

**BILLERICA SELECT BOARD AGENDA
JANUARY 5, 2026 @ 6:00 PM
THOMAS CONWAY HEARING ROOM #205 AND HYBRID VIA ZOOM**

Select Board: Chair; Jillian Pavidis, Vice Chair; John Burrows, Michael Rosa, Dina Favreau

Remote: Secretary Daniel Darris-O’Conner

Staff: Chris Dillon; Town Manager, Ann Marie Casey; Assistant Town Manager. Dawn McDowell; Director of Administrator Services, Kerri Rufo; Select Board Executive Assistant, Hemali Shah; COA Director, David Lamore; Health & Wellness Director

Attendees: Vaz Eng, National Grid, Attorney Dana Myers, Kell Sardina, Grace Tucci, Diana Saunders, Beth Samansky

Call to order 6:00 PM

Chair Pavidis called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and did a roll call vote

Darris-O’Conner	Remote
Favreau	Present
Vice Chair Burrows	Present
Rosa	Present
Pavidis	Present

Public Comments

Ms. Kelly Sardina spoke regarding concerns related to Town governance and ongoing issues before the Board, and urged the Select Board to ensure transparency, accountability, and adherence to proper process in its actions.

Ms. Grace Tucci spoke on matters related to Town operations and procedures and raised questions regarding access to Town programs and information, emphasizing the importance of clear communication and public accessibility.

Beth Szymanski spoke regarding concerns about trees being cut down in Town, expressing concern about the loss of tree cover and the environmental and neighborhood impacts of recent or proposed tree removals. She asked the Board to consider greater oversight and protection of trees where possible.

Announcements

1. Vacancies on Boards and Committees

Daniel Darris O’Conner read the open vacancies

2. All other announcements may be viewed on the Town of Billerica website

Proclamation and Public Recognition

None

Public Hearings

National Grid-Vaz Eng

3. **Public Hearing – National Grid #31226054** – National Grid proposes installing ~41’, 1-4” telecom fiber cable conduit from existing pole #15 Pollard Street to existing heavy duty telecon handhole on Quincy Road to improve communication reliability between SCADA and substation.

Motion to Open :

Secretary Darris-O’Connor moved to open the Public Hearing for National Grid #31226054.
Member Rosa Seconded.

Darris-O’Conner	Yay
Favreau	Yay
Vice Chair Burrows	Yay
Rosa	Yay
Pavidis	Yay

Selectman Rosa asked if there were any residents that reached out to National Grid with any concerns. The representative stated there were none. Selectman Rosa then pointed out that the water and wastewater lines are not marked by Dig Safe and they needed to go to the water department. The representative of National Grid acknowledged he was aware of that.

Public Comments-None

Motion to Close

Secretary Darris-O’Connor moved to open the Public Hearing for National Grid #31226054.
Member Rosa Seconded.

Darris-O’Conner	Yay
Favreau	Yay
Vice Chair Burrows	Yay
Rosa	Yay
Pavidis	Yay

Motion to Approve:

Secretary Darris-O’Connor moved to approve National Grid WO#31226054
Member Rosa Seconded.

Darris-O’Conner	Yay
Favreau	Yay
Vice Chair Burrows	Yay
Rosa	Yay
Pavidis	Yay

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4. **Public Hearing – Transfer of an On-Premises All-Alcohol License §12 Restaurant, Common Victualler License, and Entertainment (Weekday & Sunday) License FROM Triple Sushi Inc. dba Nana Seven TO Hinoki Japanese Steakhouse, Inc. dba Hinoki Japanese Steakhouse at the premises located at 199 Boston Road, Billerica, MA.**

Attorney Dana Myers

Motion to Open:

Secretary Darris-O’Connor moved to open the public hearing for the transfer of an On-Premises All-Alcohol License, Common Victualler License, and Entertainment License (Weekday and Sunday) from Triple Sushi Inc., d/b/a Nana Seven to Hinoki Japanese Steakhouse, Inc., d/b/a Hinoki Japanese Steakhouse, for the premises at 199 Boston Road.
Member Rosa Seconded.

Darris-O’Conner	Yay
Favreau	Yay
Vice Chair Burrows	Yay
Rosa	Yay
Pavidis	Yay

The applicant, Hinoki Japanese Steakhouse, Inc., located at 199 Boston Road, appeared before the Board seeking approval of the transfer of the Section 12 All-Alcohol Restaurant License, Common Victualler License, and Entertainment License from Triple Sushi, Inc. dba Nana Seven. The proposed manager is Rachanee Daranuwat. The proposed hours of operation are 11:30 a.m. to midnight Monday through Saturday and 12:00 p.m. to midnight on Sundays, with recorded background music only.

Dawn McDowell stated that all required departmental approvals had been received, all background checks had been completed with no disqualifying information identified.

Mike Rosa asked if the applicant had demonstrated understanding of the Town’s Liquor rules and regulations.

Public Comments- None

Motion to Close

Secretary Darris-O’Connor moved to close the public hearing for the transfer of an On-Premises All-Alcohol License, Common Victualler License, and Entertainment License.

Member Rosa Seconded.

Darris-O’Conner	Yay
Favreau	Yay
Vice Chair Burrows	Yay
Rosa	Yay
Pavidis	Yay

Motion to Approve:

Secretary Darris-O’Connor made a motion to approve the transfer of the Section 12 All-Alcohol Restaurant License, Common Victualler License, and Entertainment (Weekday & Sunday) License from Triple Sushi, Inc. dba Nana Seven to Hinoki Japanese Steakhouse, Inc. dba Hinoki Japanese Steakhouse at 199 Boston Road, with the hours of operation as presented and recorded background music only.

Member Rosa Seconded.

Darris-O’Conner	Yay
Favreau	Yay
Vice Chair Burrows	Yay
Rosa	Yay
Pavidis	Yay

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- Public Hearing – National Grid and Verizon #31199524** – National Grid to install (1) JO Pole on Pinehurst Avenue beginning at a point ~107’ west of the centerline of the intersection of Allendale Avenue and continuing ~15’ in a north direction for a new mid-span pole, P3-50 located in front of 33 Allendale Ave

Motion to Open:

Secretary Darris-O'Connor moved to open the public hearing for National Grid and Verizon, petition #31199524, regarding the installation of one joint-owned pole on Pinehurst Avenue in front of 33 Allendale Avenue.

Member Rosa Seconded

Darris-O'Conner	Yay
Favreau	Yay
Vice Chair Burrows	Yay
Rosa	Yay
Pavidis	Yay

Public Comments-None

Selectman Rosa asked if there were any residents that reached out to National Grid with any concerns. The representative stated there were none. Selectman Rosa then pointed out that the water and wastewater lines are not marked by Dig Safe and they needed to go to the water department. The representative of National Grid acknowledged he was aware of that.

Motion to Close

Secretary Darris-O'Connor moved to open the Public Hearing for National Grid #31199524

Member Rosa Seconded

Darris-O'Conner	Yay
Favreau	Yay
Vice Chair Burrows	Yay
Rosa	Yay
Pavidis	Yay

Motion to Approve:

Secretary Darris-O'Connor moved to approve petition #31199524 by National Grid and Verizon for the installation of one joint-owned pole on Pinehurst Avenue in front of 33 Allendale Avenue.

Member Rosa Seconded

Darris-O'Conner	Yay
Favreau	Yay
Vice Chair Burrows	Yay
Rosa	Yay
Pavidis	Yay

Old Business

Town Manager's Report

Mr. Dillon stated that there was limited activity to report due to the holidays and recent staff illness. He reported that the Town had received a request from Shawsheen Valley Technical High School to include a warrant article at the 2026 Annual Town Meeting to fund a Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) feasibility study, noting that Billerica's estimated share would be approximately \$554,000 based on current enrollment figures.

Mr. Dillon also reported that the Town's new legal firm had made a donation to the Billerica Community Pantry.

Mr. Dillon reviewed information regarding a sewer rehabilitation project, including that a special notice had been sent to affected residents advising them of temporary sewer service interruptions during construction.

Mr. Dillon further summarized information regarding the Town's involvement in PFAS litigation, stating that the Town had previously joined the class action lawsuits and had begun receiving settlement disbursements, with additional payments anticipated over the next several years.

Mr. Dillon then reviewed several Department of Public Works updates, including progress on a water main extension project to improve water quality and system looping, the completion of roadway safety improvements including the installation of pedestrian crosswalk beacons, continued collection of responses for the sewer expansion survey, and coordination with MassDOT regarding a potential all-way stop conversion at the intersection of Cook Street and Alexander Road, which would be completed at no cost to the Town.

Select Board Comments

Select Board Member Rosa commented on the anticipated Shawsheen Valley Technical High School MSBA feasibility study request and expressed concern about the potential financial impact on the Town. He stated that approximately a year ago the member communities were asked to place warrant articles so that funds would no longer be returned to the towns and instead would be placed into the district's Excess & Deficiency (E&D) account for this purpose. He stated that approximately \$1 million that should have been in that account is not there, and that an audit had identified accounting deficiencies. He further stated that, as a result, the member towns are now being asked to fund the feasibility study through new warrant articles, shifting the cost to taxpayers. He stated that he expects to receive clear information from Shawsheen Tech before Spring Town Meeting explaining what happened to the funds and why they were not properly set aside as intended.

Vice Chair Burrows asked for clarification regarding the sewer rehabilitation notices and the scope of the work. Mr. Dillon explained that the project involves lining and repairs to existing infrastructure and that affected residents were being notified in advance.

Chair Pavidis commented on the importance of the PFAS settlement funds and asked how they would be tracked and reported. Mr. Dillon stated that the funds would be accounted for separately and reported to the Board as additional payments are received.

Member Favreau raised concerns regarding Shawsheen Valley Technical High School's financial management based on the FY24 audit and a December 20 news report. The audit identified cash reconciliation issues and overspent accounts, resulting in a certified Excess and Deficiency amount approximately \$986,209. She further noted that the Town unanimously approved an operating budget increase of nearly 6% for Shawsheen Tech last year and that, in April 2024, the district approved an annual 5% contribution toward a capital stabilization fund for future projects. Given the unresolved audit findings and lack of clarity regarding the stabilization funds, Member Favreau stated she could not support placing the request on the Spring Town Meeting warrant at this time. Member Favreau also noted that Town Center safety improvements should include Parker Street and referenced the Safe Streets for All engineering study presented on March 7, 2025, which the Board voted to pursue an in-house plan to implement the study's recommendations. She requested that plan be brought forward to the board.

Secretary Darris-O'Connor and Member Favreau made general comments regarding the DPW projects and thanked staff for the updates.

6. 2025 License Renewals – Review and Approval – One Remaining License

a. Farmer Brewery Pouring Permit – 1 (License) – Petty King Brewing Company, LLC located at 279 Boston Road

Petty King Brewing Company, LLC, located at 279 Boston Road, is requesting approval of its 2026 annual renewal for a Farmer Brewery Pouring Permit (Malt Only). The licensed manager is John Thompson. Proposed hours of operation are Monday–Saturday, 12:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m., and Sunday, 12:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., subject to the conditions of the existing Mixed Use Special Permit. The renewal reflects no change in license class, type, or category. All required renewal documentation has been submitted, the manager holds a valid TIPS certification, and the application is in compliance with state and local requirements. Approval of the license renewal is recommended.

Secretary Darris-O’Connor stated that one remaining 2025 license renewal was before the Board: the Farmer Brewery Pouring Permit for Petty King Brewing Company, LLC, located at 279 Boston Road. Secretary Darris-O’Connor made a motion to approve the 2025 renewal of the Farmer Brewery Pouring Permit for Petty King Brewing Company, LLC.

Member Rosa stated that conditions related to the Mixed Use Special Permit should be part of the approval and noted prior concerns raised by the Police Department regarding alcohol leaving the licensed area and being consumed in other portions of the building. Member Rosa also noted there had previously been an issue regarding the business not opening until the restaurant portion was open, as food is not served at the brewery.

Secretary Darris-O’Connor stated that the Board was voting to renew the license and that any conditions previously imposed would still apply. Ms. Dawn McDowell stated that she reviewed the prior minutes and that the issues raised by the Police Department were not part of the original motion at that time. She explained that the Police had objected to an additional request that was not approved by the ABCC, and while the matter had been discussed, it was never made part of the license renewal conditions.

Member Rosa stated that the Board could add conditions now. Further discussion followed regarding the scope of the Select Board’s authority and the existing conditions associated with the license.

Following discussion, the Board did not take final action on the renewal and tabled the matter pending further review of Town council.

New Business

7. Discussion and Possible Vote on Updated Senior Citizen Tax Work Off Program – Requested by Member Rosa- The program is authorized under M.G.L. c. 60, §5K-Majority vote

The Council on Aging proposes a two-block FY27 Tax Work-Off application process that prioritizes financially vulnerable seniors and veterans first, while keeping remaining slots available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Discussion

Member Rosa worked with the COA to modify the program. He explained the proposal to modify the Senior Citizen Tax Work-Off Program is to implement a two-block application system. The first block would provide priority access to applicants willing to submit financial eligibility documentation to verify the need, and the second block would retain the current first-come, first-served model for general access to the remaining program slots.

Mr. David Lamore, Health & Wellness Director, explained that the intent was to make the application process more equitable while still allowing open access. He stated that the Town would accept proof such as prior year tax returns or proof of public assistance, including SNAP, Medicaid, or fuel assistance, and that applicants would not be required to submit full bank statements. He further explained that applications are

currently paper only and available at the Senior Center, and that while online applications could be considered in the future, the Town does not currently have a system in place for that.

Ms. Grace Tucci asked questions regarding access to the applications, whether they would be available online, and how many slots would be allocated to each group. Mr. Lamore explained that there are currently 125 total slots, with 25 reserved for veterans, and that the program would continue to operate within those limits.

Mr. Lamore further stated that the Council on Aging would send letters to prior participants, post notices in Town buildings, and provide flyers to ensure the public is aware of the changes.

Motion to Approve

Member Rosa made a motion to modify the Senior Citizen Tax Work-Off Program to institute a two-block application system. Block one will offer priority access to applicants willing to submit financial eligibility documentation to verify need. Block two will retain the current first-come, first-served model for general access to the remaining program slots.

Member Favreau Seconded.

Darris-O’Conner	Yay
Favreau	Yay
Vice Chair Burrows	Yay
Rosa	Yay
Pavidis	Yay

8. Discussion on Interim Public Safety Policy – Section 48.0 – First Reading – Requested by Member Favreau

Establishes a temporary Select Board policy declining support or discretionary approvals for new large-scale lithium-ion battery energy storage facilities while the Town studies safety, environmental, and siting impacts and considers permanent zoning regulations.

Member Favreau stated that the purpose of the first reading was to introduce the policy framework and outline the rationale for further review and public discussion. She explained that the proposed moratorium is temporary and procedural in nature and is intended to provide the Town with sufficient time to evaluate whether current zoning, permitting, and emergency response standards are adequate for this type of infrastructure, which has been expanding rapidly in recent years.

Member Favreau stated that the policy is not anti-technology or anti-climate, but rather pro-safety, pro-planning, and pro-local control. She explained that lithium battery storage is expanding quickly, but local zoning, siting standards, and emergency response capacity have not kept pace. She further stated that the proposal does not prohibit future battery storage development and does not take a position on the broader role of energy storage in clean energy planning, but instead pauses approvals while the Town ensures its resources, policies, and bylaws are aligned with best practices.

Additional discussion followed among Board members regarding the scope of the policy, the need for further review, and consultation with Town departments. No vote was taken, as this was a first reading.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

9. November 17, 2025 Regular Meeting

Motion:

Secretary Darris-O’Conner moved to approve the November 17, 2025 Minutes

Member Rosa Seconded.

Darris-O’Conner	Yay
Favreau	Yay
Vice Chair Burrows	Yay
Rosa	Yay
Pavidis	Yay

Meeting Schedule

January 12, 2026 and February 2, 2026

Adjournment

Motion

Secretary Darris-O’Conner moved to adjourn at 7:10 PM

Member Rosa Seconded.

Darris-O’Conner	Yay
Favreau	Yay
Vice Chair Burrows	Yay
Rosa	Yay
Pavidis	Yay

Minutes Prepared by Kerri Rufo

Approved at the February 2, 2026 Select Board Meeting

Documents:

0-Agenda

2-Vacancies on Boards and Committees 2025

4-NG Pollard Street #31226054

5-Transfer of Licenses - Hinoki Japanese Steakhouse

6-NG Pinehurst Ave #31199524

7-TM Report 010526

8-2026 License - Petty King Brewing

9-FY27 Property Tax Work-Off

10-Policy 48 - Interim Public Safety Policy - First Reading

11-11.17.25 SB Meeting Minutes-Draft