

**TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES
FEBRUARY 4, 2008
VON DECK LECTURE HALL, OAKMONT REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL**

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

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

I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: At 7:02 p.m., Carlisle read the agenda. Dennehy motioned to approve the agenda as read and was seconded by Gagnon. Motion carried.

II. PRESENTATIONS, REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE

A. **Correspondence:** Carlisle noted that there was no significant correspondence

B. **Town Administrator's Update:** Boushell stated that the Governor's budget came out and that he is basically playing politics with the casino plan, as he cut the Town's state aid by \$115k with this being contingent on the casinos passing. He also noted that he feels that at the end of the budget cycle the Town would get this money back.

Dennehy noted his displeasure and outrage at the Governor's proposal stating that all towns and cities should be given the net revenue. He added that the lottery system isn't generating enough revenue to match the growth and needs of cities and towns. He stated that everyone needs to gather together and write to our legislatures. He also stated that they should do away with the lottery aid formula and instead should dedicate 40% of all growth taxes to go to education and municipal funding. Carlisle agreed that he is amazed that town funding is based on lottery funds and added that basing the local economy on the lottery is ludicrous.

Dennehy added that leadership has ignored our suggestions to change the formula and because of this we will have to increase the local property taxes to support the government. Boushell noted that Proposition 2½ has outlived its usefulness. Further discussion followed on this issue and the impact it has had on the towns and cities.

Boushell noted that he has planned a meeting with his financial team on Monday at Cushing to go over in depth the revenue and expenses in order to accurately budget for FY09.

Boushell stated that he recently held a Department Head Meeting and asked everyone to cut 3% off their operating budgets and also has sent out a memo on spending for the remainder of FY08. He noted that the budget should be out in a few weeks or sooner. Dennehy stated that the Town had anticipated this so had been planning ahead.

Boushell stated that the Town Hall project is going well and that the arrival of the elevator, which had been a concern, is on its way. Carlisle noted that they are well on their way and that the renovations look really great.

- C. **Public Safety Building Committee update:** Gagnon noted that there was a meeting scheduled at the site for the next day at 2:00 p.m. and a Committee meeting was scheduled for 6:30 p.m. that same day. He added that things are going well.

III. OLD BUSINESS

- A. **Follow-up to Road Presentation by DPW Director:** Don Ouellette, DPW Director gave a short synopsis of the three options that were chosen at the last meeting. He noted that he recommends Option 3 because it spreads the funds out with nearly half the money up-front. He did however note that after ten years, the roads would probably need to be looked at again. Carlisle inquired about the Chapter 90 money and if part of this amount would be held aside for unforeseen incidents. Ouellette said that it would. He also went over the national average cost to a driver due to road conditions is about \$400 per vehicle for repairs nationwide. He added that this problem won't go away, the roads are in dire disrepair. Carlisle noted that this proposal to repair the roads is a great piece of work which has never been done before. He stated that the Board appreciates all Ouellette's hard work on this.

Ouellette stated that he would schedule information sessions and send out flyers, etc. adding that he is hoping to have 2 or 3 sessions before Town Meeting and one more before the election. He inquired which option to put before the voters and Dennehy stated that they should give them all three options to decide on. He added that generally people like to see a few different options as it empowers them to be a part of the decision process.

A short discussion followed regarding the bonding numbers for each of the three options. Carlisle noted that Ouellette should go ahead and start on the information sessions and should go to the cable channel and give a very detailed presentation. He thanked him and Dennehy also thanked him for his work in pursuing the grant through USDA. Ouellette noted that he would be meeting with the Water/Sewer Commissioners to go over the grant and what was involved and he added that we really can't wait on this because we may not be on the list for next year. He also noted that he is trying to get Water Street, Central Street, Centre Street and Rindge Turnpike on the TIP list. Dennehy stated that they appreciate the fact that Ouellette is working on so many issues right now.

- B. **Continued discussion re: Warrant and Budget Calendar:** Bill Johnson, Advisory Board Chair was present and noted that the Advisory Board will schedule their meetings with the Department Heads on their budgets for FY09 in March which should fit in the Board of Selectmen meeting schedule.

Gagnon noted that a Tri-Board meeting was scheduled for the next day and that the School Committee meetings and the Advisory Board meetings should be duck-tailed in the Selectmen's calendar. Dennehy agreed with this and noted that it is important to have all the calendars in one as this would keep everyone more organized.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Approval of List of Offices to be filled at next Annual Town Election:** Carlisle read the list (copy attached). He noted that the Town Caucus would be held on Monday, February 25th at 7:00 p.m. in the Von Deck Lecture Hall at Oakmont Regional High School.
- B. Approval of Special One-Day Liquor License:** Carlisle read the information on this request from Rev. Horgan of St. Denis Church regarding Italian Night at Father Lacey Hall on Saturday, February 9, 2008 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Dennehy motioned to approve the One-Day Beer and Wine Liquor License and was seconded by Gagnon. Motion carried. Gagnon stated that they should waive the \$10.00 fee and made a motion to do so for community betterment which was seconded by Carlisle. Motion carried.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. January 22, 2008 – Regular Meeting**
Gagnon motioned to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2008 Regular Meeting and was seconded by Carlisle. Motion carried.

VI. OTHER MATTERS

Carlisle announced the following reminders from the Town Clerk:

- Tuesday, February 5th is the Presidential Primary and voting hours are 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at J.R. Briggs Elementary School.
- Final voter registration for the Citizens Caucus is on Friday, February 15th from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Town Hall offices in the Clerk's office at Oakmont.
- The Annual Town Caucus for the purpose of nomination of candidates for the Town Offices, will be held on Monday, February 25, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in the Von Deck Lecture Hall located at Oakmont.

Carlisle announced a Public Forum on a Wind Facility By-Law would be held on Thursday, February 7th at 7:30 p.m. at the VMS Building.

Carlisle also announced that the next meeting of the Board of Selectmen would be held on Tuesday, February 19, 2008.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:00 p.m. Carlisle stated that the Board would be entering into Executive Session to deliberate upon matters which, if done in open meeting could detrimentally affect the

position of the Town regarding the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property and strategy of pending litigation and not to reconvene into open session.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:30 p.m. Gagnon motioned to adjourn and was seconded by Carlisle. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Sylvia Turcotte
Assistant to the Town Administrator