MINUTES OF TOWN OF BERKLEY SELECTMEN'S MEETING OF 09/16/2026

SELECTMEN IN ATTENDANCE: Tabitha McCrohan-Chair, Jennifer Vincent-Clerk

TOPIC		ACTION
Call To Order	Board of Selectmen - Called to Order at 10:30AM in the Moitoza-Pettey Hearing Room	
Appointments:	**Board to post Health Agent – Part-Time, As-Needed Position (grant funded), including approval of the job description and pay rate, and consideration of the appointment process and next steps; review of matter; votes may be taken** The Board discussed posting the part-time Health Agent position. Town Administrator Matthew Chabot explained that the position is grant funded. Ms. Vincent moved to authorize the posting of the part-time Health Agent position. Chair McCrohan seconded the motion. Motion approved.	**Jennifer Vincent moved; McCrohan seconded; approved**
	Board to consider and vote to accept the resignation of Matt Garuti from the position of Maintenance Custodian; review of matter; votes may be taken The Board accepted the resignation of Maintenance/Custodian Matt Garuti. Mr. Chabot thanked Mr. Garuti for his service to the Town, commenting that he would be missed and that he was "the one who makes Town Hall shine."	
	Board to consider and vote to authorize the posting of the Maintenance Custodian position; review of matter; votes may be taken The Board discussed posting the vacant Maintenance/Custodian position. Ms. Vincent moved to authorize the posting of the Maintenance/Custodian position. Chair McCrohan seconded the motion. **Motion approved.**	**Jennifer Vincent moved; McCrohan seconded; approved**
New Business:	**Board to discuss and potentially approve a resident request to install a decorative fork at a roadway intersection, discussion to include placement and timing.** *This item was taken out of order and heard first.* The Board discussed resident David Wilson's decorative art project to install a "fork in the road." The Board expressed its appreciation to Mr. Wilson for the project. Mr. Wilson explained that creating decorative pieces is a hobby of his and noted that he also enjoys making birdhouses. No formal motion was made; the item was informational only.	**Out of order (1): Information only; no votes taken**
	Board to consider Conservation Commission Chair David Patrick's proposal for the creation of a conservation area along the Taunton River and consider authorizing the submission of a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant application to effectuate the same; review of matter; votes may be taken The Board discussed Conservation Commission Chair David Patrick's proposal to create a conservation area along the Taunton River and apply for a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant. Matthew Chabot clarified that the requested action was authorization to submit the grant application, not approval of a land acquisition, which would traditionally require a Town Meeting vote. The proposal would seek grant funding to acquire land for conservation, supporting shoreline resilience and limiting further development along the river. Tabitha McCrohan moved to authorize Mr. Patrick to submit the proposal and complete the grant application; Jennifer Vincent seconded. The motion carried by unanimous aye vote.	**McCrohan moved; Jennifer Vincent seconded; approved**

Board to consider authorizing the Town Administrator to research and undertake the necessary steps to schedule and complete the required environmental review for the Community Project Funding sidewalk project, including obtaining access to and submitting required forms and documentation through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Environmental Review Online System, provided that no additional appropriation is required.

This item was taken out of order and heard second.

The Board discussed the Community Project Funding sidewalk project and the authorization necessary to proceed with the required environmental review.

Ms. Vincent stated that she was excited to see the project moving forward and addressed concerns and misinformation regarding earlier concepts for the sidewalk route. She explained that different alternatives had been considered during the planning process, including an earlier concept involving the cemetery, but stated that it was not the Board's intention to proceed through private property.

Resident Nancy Townley expressed concern that she had not been informed that earlier concepts contemplated use of or access through her property. She also raised concerns regarding traffic control, motor bikes, and previous issues with individuals going through her fence. Ms. Townley stated that she did not like matters involving her property being considered without her knowledge.
Ms. Vincent apologized to Ms. Townley for the lack of communication. Town Administrator Matthew Chabot also acknowledged and took responsibility for the communication issue.

Ms. McCrohan clarified that the pathway would not be going through Ms. Townley's property.

Mr. Chabot explained that TEC had been instructed to develop a concept utilizing Town-owned land only. He further explained that eminent domain was not an allowable expense under the federal funding and that any use of private property would therefore require a negotiated agreement with the affected property owner and subsequent approval at Town Meeting.

Ms. Townley also expressed concern regarding the potential removal of trees on the Common.

Motion: Ms. Vincent moved to authorize the Town Administrator to research and undertake the necessary steps to schedule and complete the required environmental review for the Community Project Funding sidewalk project, including obtaining access to and submitting required forms and documentation through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Environmental Review Online System.

Ms. McCrohan seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

Out of order (2): Jennifer Vincent moved; Tabitha McCrohan seconded Motion approved.

Board to discuss costs and budgetary impacts associated with responding to public records requests and consider future budgeting needs related to public records administration; review of matter; votes may be taken

The Board discussed the workload and budgetary impacts of responding to public records requests, noting that the Town had recently received a high volume of requests—at one point, more than 50—and that staff capacity is limited. Jennifer Vincent emphasized that communications concerning Town business may be public records and require review before release, while Tabitha McCrohan noted that the communication must relate to the Board's jurisdiction. Matthew Chabot cited estimated costs of at least $2,000 for formal training and approximately $40,000–

Information only; no votes taken

	$50,000 to digitize the Town's physical records. Members discussed planning for training, records-management resources, and possible future staffing or equipment needs during the budget process. They also encouraged requesters to describe the records they need as specifically as possible to make searches and responses more manageable.	
Meeting Minutes:	**Board to review and approve meeting minutes of September 2nd, 2026; review of matter; votes may be taken.** **Board to review and approve executive meeting minutes of September 2nd, 2026; review of matter; votes may be taken.**	**Jennifer Vincent moved; McCrohan seconded; Roll Call, JV aye, TM aye**
Town Administrator Report:	**Upcoming Event Planning/Project Scheduling** Town Administrator Matthew Chabot reported that the stormwater testing and reporting contract had been executed, with a kickoff meeting scheduled for that day. The Town intends to begin work promptly and complete its annual MS4 report by early spring, rather than June, coordinating with departments and increasing public outreach. He also reported that the secondary well project kickoff with Tighe & Bond was scheduled for the following day, with an on-site meeting to be arranged within the next month. Chabot noted that a summer concert on the common was scheduled for Thursday, where SRPEDD staff would discuss the economic development plan. With the Board's approval, the plan link could be posted on the Town website. Halloween activities were tentatively planned for Friday, October 30, pending the October 24 planning meeting; the event's hours and public announcements would be finalized afterward, and additional candy donations would be needed. The Town also planned a Veterans Day ceremony in coordination with the American Legion, with the date and time to be determined. A possible future rededication of the veterans' memorial at Locust Street and North Main Street, and ideas for the area near the flagpole, may be considered in connection with potential traffic changes. Finally, Chabot said the next Berkeley Buzz edition was expected in the third week of October, with department submissions due October 8. In response to a question about publication frequency, he described the Berkeley Buzz as a roundup of major news, while email newsletters could provide shorter, timely updates.	
Public Input:	None	
Executive Session:	Chair McCrohan moved to enter Executive Session at 10:42 AM. A roll call vote was taken: Jennifer Vincent – Aye Tabitha McCrohan Aye The Board returned to Open Session at 11:17 AM.	
Adjournment:	Meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM *Next Scheduled Meeting is Wednesday, September 30th, 2026 at 6:00PM.*	

Tabitha McCrohan, Chairwoman

Jennifer Vincent, Clerk

Matthew Chabot, Town Administrator