

TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
TUESDAY – FEBRUARY 21, 2012 – 6:30 p.m.
TRAINING ROOM – PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLEX

This meeting was taped for local cable television.

PRESENT: Ed Vitone, Chair, Gregory Fagan, Clerk, Doug Briggs, Town Administrator and Sylvia Turcotte, Assistant to the Town Administrator. Ron Reed, Member was absent.

I. SALUTE THE FLAG

Vitone called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT No input.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Fagan motioned to approve the agenda as presented and was seconded by Vitone. Motion carried.

IV. PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Vote to amend contract with Ashby for Town Administrator Services

Vitone explained that the Town of Ashburnham entered into an agreement with Ashby to share the Town Administrator services, which was extended once before and this second extension would be until June 30, 2012, the end of the fiscal year. *Fagan motioned to go forward with the extension as presented and was seconded by Vitone. Motion carried.*

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion and vote on conservation restriction on certain property in Ashburnham

Vitone stated that at their last Executive Session meeting, the Board was approached by the Ashburnham Conservation Trust and Conservation Commission regarding the approval of conservation restriction on property owned by Sallie Thoma at 171 Willard Road. He stated that the Board was unanimously in favor and voted to approve this request. Both Vitone and Fagan signed the letter to approve the Ashburnham Conservation Commission to hold title on this conservation restriction.

Gary Howland, of the Ashburnham Conservation Trust, was present and asked for a moment to explain what was required in the process as well as the timeframe. He stated that he was asking permission to expedite the purchase and sale agreement process through Town Counsel as well as title work to review and approve the conservation restriction. He asked for the Town Administrator's approval to work with Debbie Phillips to get this done. Vitone inquired who would pay for her services and Briggs stated that the Town would be reimbursed by the Trust. He also noted that he had already sent some documents to Phillips to review and he gave his approval for Howland to work with Town Counsel. It was noted by both Vitone and Briggs that there were a few other Town issues that Town Counsel was working on and that they couldn't give up on these top priority items but that she would probably be available to work on this by next week sometime. Howland stated that he understood the priorities and that this would work well with their timeframe.

B. Review of Council on Aging Senior Center Options

Vitone stated that they asked if the Bresnahan Center Committee had the ability to bring in the COA on the first floor of their new facility and they noted that the plan had been put together without the seniors in mind. He stated that he and Doug Briggs had met with the Directors on Saturday and discussed this with them and they were told that the Directors would get back to them with their vote in a week but that it didn't look promising.

Fagan stated they should make a list of options as it is important and vital to the Town for our seniors. He noted the following options:

1. A new building at the Briggs Project (Vitone stated that this was brought to the seniors back at the beginning of talks on this project but that they had turned down the offer because they were still hoping for the \$1,000,000 grant to build their center.)
2. Tax title properties that may be available
3. Modular structure
4. Town-owned property that was designated for this purpose
5. Tyna Donelson's suggestion to modify Town Hall with rest rooms and kitchen upstairs.
6. Val Daigle's suggestion to use South Station
7. Joining another town
8. A regional center

Bill Johnson inquired as to the need at this time as the seniors had just relocated to Town Hall and they were happy. He also noted that Briggs was not an option at this time and there were many more pressing items. Fagan agreed that the DPW move was the highest priority at this time for the Town and that what we have is not sustainable and we should look at a strategic plan and vision.

C. New Paper in the Area – The Valley Patriot

Briggs stated that the editor of The Valley Patriot came in to his office to let him know that his paper was available. He stated it was a free paper that came out monthly and that it covered 8 communities, Winchendon, Ashburnham, Templeton, Gardner, Hubbardston, Westminster, Fitchburg and Leominster.

VII. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE (Report is attached to these minutes and also posted on the Town's website.)

Briggs began his report by stating that the COA was looking for a fax machine and that Thoma Travel had one to donate. He wanted to ask the Board's approval on this donation. The Board unanimously approved.

He stated that when Maggie Whitney was on the Board of Selectmen she started a task list for them and now he had a task list with updates that he would send to the Board periodically, one completed and one pending which would keep them informed.

Briggs also stated that Dr. Hicks had asked about the Briggs Project Maintenance Fund where we could put in up to 1% of the project value and the SBAB would match. He stated that there were questions that needed to be answered and when Mike Zapantis brought this to their attention he didn't get clarification so it was not pursued. Vitone stated that the

primary reason we didn't do this was because we could not get verification and the school requesting more information.

He stated that Dick Reynolds, the Building Commissioner generated a report on the Briggs school permitting fees which included all the costs associated with all the inspectors with a total fee of \$167,350. Vitone took a moment to give a little history about this issue stating that the original estimate on fees was \$218,000. He added that in Ashburnham we pay our inspectors when they work so this is why we need to charge the fees. Briggs stated that Reynolds was meeting with the architect the following day so he wanted to be sure that everything was in line beforehand. Vitone stated that the Town is not making money so this was the right thing to do, to charge the full prescribed fees. Fagan agreed. Vitone stated that a letter was drafted and would be sent out to the Briggs Building Committee on this decision.

Briggs wanted to remind the Board that a Tri-Board meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, February 28th.

He gave an update on the Water Tank project noting that it was moving along but that they did find a problem with the by-pass valve where it over-fills. He added that it will affect Cobb Road with an interruption of service. He stated that the communication tower was up but that there were some issues with the grounding cables that needed to be corrected.

He stated that the PILOT was going forward and Town Counsel is currently reviewing an agreement. He also noted that the Light Department has signed the PPA.

He noted that he has scheduled a Capital Planning Committee meeting for Wednesday, February 29th at 6:30 p.m. in the Lower Level Meeting Room at Town Hall to review the FY13 Capital acquisitions. He also noted that right after this meeting in the same location, a joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and the Advisory Board would be held to review the FY13 Budget.

Briggs stated that the Building Commissioner, Dick Reynolds' inspection of Town Hall indicated that the front steps needed immediate repair as they have shifted and are lifting up. He stated that Monty Tech has agreed to come and work on this for us.

He stated that our new Town Accountant was working out very well.

He noted that the regionalization of Dispatch is now under serious discussion and that the first meeting was held on Wednesday, February 8th and was a first-step working session which was very informative. He stated that the next meeting was scheduled for tomorrow, Wednesday, February 22nd at 4:30 p.m. to continue the discussions.

Briggs stated that he had finalized the Fire Chief's contract and per the Charter, he needed the Board of Selectmen's approval to go forward. ***Fagan made the motion to approve the contract as presented and was seconded by Vitone. Motion carried.***

Fagan noted that he brought up the purchasing process in the Town because he started thinking about centralized purchasing and to look for opportunities. Briggs stated that all the Department Heads look for ways to regionalize their purchasing and are always willing to look at other alternatives. He also noted that right now the Town purchases vehicles off the state bid list, they purchase paper with the School District, heating oil is purchased with

Gardner and other towns and school districts and sand and salt with Westminster. Vitone asked Briggs to look at the Town budget and see what's under our control and not regionalized and back out what's untapped.

Vitone stated that both Greg Fagan and Gail Dumont were members of the Briggs Building Committee, Fagan as the Board of Selectmen representative. He asked Briggs to send a letter to the Committee asking to appoint Fagan to the Executive Committee.

Vitone then took some time to explain what has and is transpiring with the Town of Ashby. He stated that this began as an experiment, sharing Doug Briggs as Town Administrator and so far, both Boards of Selectmen are pleased. He stated that the next step was to regionalize Dispatch. He gave examples of other regionalized Dispatch centers such as:

- Harvard, Lancaster, Lunenburg and Devens
- Templeton and Phillipston
- Rutland, Hubbardston, Oakham (and working on Barre)

He stated that these Dispatch centers were first in line for funds from the State. He stated that so far they have had one meeting on February 8th with a second scheduled for February 22nd with a tour of the Dispatch Center at the Public Safety Building.

Vitone stated that the study results would be shared with all tomorrow and the next step would be to apply for the 911 grant which would help with servers, etc. He added that the grant application needs to be submitted a month from now. He stated that there were a lot of concerns and a lot of opportunities and that all meetings were open to the public. He added that out of the five communities that had done this, four out of the five were pleased with the outcome.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 6, 2012 Minutes – Regular Meeting

Fagan motioned to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2012 Board of Selectmen meeting and was seconded by Vitone. Motion carried.

IX. BOS CORRESPONDENCE

Vitone stated that the Board was in receipt of a letter from Attorney Scott Graves who was running for State Representative asking for Ashburnham's concerns and needs. He noted that Doug Briggs would respond to this request and would also send the same list to Rep. Bastien.

X. LATE FEBRUARY/EARLY MARCH MEETINGS

Fagan read the list of meetings for February as follows:

Committee/Board	Day/Date/Time	Location
IT Advisory Board	Wednesday, 2/22/12, 7:00 p.m.	Fire Conf. Rm., PSB
Conservation Commission	Monday, 3/5/12, 6:30 p.m.	Lower Level, Town Hall
Council on Aging Board	Monday, 3/12/12, 10:00 a.m.	Lower Level, Town Hall
Water/Sewer Commission	Tuesday, 3/13/12, 6:00 p.m.	Lower Level, Town Hall
Board of Assessors	Wednesday, 3/14/12, 6:00 p.m.	Assessors Office – Town Hall
250 th Celebration Committee	Thursday, 3/15/12, 6:30 p.m.	Webber Room - Oakmont
Conservation Commission	Monday, 3/19/12, 6:30 p.m.	Lower Level – Town Hall

XI ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fagan read the announcements as follows:

Town Clerk Reminders:

- January 1st and throughout the year – Open registration of voters in the Town Clerk’s office at Town Hall – Monday from 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Tuesday through Thursday – 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Town Hall is closed on Fridays.)
- Citizens Caucus – Monday, February 27, 2012 – 7:00 p.m. – Malcolm C. Stewart Community Room, Stevens Memorial Library, 20 Memorial Drive.
- Last day for filing applications for absentee ballots for voters who will be out of town for the state primary is Monday, March 5, 2012 – 12:00 noon.
- State Primary – Tuesday, March 6, 2012 – polls open 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. – J.R. Briggs Elementary School Gym, 96 Williams Road.
- Tuesday, March 6th – 5:00 p.m. – Last day for filing nomination papers for the Town Election with the Board of Registrars.
- Thursday, March 22nd – 5:00 p.m. – Last day to file objections or withdrawals of nomination papers to the Town Clerk.
- Tuesday, April 3rd – 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. – Final Registration for the Town Election – Town Clerk’s Office, Town Hall.
- Tuesday, April 17th – 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. – Final Registration for the Annual Town Meeting – Town Clerk’s Office, Town Hall.
- Monday, April 23rd – 12:00 noon – Last day for filing applications for absentee ballots for voters who will be out of town for the Town Election.
- Tuesday, April 24th – Town Election – polls open at 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the J.R. Briggs Elementary School Gym, 96 Williams Road.
- Saturday, May 5th – Annual Town Meeting – 10:00 a.m. – Oakmont Regional High School Auditorium, 9 Oakmont Drive.

Representative Rich Bastien Office Hours at 6:00 p.m. in the Training Room at the Public Safety Building on the third Monday of every month. To schedule time, call 978-630-1776.

The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be held on Monday, March 5th at 6:30 p.m. in the Training Room at the Public Safety Building.

Fagan then read the list of open positions for nomination of candidates at the Annual Town Caucus to be held on Monday, February 27th at 7:00 p.m. upstairs at Town Hall. The list is as follows:

<u>Office</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Incumbent</u>
Moderator	1 year	Donald J. Lawrence
Board of Selectmen	3 years	Edward T. Vitone, Jr.
Board of Selectmen	1 year	Vacant
Board of Health (2)	3 years	Thomas J. Flanagan Francis J. McLaughlin
Planning Board	5 years	John A. MacMillan
Library Trustee	3 years	Barbara Hallowell
Library Trustee	2 years	Vacant
Municipal Light Board	3 years	Kevin A. Lashua

Vitone noted that John MacMillan would not be running as he was moving out of town.

XII. SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT

Vitone asked for any public input and Bill Johnson inquired about the Regional School Agreement and if it would be ready before the Annual Town Meeting. Vitone responded that it would be and that Briggs was working with them on this to get it done in time.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

*At 7:30 p.m. Fagan motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Vitone.
Motion carried.*

Respectfully submitted,
Sylvia Turcotte
Assistant to the Town Administrator