

**TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES
MAY 19, 2008
VON DECK LECTURE HALL - OAKMONT REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL**

This meeting was aired live on local cable television Channel 8.

PRESENT: Chris Gagnon, Chair, Jonathan Dennehy, Member and Maggie Whitney, Clerk, Paul Boushell, Town Administrator and Sylvia Turcotte, Assistant to the Town Administrator.

I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: At 7:00 p.m., Gagnon read the agenda. Dennehy motioned to approve the agenda as read and was seconded by Whitney. Motion carried.

II. PRESENTATIONS, REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE

A. **Public Hearing – Liquor License Transfer – HP Enterprises, Inc. d/b/a Mr. Mike’s:** At 7:03 p.m. Dennehy motioned to open the Public Hearing and was seconded by Whitney. Motion carried. Gagnon then proceeded to read the ad published in the Gardner News on Monday, May 5, 2008 as follows:

“The Ashburnham Board of Selectmen, acting as the Local Licensing Authority, will conduct a Public Hearing on Monday, May 19, 2008 at 7:10 p.m. at Oakmont Regional High School in the Von Deck Lecture Hall, 9 Oakmont Drive, Ashburnham, Massachusetts, at the request of Alliance Energy Corp. for the transfer of a Retain Package Goods Store, All Alcohol License, from H.P. Enterprises, Inc. d/b/a Mr. Mike’s to Alliance Energy Corp., Patrick J. Dillon as Manager.”

In attendance for this hearing was Attorney Mark Goldstein, representing Alliance Energy Corp., along with Patrick Dillon, Manager, and Tim Peterson, present license holder.

Goldstein began by noting that there was a small issue regarding a change in the name for tax purposes. He stated that it should be changed to read Alliance Energy, LLC. Dennehy motioned to amend the application to read “LLC” and was seconded by Whitney. Motion carried.

Goldstein stated that no other changes to the business were planned in conjunction with this liquor license transfer. Peterson noted that he was totally in favor of this transfer.

Goldstein thanked the Selectmen adding that it would be a seamless transfer.

At 7:09 p.m. Whitney motioned to close the Public Hearing and was seconded by Dennehy. Motion carried.

Whitney then motioned to approve the application as requested and as amended and was seconded by Dennehy. Motion carried.

- B. Correspondence:** It was noted that the Board had received correspondence from the Bresnahan Committee and that they would be placed on the June 16th agenda.

Gagnon noted that any interested parties should plan on participating in a walk-thru at Lake Watatic on Lakeshore Drive on Saturday, June 14th at 10:00 a.m. with a rain date of June 21st. He also stated that a committee would be set up.

- C. Town Administrator's Update:** Boushell stated that he had the numbers for the move back to Town Hall and that he also would have the information on fuel cost numbers for the June 2nd meeting and the discussion involved with the reverse budget review.

Whitney inquired about the cell phone information on Town Hall employees and she was informed that there were no town provided cell phones for these employees at this time.

Gagnon inquired if Boushell had prepared a report that they could take before the School Committee on the temporary office improvements and Boushell stated that he had a report on the costs. Gagnon noted that he wanted a one page bullet type report with one column listing the infrastructure that has to stay and the second listing the optional removal items. He stated that he would need this report before they met with the School Committee. He then stated that they would do a request to be on the School Committee's agenda and would present a detailed list to Dr. Zapantis as to what would be kept in the building once the Town Hall offices move back. Dennehy noted that this meeting should include the Westminster officials as well, as it does involve them.

Whitney noted that she had many calls inquiring why the trees were taken down in front of Town Hall. Boushell stated that the Highway Dept. did most of the work and that the trees were diseased. He added that taking the trees down had been planned since the fall because of this. Gagnon noted that the trees had been planted when the building went up, over 100 years ago and that this was the reason for all the concern. He added that it permanently changed the landscape and that was why it was so upsetting to many residents. Boushell assured the Board that the time capsule buried there was not disturbed. Pixie Brennan, a resident of the Town, noted that she did speak with Don Ouellette, the DPW Director, about this and he told her that the trees wouldn't have lasted much longer. Brennan also stated that if there was any excess money on this project that they should think about replacing the trees. Boushell noted that lawn was being put in.

- D. Public Safety Building Committee update:** Gagnon stated that the front portico had been installed, the siding was going up and the hole was almost ready for the oil tank. He added that things were moving along on schedule.

III. OLD BUSINESS

- A. **Further discussion with Focus Committee:** Gagnon stated that they would wait for the Focus Committee members to arrive to cover this item.
- B. **Continued discussion of Improvements at Oakmont/Town Hall Offices:** Dennehy noted that he feels that their first order of business should be to find a meeting place for the Selectmen meetings as soon as possible. Gagnon agreed noting that they would go see what was available.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

- A. **Discussion on HUD Grant re: Council on Aging project funding:** In attendance was Shelly Hatch from MRPC, Mary Lee Muessel, COA Director and members of the COA Board.

Shelly Hatch was given the floor and proceeded to distribute information on the CDBG funding. (Attached) She stated that the next funding round would be February 2009 and that they would know by July 2009. She also noted that the project wouldn't happen until September 2009 at the earliest.

Dennehy inquired on whether this building would be available for other uses besides as a Senior Center and if this would prevent them from applying for this grant. Hatch stated that at the beginning it would have to be strictly a Senior Center in order to get the grant otherwise the funds can't be used. Dennehy stated that he had concerns due to the lack of meeting space at Town Hall and that eventually more space would be needed for employees as well. He noted they should be careful to not close any options. Gagnon agreed that there is always a need for meeting space. Dennehy stated that in the newly renovated Town Hall there is no extra room for new growth and that if we're looking to renovate the Senior Center, then we need to plan for community space.

Gagnon noted that they should look at the community needs and that town offices probably wouldn't be put there in that building. He added that once the Senior Center is renovated and we get the grant, then it could be used for meetings and after five years, the limitation, it can be named differently from the Senior Center. Dennehy noted that his focus was to plan for the future. Gagnon stated that this is an excellent opportunity to get this building renovated and he also mentioned that they might be able to combine something like solar panels to get reimbursed approximately 63% which might enable them to do over the kitchen.

Hatch reiterated that there was no guarantee and that they have to do the best possible application. Gagnon suggested that they might want to put together an Advisory Building Committee with other persons besides the Council on Aging.

Whitney wanted it to be noted that this would be only a one-year override if the vote passes on June 17th.

Hatch stated that public hearings and forums needed to be scheduled and the Town Planner would be involved.

Gagnon thanked Hatch for her time.

III. OLD BUSINESS

A. Further discussion with Focus Committee: Bob Fichtel was present to represent the Focus Committee. Fichtel stated that they were asked to do some homework to reduce costs on land for the potential DPW move.

Dennehy noted that they are asking the Focus Committee to look into 1) title searches; and 2) the feasibility of sites in terms of market value or an analysis or opinion of value. He added that they only slated a limited amount of funds from this auction and that they would have to have a “real world view” of the cost of the sites. He noted that we would need to see what we can afford and that the local realtors could probably help the Committee with this research.

Fichtel inquired about getting a soil test done and Dennehy responded that they would need the owner’s permission to do this. Fichtel stated that they would start working on this request and Gagnon expressed his thanks and appreciation for all the work they are doing regarding this project.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

B. Agenda Building: Gagnon noted that the Board wanted to invite the Water/Sewer Commissioners to the June 16th meeting to discuss the issue with the dams in Town. Dennehy also noted that the sewer contract with the City of Gardner was an issue that they needed to get serious about. He added that the deadline is 2010 so they need to decide which way they want to go with this.

Whitney stated that they would like to invite the Planning Board to their July 7th meeting to discuss the Industrial Land Use Committee.

Gagnon touched on the Lake Watatic walk slated for June 14th, stating that this area was an issue for quite some time, even when Kevin Paicos was here but that it is an ideal location for a park. Dennehy noted that these are Parcels 52 and 48 on Map 56.

Whitney commented on Fred Sweeney who is residing at Broadview in Winchendon and that he is doing really well. Dennehy noted that Sweeney would be in attendance at the Ashburnham Memorial Day services.

Whitney also noted that someone from the Town should be designated to be MSBA certified and take the course that is available. She also inquired about the Conflict of Interest Seminar and when it would take place. Boushell noted that it would be scheduled and that the Town is on the list. Whitney also inquired about the voting machine that the Town now had and if we were compatible with the new Optech III-PE Eagle voting machine. Boushell noted that he would check with the Town Clerk.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

VI. OTHER MATTERS

Gagnon read the following reminders from the Town Clerk:

- Wednesday, May 28th is the Final Voter Registration for the Special Election from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the Town Clerk's office.
- Tuesday, June 17th is the Special Election, polls open at 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at J.R. Briggs Elementary School in the Gym.
- Dog Licenses are available – a late fee of \$10.00 will be charged after June 1st.

Gagnon invited everyone to please attend the Memorial Day celebrations coming up.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, at 8:20 p.m. Dennehy motioned to adjourn and was seconded by Whitney. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Sylvia Turcotte
Assistant to the Town Administrator