

The Meeting of the Board of Selectmen held on Tuesday, March 18, 2025, began at 5:30 p.m. in the Board of Selectmen's Conference Room at the Town Hall.

Members Present: Derek DeBarge, Manuel Silva, James Gennette, Antonio Goncalves and William Rosenblum

First Order of Business: The Pledge of Allegiance

VISITATIONS

Mr. Strange: For the public's knowledge, this evening is Mr. DeBarge's last meeting as a Selectman after 9 years. We're going to take a couple of minutes. Thank you Glenda, Justin & Brady for showing up. You have a beautiful family. Derek is quite a family man. I had my 3-year anniversary on Friday and a little more than 3 years ago I would tune into the meetings to do some prep work for my interview and I said who is this loudmouth with the tattoos and unapologetic opinions and I wondered what I was getting myself into; however, much to my surprise working with you has been a great pleasure. I'm not sure there's anyone in town who cares more about Ludlow and more importantly acts on that love by getting involved and making a difference with their time. Thank you for that and thank you for being a reliable and committed partner over the last 3 years. Never could I have imagined that someone with such strong opinions that I don't always agree with would turn out to be such a good friend. We're going to miss your leadership, omnipresence and loud opinions. With that, Tony has a citation for you.

Mr. Goncalves: We, the Board of Selectmen, are proud to present this Certificate of Recognition to Derek DeBarge. We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Derek DeBarge for your almost 10 years of service on the Board of Selectmen. During your time here, you have been instrumental in the construction of the new Harris Brook Middle School, the new Senior Center, the new Veteran's Center, and the Mills Project. Your efforts can also be commended for helping with the 250th Semi-Quincentennial Celebration Committee and Charter Committee and as a liaison to many groups and boards including Veteran's Services, Cultural Council, Council on Aging and Agricultural Council, just to name a few. We, the Board of Selectmen, present this Certificate of Recognition to you, Derek DeBarge, and extend our sincerest congratulations and best wishes for your future. We hope that you enjoy your time continuing to help and volunteer with the Town of Ludlow. Your dedication is very much appreciated.

5:35 p.m. – Verizon Pole Hearing – Guertin Avenue – PUBLIC HEARING

Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum to open the Verizon pole hearing for Guertin Avenue at 5:35 p.m. **Mr. Goncalves second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Mr. Vonner: I just came back from the site and took measurements. Everything looks exactly as you see here. The existing poles have been recently replaced so they're doing pole work on the street. The reason we've been given that the pole needs to be put in here is to upgrade services to strengthen existing pole. There is no way to put a guidewire on the backside of the existing pole that you see at the end at Arthur Street. The new pole and this pole will help with strengthening that line. There is a stake in place located on the property line near the mailboxes.

Mr. DeBarge: Is there anyone from Guertin Ave that has issues with this? No.

Mr. Gennette: Has anybody contacted #125?

Mr. Vonner: Everybody was notified.

Mr. Gennette: Are we going to clean this job up when it's done? Or is this going to be another pole we don't finish.

Mr. Vonner: This pole will not create a double pole.

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to approve the petition for a joint pole location Verizon job 1A7Z9TC Guertin Ave, pole T.9.5/E.1.M. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum to close the Verizon pole hearing for Guertin Avenue at 5:39 p.m. **Mr. Goncalves second.**

Mr. Gennette: What is happening with all the double poles on Hubbard Street? I know they're Eversource poles but they're waiting for Verizon lines to get moved.

Representative: They're Verizon poles. They're the pole setter. Verizon sets the poles, Eversource will start from the top and we'll transfer our primary and secondary then any communications like cable, then Verizon comes in and transfers their poles and they normally remove them.

Mr. Gennette: Eversource has zero responsibility on any of the poles I'm talking about?

Representative: No. We could be holding them up as well but normally that's how the transfer process goes.

Mr. Gennette: How do we remedy this? There's a big box and it looks like it's a Verizon piece of equipment on Sewall & Hubbard that is just hanging there by rope. These poles on Hubbard Street are standing in the street on blocks and I'm wondering when this is going to get repaired. They've been there all last summer and we're lucky we didn't have a plow hit them.

Mr. Vonner: I believe you've been in contact with Al Bessette and the answer is that he's escalated it. We've been talking with Eversource as well to make sure we speed it up. You've been heard and we know it can affect future pole settings and pole hearings. I don't know when it's going to happen because it takes everybody on the line.

Mr. Gennette: As soon as you hear a date or if there's anybody else that needs to be contacted to move their stuff, make sure they're contacted and please send information to the Town Administrator so we can know what's going on so we can tell the residents the front of their lawns aren't going to look the way they do for the next 5 years.

Mr. Vonner: I will pass that along.

All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Strange: This is a request for a transfer of ownership.

5:45 p.m. – New Class III Motor Vehicle License for T&J Auto Body – PUBLIC HEARING

Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum to open the new class III motor vehicle license for T&J Auto Body at 5:43 p.m. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Mr. Oquendo: My name is Matthew Oquendo, 250 Pine Street, Holyoke.

Mr. Terzi: My name is Rob Terzi. I live at 7 Guertin Avenue. This is transferring T&J from Robert Terzi to Matt Oquendo.

Mr. DeBarge: Let's start with the mailers. How many cars is this for?

Mr. Terzi: This is for 15 cars. I want it to look exactly like the old license.

Mr. Goncalves: Are you selling cars out of there too?

Mr. Terzi: We're not but it comes with a certain amount of things. We can have 3 cars on the lot that may be for sale for parts.

Mr. Goncalves: So, 15 is for cars for sale and to be fixed on.

Mr. Terzi: All of the above. It's been like this for 60 years. Nothing has changed.

Mr. Silva: I've known T&J from way back. It's always been relatively clean, not a junk yard. Because you do have residents there. We don't want to be calling you in here. Hopefully you're going to continue to keep it clean.

Mr. Oquendo: Of course.

Mr. DeBarge: I don't get a ton of calls about stuff like this but I do get calls about wanting to make sure that area remains clean and doesn't look like a junk yard.

Mr. Oquendo: I like to make it clean and comfortable for the customers.

Mr. Santos: My name is Simon Santos and I'm an abutter. I'm not here to object to the license; I'm here to object to the number of cars but the way the lot is maintained. I checked on class III

licenses in our area and most of them are limited to 5 cars. I go by and cars are out in the lot at night, no one is working out in the yard during the day and it's the complete opposite the way TJ's is operating today. It used to be an auto body of 4-5 cars and no damaged cars or wrecks were ever kept outside. There was a fenced in area where he kept is 3-4 cars. If there was some damage there were no parts or work done outside. It's completely changed. I see there was 16 cars in the permit.

Mr. Goncalves: 15.

Mr. Santos: 15. Wrecks to be outside only during emergencies, junk parts to be removed from premises as soon as possible and hours I find kind of strange: 5:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Some of my tenants have complained about working early. Saturday 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Those hours don't make sense to me. I have some pictures here that were taken last week. This is a car being worked on right next to the road. Two cars and a wreck with no windows. I don't call that neat. Some of them are hanging over my property. And these look like they're working on cars outside. All I'm asking is they comply with the license and the number of cars be reduced we're next to apartments. There's a school there and church and it doesn't fit in the neighborhood. If you limit it to 5 cars that would be perfect.

Mr. DeBarge: Is it your understanding that vehicles like this are ok under the license?

Mr. Terzi: In June of last year, the building inspector came out and cleared us. It was not the exact same vehicles but ones just like this were out front; and they're busy. The whole point to having a business is to be busy. Maybe busier than previous but there's buildings and auto body shops that are shutting down for a number of reasons, but we did get busy. Some of the cars that are out there they're damaged to the point where they have to get fixed before they can go inside. Some of these roll in and out every night.

Mr. Santos: I don't think 16 cars is the right size for that area and if there are cars damaged, according to the license they're not supposed to be out there at night.

Mr. Goncalves: Have you been to Planning?

Mr. Terzi: Yes. I have the approval from Planning as of June last year.

Mr. Santos: I went there and there's no site plan, no plot plan.

Mr. Oquendo: Sometimes there's extra cars but it's customers when they come in and they'll park in the driveway.

Mr. Santos: I don't want to belabor the point but those cars are never moved. If one is moved another one is put in there. That's 16 cars along that route. That's what the permit calls for but you also have to provide parking for your customers and employees.

Mr. Oquendo: Some of the vehicles that do sit there we're waiting for insurance to come in and they'll make us wait so we have to wait for them to come by.

Mr. Goncalves: This was the Building Department not Planning Board, right? When was the last time you were at the Planning Board?

Mr. Terzi: To do all this to have this meeting we were just there a month ago. We didn't have a hearing.

Mr. Silva: They approved the change?

Mr. Terzi: Yes. I spent 2 weeks coming back and forth to this building.

Mr. Santos: I was at the Planning Board and they told me the only thing they have there is something that was done years ago.

Mr. Terzi: They said something about grandfathered.

Mr. Goncalves: It can be grandfathered but the minute you touch something you have to come to today's standards.

Mr. Silva: Some of this does look pretty ugly and it's backing right up to Mr. Santos' property. Would you be opposed to be putting up a 6' fence.

Mr. Terzi: They actually suggested that. It was my fault for saying I don't think that's a good idea.

Mr. Santos: I'm saying go by the permit.

Mr. Goncalves: That permit is 15 cars all in. It says anything that is wrecked has to come in after closing.

Mr. Santos: I feel that 16 cars is too much but that's my feeling.

Mr. Goncalves: It's 15.

Mr. Silva: If they have the permit or the Planning Board's approval to have those, the only way to get the change is the Planning Board. We can't change that.

Mr. Santos: Does the change in ownership make a difference?

Mr. Goncalves: Yes and no. They still have to come forward and talk to everybody but it doesn't make a difference because the permit runs with the property.

Mr. Santos: All I can say is I showed you the pictures and what I've observed over the years, the changes I've observed.

Mr. Silva: Now that there is a change, maybe there will be a change and hopefully you'll be able to work together.

Mr. Santos: No. He's been there a few years. He's not taking over the business today. I approached him one time and he said I have a permit for 16 cars and I can do whatever I want.

Mr. Oquendo: I'm the new owner. I got it off of Robert. If there's any questions, comments or concerns you can speak to me.

Mr. Santos: I spoke to you once and that's the answer you gave me.

Mr. Oquendo: I've never spoken to you sir.

Mr. DeBarge: With all the information we have, your concern is definitely noted and Planning Board approved this. I have never seen a Board remove or change the number of cars on a license. The way that I see it, unless anybody has issue with it, is they understand your concern. They're talking about putting a fence in and they know the requirement is 15 cars. They know they have to move in cars that are wrecks. I'd like to know the definition of a wreck in this circumstance. If a bumper is gone waiting for the part to come in does that mean the cars has to be brought inside?

Mr. Santos: I think a wreck would be several of those cars I showed you.

Mr. DeBarge: I don't disagree with you. I think this is a good thing.

Mr. Oquendo: Those vehicles do go inside because they have no windows. For our customers' safety and ours we bring those inside. I have video footage.

Mr. Rosenblum: If you get it down to 15 cars and put the fence up and roll in what needs to be rolled in, it's that simple.

Mr. Santos: Who is the enforcing authority for this?

Mr. Goncalves: The Building Inspector.

Mr. Gennette: I agree with Mr. Santos. Nobody wants to look at wrecks, but Mr. Santos, he's willing to put in a fence to cover those and move everything in so it's not hindering the community.

Mr. Santos: All I can tell you is that those cars are not rolled in at night.

Mr. Gennette: He's making a concession to put in a fence to make sure they're not in the purview of what's going on.

Mr. Santos: There's nothing else I can do. You people have the authority.

Mr. Goncalves: Not unless there's a series of violations.

Mr. DeBarge: We can't change a license to just change a license.

Mr. Santos: I understand that. I don't understand how it got to 16 when it was 5 when it first started.

Mr. Goncalves: The hours are messed up. Your permit says you are open 5:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Mon-Fri and Saturday 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Oquendo: Those aren't the hours. My brother goes in early in the wintertime to turn on the heater at 7:00 a.m.

Mr. Goncalves: What time do you leave at night?

Mr. Oquendo: 5:00 - 6:00.

Mr. Santos: Everyone else ceases their operation at 5:00.

Mr. Goncalves: How about on a Saturday?

Mr. Oquendo: 9:00 – 3:00.

Mr. Santos: So, you're telling me you can change some things but you can't change other things on the permit.

Mr. Goncalves: That's a different type of license.

Mr. DeBarge: I understand your concern and we're trying to make sure this is amiable for both sides. We don't have the authority to reduce the amount of cars. We can tell them that if they're not in compliance you understand our Building Inspector will be over there and there will be write-ups and fines. That's what these meetings are for.

Mr. Strange: Do you have your current license? Are the hours of operation on the license.

Mr. Goncalves: I just told Marc, I'm not sure this is our jurisdiction. We can change the hours attached to the license but I don't think we have any governing power over that license, it's all Planning.

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to table making a decision on this and notify Planning that we would like clarification as to who's jurisdiction what is and exactly any notes from any hearings in the last 3-4 years be submitted to us for review. **Mr. Gennette second.**

Mr. Silva: We're tabling this for another meeting. Is that going to be an issue? If you can still operate and we wait a week before we make a decision and get it right.

All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.

5:55 p.m. – Proposed FY2025 CDBG Application – **PUBLIC HEARING**

Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum to open the proposed FY2025 CDBG application at 6:08 p.m. **Mr. Gennette second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Ms. Johnson: My name is Erica Johnson. I work for the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. I'm here to talk about the proposed FY25 community development block grant. With your permission, may I send around a sign-in sheet. This is a sign in sheet proving people were here and listened to me talk about the community development block grant application. Sarah and Marc have been working together to put together a block grant application. The Planning Commission has worked with the town the last 2 years. There is another one proposed for this year. This year's application, the proposal is doing the next phase of work in the Roberts Street area to include work on Roberts Street as well as an intersecting street, Chmura. Estimate is \$415,000 for 400 linear feet of roadway. Also proposed in the application is additional housing rehabilitation work and the fee for the Planning Commission to manage all of this on behalf of the town, which includes full-service management. We do everything but sign off on things that need to be signed off on. If you know someone on Roberts or Chmura Streets that received an income survey that has not returned it, there's still time. In order to do work on these streets we need to show that 51% of the residents on those streets are low or moderate income. We do that by sending out a survey and if we don't get them back we come door to door. The first stage has already been funded. It's in the process and we haven't gone out to bid for the first phase, which is doing work on Marie and Carol, waiting on working out some of the particulars with Springfield Water & Sewer. We hope to get that bid moving soon.

Mr. Gennette: What was the total funding for that last project?

Mr. Strange: 1.3.

Ms. Johnson: A couple cycles ago because things had gotten a little off kilter with Covid, they merged 2 funding years together, which was wonderful as we had access to a lot more money. This year the maximum amount we can apply for is \$850,000, which gets eaten up really fast. We'll still be able to do about 400 linear feet of work on Roberts and Chmura. That will include new water mains, new water connections, drainage work and street surface. We also have some ongoing work happening with housing rehab. We were delighted to be able to do housing rehabilitation work in town. We talked about it 2 years ago with Doug and we were happy with the interest we've had from residents. Sometimes we have a hard time filling those slots and we've had no problem in Ludlow. We currently have 12 houses on the waitlist so we're proposing some more money go toward it. In the grant that's in process now, the larger one from 22-23 we have 4 projects underway. We have 3 projects that have been bid, 2 projects with contracts, 1 under construction and we're delighted with the progress. This application will be 4 more units but we go as far as the money goes.

Mr. Strange: This is essentially an extension and continuation of the work that was done with the fiscal 23 grant.

Mr. Rosenblum: So, it's up to about 2.2 now.

Mr. Silva: This is great and none of us are opposed. What is our role or is it just informational?

Ms. Johnson: First and foremost, informational. We want to make you aware this is going on and that we're working with town departments and staff to move these things forward. There is a formal vote.

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves I authorize for the Chair of the Board of Selectmen to sign all required forms, documents and authorizations pertaining to the proposed FY25 Ludlow Community Development Fund grant application. Further, I hereby motion for authorization of the PVPC to submit the proposed fiscal year 25 community development fund grant application to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Communities not to exceed \$850,000 to include construction of the Robert Street neighborhood infrastructure improvement project and the housing rehabilitation assistance program. **Mr. Rosenblum second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum to close the public hearing on the proposed FY2025 CDBG application at 6:19 p.m. **Mr. Goncalves second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

6:20 p.m. – 250th Committee to dissolve committee & morph into Celebrate Ludlow Committee.

Mr. DeBarge: For the public, this discussion is for the culmination of the 250th ceremonies and because of the 250th ceremonies, fundraising and all of the fantastic events that we've done are at a close, the committee needs to be closed down; however, the cool part about this is Ludlow has the greatest volunteers in every corner of our town and Celebrate Ludlow has been around forever, with many volunteers coming in and out of that and what better way to honor Celebrate Ludlow Committee than to morph the 250th into that with their fundraising money and all of the things you do so well.

Ms. Collette: I wanted to say to the Ludlow Board of Selectmen, as the Chairwoman of the Ludlow 250th semi-quincentennial celebration committee over the last 3 years, I wanted to express my sincere thanks for your trust in me to lead this group of dedicated committee members. It has been an honor and privilege to do so. The 250th celebration committee and subcommittees are comprised of a fantastic group of individuals who have worked tirelessly and volunteered countless hours to create many wonderful events for our townspeople to enjoy and remember for years to come. We've enjoyed our time together. We've made some new friends and got reacquainted with old friends. We'd like to express our sincere gratitude to the Ludlow Police Department, Ludlow Fire Department and Department of Public Works for their assistance in helping us and keeping all of us safe at every one of our events and providing us with everything we needed. All 3 departments were incredibly helpful to us every step of the way. They often said to us anything you need just let us know and they came through for us each and every time with every detail taken care of. We are thankful to the town and Select Board for the financial contributions to our 250th committee as well as to the many wonderful sponsors who have generously donated to us. We've left our mark

in the community and are very proud of our accomplishments. We also created a beautiful book to document our town's history. Several of us on this committee and our dedicated, hard-working volunteers want to continue celebrating our great town with some of the most well received events that we've created for our town's 250th celebratory year, such as the Halloween and Christmas home decorating contest, the fun fall event in the park and an annual town tree lighting event for all to enjoy. These events will continue to bring our townspeople together and we would like to transition to the already established Celebrate Ludlow Committee and keep the momentum and community spirit alive and well. It's been our pleasure to have served on the Ludlow 250th Celebration Committee and I want to say thank you to our group. We've done a great job. I appreciate you all. I appreciate everybody coming to our events and to the Board for allowing us to do this.

Mr. Goncalves: It's been our pleasure to watch you guys.

Mr. Rosenblum: I remember talking to you in late 2020. God Bless you that you want to keep going. It's great to have people like you in the Town. I know that all of you have other capacities that you've donated your time to in town. You're a credit to the town and we really appreciate everything you did. Thank you.

Ms. Collette: We've been involved in 43 events.

Mr. Rosenblum: Everything was on point how it was organized.

Mr. Durand: We had 1,200 marchers, 16 musical units, 19 floats and it went pretty good. I'm proud of it. We had a great group of people that served on the parade sub committee and we were able to pull it off. I'm thankful to all of them for their dedication to the parade because it wasn't only me, it was all of us and they did a great job.

Ms. Ouimette: All were part of the picnic and everything had to be in order. We had a schedule we had to keep to. It was a matter of syncing everything up and everything moved along.

Ms. Collette: That's the reason for our 3-hour meetings.

Mr. Rosenblum: This is what community is. The many times we've seen you it ran like clockwork in our view. I'm sure behind the scenes it wasn't perfect but this is what community is. It makes me proud to see the work that you did for 20,000+ people.

Mr. DeBarge: The day of the parade and picnic I was around most of the day and I went down to the gazebo area and the morning after. The organization before, during and after; Pete Ostrowski, Bob Costa and the sub committee members, who a lot of times are the unsung heroes because we honor the original committee members but so many subcommittees were needed to make sure every little detail was done. It was a pleasure to see all of that. The morning after, the clean up crews, the Sheriff's office and by noon that day it was like nothing happened and it was amazing. The way you documented it, Cristina and David with the drone and the book is amazing. I wish we could do more than hand you citations but we are eternally grateful for your hard work and especially for the time put in. We have citations for you as a 250th committee as a whole and individual citations as well.

Mr. Gennette: I think you've said it all. I mentioned to Bruce how much I loved the parade. That was the highlight for me and that entire day was a wonderful culmination.

Mr. DeBarge: The first citation we have is for the entire committee. The individual citations is the same write up but we wanted to make sure each and every one of you had one for your own homes.

Mr. Rosenblum: We, the Board of Selectmen, are proud to present this Certificate of Recognition to 250th Semi-Quincentennial Celebration Committee. On behalf of the Ludlow Board of Selectmen and our entire community, we extend our heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to the members of the Ludlow 250th Celebration Committee for their exceptional hard work, dedication, and remarkable work ethic. Your tireless efforts in planning, organizing, and executing all fundraising initiatives, for the last 4 plus years, have played a pivotal role in the unforgettable celebration of our town's anniversary. Through your commitment to fostering community spirit and your innovative approach to fundraising, you have not only raised vital resources but have also brought our residents together in celebration of our shared history and amazing achievements. Your dedication exemplifies the very best of our community values.

We thank you for your outstanding contributions, which have greatly enriched the lives of our community and ensured that our anniversary dedication will never be forgotten. Derek DeBarge, Chairman, Manuel Silva, Antonio Goncalves, James Gennette and William Rosenblum.

Mr. DeBarge: I have 2 separate ones and I'm going to read these. We, the Board of Selectmen, are proud to present this Certificate of Recognition to Bruce Durand. The Ludlow Board of Selectmen are happy to award this commendation to Bruce Durand for your exceptional efforts and pin-point attention to detail, as Parade Committee Chairman, while organizing what was undoubtedly the greatest parade in Ludlow's history. The dedication and commitment you have shown throughout this enormous project have not gone unnoticed by anyone. The countless hours of preparation, numerous phone calls and the meticulous organizing have all contributed to making our celebration a resounding success. Your leadership and self-sacrifice have inspired us all. All the time and effort you put in while fighting your own battle is truly something that can't be put into words. The 250th parade was a remarkable showcase of our town's rich history and vibrant community spirit. From all the breathtaking floats to the marching bands, from our participating businesses to all enthusiastic participants, every detail reflected the hard work and creative vision of your entire team. The parade and celebration brought families together, creating lasting memories for all. Thank you, and your entire committee, for your unwavering dedication and tireless efforts in making this event a reality and knocking it out of the park! You have all set a high standard for future parades and celebrations. We look forward to seeing how you will continue to inspire our community in the years to come. And last but definitely not least. This is the culmination of a phone call I got from Linda 4 ½ years ago inviting me to her house to discuss something that was on her mind, which was the 250th celebration. When I left I told my wife I'd be back in 45 minutes. After about 3 ½ hours later I got back with this headache of ideas. Nobody else could have done this other than you. We, the Board of Selectmen, are proud to present this Certificate of Recognition to Linda Collette, Chairwoman. The Ludlow Board of Selectmen would like to formally commend you for your extraordinary dedication and unwavering commitment as Chairwoman of the Ludlow Semi-Quincentennial 250th Celebration Committee. Your relentless passion for our community along with your exceptional work ethic has significantly contributed to the success of the monumental task needed to create an entire year of celebration. Over the years, I have witnessed your tireless efforts to bring our community together in celebration, fostering the spirit of unity and pride as we celebrate our rich history. Your ability to inspire and motivate others has been truly remarkable. Whether coordinating events, rallying volunteers, or connecting with our local businesses, you consistently go above and beyond to ensure that every detail is meticulously planned and executed. Your vision for our 250th celebration has not only highlighted the vibrant culture of Ludlow but has also strengthened the bonds among residents. With such a large committee, along with multiple sub-committees, your leadership will leave a legacy for future generations. Thank you for your dedication to Ludlow and for inspiring me and inspiring all of us to work together for a greater future. I would also be remised if I didn't mention the unsung MVP within our committees, and that is your husband, Kevin. Such an amazing man, who's tireless work in supporting you and our community has not gone unnoticed. Laurie, are you still the Chair of Celebrate Ludlow?

Ms. Smith: I think so.

Mr. DeBarge: As far as checks and balances go, we assume this is an easy transition from dissolve 250th and transfer of whatever is in their accounts over to Celebrate Ludlow.

Ms. Collette: We'd like a few weeks or months to make sure all of our bills are paid through the 250th.

Mr. DeBarge: How should we do it?

Mr. Strange: I don't think one depends on the other. You can dissolve the committee tonight and we can still pay the bills.

Ms. Collette: I think we would like to come back to do that official.

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to officially dissolve the 250th semi-quincentennial committee effective today. Mr. Rosenblum second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Sady: I'd like to say thank you to the DPW. They were unsung heroes. We had the tree fall and anything I needed they were there. Dealing with Mr. Strange was a pleasure.

Ms. Collette: Like Dave said, the night before was the tree coming down and when I got to that park at 6:30 a.m., there was not a wood chip to be seen. All the things Kathy and I worked on with the LPD, LFD and DPW, Jamie, Kenny, Tim, all of them. Anything you need.

Mr. Durand: The police department did a great job keeping our marchers safe on the parade route. That was a very big worry of mine. The police department and Chief Valadas did a great job. I'm very thankful to them and the fire department and DPW.

Mr. DeBarge: They made it look easy.

Ms. Hodgman: I'd like to thank our officers. Kathy is our co-chair of the committee, Tony was our secretary and he put up with me, and Regina is our treasurer. She kept our finances up to speed.

Ms. Ouimette: We have to thank the Board and Marc and Sharon and Amy in the Selectmen's office.

Ms. Collette: The clerk's office.

Mr. Gennette: That's a culmination of the community on all levels.

CORRESPONDENCE

44. Chief Valadas – Request for new civil service list for one (1) patrolman position.

Mr. DeBarge: This is from a candidate that had resigned from the academy. The position was offered to the alternate and they had already gotten a job at another PD so we need to call for this position.

Motion made by Mr. Gennette to approve Chief Valadas' request for a new civil service list for one (1) patrolman position. **Mr. Rosenblum second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

45. Betsy Marble, First Church in Ludlow – Request permission to use the small parking lot adjacent to the Old Meeting House (Grange) on Saturday, August 16 (rain date Sunday, August 17) for a vendor craft fair.

Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum to approve the request to use the small parking lot adjacent to the Old Meeting House (Grange) on Saturday, August 16 (rain date Sunday, August 17) for a vendor craft fair. **Mr. Gennette second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

46. Linda Collette, 250th Committee – Request to waive 10% administrative fees for Police & Fire Department payments for the "Last Night" event on February 22, 2025.

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to approve the waiving of the 10% administrative fees for Police & Fire Department payments for the "Last Night" event on February 22, 2025. **Mr. Silva second.**

Mr. Silva: Do we have an amount?

Mr. Goncalves: It's a Ludlow non-profit so it's capped at \$1,000.

All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.

47. Office of the Governor of Massachusetts – Letter certifying that contingent upon legislative approval of the \$1.5 billion multi-year bond authorization, Ludlow's Chapter 90 apportionment for Fiscal Year 2026 is \$1,093,910.39.

Mr. DeBarge: Is that up from last year?

Mr. Strange: Our regular apportionment was \$650 and we did get an additional supplemental that's derivative of the fair share agreement, which is the millionaire's tax.

Mr. Silva: Just for an explanation, this is not \$400,000 we can use elsewhere. This is strictly Chapter 90 to use on repairs for roads.

Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum that contingent upon legislative approval of the \$1.5 billion multi-year bond authorization that the Town of Ludlow accept the Chapter 90 apportionment for Fiscal Year 2026 in the amount of \$1,093,910.39. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

48. Chief Valadas – Request to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for injuries sustained by four (4) police officers as a result of an incident that occurred on February 22, 2025.

Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum to approve the request to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for injuries sustained by four (4) police officers as a result of an incident that occurred on February 22, 2025. **Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

49. Chief Pease – Request to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for injuries sustained by a Lieutenant as a result of an incident that occurred on March 8, 2025.

Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum to approve the request to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for injuries sustained by a Lieutenant as a result of an incident that occurred on March 8, 2025. **Mr. Gennette second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

50. Chief Pease – Request to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for injuries sustained by a Firefighter/Paramedic as a result of an incident that occurred on March 6, 2025.

Motion made by Mr. Rosenblum to approve the request to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for injuries sustained by a Firefighter/Paramedic as a result of an incident that occurred on March 6, 2025. **Mr. Goncalves second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Board to sign the one-day permit for St. Elizabeth Parish for March 29, 2025, from 5:00 – 9:00 p.m. and waive the fee. (previously approved 3/4/2025)

Motion made by Mr. Gennette to sign the one-day permit for St. Elizabeth Parish for March 29, 2025, from 5:00 – 9:00 p.m. and waive the fee. **Mr. Goncalves second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Jai Umiya Ma, Inc. – Surrender of beer & wine off premise alcohol license contingent on issuance of all-alcohol to the same location – Ludlow Shell, 224 Center Street. (tabled from 3/4/2025)

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to accept the beer & wine license back to the Town of Ludlow for 224 Center Street location. **Mr. Rosenblum second.**

Mr. Gennette: Was there anything left over from this? We tabled this for a reason.

Mr. Strange: You wanted to see verification that the old license has been returned.

All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.

Board to discuss and possibly approve the Project Manager description. (tabled from 3/4/2025)

Mr. Strange: We're currently without a Chief Procurement Officer. We've done a couple of solicitations and each time we've only been able to secure 1 applicant. Both times they were qualified in terms of the specifics so we hired them. We're currently between procurement officers and the market for procurement officers is sparse. The thought behind the project manager position was instead of refilling or backfilling a procurement officer out of the gate that we create this

project manager position who would manage contracts, grants and projects. I am a certified procurement officer so I can handle front end procurement things. The bulk of that job is follow up. Essentially this project manager description would be replacing the procurement officer.

Mr. Gennette: Is the salary the same?

Mr. Strange: I suspect that whoever takes this position will be coming in at a lower salary but the range is similar.

Mr. Gennette: You're expecting to get a better result?

Mr. Strange: With a project manager we can expand our pool and hire a good person. We're looking for work ethics, integrity, somebody who is going to come and want to learn. Intellectual curiosity. I feel like as long as we don't limit the pool to being an MCPPO we can expand our pool of candidates.

Mr. Silva: Are they going to do anything to help out with the Planning Board?

Mr. Strange: Yes, Doug was the primary contact for the grants. In the interim this position would also manage grants. As Erica from PVPC said, it's a lot of processing invoices and being the point of contact for the town. If and when the town is able to replace the Planning Director position if that person wants to take on the grant management they're certainly welcome to take it back.

Mr. Gennette: What's the chances of using the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission more instead of hiring this position? Do you feel there's enough work in this position for a program manager to fill?

Mr. Strange: They don't do this kind of work. PVPC is going to be filling in temporarily as a Planning Director Assistant for municipalities so there will be a planner from PVPC who takes on the day-to-day Planning role. I don't think they would do this kind of work.

Mr. Rosenblum: Working with procurement myself and understanding a lot of projects generally have engineers that might be running this, and in a lot of instances they help write the scope of services that go with these, I'm not ready to move on this. I'm not satisfied with it at this point. I wouldn't be in favor of doing this right now.

Mr. Strange: In the alternative, we can advertise for another CPO. The salary will be higher and I'm not sure about the candidate pool and in the interim I'm doing the work. I have a lot of other hats that I wear. I'm happy to do it but it doesn't mean that balls aren't getting dropped.

Mr. DeBarge: I like this position over a Chief Procurement Officer. I've been poisoned on that Chief Procurement Officer after what happened with this last integrity debacle with the person that was here. This encapsulates more of just pigeonholing a Chief Procurement Officer. This provides the town with more necessity of the things we do, if you read the entire description of it.

Mr. Silva: It wasn't just this person, I think previously we had somebody short term and that didn't work either.

Mr. DeBarge: How many municipalities have procurement officers vacant with requesting positions?

Mr. Rosenblum: The understanding is with this position here, if we do hire a Chief Procurement Officer, this person almost stays in a project manager position but still works between all the other departments. This position isn't to replace Planning.

Mr. Strange: If the project manager was approved, we would not hire a procurement officer. It's a way to expand the pool of candidates and get somebody in the position who may want to become a certified procurement officer and take it over organically.

Motion made by Mr. Gennette to approve the classification for a project manager. Mr. Silva second.

Mr. Silva: Certainly, we can move forward with this and get candidates in and see what's out there. We don't have to move on it right away.

Mr. Rosenblum: It depends on the pool. It doesn't mean this is going to be set in stone.

Mr. Strange: If we get one candidate, I'll take that hit. I'll keep doing what needs to get done. I just want to get the right person in here.

All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.

Motion made by Mr. Gennette to remove the Procurement Officer position.

Mr. Strange: Are you asking to remove it from the classification plan? If doing so we would then have to come back and ask for the Board to put it back in. We can just un-fund it. We do have line items and positions that are not funded that are still on the classification plan.

Motion made by Mr. Gennette to un-fund. Mr. Gennette second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Board to review and sign the contract between Access Care Partners for its portion of the non-federal match required of the Area Agency on Aging in the amount of \$3,626.06.

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to approve and sign the contract with Access Care Partners, formerly known as Western Mass Eldercare Inc. request of the Town of Ludlow's \$3,626.06 as its portion of the non-federal match required of the Area Agency on Aging under the terms of title IIIA of the Older Americans Act. Mr. Silva second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.

Board to sign the union contract for the DPW.

Board to discuss possible regulations for sales call solicitations.

Mr. DeBarge: As an office we've gotten complaints of solicitors going door to door with a question of would the Board wish to do anything about that, whether it be ban it completely, restrict its hours or whatever so it's up for discussion.

Mr. Gennette: I'm all for this door-to-door solicitation ban. I would like to add panhandling to it.

Mr. Rosenblum: I'm not sure I would ban it, but I would limit the hours. They would also have to register with the police department. It's business. There are some young individuals that this is their summer income. In the same sense, I've been approached a million times about solar on my house and I politely say I've already had the discussion. I would be more in line with a certain amount of hours 9-5 Monday – Friday. I know some communities ban it.

Mr. DeBarge: What about Longmeadow?

Mr. Strange: I'm not sure. We do get solicitors. I can look into it.

Mr. Rosenblum: Let's see some other policies and see what other communities are doing. In the mail that I received is that in some instances they've been banned. It is people trying to make a living.

Mr. Silva: I would like to see if we could have them be a little more respectful.

Mr. Gennette: How do you restrict that?

Mr. DeBarge: You can enforce that. You restrict the business. If we have incidents where they're hammering the door and that resident calls us then you ban that business or restrict them or put them on probation.

Mr. Rosenblum: It could be written in any kind of guidelines that they have to go to the police to register that they're here and they sign something saying please be aware that when the customer says no the customer means no. The citizen has a right to report you if they feel you're not adhering to the rules set by the town.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Mr. Gennette: This being your last meeting I'd have to say the one compliment that would most impress me if somebody gave it to me was that I acted on behalf of my supporters to the best of my ability and I think you've done that through and through. At nauseum you fought for them and it's to be commended. I think we've had some disagreements and debates and I think they were healthy but I appreciated the time you were on the board.

Mr. Silva: I agree with everything James said. I want to thank you. What you've done is incredible. I think you were poorly portrayed in public. You've done so much for this community and you're going to be sorely missed.

Mr. Rosenblum: I came on 6 years ago and we ran against each other my first time. When you sit on a board like this and you find out what can and can't be done and you realize the guidelines you need to follow and that everything isn't what it seems, then you have the dialogue. There was one time when we sat in the Charter Committee that I actually changed your mind. The amount of work that you do every day it's somewhere, something. You've given more than anyone I can possibly imagine has given to the town. I appreciate it. We communicate well. I congratulate you on 9 hard years. We all know there's no way you're going to go off quietly. Thank you for your service to the Town of Ludlow.

Mr. Goncalves: I'd like to pass our heartfelt condolences to Sharon LaDuke and her family. Her husband passed away this week. Jeremy was well known in town. For Mr. DeBarge, there's a big segment of the population that don't want to believe that we do much more than 2-3 hours twice a month. They forget about the 14 subcommittees everybody serves on. Mr. DeBarge was here during Covid. He was in town hall every day. He took the bull by the horns to make sure we were ok as a town. At the Vet Center, the amount of time and effort he's put into that. We have a fantastic Vet Center and nobody in the area has anything that resembles that. Hopefully you're going to hang around a couple of years before you move to get involved with some other stuff. We'll miss you.

Mr. Silva: I want to remind everybody that Monday is voting and I want to wish Mr. Rosenblum good luck.

Mr. DeBarge: Sharon, you have my love and sympathy for your loss of Jeremy. He was a great guy. I appreciate what everybody said in opening ceremonies. Because of how much I admire this community, and I had no intention of staying here. When I moved here out of the Marines, my intention was to go to the police academy and move to Arizona because I didn't want to stay in Massachusetts. When I tell people why I stayed it was because of the community. Ludlow has this way of grabbing you. I could go on about culture and everything else, but it's the people and relationships that have been more important to me than anything else. I know how I got here. I'd like to say some of the work I did kept me here but I got here with people in this community that I got to know that became family. Michelle is here and she's one of them. Her entire family has been great to me. Mary Evangelista. I met Mary as a cop when I would get called to her house for medicals for her sister. Mary lived for her sister, who was bedridden. She did not deviate from taking care of her sister at any moment until her passing. Her love kept her sister alive a lot longer than what was expected. Mary became my family's family and she helped me out immensely. Gloria Faria was probably one of my biggest mentors and gave me quite a bit of good advice when I was thinking about running. Throughout my career I'm able to call these people and run things by them because you have to make it a community. Michelle brings a great aspect into it from her background and Gloria in banking. The friendships have been nothing but incredible. I got here because of those people and I'd like to say some of the work kept me here. Thank you to all of you. Jim McGowan, Tom Petrolati, Tommy Foye is another one I rely on for a lot of things. Manny Vital is a close friend of mine. Town employees, thanks for everything. I think all of you are fantastic. Municipal work is tough. Whatever your population is, you can have a good portion of that come down on you at any time and it's difficult. I give you all credit. We have fantastic services in this town. A lot of the forums, because of their administrator, are mostly negative but

you have to understand something. Ludlow has services that no other community has. We have trash, a senior center, a veteran's center, a brand-new high school track & field, a boys and girls club. This town is a one-stop shop for anything you want to do with your friends and family. In order to keep that running, you need a budget that you have to be very concise about because that budget is held by 2 ½. It's a fantastic town because of its people and services. We have a mills project that is going to provide a lot more new money infused into this community. I am proud of all of that. I am proud to be a part of everything I have been a part of, most in particular the vets center. We serve people we should be serving because without veterans and their sacrifice none of us would be doing any of this here. To the board I'd like to say we have been a good example of a group of 5 from different dynamics, different beliefs, different likes and dislikes that have argued on camera and harshly off camera and walk out of the building. I can call each and every one of you my friends. That's what brings the town closer, when they see us trying to govern over this and still be able to get along and not have a lot of the drama that you see in other places much things up. I hope you have the strength to make decisions needed to move this town forward because some of those decisions are going to be tough. There's one undeniable truth about me here. There is no selectman past, present or future that has ever had more fun than me. If you're not having fun doing this you're not going to survive. If you can't laugh it off and keep your focus on the prosperity of Ludlow it will eat you up. My wife doesn't watch these meetings. I don't talk to her too much about all of this because she hears the noise on social media and that's the part you wish you could take away. She's put up with this for 9 years. My sons have put up with this for 9 years. It's time for me to stop aside so I can give them a little bit of rest and have a little more fun. Thank you for everything. I have had the best time representing this town. I've been a public servant since 2000 on the police and here and nothing has been more fun than being that. Evan, you rock, thank you for everything. I love watching your smiles at comments. Your crew at LCTV is the best. I wish I could name every single one. We have the best department heads in Jodi, Eric, BJ, Joe, Jamie at the DPW. We have great people and I wish you all the best.

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to adjourn at 7:26 p.m. Mr. Rosenblum second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.


Chairperson

