

**TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MAY 3, 2010 – 7:00 P.M.
TRAINING ROOM AT PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLEX**

This meeting was aired live on local cable television.

PRESENT: Ed Vitone, Chair, Maggie Whitney, Clerk, Ron Reed, 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.

Vitone stated that they welcomed Ron Reed as the new member of the Board of Selectmen. He noted that the Board needed to reorganize and asked for a motion to appoint the Chair. **Whitney made the motion to recommend that Ed Vitone continues as the Chair and was seconded by Reed. Reed motioned to recommend Whitney continues as the Clerk and was seconded by Vitone.** Both motions were unanimous.

Vitone asked the members of the Board to sign the Code of Conduct which defines the benchmark for the Board. All were unanimously in favor of signing this document. Vitone noted that it would be posted on the Town's website.

II. PUBLIC INPUT

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Whitney motioned to approve the agenda as presented and was seconded by Reed. Motion carried.

IV. PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS

A. Presentation by HOME (Help Oakmont Maintain Excellence)

Emily Dewley and Meghan Horgan, both Freshmen attending Oakmont spoke on behalf of HOME. Both Dewley and Horgan noted that they felt the cuts were unacceptable and emphasized that the students had only one chance to get a good education. They stated that there should be an override for the Town.

Vitone commended the students for coming and stated that this was the cornerstone of early democracy. He then proceeded to explain how the finances of the Town worked regarding the budget, noting that the Town's budget went down by 4% while the School's budget went up by 2%. He stated that he applauded the student's passion.

Megan Horgan stated that they would be going to the State House with other schools in the area to bring their concerns. Whitney noted that the State just isn't following up and Reed noted that it was a good effort on their part to go to the State as they would meet other legislators.

V. UPDATE – STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE FROM OAKMONT

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Review of BOS Initiatives and Task List

Whitney stated that they had two items remaining on their list, the So. Station Study Committee and the Scout Center. She noted that they had 153 total, 148 completed and they were at 97% complete. Vitone noted that they would be setting up a new list of initiatives and task lists for FY11.

B. Continued discussion on permanent IT Advisory Board

Briggs stated that he had four persons interested in serving: Joe Kalagher, Duncan Phyfe, Kyle Johnson and Nancy Haines. He added that Haines was the power user. He stated that they all identified their strong points and that they were looking for one more person to serve on this Board.

Reed stated that this was a great idea as technology changes so fast. Briggs noted that they should do this as soon as possible as there was a meeting scheduled in a few weeks with the Light Dept., the IT Board, the Selectmen and Guardian to discuss connecting all the Town buildings and departments. It was noted that they should stagger the appointments. ***Reed motioned to appoint the four members as noted consistent with the policy and Whitney seconded. Motion carried.***

C. Review status of Beals land donation/120 day waiver

Vitone gave a brief summary as to the status of this issue. He noted that they had a special meeting on April 26th to make the announcement on the potential sale adding that the Beals Trust owns over 1,000 acres in Ashburnham. He stated that this land is in Chapter 61 and that the Town has 120 days to make the decision whether to purchase. He added that they asked if the Beals would be willing to donate 10 to 15 acres to the Town and in return the Town would sign the 120 day waiver.

VII. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE (Report attached)

Briggs began by noting the openings on Boards and Committees in Town. He added two more to the list in his report; (1) more member on the IT Advisory Board and (1) on the Advisory Board as there was an opening now since Ron Reed was elected to serve on the Board of Selectmen.

Vitone noted that Thomas Van Wert, who ran against Reed in the race for Selectman, could potentially be a good fit for the Advisory Board to replace Reed.

Briggs touched on the water tank noting that once the article at Town Meeting was passed they would move forward quickly.

He stated that Rindge Turnpike Road resurfacing would begin on Tuesday May 4th and would be a two week process. He added that the road would not be closed down during the process.

Briggs stated that some businesses and groups in Town wanted permission to advertise to adopt traffic islands and to plant and maintain flowers which are presently under the control of the DPW. He noted that this would be on a first come first serve basis and the Board of Selectmen all agreed this was a good idea.

He noted that the Town had been successful in receiving the \$150,000 EECBG grant to install Photovoltaic panels at the Public Safety Building and Oakmont. He noted that there would be a savings of approximately \$11,000 to \$12,000 a year of electrical cost due to the installation of these panels. He added that any extra costs over the grant amount to install these panels would be covered by the Light Department.

Briggs touched on the Town's insurance stating that he had been reviewing the possibility of going with GIC and he added that he was still looking into it. He did note that our insurance increase was low.

He also noted that the Town was going with MIA for our liability and property damage and that we were staying with Berry Insurance for Police and Fire coverage.

Briggs stated that the Board of Selectmen needed to vote to approve expenditures by the Lakes Coalition regarding the Waterways Fund. Vitone noted that the Lakes Association recommends how to use the Town funds, and that it was not donations as was previously thought. He stated that these expenditures should come in as recommendations to the Board of Selectmen, not decisions in the future. Bill Johnson commended the Town Accountant for all she has done, adding that she has been doing very well.

Briggs stated that the Board needed to vote to accept the Lakes Coalition request for the two expenditures. ***Vitone made the motion and Whitney seconded. It was unanimous.***

Briggs stated that the Board was asked to waive the 120 days on the Ojanen property to basically remove it from forestry use to commercial type use. Vitone gave a brief history of the property and the wind turbines placement which he noted was good for the environment, the Light Department and the Town.

Whitney motioned to waive the 120 days on the Ojanen property request and was seconded by Reed. Motion carried. Vitone added that he was pleased with Stan Herriott for all his hard work on this project.

VIII NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion on Foreclosure of Land of Low Value

Vitone stated that their goal was to get these properties back on the tax role. Reed stated that they should review and identify every piece to be sure that it's not a parcel the Town might want to keep. Vitone agreed and stated that they would make their decision at the next meeting in order to take another look at the list. Reed also stated that they would need to identify the abutters. Briggs added that there was still a lot of work in order to get this done.

B. Discussion on Donation Policy

Vitone gave a brief background noting that there could be a conflict of interest when donations are received by the Town and they wanted to make sure that donations go where the Town wanted them to go. He added that they had asked Briggs to draft a policy. Briggs stated that the key was "no surprises". He stated that this policy looks at and sets a precedent prior to accepting and making commitments so we know about it in advance and that it would serve as a communication tool to thank people for their

donations. Reed noted that there was a policy already set some time ago and that they would look for this as well.

Vitone noted that he would be signing a Certificate of Appointment/Election for the Town Clerk, Linda Ramsdell.

Vitone stated that the Turnpike Rod & Gun Club had requested a Special Liquor License for beer and wine for the following dates: May 27, June 3, June 10, June 17, July 1, July 8, July 15, July 22, July 29, August 5, August 12, August 19, August 26, September 2 and also May 22. ***The Board unanimously approved this request.***

IX. CONSENT AGENDA

Whitney motioned to approve Items A and B of the consent agenda and was seconded by Vitone. Motion carried. There was one abstention.

Item C – a Special One Day Liquor License requested by the Ashburnham Historical Society for a reception on June 29 was approved unanimously.

X. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Whitney read the following announcements from the Town Clerk:

- May 8th – Annual Town Meeting – 10:00 a.m. at Oakmont Regional High School in the Auditorium, 9 Oakmont Drive.
- Dog Licenses are now available at the Town Clerk’s office. Please note the fees have changed to \$10.00 for spayed/neutered dogs and \$15.00 for unaltered dogs. If registered by mail, please send in current rabies certificate, spay/neuter certificate, and a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Town Clerk’s office.

Third Annual Walking Event in Celebration of Massachusetts Walk to School Day is on Wednesday, May 5, 2010. Parents and students will gather at the soccer field located on Williams Road at approximately 8:00 a.m. with departure at 8:10 a.m. or at Spuria’s parking lot at approximately 7:45 a.m. with a departure of 7:55 a.m. The Commonwealth’s Safe Routes Program encourages walking and bicycling for school travel.

Reminder – Annual Town Meeting – Saturday, May 8, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. – Auditorium, Oakmont Regional High School.

The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen would be held on Monday, May 17, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Complex in the Training Room.

It was also noted that a Joint Meeting of the Board of Selectmen and the Advisory Board would be held on Saturday, May 8th at 9:00 a.m. before the Town Meeting.

Briggs stated that if Article 5 passed at Town Meeting the Special Election date would be set for June 15th which would coincide with the Town of Westminster’s election date. He stated that there was a timing issue because it needed to be approved by May 10th. It was noted by Briggs that this election would require Police coverage because school would be in session on that date. Reed motioned to set the Special Election date of June 15, 2010 contingent on Article 5 passing at Town Meeting and was seconded by Whitney. Motion carried.

XI. BOS CORRESPONDENCE

XII. SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:15 p.m. Whitney motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Reed. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Sylvia Turcotte, Assistant to the Town Administrator