

Selectmen's Minutes
TOHP Burnham Library

February 23, 2015

Present: Chairman Jeffrey D. Jones, Selectman Lisa J. O'Donnell, Selectman Susan Gould-Coviello, Town Administrator Brendhan Zubricki, and Selectmen's Assistant Pamela J. Witham.

Also Present: Bill Bartlett, Justin Bourgette, Matt Coogan, Christine Creager, Kristin Crockett, David Gabor, Jack Hanley, Bill Liberti, Sibhita Mahabier, Mark McKenna, Ed Perkins, Ken Riehl, Richard Ross, Jeffrey Soulard, and Michael Sullivan.

At 7:00 p.m., the Chairman called the meeting to order in the TOHP Burnham Library and announced that the Board would hear Public Comment. No one offered any comment.

In other business, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the weekly warrant in the amount of \$618,157.40.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the minutes for the Selectmen's February 11, 2015, Open Meeting.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve a *request from Police Chief Silva* to accept a donation to the Police Gift Account in the amount of \$220.00.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve a request to the Finance Committee for a line item transfer in the amount of \$5,000 from Blanket Insurance to Town Property to pay for a contract with Regina Villa. Ms. Villa is a public affairs consultant and will help the Selectmen, the CPPC, and Mr. Heroux with the plan for northern Conomo Point.

Mr. Zubricki asked the Selectmen to consider the potential need for authorizing a line item transfer, at a future date, to hire a financial visualization firm to illustrate certain aspects of the northern Conomo Point decision making.

Citing Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 44, Section 31D, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve a second request to the Finance Committee for an additional \$50,000 for the snow and ice removal budget for FY2015.

Kristin Crockett, the newly appointed Director of the Council on Aging, introduced herself to the Selectmen. The Selectmen welcomed her and congratulated her on her new position. She said she is thrilled to have been awarded the position. In addition to her regular duties, she has been reaching out to directors in neighboring towns who have suggested new programs, some of which have now been adopted at the Center. The Selectmen wished her well and asked her to contact them with any questions or needs. She thanked the Selectmen and left the meeting.

The Board of Selectmen, acting in their capacity as the Licensing Board, made and seconded a motion, and voted unanimously to approve an Auction Permit for Michael March, Blackwood March Antiques, for use on Wednesday, March 4, 2015, between the hours of 4:00 and 10:00 p.m. within the confines of 125 Main Street.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the following requests for clamming permits:

Commercial Clamming Permits contingent upon receipt of 2015 Census:

- Kelly Corrao
- Matthew Jacobs
- Edward G. Lane
- Matthew E. Lane

Non-Resident Recreational Clamming Permit:

- Richard Brunning, Manchester, MA
- Martin Forde, Middleton, MA
- Charles Neville, Wakefield, MA
- Michael G. Rogers, Georgetown, MA
- Chester M. Sullivan, Methuen, MA

Senior Clamming Permit contingent upon receipt of 2015 Census:

- Norman A. Burnham
- Stephen Hartley
- George E. Lane
- Peter Wilson

Mr. Zubricki began the presentation of his Town Administrator's Report for the period February 7th through February 20th, 2015, regarding the following:

Open House Highlighting Elected and Appointed Positions: It was reported that the Board of Registrars has compiled a list of vacant elected and appointed Town positions, along with each position's corresponding duties in anticipation of a proposed "job fair". It is hoped that the fair will attract a large number of interested people, resulting no more vacant positions. The Lions Club and/or the PTO may host the fair. Selectman Gould-Coviello said that she would continue discussions with the PTO regarding their possible participation.

Draft Essex River Encroachment Elimination Plan: Mr. Zubricki reported that GZA has completed their analysis of encroachments on the Essex River channel and produced a plan for a re-aligned 60-foot wide channel. Selectman O'Donnell and Mr. Zubricki will now meet with a representative from the Army Corps of Engineers and the Town's Consulting Engineer to discuss the plan and report back to the Board.

National Grid representative Sibhita Mahabier introduced herself to the Selectmen, and at 7:15 p.m., a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to open a Public Hearing regarding a petition to move utility poles in the area of Willow Court and Main Street. Ed Perkins joined the Selectmen and Ms. Mahabier at the table. The Chairman asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of the relocation of the utility poles and Mr. Perkins did so. Sibhita Mahabier said that National Grid is seeking to move three utility poles from the Perkins' Marina side of Main Street to the opposite side of the street. This move would result in all the utility poles being on the same side of the street in that area. The Chairman asked if anyone would like to speak against the proposal and no one did. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to close the hearing. There was no discussion and a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the National Grid petition, the National Grid Plan #18649257, dated January 20, 2015, and supporting documents.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to open a Public Hearing regarding a petition to move utility poles in the area of Cogswell Road at Conomo Point and the Chairman asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of the relocation of the utility poles. Ms. Mahabier said that National Grid would like to move some utility poles currently located in the marsh and residents' backyards. No one wished to speak against the request and a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to close the hearing. The Selectmen were in agreement, and a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the National Grid petition, the National Grid Plan #18514683, dated January 15, 2015, and supporting documents. The Selectmen thanked Ms. Mahabier for coming, and, she and Mr. Perkins left the meeting.

Christine Creager and Bill Bartlett from Constellation Energy, Jack Hanley from ESCO Energy Services, and Town Planner Matt Coogan joined the Selectmen to discuss the possible advantages of buying the street lights in town from National Grid and converting them to low energy LEDlighting. Matt Coogan, who is also employed as a Planner by the City of Gloucester, recently participated in that city's conversion to low energy street lights. Essex currently has 115 street lights on record, although not all of them are in use. The low energy lighting is not as yellow as the sodium lighting. These lighting elements are warranted for 10 years and typically last about fifteen to twenty years as opposed to four or five years for the sodium lighting. Various levels of brightness and dimming options are also available with the low energy lights. After some discussion, the Selectmen were in agreement, and a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to ask Mr. Zubricki to send a letter of authorization requesting that a study be prepared regarding a proposed conversion process for Essex.

Matt Coogan, Christine Creager, Bill Bartlett, and Jack Hanley left the meeting.

Mr. Zubricki resumed discussion of certain topics contained in his Town Administrator's report:

Town Building Committee Meeting: Mr. Zubricki reported that both he and Selectman O'Donnell (also Chair of the TBC) attended the recent Town Building Committee meeting at which the Committee was updated regarding recent repairs to the Town Hall and the hiring of a Project Manager to help formulate and oversee proposed exterior repairs to the Town Hall. The

TBC was in agreement that they would like direction from the Board of Selectmen regarding their role in researching and planning for Town buildings. The TBC thought that they might like to focus on public safety and would like to explore the idea of building a new building to house only the Fire Department and retrofitting the current Fire Station to meet the needs of the Police Department. This could be an alternative option to building a new building to house both the Fire Department and the Police Department.

Development of Strategic Planning Committee: Mr. Zubricki said that in the past, the Board has discussed transitioning the Long Term Planning Committee to a Strategic Planning Committee that would address near-term and middle-term, as well as long-term needs of the Town. The new committee would potentially consist of representatives from many Town boards and committees in order to facilitate input and perspective on a wide variety of Town needs. Currently, the LTPC is finishing up their report regarding the character-defining resources of the Town. Selectman O'Donnell said that she would contact LTPC Chair Andrew St. John and past LTPC Chair Mike Dyer to find out the status of their report and their ideas regarding how and when a transition to a new committee may be effected.

Further Discussion Relative to Chief of Police's 2015 Goals: The Selectmen said that they had reviewed the Chief's goals and would like Mr. Zubricki to ask the Chief to add the following items to his list of goals for further discussion and approval on March 9, 2015:

- Implementation of a bicycle patrol similar to the program that the Department used to have several years ago.
- Designation of a Full-time Officer to explore and implement use of social media to keep the public informed and promote the Police Department.
- Public outreach regarding the resulting value to the Town when the Department achieves certification; and also, when the Department achieves accreditation.
- Formulation and oversight of a program to man the Town Landing boat ramp and collect launch fees (including appointment of personnel, scheduling, and reporting of fees).
- Review of the Public Safety Study Committee's Report and comments regarding possible efforts to address the PSSC's recommendations for the current space occupied by the Police Department.

Finance Committee Chair Jeffrey Soulard and members Justin Bourgette, David Gabor, Mark McKenna, Ken Riehl, and Richard Ross joined the Selectmen to discuss the status of the proposed budget for fiscal year 2016. After much discussion, it was agreed that the Finance Committee will look at postponing some capital expenditures in order to avoid an override and balance the budget. Those present also agreed that the necessary repairs to the exterior of the Town Hall should be funded without borrowing, by means of the Conomo Point Sale of Real Estate Fund. The Selectmen will meet again with the Finance Committee on March 9th.

Review of History Concerning Greenhead Fly Trap Boxes: Mr. Zubricki reported that it would be possible for the Town to join a subsidiary program of the Northeast Massachusetts Mosquito Control and Wetlands Management District to control the greenhead fly population. This program is available to the Town even though the Town is not a member of the District. The

program would include the acquisition, placement, and management of the traps for approximately \$3,600 per year, 3 years minimum participation. Both the Finance Committee and the Board were in favor of joining this program, and a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to ask Mr. Zubricki to obtain the contract documents.

Northern Conomo Point Design Update / Hiring of Public Affairs Expert: The Selectmen discussed the desirability of obtaining the services of a public affairs specialist to assist with the presentation of a final design for northern Conomo Point and the Finance Committee was in agreement. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to enter into a contract with Regina Villa for communications services based upon the proposal in the amount of \$4,000 that she had supplied.

The Finance Committee left the meeting.

Downtown Boardwalk Permitting Update: Mr. Zubricki reported that it has been determined that restaurant tables may not be placed on the new boardwalk when it is built. However, after that, a modification could be sought for the tables. The Selectmen suggested that Mr. Zubricki ask Tom and Patrick Shea to discuss the desirability of granting an easement for the boardwalk with the owner of the property at 112 Main Street.

Draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant: Mr. Zubricki briefly covered each of the proposed articles for the May Annual Town Meeting Warrant. There will be a revised draft available for further discussion at the next Selectmen's meeting on March 9th, 2015.

Mr. Zubricki said that he would like to recommend that the Selectmen approve a 3% merit increase for FY2016 for Selectmen's Assistant Pamela Witham. He also reminded them that they needed to determine whether or not they were in favor of approving a merit increase for the Town Administrator. Subsequently, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve a 3% merit increase for both employees based on their total FY2015 base salary.

Those present were in agreement that there was no business to discuss requiring an Executive Session.

The Selectmen were reminded that the next regular Board of Selectmen's meeting will take place on Monday, March 9, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. in the Library on Martin Street.

Attorney Michael Sullivan came before the Selectmen and said that he is the recording secretary of the Robbins Island Association and that he would like to make some comments regarding the subdivision of Robbins Island. The Chairman gave him permission to speak and Mr. Sullivan reviewed a list of comments which are appended to these minutes. The Selectmen reiterated that until the Hsia boundary dispute is settled, the Town is unable to move forward with the subdivision of Robbins Island. Mr. Sullivan left the meeting.

There being no further business before the Board, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

Documents used during this meeting include the following:

Request from Police Chief Silva to Accept a Donation

Prepared by: _____
Pamela J. Witham

Attested by: _____
Lisa J. O'Donnell

From: [Sullivan, Michael T.](#)
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2015 11:48 AM
To: bzubricki@essexma.org
Cc: <mailto:ryankaroline@gmail.com>
Subject: Robbins Island

Dear Brendhan –

As you may have noticed, I attended last night's BOS meeting on behalf of the Robbins Island Association. I had a few questions, but it did not seem appropriate to interrupt the meeting with them. So I hope you can answer them.

First, I believe you said words to the effect that the BOS is up against a deadline that may cause the subject of Robbins Island sales to be removed from the current/draft list of Town Meeting subjects. Can you please let me know what that deadline is, and what would need to happen between now and then to keep the subject on the list? If the answer is (as I expect) that the Hsia dispute needs to be fully resolved, could you kindly let me know the general status of that dispute?

Second, if the Hsia dispute is not resolved before the deadline, what is to prevent the subject of Robbins Island sales from being voted upon at Town Meeting? That vote would be contingent upon completion of a subdivision plan, appraisals, and the like, so I am wondering why it could not also be contingent upon resolution of the Hsia dispute.

Thanks for any information you can provide.

Michael Sullivan