

**TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 9, 2012
7:00 P.M. – TOWN HALL**

PRESENT: STEPHEN BANNON
ANDREW BLECHMAN
ALANA CHERNILA
DEB PHILLIPS
SEAN STANTON
KEVIN O'DONNELL, TOWN MANAGER

1. CALL TO ORDER

Sean Stanton called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

June 25, 2012 Regular Meeting

MOTION: Deb Phillips to approve the June 25, 2012 regular meeting minutes.

SECOND: Steve Bannon

VOTE: 5-0

3. SELECTMEN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/STATEMENTS:

Andrew Blechman stated that the Co-op Market has been using policy governance since 1997 and would be glad to talk to the Board if there are any questions.

Steve Bannon addressed the following maintenance issues:

The trees that have been planted by the National Grid grant are being maintained by neighbors and are not being watered by the Town. They are not doing well. A plan is needed to care for the trees.

There has been vandalism at Memorial Field.

The Mason Library has not been maintained.

There are projects lingering at Grove Street and the Parks Department is getting frustrated.

Steve said that the Town needs to do a better job of maintaining their assets.

4. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

Kevin O'Donnell listed all of the current vacancies and encouraged anyone interested to contact him.

Kevin O'Donnell said that he met with the Fire Department personnel about the hiring process in order to replace Chief Jennings. They were very glad to be part of the process. Kevin said that he would like to hire internally and will have 2 firefighters serve on the interview panel.

Kevin O'Donnell stated that the State has recognized an economic opportunity area for the former Fire Station and various areas in Housatonic. This could leverage State money for the Town.

Kevin announced that Ingersoll, Ontario, Canada wants to be part of the sister-city relationship that is forming. He would like to formalize the process soon.

Kevin has been working with Karen Smith regarding the South County Assist list that is currently on the website. The list has been disseminated to all departments and will be updated semi-annually.

A. Town Managers response to BOS evaluation

Kevin O'Donnell presented the Board with his written response.

He said that he will be meeting with the Chairman more often and continues his desire to meet with individual Board members.

He said that the executive summary will now include timelines as appropriate, which will give a better idea of the process for each item. Kevin said that he will make more presentations of current and on-going activities.

Deb Phillips responded that the score was 2.6 and she did not feel that it was a 'satisfactory' rating. She stated that there is no improvement from the last score and the comments on the evaluation indicate that it is not satisfactory. Deb read some of the comments from the evaluation.

Alana Chernila said that she was struck by the slight reduction in score. She felt that the Town Manager's response did not address the comments in the evaluation. Alana said that she feels that there is a trust issue and the Board needs to figure out the next step.

All agree to think about the strategic planning priorities and make sure that they include all of the Boards goals and to also base them on the comments given in the evaluation.

5. CITIZEN SPEAK TIME:

Karen Smith spoke about the South County Resource list and said that CHP (Community Health Programs) will take care of the updates twice a year. If there are any updates, please contact South County Assist. Karen Smith thanked Theresa Ahrens who helped her with the compilation of the list.

As a representative from the Parks and Recreation Department, she asked for the police log from the last month and a half. She would like to see how many times they have gone to Memorial Field and have spoken to the staff. Karen stated that the police have been told to have a presence there and wants to know why they haven't done so.

Karen spoke about the 9 items that Parks and Recreation have asked to be completed and have not been responded to. She asked who is responsible for this if it is not being done. Karen said that it is the Boards problem that things are not being done and said that policies need to be set.

Holly Hamer, president of the Library Board of Trustees, said that the Library grounds and interior are not being maintained. She said that there are concerns about preventative maintenance as well. Holly said that she holds the Town Manager responsible since he has control over the department heads. Holly asked that the Board consider whether the chain of command has proper channels for complaining and getting things done.

Jenny Clark spoke about the material regarding signage that she sent to the Board. She said that she does not feel that the proposed crosswalk signage is appropriate for the town.

David Magadini spoke about the economic development committee. He said that special town meeting or annual town meeting is the only place where this can be voted upon. He referenced Mass. General Law section 2 of chapter 40Q and Section 3 of chapter 121C.

Kevin O'Donnell said that he will follow up with the Town Attorney about this.

Bud Atwood said that it is the Selectboards job to deal with employees not doing their job. He said that it is time to change Board members and town employees. He expressed his support of Kevin O'Donnell.

6. LICENSES OR PERMITS:

A.

BAZAAR PRODUCTIONS/SARA KATZOFF FOR ONE DAY BEER AND WINE LICENSE FOR JULY 23, 2012 FROM 6:00 PM – 11:00 PM FOR THE 2012 BERKSHIRE FRINGE GALA AT DANIEL ARTS CENTER, BARD COLLEGE AT SIMON'S ROCK, 84 ALFORD ROAD. (DISCUSSION/VOTE)

MOTION: Deb Phillips to approve the license

SECOND: Steve Bannon

VOTE: 5-0

B.

MAHAIWE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, INC./LEIGH DAVIS FOR PERMISSION TO HANG BANNER ACROSS MAIN STREET (FROM TUNE STREET BUILDING TO TOM'S TOY'S BUILDING) BEGINNING THURSDAY, JULY 12, 2012 THROUGH MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2012. (DISCUSSION/VOTE)

MOTION: Deb Phillips to approve hanging the banner over Main Street

SECOND: Steve Bannon

VOTE: 5-0

7. NEW BUSINESS:

A. BOS – Resolution Creating Economic Development Committee

Kevin O'Donnell presented the Board with a revised draft of the resolution. He said that he sent it to the finance committee and received no response.

Alana Chernila said that Pittsfield has a split tax rate, which funds this position. She suggested that there be a discussion about the creation of committees versus the re-organization of town staff and reallocation of resources. Alana said that it is important to look at the needs of the community and make sure that the way the staff is structured meets those needs.

Andrew Blechman said that he would like a professional to come in and 'jump start' the process. He suggested a non-benefited position with a one year contract.

Steve Bannon said that a timeline would be needed, as well.

Kevin O'Donnell said that the Board needs to clearly define economic development and what they want to achieve.

Deb Phillips said that the committee should define barriers, potential resources and come back to the Board with the maximum business activity.

The idea was presented of : Reasonable, Rational, Affordable.

Carol Diehl said that there needs to be outreach. A professional is needed to attract businesses to the area and who knows other towns that have also turned around economically.

Sharon Gregory said that this needs to be done one step at a time. The focus should be to help businesses and the community to grow more. She suggested that immediate issues should be addressed, such as taxes.

All agree that Deb Phillips will work with Kevin O'Donnell to re-write the resolution.

All agree to have Chris Rembold as a staff liaison on the committee.

B. BOS – Appointment of Town Election Officers for FY13

MOTION: Deb Phillips to approve the attached list of election officers

SECOND: Steve Bannon

VOTE: 5-0

8. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Continuation of Discussion Re: 2013 Annual Town Meeting and Town Election Calendar

Ed McCormick, moderator, gave his opinions about the Town Meeting and potential changes.

He said that Town Meeting is traditionally held on Monday night and to change the day would conflict with other organizations. He stated that extending it to 2 nights would be 'disastrous' because he feels that no one would come to the 2nd night. Mr. McCormick said that a better job needs to be done informing the public about what goes on at Town Meeting. He added that having the meeting at the Mahaiwe would discourage the elderly since there is limited parking. Mr. McCormick suggested changing the order of the warrants.

Alana Chernila said that they need to be more creative about how to get young people out.

Steve Bannon said that they need to do a better job of providing childcare and advertising such.

Ed McCormick suggested the possibility of being able to vote via internet.

All agree that food should be provided.

All agree to get the cost of using the Mahaiwe and to determine if it is technologically possible.

B. Discussion re: Board of Selectmen Self Evaluation

There was discussion regarding this process and the possibility of changing the self evaluation form

C. Update re: Transfer Station Operations

Joe Sokul gave a presentation regarding the cost of allowing credit card use.

Bud Atwood said that the transfer station should be closed.

Alana Chernila recommended researching the company 'Square' as a less expensive option.

MOTION: Deb Phillips requested a plan from the town that would make the transfer station more financially viable, more accessible and user-friendly by 8/13.

SECOND: Steve Bannon

VOTE: 5-0

Kevin O'Donnell said that he would have a response on Aug 13th.

D. Discussion re: Pedestrian Crossing Signs

Joe Sokul presented pictures of the proposed pedestrian crossing signs.

There was discussion regarding the look of the signs.

MOTION: Alana Chernila to use the yellow/orange sign

SECOND: Steve Bannon

VOTE: 4-0-1 Steve Bannon abstained

MOTION: Andrew Blechman to request a smaller sign from DOT

SECOND: Alana Chernila

VOTE: 4-0-1 Steve Bannon abstained

All agree to find out more information about the longevity of the material used for the crosswalk

All agree to find out more information about the pattern/color of the crosswalk.

9. SELECTMEN'S TIME:

Andrew Blechman asked if Bob Guidi was presented his Resolution.

Kevin O'Donnell said that he is waiting for a response and will follow up.

Alana Chernila said that the Board has gotten better at goal setting and should continue to get better. She said that the Board needs to consider if they are saying things in the right way because things are said and still don't get done.

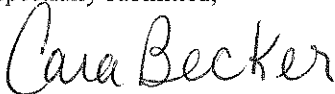
Steve Bannon said that the Parks Dept. asked that the electricity be turned off at the gazebo when it is not in use and this has not been done.

10. MEDIA TIME: NONE

11. ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion by Deb Phillips, seconded by Steve Bannon, the Board adjourned its meeting at 9:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Cara Becker
Recording Secretary