align with past practices. Ms. Choudry answered that it was added due to a public comment. The Board asked for clarification as to why the library department should be excluded from the Town Manager's appointing authority. Ms. Choudry responded that the elected board is elected for the sole reason of supervising the library director. They undergo specific training to align with M.G.L. standards. Ms. Choudry added that historically the language regarding town officers didn't include department heads with elected boards. Therefore, the Library Trustees encourage the newest edits if the Town decides to continue with the new interpretation of the language. Mr. Hanson clarified that the appointing authority of department heads has historically been handled differently. The amendments clarify the Town's historic practices. Mr. Parker added that the Library Trustees should be separate due to how elected members specialize in library affairs.

The Board and Ms. Choudry had a lengthy discussion regarding article 5-1b.

Beatrice Brunkhorst, Mike Pulizzi, and Elizabeth Hacala supported the new edits made by the Library of Trustees. Emphasizing the preservation of the Board's independent authority. Ms. Hacala highlighted the 2019 Charter and Bylaws report which outlined the appointing authority for the Assessor's Department.

Mark Siegenthaler discussed the proposed change to the dates for the Annual Town Meeting and the election. He expressed concern that the election date would be scheduled too close to the Annual Town Meeting and suggested that it should be adjusted to allow for appropriate separation between

the two events. Additionally, Mr. Siegenthaler stated that he does not support granting the Select Board authority to change these dates. Mr. Mortenson responded by clarifying the rationale for the proposed date change and outlined the scope and limitations of the Select Board's authority in the matter.

Mr. Brosgol moved to close the public hearing for the general Bylaw and Charter amendments. Ms. Malone seconded.

The Select Board conducted a roll call. Mr. Mortenson, aye; Mr. Hanegan, aye; Mr. Brosgol, aye; Mr. Parker, aye; Ms. Malone; aye. The motion passed 5-0-0.

Materials: Change to Recycling Revolving Limit (2026); Charter Bylaw Hearing Notice Feb 23rd, 2026; Cottage Overlay District for ATM Warrant; Sewer Bylaw Change Memo (2026)

6. Review Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Tony Fields, Planning Board Director, and Attorney Pam Brown, Brown & Brown, P.C., spoke on the updates to Article 30 on the annual town meeting warrant. The update maintained a 1,850 square foot size limitation while allowing for cross-references to existing bylaw sections. Additionally, the 10 units per acre aligns with the neighborhood character and specific proposal for Elm Street property.

Mr. Hanegan inquired about the unit sizes. Mr. Fields stated that the Board agreed to establish the minimum unit size at 1,850 square feet to align with the team advancing the 40Y concept. Attorney Brown further noted that the proposal includes a mix of varied unit sizes. Mr. Mortenson inquired about the quantity of units. Mr. Fields answered a maximum of 10 total units.

Mr. Brosgol requested clarification on projected expenditures from the Special Education Stabilization Fund for the current and upcoming fiscal years. Cliff Chuang, Bedford Public Schools Superintendent, stated that a deficit of approximately \$200,000–\$350,000 had been projected, requiring a draw from the stabilization fund, which had been approved at \$350,000. An updated projection indicates a lower draw for FY26.

For FY27, the current budget projects a \$490,000 draw. Mr. Chuang noted that the district is actively pursuing state and other funding sources and is cautiously optimistic that the need to draw from the stabilization fund will be significantly lower than what is currently reflected in the proposed budget.

The Board and Alethea Yates, Historic District Commission chair, discussed Article 21. Mr. Mortenson expressed concern that the proposal could encourage pseudo-teardowns of historic homes. Ms. Yates responded that the intent of the article is to preserve older houses.

Ms. Malone moved the Board to close the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Mr. Hanegan seconded.

The Select Board conducted a roll call. Mr. Mortenson, aye; Mr. Hanegan, aye; Mr. Brosgol, aye; Mr. Parker, aye; Ms. Malone; aye. The motion passed 5-0-0.

7. Consent

- a. 1 Railroad Ave Easement
- b. 2-9-2026 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Hanegan moved that the Town accept the easements on 1 Railroad Avenue between the Town of Bedford and One Railroad Bedford, LLC as described in the Public Works memo dated February 5, 2026, and authorize the Town Manager to sign on their behalf. Mr. Mortenson seconded.

The Select Board conducted a roll call. Mr. Mortenson, aye; Mr. Hanegan, aye; Mr. Brosgol, aye; Ms. Malone; aye. Mr. Parker abstained from the vote. The motion passed 4-0-1.

Mr. Brosgol moved to approve the remaining consent agenda item. Ms. Malone seconded.

The Select Board conducted a roll call. Mr. Mortenson, aye; Mr. Hanegan, aye; Mr. Brosgol, aye; Mr. Parker, aye; Ms. Malone; aye. The motion passed 5-0-0.

Materials: 1 Railroad Avenue Easement Acceptance Cover Memo 2026-02-05; One Railroad Avenue Easement Contract; 2.9.2026 Meeting Minutes

8. Liaison Report

Bopha Malone- Ms. Malone attended a Community Media Committee meeting

Paul Mortenson- Mr. Mortenson had no updates to report.

Dan Brosgol- Mr. Brosgol will attend an Energy and Sustainability and Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) meeting.

Shawn Hanegan- Mr. Hanegan had no updates to report.

Terrence Parker- Mr. Parker's Fire Station Building Committee meeting and tour was postponed due to the inclement weather.

9. Adjournment

Mr. Brosgol moved to adjourn. Mr. Hanegan seconded.

The Select Board conducted a roll call. Mr. Mortenson, aye; Mr. Hanegan, aye; Mr. Brosgol, aye; Mr. Parker, aye; Ms. Malone; aye. The motion passed 5-0-0.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM.