

**TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
JANUARY 4, 2010 – 6:00 P.M.  
TRAINING ROOM AT PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLEX**

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This meeting was aired live on local cable television.

PRESENT: Ed Vitone, Chair, Maggie Whitney, Clerk, Doug Briggs, Town Administrator and Sylvia Turcotte, Assistant to the Town Administrator.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Maggie Whitney. Vitone called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. PUBLIC INPUT

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Whitney stated that they should add a discussion on town-owned property on Lake Watatic as Item C under Old Business. *Whitney motioned to approve the agenda as amended and was seconded by Vitone. Motion carried.*

IV. PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS

V. UPDATE – STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE FROM OAKMONT

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Review of BOS Initiatives and Task List

Whitney gave an overview of the task list noting that they had completed 91%, completing 140 of 154 tasks on their list.

B. Discussion and Adoption of the Snow & Ice Policy

Whitney noted that she had no changes to propose for this policy and Vitone stated the same. *Whitney motioned to accept the Snow & Ice Policy as presented and was seconded by Vitone. Motion carried.* Briggs noted that this policy would be placed on the Town's website.

C. Discussion on town-owned property on Lake Watatic

In attendance were ConCom Chair Marshall Dennis and Paul Somers and Don Lemay of the Ashburnham Conservation Trust. Gary Howland also a member of the Conservation Trust came in a little later during the discussion.

Vitone noted that these properties were withheld from the auction in order to be reevaluated by ConCom and the Conservation Trust. He noted that these properties had been walked by many and the consensus was that they are mostly under water. He did add that only parcel 52 may be buildable.

Somers handed out a proposal to the Board of Selectmen which is attached to these minutes. In this proposal he stated there were four points as follows:

- 1) "The Ashburnham Conservation Trust offers to pay the Town \$10,000 for a conservation restriction on May 56, parcels 48 and 51. This is about 12.3% of the full assessed value of these two parcels when combined, but an amount higher than the 10.6% of total assessment value received at the Town's December 12, 2009 auction of 32 parcels taken for back taxes.
- 2) In addition, we offer to cover the cost of a Baseline Survey of these two parcels (valued at approximately \$1,500-2,500) and pay any legal expenses incurred by the Trust. The Town had parcel 52 surveyed earlier this year, so there should be little or no survey expense involved.
- 3) Finally, we request that an MOU be prepared whereby the BOS and Town agree to formally assign all of the lots (wetland parcels 42-49 and upland parcel 52 on Map 56) to the Conservation Commission, recognizing the areas as a Town Conservation Area, pending approval of this negotiated plan by citizens at a town meeting.
- 4) A final vote of approval by the ACT Board on this or any counter offer by the Town will be needed."

Vitone stated that when property is sold it comes back on the tax roll and income continues each year which could run between \$3,000 and \$4,000 a year and that they should take this into consideration for lots 48 and 52. Whitney agreed with Vitone and asked what the Conservation Trust planned for this property. Somers stated that not much would change and that it would still be open to all Town residents.

The question of parking was discussed. Vitone also asked if the Lake Association had been notified of this proposal and Lemay stated that they had and that they would be happy with the conservation. There was also some discussion on allowing motorized boats on the lake and maybe having the Town impose limits on this type of activity.

Vitone noted that if this property was conserved there should be a financial reason and it should go by the appropriate price.

Dennis stated that lot 52 provides an upland access to the lake and Lemay noted that it should not be combined with lot 48 if it's sold as it is the only access. It was noted that the assessed value of the two lots combined was \$82,000 and that lot 52 alone was assessed at \$58,000.

Vitone stated that he appreciated their proposal but he was not comfortable accepting the offer from the Conservation Trust. He added that absent of fairness of the offer, its not a fair proposition, as the offer should be in line and treated the same as it would be for a private citizen.

Briggs stated that the next land auction would probably be in the fall and that he agreed with Vitone's position on this. He added that the value could go up higher and they could look at the two parcels combined as well. He noted that the other parcels had no relative marketability and Vitone added that in the long term, it might cost the Town money to keep trying to sell them. Whitney stated that she agreed with Vitone and Briggs and that they would keep this under advisement. Vitone added that the Board of Selectmen would be receptive at a fair price and absent of that, they have nine months to see about any other resolution.

VII. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE (Report attached)  
Briggs stated that there was a pending appointment to the ZBA.

He asked the Board of Selectmen to vote on the proposed new Dog License Fee Structure which would bring Ashburnham in line with the Town of Westminster as we are regional with them now. He stated that the fees would be increased from \$7 to \$10 for female (spayed) and from \$11 to \$15 for non-spayed and male dogs.

***Whitney motioned to approve the new fee structure as presented and was seconded by Vitone. Motion carried.***

Briggs stated that he needed the Board to vote to accept the bid on the Kaiser Jeep in the amount of \$606 from David Grady. He added that this was a surplus vehicle in the Fire Department. ***Whitney motioned to accept the bid and was seconded by Vitone. Motion carried.***

Briggs discussed the town meeting votes on cruiser purchases stating that they should have wording in there giving the Board of Selectmen the authority to decide what should be done with the old vehicle being replaced.

Vitone stated that they needed a policy or procedure and a cash flow process on when investments should be made such as the purchase of a new vehicle as it should not be made at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Vitone explained the CDBG Grant process and that they needed at least 20 applicants in order to apply. Whitney read the list of roads that are in the target area for this grant. The list was as follows: Ames Ave., Chapel St., Cushing St., Fairview Ave., Lashua Rd., Main St., from Lashua to Factory Village Pond, Marshall Mills Rd., Proctor St., Valerie Circle, Cashman Hill Rd., Corey Hill Rd., High St., Juniper Rd., Lillian Dr., Pleasant St., River Styx Rd., Water St., Central St., Corey Rd., Hillandale Rd., Kelton Rd., Old Nims Rd., Maple Ave., Puffer St., and School Street. Briggs stated that this information would be on the Town's website.

Briggs asked the Board to designate him as the Environmental Certifying Officer for the Town. ***Whitney motioned to designate Doug Briggs as the Ashburnham Environmental Certifying Officer and was seconded by Vitone. Motion passed.***

Briggs advised the Board that he was working with Town Counsel to identify the process to proceed with the Scouting Center project in South Ashburnham. He added that they would need a town meeting vote to authorize the Selectmen to go forward.

Briggs also reported that the Assessors firm started on January 1<sup>st</sup>. He noted that they would be setting up a link on the Town's website so that field cards, maps etc. would be available and easily accessible and that this would decrease the hours in the Assessors office.

VIII NEW BUSINESS

- A. Street Listing for CDBG Grant eligibility through MRPC  
This was covered under the Town Administrator's Report.

IX. CONSENT AGENDA

X. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Whitney read the following announcements:

- January 15, 2010 – 5:00 p.m. – last day for filing applications for absentee ballots for voters who will be out of town for the State Election.
- January 19, 2010 – State Election – Polls open 7:00 a.m. close at 8:00 p.m. at the J.R. Briggs Elementary School 96 Williams Road.

Whitney stated that a Farewell Get-Together will be hosted by the Police Department to honor Sergeant Robert Brennan Jr. on Sunday, January 24<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the training room at the Public Safety Complex.

Whitney noted that the Friends of the Stevens Memorial Library were presenting an Irish Night on Tuesday, March 16<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. and that Seamus Pender a local musician would be performing.

She noted that the next meeting of the Board of Selectmen would be on Tuesday, January 19, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Complex in the Training Room and that this was due to the Martin Luther King Holiday on Monday.

XI. BOS CORRESPONDENCE

XII. SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

*At 7:57 p.m. Whitney motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Vitone. Motion carried.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Sylvia Turcotte, Assistant to the Town Administrator