

Board of Selectmen

Regular Meeting – November 18, 2015

A regular meeting of the Deerfield Board of Selectmen was held on November 18, 2015, at 6:30 PM.

PRESENT: Mark Gilmore, Carolyn Shores Ness, David Wolfram (Chair)

A quorum was declared, and the meeting was called to order at about 6:30 PM.

Minutes of previous meetings for review and approval

The minutes of November 4, 2015 were reviewed.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore

To approve the minutes of November 4 2015, as presented

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

The minutes of October 7, 2015 were reviewed.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Wolfram

To approve the corrected minutes of October 7, as presented.

VOTED: 2, 0, 1 (Gilmore).

Public Comment

Transfer Station Concerns

Mr. Sam Adams rose to speak to his concerns related to the Transfer Station. His concerns were that employees cannot wash their hands, and that there is no running water, proper rest-rooms, or other amenities for employees.

Mr. Wolfram responding by stating that his concern will addressed to the Superintendent of Public Works, who will investigate and reply back.

SCEMS / DES Concerns – Sharon Paciorek

Ms. Sharon Paciorek presented a petition to the Board of Selectmen (attached herein by reference). The petition had 200 (unverified) signatures. Ms. Paciorek requested that the board endeavor to determine a way to keep the EMS services located in Deerfield, and find a better solution for the taxpayers.

Ms. Paciorek also expressed her concern related to the cost of the service, versus Deerfield's representation on the Board.

Mr. Gilmore described the percentage of representation on the Board of Oversight (33%), versus the cost expensed to Deerfield for the service (52%).

There was discussion related to efforts to find a permanent home for the service in Deerfield. Mr. Gilmore discussed the needs of the EMS service, and the importance of housing the service under one roof.

A recent incident, and the service response time was discussed. An incident from June, 2015, and the related ambulance response time, were discussed.

The process by which changes to the ambulance 'housing' locations was discussed. Some of the details related to the specific proposal for housing in the Whately.

Ms. Paciorek reiterated her concern about a lack of information related to the proposal for housing in Whately. Mr. Wolfram responded by saying that all of the information related to the Whately proposal had not yet been decided.

Ms. Ness reminded Ms. Paciorek of the importance of having the service located under one roof. However, the costs for construction of a new facility in Deerfield make that option untenable at this time.

There was further discussion related to town expenses, the SCEMS housing issue, and the costs being incurred by the Town.

Mr. Wolfram expressed his personal sadness at the discontinuance of the Deerfield Rescue, but his confidence in the higher quality of service being provided by SCEMS.

Ms. Paciorek thanked the board for their time, and for considering her concerns, as well as those who signed the petition.

General and SCEMS Concerns - Mr. Jeff Upton

Mr. Upton spoke to the board about certain concerns related to South County EMS, including consideration of the proposal for housing of the service in Whately at a special, versus regular Town Meeting.

Mr. Upton asked about the cost-per-square-foot of the EMS housing in Whately, versus the cost-per-square-foot of an addition to an existing building in Whately.

Mr. Upton asked about the reasons for a low response time of the SCEMS. The potential for staffing levels, versus the 'home' location of service were considered.

Mr. Upton also asked about the negotiations with Whately. Mr. Gilmore briefly discussed his vision of the history of the Whately Town Office building as related to the Town of Deerfield.

Mr. Upton asked about the potential for extending West Industrial Drive into Whately, to better facilitate the SCEMS at the Whately Town Office, and its potential impact on marketing efforts at the Deerfield Industrial Park. Mr. Gilmore stated that the SCEMS BOO had decided that the road would not necessarily be a determinant as to whether the SCEMS moved to Whately.

Mr. Wolfram stated that the extension of West Industrial Drive was not in the purview of the town to decide, but up to the DEDIC Board of Directors.

General Comments and Concerns - John Paciorek

Mr. Paciorek requested that the Board of Selectmen reenter into negotiations with the South Deerfield Fire District to determine if any options for housing the SCEMS at that station are possible. Mr. Gilmore explored the history of negotiations for space for the SCEMS.

Mr. Paciorek also inquired about the potential of adding onto the fire-station, to add bays. The response from Gilmore was that there was limited potential in the short term to add space to properly house the SCEMS. However, the current service was called a 'stepping stone', and would likely change over the long term.

There was discussion about the potential of the South Deerfield Fire Department to adopt EMS service at a later date, but the board generally did not wish to discuss the matter without representatives of the SDFD present.

Hearings/Appearances before the Board

6:35 PM – PUBLIC HEARING – Tax Classification

The Deerfield Board of Selectmen conducted a hearing to determine the percentage of the Fiscal Year 2016 Tax Levy to be allocated to each class of real and personal property, in conformity with the requirements of MGL, C.40, s.56. Information on the projected Fiscal Year 2016 Tax Levy and classification of values was made available through the Board of Assessors. Interested taxpayers may present written or oral information and data relative to determining the fiscal effect of available alternatives.

The Deerfield Board of Assessors (already in session) was welcomed to the table.

The Board of Assessors reported that the proposed tax rate for FY2016 would be \$15.25 / \$1,000 dollars of evaluation, or about a 2.8% increase. Further the Board of Assessors reported that the LA-5 excess capacity had been calculated as \$6,715.11

The Board of Assessors requested whether the Board of Selectmen wished to split the tax rate, or continue with a single rate. The Assessors recommended a single rate.

There was some discussion related to the advantages of a single-rate

It was MOVED by Gilmore, SECONDED by Ness

To adopt a single tax rate for FY2017.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

The public hearing was closed.

The Assessors also discussed briefly the need for discussion and planning in relation to an expected proposal for a PILOT (Payment In Lieu Of Taxes) agreement for a planned Extra-Large Scale Solar Development off of River Road in East Deerfield.

Board Comments

Mr. Gilmore acknowledged the assistance of several local groups who have contributed efforts towards cleanup of the South Deerfield Town Common, the SCSC Grounds, and etc.

Mr. Gilmore also mentioned that the Tilton Library Needs Assessment Committee was progressing on its efforts related to new library housing resources.

Board of Health – Comments

Ms. Ness spoke about recent training that she had taken through the Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition. MAPHCo is also petitioning to the state to support local distribution of flu vaccine next year. There was some discussion related to the costs and paperwork associated with application of grants for, insurance reimbursement for, and distribution of vaccines.

Charter Schools

Mr. Wolfram inquired as to how charter schools are funded. There was some discussion related to the subject, including the cost per student, and how funding of charter schools affects local school budgets.

Mr. Wolfram suggested that the current model of funding charter schools constitutes an 'unfunded mandate' from the state, and suggested that the board support a letter to State Representative Steve Kulik to express concern related to charter school funding.

Mr. Gilmore spoke about the potential benefit of charter schools, but expressed concerns about the manner by which charter schools are funded.

Ms. Ness suggested sending a letter of concern to Rep. Kulik, stating that charter schools, and the school choice system is 'destroying' public school, and that any changes that may be considered at the state level should consider the mechanisms by which schools are funded.

Discussion/Decision Items

Discuss/Approve/Vote – Auctioneer Proposal

Acting on the recommendation of the Town Administrator, it was MOVED by Gilmore, SECONDED by Ness

To reject all bids related to the FY2016-020 Auctioneer Services Procurement.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

NOTE: Mr. Gilmore recused himself, and stepped away from the table.

Discuss/Approve/Vote – Snow Removal Contract

Kevin Scarborough (Superintendent of public works Operations) joined the Board at the table. The board considered the renewal contract for Winter Snow Removal in Old Deerfield.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Wolfram

To approve renewal of the winter snow removal contract.

VOTED: 2, 0, 1

Mr. Scarborough spoke briefly about Old Albany Road, and the impact on the road by the traffic of extensive electric company contractors. Mr. Scarborough also spoke about the remediation work being done by the electric company. Generally, the effort to remediate damage to the road has been welcome, but the town will need to contact the electric company for an update to those repairs.

Mr. Scarborough also responded to the comments from Mr. Adams earlier in the evening. Scarborough stated that he had spoken with the staff of the transfer station, and asked if there was any issues that needed to be addressed; they are personally satisfied with the work conditions at the transfer station.

NOTE: Mr. Gilmore rejoined the conversation at the table.

Mr. Scarborough also spoke about the regional and state-wide efforts to regionalize fire services. Mr. Scarborough also spoke about the potential for South Deerfield Fire to take over EMS services for Deerfield, in the case that Deerfield opts out of the SCEMS IMA.

Mr. Scarborough suggested that, at this time, the SDFD doesn't have the capability to house two ambulances.

There was further discussion about future potential options, including providing funds to train SDFD staff as First Responder / EMTs. The uncertainty of the future of the Affordable Care Act ("ObamaCare") was also considered.

Discuss/Approve/Vote – Civil War Monument Update

Mr. Scarborough spoke briefly about the efforts to rehabilitate the figure at the top of the Civil War Memorial in Old Deerfield. The delicate and fragile condition of the figure was detailed.

The expectation is that the figure will be stabilized, and prepared to remove from the pedestal within two weeks. The figure will be transported to PVMA for winter storage, further stabilization and preservation treatment.

Discuss/Approve/Vote – Community Compact

Ms. Ness expressed concern with the necessity of participation in the Community Compact. Ness expressed the opinion that the Governor would be requiring participation in the program as a prerequisite to funding of special programs or administration of special grants.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Ness

To participate in the Community Compact, and further to provide direction to the Town Administrator at the December 2 meeting, as to the areas and level of commitment to include in the Community Compact Agreement.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

Ms. Ness expressed her concern that the "Community Compact" program could be a way to squeeze small towns out of receiving funding.

Discuss/Approve/Vote – Sewer Commitment

The board considered the information presented in relation to the sewer rates.

Mr. Gilmore expressed a concern about the amount of money from revenues that would go into reserves.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore

To approve the sewer commitment as presented, and to authorize the Chair to sign the sewer commitment letter at his convenience.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

Discuss/Approve/Vote – Discuss/Approve/Vote – SCEMS Housing

The Board of Selectmen may enter into Executive Session as allowed by M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(6) to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.

Town Administrator's Report

The Town Administrator's report was reviewed, and is included herein by reference.

Landfill Solar Consulting

The board reviewed the request to execute a contract for consulting services with Beth Greenblatt of Beacon Integrated Solutions.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore

To authorize the chair to execute the completed contract with Beth Greenblatt of Beacon Integrated Solutions, when the contract is fully prepared, at the convenience of the chair.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

Other Business not reasonably anticipated at the time of posting

Appointment to Personnel Board

The board considered the appointment of Nanci Schwartz to the Personnel Board. The Personnel board recommends this appointment.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore,

To appoint Nanci Schwartz to the Personnel Board, for a term ending on June 30, 2015.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

Upcoming Meetings

- December 2, 2015: Presentation by Pinck and Company on the School Roof.
- December 4, 2015 (participation in _____???)
- December 9, 2015 - TENTATIVE - Joint meeting with CIPC and Finance Committee
- December 16, 2015 – Regular Meeting
- December 30, 2015 – Regular Meeting

Adjourn

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

To authorize signing of payroll and vendor warrants, upon completion, and at the convenience of the Board members.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

The meeting adjourned at about 8:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Douglas C Finn