

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES  
BLACKSTONE MUNICIPAL CENTER  
15 ST. PAUL STREET  
JOHN ELDRIDGE MEETING ROOM**

Town Clerk  
Town of Blackstone

**JANUARY 20, 2026 (5:00 PM)**

FEB 25 REC'D

Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
RECEIVED

**1. Pledge of Allegiance & Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM by Vice Chairman Sweeney. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the Board members and meeting attendees.

**2. Roll Call - Attendance**

Present were Chairman Daniel Keefe and Vice Chairman Sweeney. Absent were Selectwoman Mary Bulso, Selectman Edward Castonguay, and Selectman Gino Olaes. Also present were Town Administrator Chad Lovett, Parks and Recreation Chairwoman Celeste Langlois, and residents Robert Gilbert and Chie Ferreli. Jacki Diogo, Bunny Roy, and Joyce St. Jean attended virtually. There was a Zoom link option for anyone interested in attending virtually.

**3. Old Business**

• **a) Discussion on the Semi-Quincentennial Celebration**

Event Dates & Facilities

The Semiquincentennial Celebration is scheduled for July 24 - 26, 2026. Carnival dates are July 23 - 26 (set-up begins July 22). Facilities request submitted to the school district for access to full school grounds, parking areas, cafeteria, auditorium and restrooms. Event hours requested are Weekdays: 4:00 PM - Midnight and Saturday - Sunday: 9:00 AM - Midnight. Drop-off of carnival equipment may begin July 20 - 21.

Site Planning & Logistics

Port-a-potties to be stationed in multiple areas including beer garden and carnival grounds. Discussion on using school restrooms vs. portable options, especially to accommodate seniors and families. Planning to utilize the school courtyard, tennis courts, and front parking lots for beer garden, vendors, food trucks, music/entertainment stages.

Security & EMS

A future warrant article may be needed to fund police and EMS presence during the event. The Board supports a strong safety presence due to event size and season.

Fireworks & Sponsorship

Fireworks tentatively scheduled for Saturday night, July 25. \$15,000 donation confirmed from Wayne Kimball (Kimball Sand & Gravel). Outreach underway to Unibank and local dispensaries for additional sponsorship. The Board is aiming for a \$40,000 total sponsorship goal.

Transportation & Accessibility

The Board discussed using senior vans for shuttle/tour routes. On/Off Van Subcommittee may handle tour logistics to historic sites.

Promotion & Advertising

“Save the Date” flyers and volunteer recruitment posters have been made by Ms. Ferrelli. They plan to distribute flyers through schools, local businesses, parks and Post online via Town Facebook page and website. They will also advertise in The Enlightener and via lawn signs (starting in April). Volunteer QR codes on the flyers will link to sign-up forms.

- **b) Finalize Rules for the “Capture Our Town Through Art” Contest**

Ms. Langlois presented the rules for the art contest. The Board reviewed and finalized the following contest rules:

Categories & Age Groups

Two divisions: adults and youth

Four categories: painting, drawing, photography, and People’s Choice

Submission Guidelines

Accepted Mediums: original artwork only; no AI, no digital alteration, no reproductions.

Creation Window: Entries must be created between February 1 and June 30, 2026.

Size Requirements:

- Artwork: 8x11 to 16x20 inches (framed or mounted)
- Photography: 8x10 to 11x14 inches (framed or mounted)
- Drop-off Dates: June 29 - 30
- Pick-up Dates: July 28 - 30

Entries not retrieved will become property of the Town of Blackstone

Judging & Prizes

Total prize pool: \$3,560 (reduced prizes for photography category due to lower complexity; People’s Choice award included)

Judging panels to be split between art and photography Proposed judges include teachers from Nipmuc, BVT, and BMR. Julie Picard nominated. Paul Robinson and Rick Daugherty also suggested. Ms. Langlois, Ms. Ferrelli, and others will reach out to potential judges

Display of Artwork

Entries will be displayed at Blackstone Public Library from July 1 - 17. Winning entries will be moved and displayed during the main event weekend.

Liability Waiver

Legal counsel will draft a waiver form for participants entering private property (e.g. Daniel’s Farmstead, Christ Community Church). Contestants must agree not to hold property owners or the Town of Blackstone liable for injuries incurred while producing artwork.

- Motion: Vice Chairman Sweeney made a motion to approve the contest rules; seconded by Robert Gilbert. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

- **c) Come with Ideas for the Contest Judges**

The Board brainstormed potential judges. There was consensus to include educators from BMR, BVT, and Nipmuc art departments. It was suggested to have separate panels for art and photography. Nominations included: Julie Picard, Paul Robinson, Rick Daugherty, and Bob Gilbert (photography). Mr. Lovett recused himself from judging, and expressed interest in submitting. The final judging panel will be confirmed at next meeting (Feb 10)

- **d) Choose What Subcommittees are Necessary for the Event**

A full subcommittee list and assignments will be confirmed at the next meeting. Current proposals:

- Food Trucks, Vendors, Music: likely to consolidate into one planning team
- Site Logistics & Security: coordinates layout, signage, sanitation, fencing
- Opening Ceremony: led by Selectman Castonguay and includes flag raising, dedications, flyover
- Cooling Center: Use of school indoor space as cooling area
- Art Contest: Already managed by Ms. Langlois and Ms. Ferrelli
- On/Off Van Tour: Coordinated by Selectwoman Bulso
- 5K Coordination: BMR Track Team has confirmed to help
- Video Project (Town Voices): This subcommittee would be working with Bill May for display during event

Other possible subcommittees (to be decided):

- Fireworks & Donations
- Volunteers & Staffing
- Sponsorship Outreach
- Youth Engagement

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 10, 2025 at 5:00 PM with both in-person and virtual attendance options.

#### 4. Adjournment

- Motion: Celeste Langlois made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:13 PM; seconded by Michael Sweeney. Vote unanimous; motion passed.

Time: 6:13 PM

**Next Meeting:** February 10, 2026

**Meeting Minutes Respectfully Submitted By:** Sara Peters