

**TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2012
6:30 P.M. – TOWN HALL**

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

6:30 PM - PUBLIC SESSION - BOARD ROOM

1. CALL TO ORDER

Sean Stanton called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

2. SELECTMEN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/STATEMENTS:

Alana Chernila said the Board had discussed the other Boards and Committees meetings and who would cover each. She said that this was not done this month.

Sean Stanton said that this will be discussed during the Monday meeting.

3. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

Kevin O'Donnell announced that he received confirmation that the Town is eligible, on the States Revolving Loans Fund, for a 2% low interest loan for the Wastewater Treatment Plant improvement. \$4.2 million is the maximum for the program, which has changed from a grant to a competitive revolving loan.

4. CITIZEN SPEAK TIME:

David Magadini asked who is in charge of the Library: the Board of Trustees, Library Director, Town Manager or someone other.

Sean Stanton replied that it depends upon which part of the library you are talking about.

Mr. Magadini asked who the representative is for the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority.

Sean Stanton replied that it is the Town Manager.

Mr. Magadini stated his complaint that at 3:30 P.M. today, they refused to pick him up and would not give him a reason why. He said that this is against the Constitution and he said that his rights have been violated. He asked that the Board instruct the Town Manager to instruct the Transit Authority to pick him up.

Kevin O'Donnell said that he will follow-up with the Director of the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority and update the Board.

Mr. Magadini said that the sale of the Fire Station is on the agenda. He stated that the Fire Station is Town property and the topic should come before the town in a special town meeting. He said that the Board should seek the voters' approval for the sale of town property.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

A. REAL ESTATE AGREEMENT FOR THE SALE OF CASTLE STREET FIRE STATION

MOTION: Deb Phillips to postpone the discussion until the paperwork is in order

SECOND: Steve Bannon

VOTE: 5-0

B. REQUEST FROM THE GREAT BARRINGTON FIRE DISTRICT PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE FOR A WAIVER FROM CHAPTER 115 NOISE CONTROL BYLAW.

Kevin O'Donnell said that the Fire District has sent a request to receive an exemption from the Town's noise bylaw, which is between 8PM and 8AM. They would like to work on the Water Main Construction project on Main Street between the hours of 6AM and 4 PM on Monday through Friday from April through June. Kevin said that the code allows the Board to give an initial 6 month waiver and beyond that a public hearing would be required.

Andrew Blechman said that this is very reasonable and that the only concern would be the residents of the area. He suggested that the Board give them a chance to speak about this.

Kevin O'Donnell responded that this will be televised and reported. He suggested if there is 'backlash' the Board can discuss the topic again.

Sean Stanton said that the executive summary says that the Fire District should provide regular updates to the Town and the merchants and asked Bud Atwood if this will be in the contract.

Bud Atwood replied that it would and that the Fire District wants this project to run as smoothly as possible.

MOTION: Steve Bannon to grant a 6 month waiver for Monday through Thursday from April through June.

SECOND: Deb Phillips

VOTE: 5-0

C. SEWER RATE ANALYSIS

Kevin O'Donnell went over the Sewer Rate and how they were developed.

Kevin said that this is an Enterprise Fund, which is a self-supporting fund by the users and does not require any property tax dollars.

The average single family household uses approximately 330 gallons a day which is equivalent to 1 EDU. 1 EDU = \$370 a year and there are 3600 EDU's in the system.

It is anticipated that there will be \$33 million of improvements to be done to the Wastewater Treatment Plant over the next 20 years. We are eligible for \$4.2 million in State Loans at 2%. Kevin O'Donnell strongly recommends that they go for the full amount. The years are combined into one borrowing to cover the cost of the entire project including engineering and construction.

Deb Phillips asked if we are looking for grants.

Lauren Sartori replied that it depends on the type of work being done. She said that the work we are doing is a different rank and rating. She said that we only qualify for low interest.

Andrew Blechman asked how much we take in from outside fees.

Tim Drumm replied \$160,000 - \$ 200,000 a year.

Kevin O'Donnell said that a letter will be going out with the next bill talking about how rags and cleaning supplies clog the system.

Deb Phillips requested that this also be put in the paper.

Sean Stanton suggested that they try to get a 30 second spot about this on CTSB-TV.

Joe Sokul said that he will look into this.

Lauren Sartori suggested that the High School Students be involved by creating cartoons or other creative means to communicate this message.

Kevin O'Donnell said that a flyer about phosphates will also go out with the bills.

Joe Sokul said that he will look into publicizing this as well.

Lauren Sartori said that there is money in the Wetlands Protection Act if seed money is needed.

There was discussion regarding the pros and cons of going to a flow basis.

Alana Chernila asked about the possibility of going to a flow basis and asked if the communities on the flow system work by a formula.

Kevin O'Donnell said that there is a minimum charge and a charge that is a decreasing or increasing fee predicated upon use. He added that it would cost \$15,000 alone to conduct the study on this.

Deb Phillips asked what kind of volume decrease would decrease the cost.

Tim Drumm replied that a decrease would only affect the electric cost.

Deb Phillips clarified that there would be nothing to gain by decreasing the use of water.

Tim Drumm replied no. Brewery and Paper Mills are needed. He added that the only way to reduce the cost is by upgrading and by energy efficiency.

Andrew Blechman asked if they should consider solar panels at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Tim Drumm replied that there is not a big enough foot print for them.

Sean Stanton suggested that they approach Town of Egremont again to see if there is interest in using our service.

6. SELECTMEN'S TIME:

Andrew Blechman said that he has the letter that was drafted to the Berkshire Co-op Market and will present it when he attends their meeting.

It was planned that the Board will meet with the Agricultural Commission and Energy Committee on February 27 to discuss our plan as a Town regarding our energy, agriculture and land use policy.

The Board will try to make the meeting earlier and will invite the Town Planner.

Alana Chernila said that it is important to set missions and goals around this topic rather than speak only about the proposed by-law.

7. MEDIA TIME:

Trevor Jones asked if the sewer rate increases of between 25%- 80% can be tied to the lack of an increase historically.

Kevin O'Donnell responded no, that the sewer rates have been established to generate sufficient revenue to cover operating costs and some ongoing infrastructure improvements. The plant now needs significant upgrades, which spreads the cost of \$12 million over the next 5 years.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion by Steve Bannon, seconded by Deb Phillips, the Board adjourned its meeting at 8:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Cara Becker
Recording Secretary