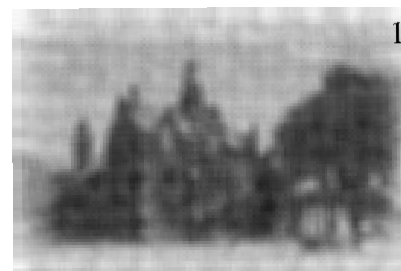


Town of Ayer
Board of Selectmen
Town Hall, First Floor Meeting Room
Ayer Massachusetts, 01432
1-6-09



Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Meeting date: 1-6-09

Present:

Carolyn McCreary, Chairman (Ms. McCreary)	X	Cornelius F. Sullivan, Vice-Chairman (Mr. Sullivan)	X
Richard D. Gilles, Clerk (Mr. Gilles)	X	James Fay, Member (Mr. Fay)	X
Gary J. Luca, Member (Mr. Luca)	X	Shaun Suhoski, Town Administrator (Mr. Suhoski)	X
Janet Lewis, Secretary (Mrs. Lewis)	X		

Meeting Called to order at 7:05p.m.

Public Input-Chairman McCreary requested if there was anyone present wishing to meet with the Board under Public Input.

David Bodurtha -Permit Tracking Software status

Douglas Friedrich-Water Bill

Selectman Gilles-care of graves

Chairman McCreary called for a motion to approve the Agenda. Selectman Luca moved the Board approve the Agenda as amended, 2nd by Selectman Fay, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

Mr. Bodurtha requested status of Permit Tracking Software, questioning delay in start up, obstacles getting IT on board.

Mr. Board advised Mr. Bodurtha to file transfers done/input/data base ready. The Board requested meeting be scheduled with Town Accountant, Town Administrator and Selectmen to discuss IT position.

The Board went off the posted Agenda to welcome LTC Steven W. Nott, Commander -Fort Devens, to the meeting. Col. Nott presented the Town an original framed Army Community Covenant signed by the four (4) Boards of Selectmen from the Town's that make up Fort Devens committed to building strong communities: Ayer, Shirley, Harvard and Lancaster along with MADEV Executive Director Robert Culver and the Devens Citizens Advisory Group living on Devens. Selectman Fay read into the record the Army Covenant presented to the Town of Ayer committed to a partnership that supports the strength, resilience, and readiness of soldiers and their families. The Board thanked Col. Nott for coming in to meet with the Board and presenting the Town with an official covenant.

Selectman Gilles stated he had received an acknowledgement from the Veteran's Administration re assistance for Town Programs.

Douglas Friedrich requested the Board's assistance re his recent water bill doubling from 1st quarter. Questioning if meters were calibrated. The Board requested Water Department respond with details-meter reader to report re billing vs calibration and also to have the Water foreman review and report back.

Chairman McCreary took this opportunity to announce the Green Communities latest venture conducting "2nd Friday Night Movies" at the Ayer Town Hall on Friday Nights with movies in the Great Hall on the 2nd Friday of each month the 1st movie is this Friday Night, Jan. 9th, at 7:00p.m. with the "Story of Stuff" to be presented. Chairman McCreary announcing movie is free to the public with in kind donations accepted toward energy costs.

Agenda Item #1. -LaSita Restaurant-All Alcohol License-The Board met with James Januskiewicz owner of LaSita Restaurant who requested the Board's permission to grant him a six (6) month "Pocket License" re decision to sell or re-restaurant. Economy based request. Selectman Luca recusing himself from discussion. Selectman Fay acknowledging Mr. Januskiewicz being a long-time resident/ businessman in Town well respected and moved the Board

Grant Mr. Januskiewicz a six (6) month 'Pocket License' expiring on 6-30-09 license to be paid in full (\$3K) and held in the Selectmen's Office, 2nd by Selectman Gilles, VOTE: Selectman Fay aye, Selectman Gilles aye, Selectman Sullivan aye, Selectman Luca going on record to his recusing himself from all discussion and vote, Chairman McCreary aye, 4-0 motion passes.

Agenda Item #2. Water Dept. Projects-The Board met with Rick Linde, Water Foreman-Dept. of Public Works re the Grove Pond Filter Media replacement Change Order re gravel loss on two levels due to frequent back washing-power surges to WTF. Selectman Gilles moved the Board approve the Change Order for the Grove Pond Treatment Facility in the amount not to exceed 23,837.00 plus \$4,585.00 (25% materials) for the 2nd by Selectman Sullivan VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

Chairman McCreary went off the posted Agenda to thank and acknowledge the following Town Hall staff, officials and citizens for taking the **Heartsaver AED** Course at the Ayer Fire Station (Heart Defibrillation Certification Program & CPR Course) – Jeff Thomas, Michelle Carlisle, Chris Ryan, Dan Sherman, Tom Hogan, Ann Callahan, Lauri Fritz, Lisa Gabree, Marianne Brouillette, Sister Paula McCrea, Sue Sullivan, Donald Baker, Denis Callahan, Shaun Suhoski and Mary Spinner. The Board congratulated and thanked all for taking the required training for use of Town Hall Defibrillation unit.

Agenda Item #2. (cont. Water Dept. Projects)-The Board met with Susan Hunnewell & Jack O'Connell of Tata & Howard re: Spectacle Pond Replacement Well #2 and consolidated Grove Pond Projects. Mr. Suhoski opened the discussion by updating the Board to Tata & Howard's engineering agreement to design the new water treatment plant and third drinking water well at Grove Pond placed on the Town's Stimulus package application –(Federal economic recovery bill-for "ready to go" infrastructure projects, which includes public infrastructure and redevelopment projects which are both already designed or in design development phase. Mr. Suhoski advising the Board to deadline for submission is January 8, 2009 by 2:00p.m. Other projects listed: downtown parking facility, Senior Ctr. expansion, McPherson Rd. upgrades, Town Hall IT Needs Assessment & action plan. Mr. Suhoski turned the discussion over to Jack O'Connell re the Spectacle Pond replacement well. Mr. O'Connell summarized the discussion by advising the Board of the test well investigations for Spectacle Pond Replacement Well #2. stating it appears that at the depth of the existing well, the water quantity is available however the water quality is poor and recommended the Town consider the installation of three (3) shallower wells as a replacement versus one (1) deep well. Mr. O'Connell advising to fully investigate this potential option additional shallow test wells would be required resulting in additional project costs of approximately \$3,500.00 to Tata & Howard's existing agreement of \$45K. Selectman Gilles moved the Board vote to approve additional project costs re the installation of three (3) additional test wells, 2nd by Selectman Sullivan for discussion-real number to be developed and presented over \$4K projected, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

Jack O'Connell reviewed with the Board the Grove Pond Wells-Single design and construction contract for replacement wells #1. and #2. and new well #3 Mr. O'Connell and Ms. Hunnewell reviewed the schedule, design fee and construction costs estimates with the Board. The Board after a lengthy discussion requested Tata & Howard to present cost break-out re seven (7) phases to be presented at Fall Town Meeting when all numbers are in which presents a complete package that reflects accurate picture of the Grove Pond history and current and future work.

Agenda Item #3. Public Hearing –Shared DPW Superintendent with Town of Harvard-Chairman McCreary opened the discussion re Board of Selectmen appointing Screening Committee charged with review of candidates for the Superintendent of Public Works position and Committee having met with Mr. Nona Harvard's Supt. of Public Works re background/investigation of shared Superintendent of Department of Public Works position with the Town of Harvard through an Intermunicipal Agreement.

20p.m. Chairman McCreary opened the Public Hearing-

1. Peter Johnston-Town of Ayer resident for 50 years and member of the DPW Superintendent Screening Com. stated he was shocked this had gone this far without public input, very disturbing and voiced his opinion of not being in favor of shared position re concerns he had that this would be stepping stone for other Town services.
2. James Pinard Jr.-Businessman from Town of Ayer stated he also was on DPW Superintendent Screening Committee and had pros/cons re shared position. Mr. Pinard feeling part-time person would not work, listen to people, Town of Ayer needs their own Superintendent, Town has a lot going on. Mr. Pinard advising to Committee recommending two (2) very good candidates for consideration.
3. Mary Spinner-Town of Ayer resident, Fin-Com member stating being against shared position advising Board to DPW Budget for Fy-09 in excess of over \$5million, Town needs own person. Concern re foreman's doing more admin work and payroll increasing to cover additional responsibilities when Superintendent not available questioning how will this help the Town.

The Board introduced Richard Nota to the meeting. Mr. Nota gave the Board a brief back-ground stating regionalizing services is a clear indicator of financial time country is in. Mr. Nota stating he has been in this business a long time has the education and experience for position. Mr. Nota took questions and concerns from the Board re handling two communities needs at the same time without being overwhelmed. Mr. Nota looking to build relationships/responsibilities with staff and a 6-9 month trial period is adequate for task to see if this is way to go. Mr. Nota advising board to past services as Weston Public Works Director in which he oversaw volunteers along with full-time staff cross trained to share/maintain equipment, did projects in-house with out hiring consultants, assisted in Collective Bargaining. The Board addressed roadwork pride in Town i.e. snow removal, street repairs, paving, etc.. not wanting to loose this quality of work with shared position. Another area discussed was managerial skills working with employees last Supt. lacked these skill. Mr. Nota again advising to having in is tenure in Weston only 1-2 grievances. The Board addressed work load -pressure cooker, last Supt. needed help- to much work for one person and Board looked at this as a great opportunity re solution-constructive way to handle/explore through a trail basis, 3-6 months, to see how it would work, 1st step in Public process, want to hear more. Ayer is an affordable community by keeping taxes modest. Sharing of services/regionalization will not go away and was put forward as a trial to be determine if successful or not.

The Board took more comments from residents-

1. Bill Adamson-stated Board of Selectmen are elected to represent residents-Town of Ayer growing-Town is going backwards. Willing to increase tax rate if necessary to keep in Town.
2. Rick Linde-foreman, Water Dept.-Foreman's have stepped up dramatically changing job descriptions, requesting Board's consideration re availability of Supt. when needed. Mr. Nota responding to being only 8 minutes away, misconception re job responsibilities/duties falling by wayside, Ayer will take up most of his time.
3. Gerry Wood-67 year resident of Town of Ayer stated he has a very high regard for DPW employees, Town of Ayer needs full time Superintendent-regionalization scares him, next thing it will be Devens, Shirley, etc. Concerns raised were loosing control of Superintendent, tax increase, citizens pride in Town services provided by DPW and to respect the Screening Committees proposal and interview two finalist.
4. Doug Jasperson-DPW Asst. Foreman Highway Dept.-Questioning why Harvard? Offered services before and Harvard denied, why now? Morale issue also.
5. Frank Maxant -feeling it is a degrading quality of management regionally.

The Board thanked all for coming and sharing their views and called for a motion to conclude the Public Hearing. Selectman Luca moved to close the Hearing, 2nd by Selectman Sullivan, Vote: unanimous, so moved.

9:30p.m. Public Hearing closed.


Agenda Item #4. Fy-10 Budget (General Discussion)-deferred to next Wednesday Tri-Board Meeting to discuss broader concepts.- Mr. Suhoski updated the Board to suggested areas of savings:

- Reduce Town Hall hours to 36 hours/week within 4 days tied into a wage freeze for affected employees for Fy-10 (estimated savings \$5K in energy costs avoided Steps and COLA.
- Close Town Hall on Fridays and limit of three evenings per week –if problematic police & fire Stations available for meeting nights.
- Request if staff wishes to voluntarily reduce their hours
- Request departments heads to inquire & plan for retirements or other attrition in Fy-10
- Implement wage freeze for all personnel
- Continue to review Health Insurance options for greater savings.
- Eliminate all non-Town “raise” articles including: SHAVE, Fireworks, youth baseball/cheerleading subsidy, American Legion and Memorial Day celebration cost savings \$30,370
- Moratorium on TIF’s
- Moratorium on local fee waivers
- Have boards, committees and departments review fees on annual basis
- Ensure Town accounts current prior to issuance of new permits/licenses through formal policy
- Decide fate on town owned property (old fire station, tax title)

Agenda Item #5. Town Administrator’s Report-

1. No water & sewer permits to present
2. Great Hall Usage Fee-Town Administrator presented recommendation to the Board given budgetary restraints and increased cost of utilities the Facilities Director Dan Sherman has estimated that a “typical” four-hour use of the Great Hall consumes \$35.00 in energy costs. Mr. Suhoski proposing to implement a \$35.00 usage fee for the Great Hall for all non-Town groups to compensate for energy usage, this fee non waivable except by a vote of the Board of Selectmen. Motion to approve made by Selectman Luca, 2nd by Selectman Fay, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.
3. Federal Stimulus Package Proposals-reviewed by board earlier in evening:
 - Grove Pond Wells, Downtown Parking, Senior Ctr. Expansion, renovations to schools i.e. windows etc., DPW upgrade water pipes, public safety, energy –alternate, McPherson Well- (MaDev)
4. The Board designated Chairman McCreary as the voting delegate for the MA Interlocal Insurance Assoc. at the MMA Meeting in Boston, Saturday, Jan.24, 2009.
5. Mr. Suhoski updated the Board to the Ayer Fire Dept. receiving a \$5K Grant from MIIA for the Station’s snow guards on the roof of the station. The Board extended their congratulations and thanks to the Dept.
6. Mr. Suhoski advised the Board to the Police Chief requesting the Board’s consideration of By-law Enforcement re the newly enacted Marijuana Law. The Board requested to put the Chief on the Selectmen’s upcoming Agenda re this issue (1-20-09).

10:00p.m. Selectman Gilles moved the Board adjourn the meeting, 2nd by Selectman Sullivan, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

Richard Gilles, Clerk  Date: 2-3-09