

TOWN OF BLACKSTONE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING – 7:00 p.m.
February 17, 2015

PRESENT: Ryan Chamberland, Acting Chairman Robert Dubois
Michael Catalano Margo Bik

OTHERS PRESENT: Daniel Keyes, Town Administrator Patrick Costello, Esquire

1 & 2: CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. and roll call was taken as noted above.

3: TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS:

None.

4. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Boucher
Recording Secretary

T-02-18-15

cc: Board of Selectmen
Town Administrator
Town Clerk

TOWN OF BLACKSTONE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING – 7:30 p.m.
February 17, 2015

PRESENT: Ryan Chamberland, Acting Chairman Robert Dubois
Michael Catalano Margo Bik

OTHERS PRESENT: Daniel Keyes, Town Administrator Patrick Costello, Esquire

1 & 2: CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OR ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL:

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. and roll call was taken as noted above. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all members of the Board.

3: ACCEPT MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF JANUARY 10, 2015 AND JANUARY 13, 2015:

A motion was made by Mrs. Bik, seconded by Mr. Catalano, to accept the minutes of January 10, 2015 and January 13, 2015. There was no discussion and the vote was unanimous.

4. GOOD AND WELFARE – PUBLIC (7:30-8:00 P.M. (5 min. time limit per participant):

None.

5. CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

6. HEARINGS AND MEETINGS:

Acting Chairman Chamberland noted that several meetings had to be cancelled because of snowstorms and agenda items were rescheduled to this meeting.

7. OLD BUSINESS:

- Update FY15-FY16 Budgets:

Mr. Keyes noted that all departments remain within the confines of their budget. Overtime budgets for FY 15 will be addressed. Mr. Keyes commended DPW Superintendent Sullivan for keeping the streets and sidewalks plowed and passable during the several snow storms. He noted there was a problem with salt delivery, but that problem is state-wide. Mr. Chamberland noted that Capital Outlay is all set and moving forward

8. NEW BUSINESS:

- Approve a one-day liquor license request from St. Theresa’s Parish, 630 Rathbun Street, effective February 21, 2015 from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Mr. Dubois, seconded by Mr. Catalano, to approve a one-day liquor license request from St. Theresa’s Parish, 630 Rathbun Street, effective February 21, 2015 from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. There was no discussion and the vote was unanimous.

- Appointment of Allyson Anderson, 12 New York Avenue, to the Memorial Day Parade Committee for a term upon completion of objective:

A motion was made by Mr. Dubois, seconded by Mrs. Bik, to appoint Mrs. Allyson Anderson to the Memorial Day Parade Committee as stated above. There was no discussion and the vote was unanimous.

- Appointment of Wayne Anderson, 12 New York Avenue, to the Memorial Day Parade Committee for a term upon completion of objective:
Mr. Anderson stated he has lived in Blackstone for three years, their son attends BMR and is in the Band. He and his wife want to become more involved in Town activities. Mr. Anderson stated he is a veteran of the Air Force and Navy. Mrs. Bik thanked him for his service to the country. A motion was made by Mr. Dubois, seconded by Mrs. Bik, to appoint Mr. Wayne Anderson to the Memorial Day Parade Committee as stated above. There was no discussion and the vote was unanimous.
- Approve co-partnership request from Michael Aiudi, d/b/a Blackstone Motors to add Janet Aiudi as co-partner:
A motion was made by Mr. Dubois, seconded by Mrs. Bik to approve the co-partnership request from Michael Aiudi, d/b/a Blackstone Motors to add Janet Aiudi as co-partner. There was no discussion and the vote was unanimous.
- Review Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles:
Mr. Chamberland asked the Board of Selectmen to open the warrant articles. We will take a vote at our next meeting on March 10, 2015 to close the warrant articles and they will be signed on March 24, 2015. That will give the Finance Committee and the community close to 2 months to review the warrant articles and go through their process. A motion was made by Mrs. Bik, seconded by Mr. Catalano to open the warrants for the Special and Annual Town Meetings to be held on May 26, 2015. There was no discussion and the vote was unanimous.
- Snow and Ice Budget Deficient Spending Approval:
Mr. Keyes stated that \$110,668 was appropriated for the Snow and Ice budget for FY 15. Mr. Keyes requests approval from the Board of Selectmen to deficit spend in this line item. As of this evening, we are over the budget by \$6,700. Mr. Catalano stated he has seen the plows and sanders out and about at all hours of the night during the unprecedented amount of snowfall in the past 20 days. He commended the DPW and private contractors for their dedication to the Town in opening the roads within 24-48 hours of each storm and felt this was amazing. Mr. Dubois concurred with Mr. Catalano's observation and hoped that those who complain would realize the enormity of the situation. It is difficult at best to deal with this much snow in so short a period of time. He also complimented the trash pickup and felt they did a great job in spite of the challenges the storms presented. Mr. Dubois noted that Mr. Keyes had the flat roof of Town Hall cleared off in 2 days. Mr. Chamberland stated that the Town Administrator did a fantastic job in keeping the Board informed throughout all of the storms. A motion was made by Mr. Dubois, seconded by Mr. Catalano, to allow deficit spending in the Snow and Ice budget. There was no further discussion and the vote was unanimous.
- Clean-Up Day – Mary Bulso:
As a member of the Historical Commission, Ms. Bulso stated that they have started a clean-up of the Canal Street area with permission of the Conservation Commission and partnering with National Parks. It has turned into a town-wide effort. Our focus is not to just pick up the trash but remove some of the brush in and around the area. The bridge on St. Paul Street needs attention as well. These arches were made by Daniel Simmons who is also responsible for the rolling dam. Ms. Bulso felt these features should be show-cased. Dave Barber from the Canal Conservancy was brought in to give a talk on the canal and its history. Many seniors attended and expressed an interest in having the area return to its former beauty. A web site has been started where volunteers can sign up to help. She stated they need people to track hours, hand out trash bags, make coffee, etc. The original date for this project was March 28, 2015 but this may be too aggressive. They may be able to partner with the Corridor Clean-Up Day. There is a possibility that a 50-50 grant may be available which will pay \$27/hr. We are hoping for a match of \$100/day per person with a cap of \$15,000, but this is no guarantee. We hope our efforts will be rewarded. She also noted that Mr. Keyes, Mr. Walsh and several town departments have been a tremendous help in this endeavor. Those wishing to volunteer can contact Ms. Bulso by phone (508-883-2917) or Mr. Keyes at the Town

Administrator's office. The information will also be posted on the Town's web site. Mrs. Bik attended the talk given by Mr. Barber and thought it very informative. She also thanked Ms. Bulso for bringing this to the attention of the Town.

- Approval of Payroll Warrant #15EWA16 and #15W16, #15EWA 17 and #15Pw17, #15EWA 18 & #15PW 18:
A motion was made by Mrs. Bik, seconded by Mr. Catalano, approving Payroll Warrant #15EWA16 and #15W16, #15EWA 17 and #15Pw17, #15EWA 18 & #15PW 18. There was no discussion and the vote was unanimous.
- Approval of Vendor Warrant #15EWA16, #15EW17, and #15EW18:
A motion was made by Mrs. Bik, seconded by Mr. Catalano, approving Vendor Warrant #15EWA16, #15EW17, and #15EW18. There was no discussion and the vote was unanimous.
- Matters that the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen reasonably anticipates to discuss:
None.

9. GOOD AND WELFARE – SELECTMEN:

Mr. Dubois expressed his dissatisfaction with the meal tax proposed by the Finance Committee as did Mr. Chamberland. He stated we are trying to attract businesses into town and feels the tax would impose a hardship on the business owners. Mr. Muller stated that the meal tax (0.075) was an avenue to generate some revenue. Over half the towns in Massachusetts have opted for this Local Options Meal Tax. He noted that on a restaurant bill of \$100, the tax would be 75 cents and would not create a hardship.

Mr. Muller stated it is a way to generate money for the town without it coming out of the tax payers pockets. He even went so far as to check the vehicles in the restaurant parking lots and found the majority of cars were from out of state (Rhode Island). This money could also be used to fund the OPEB account. He felt it was worth considering and presenting to the townspeople. In addition, it would not be burden on the restaurant owners as all they need to is change the tax in the register from 6.25 to 7 percent. The Department of Revenue handles everything else and sends the appropriate amount to the town on an annual basis. The Department of Revenue estimated that Blackstone could collect between \$40,000 and \$50,000 annually by implementing the meals tax. Mr. Muller also researched surrounding towns and presented a list of communities and what they've collected in the past year. Mrs. Bik felt that a consensus of restaurant owners should be taken to see how they feel about it. Mr. Muller will make the information available for Town Meeting.

Mr. Catalano asked that people be tolerant and patient when driving around town, as the snow banks are still quite large.

Mrs. Bik thanked Public Safety for the fabulous job they've done while it keeps snowing. Clean up Day will be posted on the web site. The Senior Center had their Valentine's pot luck dinner last week. She thanked everyone for their efforts. The AARP will help seniors on Wednesday with tax preparation through April 8th. A photo I.D. and Social Security Card is required. To make an appointment please call Laurie Keefe at the Senior Center (508-876-5134 or 508-876-5135).

Mr. Dubois wanted to thank all the Public Safety, DPW, Recycling, trash pick-up, etc. for the fine job they did during the many snow storms we had in such a short period of time. He wanted to mention the fact that he hopes the school department will invite the Board of Selectmen to their budget meetings.

Mr. Dubois understands that the City of Woonsocket is going out to bond for \$44 million. We felt it would be in the high 30's so the figure we've been given will change as far as our contribution is concerned; however, there has been no contact from the City of Woonsocket at all. They will vote on the bond in March. This has been a nightmare as far as communication is concerned with the City. Mr. Dubois asked Mr. Keyes to contact the Mayor's office and find out what is going on with this project.

Mr. Chamberland also thanked the DPW and Public Safety officials who have worked tirelessly over the past two weeks. He also wished all the candidates who are running for office the best of luck. He also officially announced that he will not be seeking re-election to the Board of Selectmen. It has been an honor to be a part of this community and to serve its residents. He will be taking another position in the western part of the state but will remain with the Board of Selectmen until April.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Mrs. Bik, seconded by Mr. Dubois, to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 p.m. There was no discussion and the vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Boucher
Recording Secretary

T-02-18-15

cc: Board of Selectmen
Town Administrator