

Board of Selectmen Meeting
November 9, 2011

Present: Selectmen: Carolyn Shores-Ness, Elizabeth Clarke,
Mark Gilmore (arrived during the meeting)
Town Administrator: Bernie Kubiak

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm.

Minutes: Minutes of October 26, 2011 were approved in a motion made by Ms. Ness, seconded by Ms. Clark.

Public Comment: none

Selectmen's Comments: moved to later in the meeting

Board of Health Comments: Ms. Ness said 727 flu shots have been given as of this date. Lisa White, the town nurse is available on Wednesdays between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM in her office and flu vaccine is still available.

Town Administrator's Report: Mr. Kubiak reported that cleanup from the storm is progressing nicely. He wanted to remind folks that at this time the town is only picking up debris from trees that are in the tree belt. People should not add other debris to the piles. The town cannot pickup additional debris without violating its ability to bill FEMA. People can bring debris to the transfer station.

The FEMA grant for work on the Deerfield River just north of the sewer plant along Little River Road has been filed. The grant is to stabilize the riverbank to protect the sewer line and the road is being done under a hazardous mitigation program.

Construction projects: Work is going well on replacing the sewer line in Old Deerfield. He expects it will be finished in short order. The sewer lining along Old Main Street will be done soon. Replacement of the library roof has begun. Samples of the slate are available, if anyone wants to see them.

Ms. Ness requested that the Weston & Sampson engineer take a look at the culverts in the Old Deerfield area. Ms. Clarke asked how the plan to replacement of windows on the backside of town hall was coming along. Mr. Kubiak replied that permission to use Green Energy funds has not been received. He's trying to move the process forward. The energy management program at the elementary school has been commissioned. The teachers have had an in-service session on how the system works.

7:15 PM - Community Development Strategy Plan Hearing

Present: Bruce Hunter, Assistant Director of Community Development for the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority. Mr. Hunter is also a resident of Deerfield.

Ms. Ness read the posted notice of this meeting.

The purpose of this meeting is to amend and update the Town of Deerfield's Community Development Strategy (CDS). Local citizens are requested to attend and discuss the draft Community Development Strategy. The document will be available for review on October 28, 2011 at the Deerfield Town Hall and on the town's website www.deerfieldma.us

The Town wishes to encourage local citizens to attend the informational meeting where any person or organization wishing to be heard will be afforded the opportunity.

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Mr. Hunter said that this year, the town is required to update the community development strategy because it has exceeded 5,000 persons in population. The strategy is to target an area in the community for the projects that are proposed in the FY2012 grant.

It is a requirement of the Community Development Block Grant process to have a community development strategy and update it every year. The Town is able to target more than one area. Social Services count as a town-wide project and are considered targeted to a specific target area.

The areas to target are the areas that have the most need. Block groups 2, 3 and 4 become target areas. One contains roughly 50 houses built prior to 1939 and that is where most of the need for the rehab projects occurs, especially lead paint, heating systems, roofs and windows.

With regard to the weatherization projects, the FCRHRA works with multiple agencies to come up with the people that need weatherization. They not only have to do the weatherization but also correct the code violations. Weatherization could be incorporated into CPA funds possibly with elders. Anyone that needs should contact the Town. The Town would contact FCRHRA and one or the other could direct them to the current agencies that provide the services.

Ms. Clarke made a motion to close the hearing regarding the Community Development Strategy. Ms. Ness seconded the motion. Vote passed. Later in the meeting a motion was made, by Ms. Clarke, seconded, and voted to approve the Community Development Strategy, as amended.

CDBG 2012 Application Hearing

Present: Bruce Hunter (FCRH&RDA)
Donna Liebel (FC Home Care)

Mr. Kubiak presented an outline of the CDBG grant application process that could provide \$1,100,000 in housing rehabilitation funding for the towns of Erving, Gill, Colrain, and Deerfield, with Erving serving as the lead town. He said the funds are provided through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and administered in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts through the Community Housing Department.

The national objective is to benefit low and moderate income residents. In Deerfield the target area is census blocks 2, 3, & 4. The other towns, having populations under 5,000, will include the entire town. The goal is 16 units @ \$35,000/ unit, 1 unit with full lead and asbestos abatement and handicap access, the de-leading of 16 units @ \$800/ unit, and 1 unit without full abatements.

The meals-on-wheels component for Deerfield includes \$180,060 to serve 51 elders a total of 18,411 meals over an 18 month period.

The application is due December 16, 2011.

Mr. Hunter said all monies will come to Erving, and then passed on to the Housing Authority for disbursement. Deerfield's portion is \$160,340 to rehab 4 units @ \$35,000 and 1 @ \$17,400. He said there is a waiting list. Typically, more units than originally planned are able to be done. He explained the evaluation process for individual projects. He noted that it was possible that 20% of the funding could be used for an emergency repair such as a roof, septic, or well for a unit not in the target area.

Mr. Hunter commented that this is a very helpful program and recommended that the town consider applying again in January or February when the next letter of interest comes out. At that time some of the other issues discussed at the informational meeting (fuel assistance) might be included as a social service. Mr. Hunter inquired about a senior survey; Mr. Kubiak replied that one is being prepared.

Questions were asked about what would happen if the number of persons identified for meals-on-wheels exceeded the projected 51. Ms. Leibel said there were ways to accommodate the need. Funds can be shifted within the towns in the program. She said evaluations of persons receiving meals are made every six months to see if the needs are being met.

A motion was made by Ms. Clarke, seconded by Ms. Ness, and voted, to close the hearing on the Community Block Grant application.

Assessor's Tax Classification Hearing

Present: Assessors: David Rohrs, John Coderre, Bruce St. Peters

At 8:00 pm Ms. Ness opened a tax classification hearing. Mr. St. Peters stated that the purpose of this hearing was to decide whether the tax assessment should be split for commercial/ industrial, and residential. He said the Board did not recommend a split rate at this time. Less than 25% is commercial/industrial. It is too much of a burden for the commercial/industrial businesses. To reduce the residential rate by \$1.00, the commercial/industrial rate would be raised \$2.95, which is not business friendly.

Ms. Ness was in favor of a single rate. She said the only time this is done is when "you want to grab somebody on the way out."

Ms. Clarke had no objection to a single rate. She commented that Deerfield was one of two towns in the state that doesn't follow the Department of Revenue's recommendation regarding the evaluation of agricultural land. She said, especially this year where the farmers have had to spend so much money to restore their farmland. She said that issue wasn't on the table for discussion at this time, but she felt it needed to be addressed so she was "putting it out there."

Mr. St. Peters reported that the previous year the average single family home was valued at \$278,578; the tax rate at \$12.32; making the average tax bill \$3,032. This year the value of a single family home has dropped to \$270,763; the tax rate is \$12.82; and the average tax bill \$3,071. Personal properties have been a stabilizing force for the past couple of years.

A motion was made by Ms. Clarke, seconded by Ms. Ness, and voted, to hold the tax assessment at a single rate.

At this point, with Mr. Gilmore now present the Board went back to Selectmen's Comments.

Selectmen's Comments: Ms. Ness reported that yesterday afternoon, at 4:27pm, she declared an emergency because there was a slump on property on Steam Mill River Road. Silt was blocking culverts potentially compromising septic systems. There was blockage on RTs 5 & 10 threatening to flood the highway. She has been in contact with MassDOT and DEP and learned that with emergency certification, which can be issued by the Conservation Commission, there would be 30 days to correct the situation.

Ms. Clarke identified the location as that in the vicinity of Savages Market. She said there are some serious drainage issues, the biggest being a clogged culvert on RT 5 that is not draining.

Mr. Gilmore said the first thing to do is get the paperwork in place so that property owners know that they can take action now. Property owners are the ones who need to do this. Secondly, MassDOT needs to be involved, as the culverts are state property. He said there needs to be some place for the water to go before more water can be sent along and agreed that something needs to be done tomorrow as a temporary fix. A longer term solution can be worked out. He suggested a pump could be used to move the water from one side of the road to the other. Mr. Kubiak suggested that Baltazar Construction is currently working in town and may possibly have equipment that could be used or suggestions about what can be done. Ms. Ness agreed to talk to Hap to get his input.

Interim Highway Management: Although Hap is trying to use his vacation time, he has been coming in mornings to manage things. Mike, the foreman, who is also trying to take some vacation time, is coming in afternoons so that there is always someone in charge. Mr. Kubiak said this arrangement has been working.

Interviews for Highway Superintendent: Ms. Clarke said she and Mr. Kubiak will interview two candidates tomorrow and a couple more will be scheduled for next week. They have prepared some questions to ask.

Facebook: To reach the Facebook page that Ms. Clarke has posted, look for Deerfield selectmen or go to her personal page; she spells Clarke with an "e."

Richard Calisewski: Mr. Kubiak said Mr. Calisewski needs to be reappointed as a part-time Building Commissioner and Health Inspector. His current rate is 30 hours at \$30.00/ hr., which will work for Mr. Calisewski. A motion was made by Ms. Ness, seconded by Ms. Clarke, and unanimously voted, to appoint Richard Calisewski to the part-time positions effective December 1st.

Amended Agricultural Preservation Restriction: A motion was made by Ms. Ness, seconded by Ms. Clarke, and voted, to execute the amended and restated APR Co-holders agreement. This is in reference to an exchange of properties between Jaap Molenaar and Al Dray previously approved at the October 26th meeting of the Board.

Transfer Station: Mr. Kubiak presented a report from Jan Ameen on her analysis of the finances and operation of the transfer station. It includes several suggestions. We know that we have a grant for \$7,500 toward a paper compactor which needs to be used by March of 2012. The Town will need to put some money with that as these units cost around \$12,000. The next step is for Jan to walk through the transfer station and come up with a design for reorganizing the site to improve operation and make room for the paper compactor. He would then like to have a scale drawing of what it would look like. A recommendation in the report is to rewrite the hauling contract to reduce the number of runs and pay by the load rather than by the ton. Mr. Gilmore suggested contacting Conway School of Design for a design.

Alternate Health Inspection: Ms. Ness wanted the Board to appoint Nicole Zebco (sp?), Greenfield Health Director, and Mike McCloud, Greenfield Health Inspector, to be a back-up for Mr. Calisewski, Deerfield's Health Agent. She explained the plan as similar to mutual aid for fire departments. Fellow board members had questions about this as a backdoor regionalization plan. Mr. Gilmore commented that the first step should be for Mr. Calisewski to request back-up. Ms. Clarke wanted to see what the overall situation is. Mr. Kubiak said there is no budget to do this, and since his office would do the scheduling he should be involved.

Oxford Property: Mr. Kubiak reported the property needs to be registered. A minimum value needs to be determined, and the property declared surplus. Once this has been completed an RFP can be prepared. Andrea Woods (FRCOG) would handle the process at a cost of about \$300.00. Since the value of the property is over \$25,000 it will have to be listed in the Central Register. A provision of the sale would be that the Town would be interested in some storage for the next three years. Mr. Kubiak will prepare an RFP for the Board to review.

Personnel Board: No appointments were made.

Resignation: A motion was made by Ms. Ness, seconded by Mr. Gilmore, to accept with regret the resignation of Steve Barrett from the Conservation Commission.

A motion was made to adjourn with the signing of the warrant.

Respectfully submitted,
Priscilla Phelps.

