

MINUTES OF TOWN OF BERKLEY SELECTMEN'S MEETING OF 04/09/2025

SELECTMEN IN ATTENDANCE: Tabitha K. McCrohan, Chairwoman, Jennifer Vincent, Clerk

TOPIC		ACTION
	Meeting Called to Order at 6:01 p.m. in the Council on the Aging Room	
Public Hearing	<p>The meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM. Present were Selectmen Jennifer Vincent (JV) and Tabitha McCrohan (TM).</p> <p>At 6:08 PM, JV read an opening statement to introduce a public discussion regarding the impacts of South Coast Rail. She expressed a commitment to holding a second public meeting on the issue. Kerrie Hamblet of 67 Myricks Street opened public comment, voicing concerns about the sharp increase in train traffic and its significant impact on residents' mental health. She stated that the initial promise of 13 routes has evolved into a disruptive reality, citing 64 train passes in one day, often depriving residents of sleep. An online petition had gathered over 550 signatures.</p> <p>Multiple residents voiced similar concerns. Amanda Gagne of 4 Grove Street, a single mother of six, described her children's sleep deprivation and its effects on their education. Others, like Michele Garrity and Laurie Johnson of Cotley Street, described sleepless nights, growing frustration, and the need for decibel reporting and ridership data.</p> <p>Jean Fox and Ryan Coholan of the MBTA introduced themselves. Residents raised questions about horn volume, safety, and the feasibility of Quiet Zones. JV explained that horn usage is a federal requirement, and while silent crossings are possible, the Town would bear liability and substantial costs. Resident Glen Crecian of Assonet noted that all crossings already include Supplemental Safety Measures (SSMs), arguing that this should qualify Berkley for Quiet Zones. Coholan clarified that a formal crossing diagnostic must be completed by a third-party before a Quiet Zone can be established.</p> <p>Many residents, including Alvin Rodrigues, Julie Barbosa, Rich Spada, and Kevin Hamblett, provided personal accounts of disrupted sleep, lack of mitigation follow-through, and damage to property. Some had been promised tree barriers or noise mitigation that never materialized. Concerns about misleading information, broken promises, and procedural opacity were common.</p> <p>Brenden Connelly of Jack Henry Drive reported environmental concerns, including potential hydraulic fluid spills in nearby wetlands. Steven Alberez, a retired firefighter, highlighted public safety access issues and criticized previous dismissive remarks by officials during the planning phase. Several residents cited personal expenses for mitigation efforts that failed to resolve their issues.</p> <p>Throughout the meeting, residents questioned the effectiveness of mitigation, the scheduling of late-night trains, and the apparent lack of consideration for community impact. Calls were made to reduce service hours, prioritize safety, and ensure consistent communication from officials.</p> <p>Selectmen McCrohan and Vincent emphasized the Town's commitment to finding solutions. TM reiterated the need for a cost estimate on a Quiet Zone study, which may cost approximately \$20,000. The Board indicated that a meeting with public safety officials would be held the following week to discuss Cotley Street. JV stressed that Berkley has not been treated equitably and that rural communities face unique challenges that are often ignored. Residents also raised concerns about declining property values and lack of compensation. The issue of the MBTA Communities Law was briefly discussed, with TM explaining that while Berkley's requirement is relatively low at 8 acres, placement and implementation remain sensitive decisions.</p> <p>The Board acknowledged the public's frustration and thanked MBTA representatives for attending. JV reiterated her appreciation for the turnout and stated that the Board would continue to advocate on behalf of residents.</p>	Informational only, will continue to be discussed.

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Personnel Board	Board to discuss the potential creation and posting of a Float Clerk position, potential posting of Administrative Assistant to the Town Accountant and effects of these positions on the FY2026 budget. Town Administrator recommends a float clerk position for the short term due to budget constraints and being short staffed in the Town Hall Offices. This would offer a short term solution until full time positions can be budgeted and posted.	Informational only, no vote needed
Appointments	The Board accepted the resignation of Danniel T Meadows from the Berkley Police Department	Ms. Vincent moved to accept, Ms. McCrohan 2nd, motion approved
	Finance Committee Appointing Authority to appoint Christopher Sullivan to the Berkley Finance Committee with term to expire June 30, 2028.	Mr. Wu moved to appoint, Ms. McCrohan 2nd, motion approved
	Board to review and appoint Patricia Dougherty to the Berkley Zoning Board of Appeals term to expire June 30, 2026.	Ms. Vincent moved to accept, Ms. McCrohan 2nd, motion approved
	Board to review and appoint Mark Pettey to the Berkley Zoning Board of Appeals as the alternate. Term to end June 30, 2027.	Ms. Vincent moved to accept, Ms. McCrohan 2nd, motion approved
	Board to review and appoint Jennifer Vincent to the Berkley Common Committee	Ms. Vincent moved to table, Ms. McCrohan 2nd, motion approved
	Board to review and appoint Tabitha McCrohan to the SRPEDD Regional Commission	Ms. Vincent moved to table, Ms. McCrohan 2nd, motion approved
	Board to review and appoint Joshua Carreiro to the position of Library custodian. Term to end June 30, 2027.	Ms. Vincent moved to accept, Ms. McCrohan 2nd, motion approved
	A Common Victualler application was presented and approved contingent upon the Building Inspector's approval, following a motion by JV and second by TM.	Ms. Vincent moved to accept, Ms. McCrohan 2nd, motion approved
New Business	Board to review potential bylaw changes and review draft warrant to include Capital Improvements Planning Committee bylaw changes, Petition for Special Legislation for additional liquor licenses, increases to existing tax exemptions, and Petition for Special Legislation for the process of recall of elected officials	Ms. Vincent moved to table, Ms. McCrohan 2nd, motion approved

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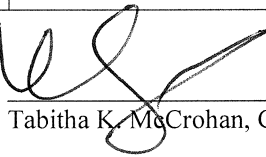
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New Business (continued)	Board to approve permit for door to door sales applications for Renewal by Anderson	Ms. Vincent moved to accept, Ms. McCrohan 2nd, motion approved
	Board to sign amendment to Disposal Services Agreement between Reworld Sustainable Solutions, LLC and the Town of Berkley	Ms. Vincent moved to accept, Ms. McCrohan 2nd, motion approved
	Board to discuss Talk of the Town events between the Berkley Board of Selectmen and the citizens of Berkley with first one potentially being May 3 rd .	Discussion only, no vote needed
Old Business	Board to review and authorize the Chairman of the Board to sign FY2024 audit engagement letter between the Town of Berkley and CBIZ CPAs P.C.	Ms. Vincent moved to table, Ms. McCrohan 2nd, motion approved
Meeting Minutes	Board to approve Meeting Minutes of March 26th, 2025	Ms. Vincent moved to accept, Ms. McCrohan 2nd, motion approved
	Board to approve Executive Session Minutes of March 26th, 2025	Ms. Vincent moved to accept, Ms. McCrohan 2nd, motion approved
Town Administrator Report	<p>Digital Equity Plan - The Town has signed on to a regional Digital Equity Plan with support from SRPEDD, with potential support from Rehoboth and Dighton. The plan addresses gaps in infrastructure, device access, and digital skills, especially among seniors, rural residents, and individuals with disabilities. This initiative aligns with efforts to expand online municipal services and may complement programming already offered by the Council on Aging.</p> <p>MBTA Communities Technical Assistance Application - Berkley has applied to the Massachusetts Housing Partnership for technical assistance in developing a zoning bylaw compliant with the MBTA Communities Law. If awarded, this grant-funded support will aid in mapping a zoning district and conducting outreach over the next six months. Site selection for the proposed zoning is a critical first step, with the potential presentation a draft bylaw by November.</p>	

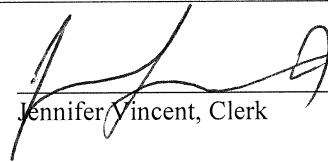
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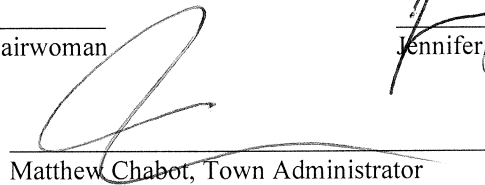
Adjournment	Meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.	Ms. Vincent moved to accept, Ms. McCrohan 2nd, motion approved
Executive Session	Executive session is tabled until next Board of Selectmen meeting on April 23, 2025	Ms. Vincent moved to table, Ms. McCrohan 2nd, motion approved



Tabitha K. McCrohan, Chairwoman



Jennifer Vincent, Clerk



Matthew Chabot, Town Administrator