

TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MONDAY – NOVEMBER 19, 2012 – 6:30 p.m.
TRAINING ROOM – PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLEX

This meeting was aired live on local cable television.

PRESENT: Ed Vitone, Chair, Leo Janssens, Clerk, Doug Briggs, Town Administrator.

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

None

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Janssens motioned to approve the agenda, and was seconded by Vitone. Motion carried.

IV. PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS

A. Liquor License Hearing Café 57 (6:45pm)

Leo Janssens motioned to open the hearing Chairman Vitone seconded; motion carried.

Chairman Vitone read the posting for the hearing and asked Ted Holmes, the requestor of the License, to give a brief overview of his operation and why he is requesting the license. There was one abutter Harold Dandy that spoke on behalf of the applicant and no one against. Chairman Vitone asked Mr. Briggs if there were any concerns reported by the Police and Mr. Briggs stated there was not. Mr. Janssens asked if the Fire Department was okay and Mr. Briggs reported that the Fire Department and Building Commissioner were scheduled to do an inspection on Tuesday the 20th of November and the results would be reported to him. *Mr. Vitone hearing no other questions asked for a motion to close the hearing, which Mr. Janssen did with a second from Mr. Vitone and unanimously carried.* The board then signed the application

B. Water System question and answer

The Town's engineering firm of Tighe & Bond represented by Peter Valinski, Randy Brown and John McClellan were in attendance. Chairman Vitone stated that Tighe & Bond had volunteered to speak to the Board and answer any questions they or the public might have due to the recent water main breaks over the past few months. After much discussion, Ed Vitone asked Randy Brown to summarize the project and its current issues. Randy summarized as follows:

“The Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners (Board) coordinated a water system improvements project that included construction of a new 1 million gallon water tank on Cushing Street and when completed replaced the 420,000 gallon tank on High Street which was constructed in 1912.

In late 2011, construction of the pump modifications, site work, and water tank were completed and ready for service.

The Cushing Street tank was constructed at an elevation approximately 50 feet higher than the existing High Street tank. The parcel where the new tank was constructed was selected through collaboration with the Board, Town Administrator, and Historical Commission, and was Town-owned property. The higher elevation resulted in a 25 PSI pressure increase to the water system.

On March 19, 2012, the Town switched over service to the new Cushing Street tank and took the High Street tank off-line. Within 24 hours, there were four water main breaks (2 on Holden Street, 1 on Corey

Hill Road, and 1 on Central Street). The water mains on both Holden Street and Corey Hill Road were composed of asbestos cement water mains. The water main on Central Street was cast iron pipe installed in 1910.

At this time, the Board requested that the High Street tank be immediately placed back into service until the cause of the water main breaks could be investigated. Over the next few months, the Board evaluated their options to reduce and/or eliminate future water main breaks. One option included placing the Cushing Street tank back on-line. The Board suspected the breaks were occurring at weak points in the system. Over time, these breaks inevitably would have surfaced. Eventually the breaks will stop as the weak points are repaired.

The Board also considered installing a new pressure reducing valve near the Lake Road/Hastings Road intersection, which could bring pressures back to the level they were prior to the tank switchover. One downside of this option is there were homes at higher elevations, in particular along Lashua Road, High Street, and Hastings Road, that welcomed the added pressure. Many of these homes were able to eliminate their pumps that boosted pressure in their service. Also, another downside of a pressure reducing valve is the added maintenance. The Board received a quote of over \$80,000 to construct a pressure reducing valve and vault; however, the Board decided not to pursue this option.

At the treatment plant, there is a flow control valve just downstream of the pumps. The flow control valve is normally closed, and when the pump kicks on, the valve opens slowly. The Board requested the valve to be inspected and reset to its slowest opening time, which is one minute. Previously, the valve was set to open in approximately 30 seconds.

The Board opted to move forward to place the Cushing Street tank back on-line. Over the course of the summer and fall months, there were multiple water main breaks throughout the system, including on Corey Hill Road, Liberty Lane, South Main Street, Hillendale Road, Holden Street, Pleasant Street, South Maple Street, Central Street, Oakmont Drive, and Williams Road. During the repairs, it was noted that many of these breaks could be attributed to pre-existing conditions, such as cracks that eventually gave way with the added pressure. Other breaks formed at services that were tapped onto existing asbestos cement mains. Typically, service taps onto this type of water mains are done with saddles.

Tighe & Bond placed pressure recorders around Town to monitor system pressures. There was a theory that sudden pressure spikes caused water hammer, leading to the breaks. If there was a sudden spike, the pressure recorders would pick them up. Pressure recorders were placed on the following streets: Lake Road, Fitchburg Road, Corey Hill Road, Central Street, Lashua Road, Williams Road, and Pleasant Street.

Upon evaluating the recorder data, a 7 PSI increase was noted along Lake Road that occurred at the beginning of the pump run. On average, the “spike” lasted 12 – 15 seconds before the pressure dropped to the normal levels for the duration of the pump run. This small increase is normal and should not be a cause for the breaks. In addition, there was no correlation to the time the pumps turned on and the time the breaks occurred. It was also noted that there were prior breaks on a few of the streets that had breaks over the past year, including Holden Street and Corey Hill Road.

Further, the Board evaluated their unaccounted for water, which is the difference between the volume of water produced at the treatment plant and the volume of water metered by the customers. Recently, the amount of unaccounted for water has drastically reduced, likely a result of eliminating the small leaks that developed into the recent breaks.

Based on this analysis, the Board believes the breaks are a result of inadequate pipe conditions. For this reason, the Board has decided to not make any modifications to the new water tank or the piping leading the tank. The Board does recognize that the water system needs to be upgraded, in particular to eliminate the asbestos cement water mains and upgrade the 100 year old cast iron mains. The Board is currently working on a long-term plan to address the water system needs.”

Robert McCloud asked about illegal well hook-ups on Lake Road and Lashua Road. The Water Department will send out reminders to water users to remind and inform them that these type hookups are illegal.

Mr. Gerard wanted to know about any plans for repair of water mains and road repair. Mr. Briggs stated that the DPW is working on a capital plan for both road and water improvements and Mr. Vitone requested it be available by the Annual Town meeting in May.

V. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Veteran's Day Services - Leo Janssens reported that all went well and Mr. Briggs stated he had heard Mr. Janssens' remarks were well appreciated.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

VII. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Briggs presented his report as follows:

TOWN COMMITTEES

Currently there are (2) openings on the Conservation Commission, (2) on the Council on Aging Board, (1) on the Capital Planning Committee, (1) Advisory Board, (1) Parks and Recreation, and (1) on the Board of Assessors. These are listed on the Town's website under Volunteer Opportunities.

Also, we are looking for interested parties to serve on the Cable Advisory Board.

WATER

With a balance of close to \$210,000 the commission has voted to do the following change orders, as quoted by Tighe & Bond: This is "USDA grant" money that if not spent would go back to the federal government.

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| 1. Install variable speed drive (VSD) on pumps at treatment plant | \$ 60,000 |
| 2. Install pressure transmitter on discharge line to treatment plant | \$ 5,000 |
| 3. Change tank level communications to a digital transmission | \$ 20,000 |
| 4. Install security measures (cameras, lights, etc.) | \$ 90,000 |
| 5. Add mixing system to Gardner Hill tank | <u>\$ 35,000</u> |
| Total | \$210,000 |

Water Commissioners also voted to authorize Tighe & Bond to do transient dynamic analysis with the system model that they have built. This will allow us to run different scenarios with valves and identify any system response.

ACCOUNTANT

We have received 6 applicants for the position. Ms. Turcotte has set up interviews with the top three candidates to be held on Monday, November 26th.

CONSERVATION AGENT

I have issued an offer letter to Maureen Pollock for the position of Conservation Agent per the recommendation of the Conservation Commission. Projected start date of December 4, 2012.

Ms. Pollock was chosen out of a field of eight candidates. Maureen is completing her dual masters degree in Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning from U-mass Amherst.

AWRSD NEGOTIATIONS

I met with the negotiation team on Wednesday the 7th of November. The Committee has set up a series of preliminary meetings to develop a strategy for bargaining with the AWTA.

DPW

GCG our engineering firm has contacted the Mass DOT to review the status of the engineering on RT101 South.

Steve Nims, Jim Whitney, Leo Collette and I met with Mayor Hawke and Dane Arnold from Gardner about communication issues relating to the sewer pumping station operations. Gardner is looking to end our relationship and we are interested in seeking alternatives to Gardner. I have already open discussion with USDA as a funding source and enlisted Senator Brewer support.

The DPW is applying for monies from the “Sewer Rate Relief Fund” and the Water and Sewer Commissioners have signed. I need the BOS to also sign. These are State funds set aside to help relieve the burden of debt service on municipal sewer systems. This is the first time since 2009 that the state has funded this program.

TOWN HALL

New basement windows as voted at the Annual Town Meeting, have been installed.

CODE RED

Chief Barrett and I met with representatives from Code Red which is a privatized version of reverse 911. Total yearly cost is \$4,400 for unlimited use. Chief Barrett is looking at other vendor options prior to proceeding.

FIBER

Fiber has been installed from the PSB to DPW, Town Hall, and Library. A meeting to identify next steps will be held Tuesday November 20th with Guardian Technologies.

FY14 BUDGET

Departments have received their budget sheets for FY14 with the initial response due on November 28th.

PILOT

Working on a Pilot agreement with a company called **ten K energy** for a 3 MW facility. Proposal is for \$25,000 per MW per year for 20 years for the first 2MW and \$10,000 per year for the third, for a total of \$60,000 per year for twenty years.

LIGHTNING STRIKES – INSURANCE CLAIMS

Lightning strike at new Water Tank - August 4, 2012

- Invoices submitted \$2,995
- Insurance paid \$ 495 (less \$2,500 deductible)

Lightning strike at Public Safety Building – August 16, 2012

- Invoices submitted \$22,113.64
- Insurance paid \$19,613.64 (less \$2,500 deductible)

VMS BUILDING

The Hazardous Material (Asbestos) inspection is completed and we are awaiting the results.

The North Country Sustainability Group will be out of the building by November 30th which is the end of their lease with the Town and at that time we will winterize the building.

OLD FIRE STATION

Appraisal from Central mass Appraisal should be to me by Wednesday November 21st. RFP due date is November 28th.

WINTER PARKING BAN

The Winter Parking Ban is now in effect as of November 15, 2012. This is in accordance with Section 5-5 of the Ashburnham General Bylaws – “No All Night Parking (Winter Season)”

Parking on any street is only allowed for a period of time no longer than one hour between the hours of 12:00 midnight and 5:00 a.m. from November 15th to April 1st. There is a fine of \$50.00 per offense.

PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE EVENT

The Parks & Rec Committee is scheduling a Holiday Tree Lighting event on Friday, November 30th. They will also be collecting toys to be distributed to needy families in Town at this event.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. November 19, 2012 – Regular Meeting

Mr. Janssens motioned to approve the minutes, as submitted and was seconded by Vitone. Motion carried.

XI. BOS CORRESPONDENCE

X. NOVEMBER/DECEMBER MEETINGS

Leo Janssens read the meeting calendar for December.

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| Mon., November 26 | 6:30 p.m. | Conservation Comm. | Lower Level – Town Hall |
| Mon., December 3 | 6:30 p.m. | Board of Health | Lower Level – Town Hall |

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| Mon., December 10 | 10:00 a.m. 6:30 p.m. | Council on Aging Board Conservation Comm. | Lower Level – Town Hall Lower Level – Town Hall |
| Tues., December 11 | 6:00 p.m. | Water/Sewer Comm. | Lower Level – Town Hall |
| Wed., December 12 | 5:00 p.m. | Board of Assessors | Assessors Office – Town Hall |
| Thurs, December 13 | 6:30 p.m. | Planning Board | Lower Level – Town Hall |

XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Janssens 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)
- November 20, 2012, Tuesday – Final day to submit papers to the Town Clerk to be placed on the ballot for the Special Town Election.
- December 19, 2012, Wednesday – Final registration for the Special Town Election. Town Clerk’s office at Town Hall, 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- January 7, 2013, Monday at 12:00 noon – Last day for filing applications for absentee ballots for voters who will be out of town for the Special Town Election.
- January 8, 2013, Tuesday – **SPECIAL TOWN ELECTION** – Polls open at 9:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m. at the J.R. Briggs Elementary School Gym, 96 Williams Road.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be held on Monday, December 3, 2012, at 6:30 p.m. in the Training Room at the Public Safety Building.

In observance of the Thanksgiving Day holiday the Town Hall will be closed on Wednesday, November 21st and Thursday, November 22nd. We wish you a wonderful holiday!

The Parks and Recreation Committee has received a donation of a 20 foot holiday tree which will be placed on the Town Common for the holiday season. They will hold a special Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony on the lawn in front of Town Hall on Friday, November 30th beginning at 6:30 p.m. with the lighting of the tree to take place at 7:00 p.m. This should be a fun time for the whole family.

Santa Claus will be coming to Ashburnham, courtesy of the Ashburnham Firefighters Association, on Saturday, December 1st from 10:00 a.m. to noon. The parade will begin on School Street and will end at the Public Safety Building.

XII. SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT

None

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Janssens made a motion that the Board vote to go into Executive Session to deliberate upon matters which, if done in open meeting could detrimentally affect the position of the Town regarding strategy with respect to collective bargaining and to only reconvene into open meeting to adjourn. Mr. Vitone seconded. Roll call Mr. Janssens aye and Mr. Vitone aye unanimously carried.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The Board came back into open session at 8:33 p.m. *Mr. Janssens moved to adjourn Mr. Vitone seconded- motion unanimously carried.*

Respectfully submitted,
Douglas Briggs
Town Administrator