

**SELECT BOARD  
TOWN OF LEXINGTON**



**REPORT TO THE  
2020-2 SPECIAL TOWN MEETING  
November 2020**

**Select Board:**

**Douglas M. Lucente, Chair, Jill I. Hai, Vice-Chair,  
Joseph N. Pato, Suzanne E. Barry, Mark D. Sandeen  
Kim Katzenback, Executive Clerk**

November 2020

The Select Board has prepared this written report to Special Town Meeting 2020-2 under Article 1. This report contains an update to Town Meeting on the status of Article 14-Appropriate for Police Station Rebuild-Design that was adopted by Town Meeting at Annual Town Meeting 2018, Article 16a-Police Outdoor/Indoor Firing Range-Hartwell Ave that was indefinitely postponed by Town Meeting at Annual Town Meeting 2020 this past June, and the Town's Social Racial Equity Initiatives.

**Article 14 ATM 2018 - Appropriate for Police Station Rebuild-Design**

At ATM 2018 Town Meeting approved an appropriation of \$1,862,622 for design, engineering and architectural services for the reconstruction and expansion of the Police Station. Since that time the project design firm, Tecton Architects, completed the Police Station Schematic Design (SD) in consultation with the Department of Public Facilities staff, the Police Department staff, and the following boards and committees: Permanent Building Committee, Historic District Commission, Design Advisory Committee, Sustainable Lexington Committee, and Select Board. The SD phase is now complete, and the hazardous materials investigations have started. To date, the total amount spent on the police station design is approximately \$531,000.

In October a majority of the Select Board supported delaying further funding and pausing any further design work (Design Development (DD) and Construction Development (CD) phases) on the police station project until a point in time that the community could participate in comprehensive conversations about the future of policing and its relationship to this facility. While all the members of the Select Board believe that the police station building needs to be replaced, the recent and ongoing atrocities around the country against people of color, particularly those in the Black community have prompted the Select Board and the Town as a whole to seek ways to engage the larger Lexington community in these comprehensive conversations. The work involved to have meaningful conversations must be done over the course of several months.

The Select Board wants to ensure that transparent information is provided to the community about the current type and level of police services that the Town provides, the expected type and level of police services in the future, the staffing for those services, and the training requirements for our public safety staff. Further, the Select Board is committed to allowing ample opportunities for residents to ask questions about policing and for the Town to provide comprehensive responses.

Additionally, a majority of the Select Board expressed concern over the current state of the pandemic and the uncertainty about the economic outlook over the next year. A successful debt exclusion override, on an important building project of this scale, must have the support of the larger community.

Based on these decisions, the police station project will not be coming to Town Meeting for funding at ATM 2021, since we will not have sufficient design and cost estimates to move the project forward.

### **Article 16a ATM 2020 - Police Outdoor/Indoor Firing Range-Hartwell Ave**

At ATM in June of 2020 Town Meeting initially supported an appropriation of \$125,000 for the schematic design for an Outdoor/Indoor Firing Range on Hartwell Ave. The spending of this appropriation was subject to and contingent upon the receipt of either a Criminal Justice Training Council grant or other grant and the development of a business plan that was acceptable to the Select Board. In the context of a national reckoning with racial injustice in policing, the Select Board subsequently asked Town Meeting to reconsider that appropriation and committed to delay further funding of this project until we could hold community conversations on policing in Lexington, and begin the examination of public safety policies, procedures and practices.

No further action has been taken on the Police Outdoor/Indoor Firing Range project pending the community discussions.

### **Social Racial Equity Initiatives**

Since Annual Town Meeting 2020 in June, the Select Board has taken on the following actions to promote civil discourse and begin the meaningful work to examine our policies, procedures and practices as they relate to municipal operations:

- Agreed to begin a comprehensive examination of racial equity and social justice status and opportunities.
- Joined both the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) and the National League of Cities (NLC)'s in order to take advantage of their collective Racial Equity resources.
- Applied for the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) Racial Equity Municipal Action Plan (REMAP) Program grant.
- Added a standing Racial and Social Equity update item to every regular meeting agenda.
- Held a panel discussion on policing, moderated by a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion consultant from Equity and Expectations in September. The virtual event was attended by over 200 residents and was broadcast live on LexMedia. There were over 80 questions received and answered on the topic. The questions and answers will be published on the Town website.
- Authorized the Town Manager to sign a long-term contract with All Aces, Inc., in October, after reviewing several options. All Aces will serve as our Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity Transformation (DIET) partner. They will be working with the Town to conduct a comprehensive assessment, plan strategic workshops, provide training and evaluate the results.

In addition, in October the Town Manager engaged the services of Town Counsel to begin the work of reviewing all Town policies. The starting point of this work will be a review of the Police Department policies to ensure there is no potential bias or discriminatory language reflected therein and to recommend any changes as necessary.

The Police Department has also prepared a series of videos on the current police services offered to residents. The series of videos will be published on the Town website.

The Town remains committed to doing everything we can to make Lexington a more welcoming, inclusive, and safe community for all.

Should you have any questions or comments regarding this report, the Board encourages you to get in touch with any member of the Select Board via email: [selectboard@lexingtonma.gov](mailto:selectboard@lexingtonma.gov) or by calling the Select Board Office (781-698-4580) to schedule a meeting with any of the members of the Select Board.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Lexington Select Board**

*Douglas M. Lucente, Chair*

*Jill I. Hai, Vice-Chair*

*Joseph N. Pato*

*Suzanne E. Barry*

*Mark D. Sandeen*