

# Deerfield Board of Selectmen

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*March 4, 2015*

A regular meeting of the Deerfield Board of Selectmen was held on March 4, 2015, at Deerfield Town Hall, 8 Conway Street, South Deerfield, MA.

*PRESENT: Gilmore, Wolfram, Ness; also Kayce Warren, Town Administrator.*

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 PM.

## **Minutes from Previous Meeting**

No Minutes from previous meetings were reviewed.

## **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

## **Selectmen's Comments**

Gilmore warned of upcoming flooding dangers.

Ness stated that she had advised the Highway Superintendent to document and monitor culverts during the spring flooding season.

The board briefly addressed concerns about flooding issues, snow-loads on roofs, catch-basins, etc.

## **Board of Health Comments**

*Ness: Flu is still a concern. Keep washing your hands!*

## **Personnel Appointment Request**

The board considered a personnel appointment request. It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore

*To Appoint Michele Komosa to the Personnel Committee.*

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

The Personnel Committee consists of Mary Stokarski, Marie Guerin, Michele Komosa. The board advised the Town Administrator to forward the draft job description for the Highway

Superintendent to the Personnel Board for their immediate attention and recommendations.

## **Oxford RFP Proposal**

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore

*To enter into executive session, as allowed by MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(A)(6), to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of the Oxford property, the chair declaring that an open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating session of the public body. The Board will reconvene in open session.*

VOTED:            GILMORE: YES  
                      WOLFRAM: YES  
                      NESS: YES.

The board entered executive Session at about 6:08 PM, and returned to open session at about 7:30 PM.

## **Town Administrator's Report**

The Town Administrator reminded the board of the 6 PM presentation about the Rail Yard, to happen at next week's meeting.

Tim Neumann asked to have Deborah Blodgett come to describe the situation with the Civil War Memorial in Old Deerfield. Both items will be on next week's agenda.

The Governor's budget has been released, along with preliminary figures for local aid, for town consideration. The overall impact does not reflect as dire of a situation as was predicted. The veracity of the data was discussed.

The Town Clerk provided a list of vacant positions for which there are no current candidates.

*Gilmore: We need to try to emphasize the need for representatives on town boards and committees. Fresh blood, fresh thinking. We should emphasize how much good is provided by boards, and how important new skills and experience is needed.*

*Ness: There are many complex issues to face, and limited resources. More people willing to step forward and help will make a difference.*

There was discussion about a proposal for a long-term planning study for the regional schools, and funding for same. Some additional conversation about the development of the current RFP, the potential to have the study completed by UMass staff and students at a lower-cost. It was suggested by Gilmore to put a line-item into the budget for the study, and that any study cost be split equally among the member towns based on the formula used for school funding.

Town Administrator advised that a meeting with the member towns would be the next step.

It was MOVED by Gilmore, SECONDED by Wolfram

*That the Town of Deerfield host the March 19<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Selectmen's Association Quarterly meeting at Deerfield Academy.*

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

## **Joint Meeting with Sunderland Board of Selectmen**

The Sunderland Board of Selectmen joined the Deerfield BOS to discuss various issues.

Present: Tom Fydenkevicz (Chair), David Pierce, Scott Bergeron.

## **School Long Range Planning**

There was initial discussion on the Long Range Planning Study for the regional school district. Funding sources and potential split of same were discussed. The advantages of the study were discussed.

There was extensive conversation about schools, and school funding.

*Fydenkevicz: 77% of the School Budget in the town of Sunderland is paid for by the Town of Sunderland.*

There was additional discussion about the manner by which schools are funded, funding sources, the cost 'split' between the member towns, and related topics.

## **Water Resources, Grants, and Related**

Ness detailed conversations that have been ongoing between interested parties in relation to the Deerfield and Connecticut River Watershed, as well as conversations on the MEMA Mitigation Committee, and discourse with Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA). Ness also outlined a grant opportunity that may affect Deerfield and Sunderland.

Ness also outlined potential upgrades to Deerfield's wastewater treatment plants, and the financial impact of same. Ms. Ness also outlined a potential plan that may

- Connect the 'Old Deerfield' sewer district to the Greenfield Wastewater Plant
- Connect the town of Sunderland's sewer system to the South Deerfield Wastewater Plant.

The plan has advantages for all partners involved, and could potentially represent fiscal savings for all towns.

The possibility of the inter-town connection being reversed (Connection of South Deerfield's sewer system to Sunderland's Wastewater Plant) was also entertained.

Fydenkevicz reported that the Sunderland Plant is at about 50% capacity. The Sunderland WWTP is a contract-for-service, and is billed at a flat-rate per connection, vs. Deerfield's pay-per-usage system. Sunderland's usage is 500k gallons per day.

Details of the capacity and usage of both plants were extensively discussed.

There was also discussion of the means by which long-term potential usage sharing could happen.

Emphasis was placed on Sunderland's participation in the effort in order to qualify for the HUD grant.

Ness described some of the regional and interstate partners that might be taking advantage of the grant opportunity, and there was further discussion about the goals of the collaboration.

An evaluation of both plants was considered, as was the potential of either creating a sewer district, or expanding the existing sewer district to include Sunderland. Accountability to the public on the part of any district organization was also expressed as a concern.

Emphasis on any plan's capacity for future growth was also discussed.

A concern was raised that the plan was just 'chasing a grant'. Reassurances were given that the plan was driven by real, demonstrable need for upgrades and plant 'hardening' against flood events.

Ness expressed her appreciation for the process as it has occurred; additionally, she believes that the grant possibility could be a benefit for local rate-payers. Wolfram expressed his belief that this would also help to facilitate future industrial growth.

Ness reinforced her belief that there could be a great deal of positive benefit to the collaboration, and through receipt of the grant.

There was discussion about integrating an upgrade of the Sunderland infrastructure to allow for more residential and business connections to the system.

It was agreed that Ness would start the process, but nothing more would be known until April, when verification of eligibility with HUD would be determined.

Concern was expressed about the capability of current towns to meet requirements assessed by state and federal agencies. This project was considered to be another area where focus on 'what it means to be a town' had to be reconsidered.

Joint meeting adjourned at about 8:15 PM.

### **Insurance Claim Request**

Town Administrator presented a request for payment for a damage claim, presented by a local resident, who suffered damage to two vehicles as a result of branches falling from a tree on the town tree-belt. The town's insurance has denied the request.

The Board of Selectmen took the request under advisement.

### **Regional Schools Planning Study**

The board agreed to request funding for the proposed Regional Planning Study for Schools through a warrant article.

### **Upcoming Meetings and Agendas**

The board was advised of upcoming agenda items slated for the meeting on March 11.

Meetings are slated for March 11, March 18, April 1, April 8, and April 22.

Town Administrator will be on vacation between March 20 and April 2.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, it was MOVED by Wolfram, SECONDED by Gilmore

*To Adjourn.*

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas C. Finn