

**TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON
SELECTBOARD'S MEETING
MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2014
7:00 P.M. - REGULAR SESSION
TOWN HALL**

PRESENT: ED ABRAHAMS
DANIEL BAILLY
STEPHEN BANNON
DEB PHILLIPS
SEAN STANTON

JENNIFER TABAKIN, TOWN MANAGER

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Deb Phillips called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

September 22, 2014 Selectboard and Finance Committee Joint Meeting.

MOTION: Steve Bannon to approve the September 22, 2014 minutes

SECOND: Dan Bailly

VOTE: 5-0

3. SELECTBOARD'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/STATEMENTS:

A. GENERAL COMMENTS BY THE BOARD – None

4. LICENSES OR PERMITS:

A. LIISA KELLY, JUSTICE RESOURCE INSTITUTE BERKSHIRE MEADOWS FOR A DRIVEWAY PERMIT AT CHRISTIAN HILL RD. (300 FT. SOUTH OF BURNING TREE RD.). (DISCUSSION/VOTE)

Lisa Kelly presented and clarified the map of this property.

MOTION: Steve Bannon to approve the permit

SECOND: Sean Stanton

VOTE: 5-0

B. SB - TO ACCEPT EARLY (10:00A.M.) SUNDAY OPENING TIME FOR PACKAGE STORES TO SELL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AS PERMITTED BY MGL. CH. 138, SEC. 15. (DISCUSSION/VOTE)

The list of all package stores that submitted applications was read.

MOTION: Steve Bannon to accept early Sunday opening time for package stores

SECOND: Dan Bailly

VOTE: 5-0

C. JENISE LUCEY/BERKSHIRE SOUTH REGIONAL COMMUNITY CENTER FOR ONE DAY ALL ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR LICENSE FOR OCTOBER 18, 2014 FROM 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM AT 15 CRISSEY ROAD. (DISCUSSION/VOTE)

MOTION: Sean Stanton to approve the license

SECOND: Steve Bannon

VOTE: 5-0

5. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

A. UPDATE ON POLICE UNION CONTRACT.

Jennifer Tabakin reported that the police union contract is expected to be signed by the end of the week. They are working on one minor edit.

B. UPDATE ON SEARLES/BRYANT PROPERTY.

Jennifer reported that the town issued a promissory note for \$640,000, which was received in full, with interest, last Friday. The property is now owned 90% by Iredale Cosmetics and 10% by CDC.

C. UPDATE ON BUILDING USE POLICY.

Jennifer presented the revised building use policy. The suggested rate at the Housy Dome is \$50 a day, which is less than what was suggested in the last draft but more than in previous years.

The basketball league uses the building for 143 days. They refinish the floors in lieu of payment, which will continue.

The Great Barrington little league paid \$35 in the past and will now pay \$100 for 2 days.

The Parks Committee is also considering use fees for parks, etc. Any changes will be added to this policy. Jennifer said that film work permit fees will be added to this policy as well.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

A. TRANSFER STATION UPDATE.

Joe Sokul gave a transfer station update. He reported that there was \$15,220 in sticker sales.

There is a weekend use count of 193. This count is taken by the attendant.

Joe recommended that the rates remain the same.

Sean Stanton spoke about the annual rate. He said that only 19 people use this option. He suggested reducing the amount that is charged, in order to get more people to choose this option and therefore, make more money.

Sean also suggested studying metal hauling.

Deb Phillips suggested that someone run different scenarios regarding cost and income, such as 1) getting money for metal 2) decreasing cost in order to increase people purchasing the annual sticker.

Jennifer said that she will have someone research this.

There was discussion about changing the days; closing the station on Friday and opening another weekday.

B. REST OF RIVER COMMENTS TO EPA. (DISCUSSION/VOTE)

Jennifer explained that 6 river towns have been working on comprehensive comments to the EPA. Jennifer gave out a summary of this letter. The final copy of this letter is to come.

Jennifer is asking the Selectboard to authorize Deb Phillips or Sean Stanton to sign the final letter on behalf of the Selectboard.

Jennifer said that this letter would be in addition to the letter that Great Barrington is sending to the EPA on its own.

MOTION: Sean Stanton to authorize Selectboard Chair Deb Phillips, or Vice-Chair Sean Stanton in her absence, to sign the Housatonic Rest of River municipal committees' letter addressed to EPA New England.

SECOND: Steve Bannon

VOTE: 5-0

C. LAKE MANSFIELD ROAD – UPDATE/DEB PHILLIPS.

Deb Phillips spoke about the Lake Mansfield Road meeting. She explained that the Selectboard will recommend what goes on the ballot.

Deb said that the meeting revealed that “do nothing” is not an option. Everything will cost money, so it can't be a cost decision. Deb said it is important to get community input. Environmental and recreation issues will need to be weighed against convenience issues.

Deb Phillips asked Jennifer Tabakin to ask the emergency department their opinion regarding the options.

Dan Bailly said that this was a great presentation. He said that he was surprised that the Lake Mansfield Improvement Task Force did not have a recommendation. However, they are asking for community input.

Dan said that he would like to see the cost of moving the road.

Ed Abrahams expressed that what is really being looked at is what the town wants and needs. He said that he would like to see a more fleshed out plan for the option of closing the road.

Ed would also like to have more meetings to hear from the public.

Steve Bannon asked what the impact will be on the surrounding roads if Lake Mansfield Rd. is closed. He asked where the cars would be pushed to.

Jennifer Tabakin said that she liked how many aspects were included: traffic flow, design, parking and recreation. She said that it is important that all aspects are included in decision making and to look at this as a full picture.

Deb Phillips said that she would like a community meeting in Housatonic in November and one in downtown Great Barrington in December.

Dates will be discussed.

Sean Stanton said that it is important to find out what grants are available if the road is closed.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

A. SB – APPOINTMENT TO THE DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE. (DISCUSSION/VOTE)

MOTION: Steve Bannon to appoint Lisa Landry to the Design Advisory Committee.

SECOND: Dan Bailly

VOTE: 5-0

B. PETER DILLON/BHRSD SUPERINTENDENT.

Superintendent Peter Dillon requested that the Selectboard vote to put 2 questions on the ballot and vote to endorse the High School renovation project.

Peter Dillon said that he met with the Boards in Stockbridge and West Stockbridge and they voted unanimously to endorse the project and put the questions on the ballot.

Superintendent Dillon said that Great Barrington initially voted the budget portion down which was \$4 million more than is now being proposed.

The project is \$51.24 million with the state reimbursing \$23.3 million.

He explained that the tax impact per 100,000 assessed value is \$92 a year. Therefore, assessed value of \$300,000 would cost $\$92 \times 3 = \276 .

Superintendent Dillon spoke about the items that will be addressed in the renovation which will include: Added sprinkler systems, asbestos removal, heating/plumbing/electrical work, creation of a modern science lab, handicapped accessible bleachers and improvements in arts and humanities spaces.

Dan Bailly clarified that if the project doesn't pass this time, the school can't go forth without Great Barrington.

Steve Bannon replied that it would have to be a district vote.

Michelle Loubert asked if the district will pursue grants for school safety as well.

Peter Dillon replied that they will and are aware of the grants that are available.

Sean Stanton said that it seems like there are many families moving into town. He said that there is often worry that the population is decreasing, but if we invest in our schools, people may come. Sean said that he is in favor of the project.

MOTION: Sean Stanton to confirm placement of question #1 on the ballot

SECOND: Steve Bannon

VOTE: 5-0

C. SB - TO PLACE PROPOSITION 2 ½ EXEMPTION QUESTION ON NOVEMBER 4, 2014 BHRSD BALLOT. (DISCUSSION/VOTE)

Jennifer Tabakin explained proposition 2 1/2. This would allow the levy limit to increase. This would not impact individual taxes. It impacts the maximum amount that can be taxed.

Steve Bannon asked if this question was not put on the ballot, would we be getting close to the levy limit.

Jennifer Tabakin responded that we could get through this year but over 25 years, she doesn't think there will be enough to get through.

Karen Smith thanked Jennifer for putting a light on proposition 2 ½.

Jennifer further explained that the actual tax levy; what is collected through property taxes is \$18.8 million. There is an additional \$5 million that isn't a revenue source through taxes; it includes grants, free cash and 'reimbursable' from the state. If we were to go up to the maximum levy capacity, it would be just over \$20 million. Our current excess levy capacity is \$1,689,311.

MOTION: Sean Stanton to confirm placement of Question #2 on the Ballot.

SECOND: Steve Bannon

VOTE: 5-0

MOTION: Sean Stanton to support the renovation and addition to the High School

SECOND: Steve Bannon

VOTE: 4-0-1 Dan Bailly against

Dan Bailly stated that 60% voted no the first time; those voters aren't getting fair representation. Ed Abrahams responded that the cost was the original problem, not the project. The cost has decreased. Ed said that if the project gets voted down, there are still 570 students that need to be put into a building that will need work. It will cost significantly less with State assistance. Ed supports the project. Deb Phillips responded that people were concerned about the cost of the project, not that it was a bad project. Many have looked at the new data and have changed their mind.

8. CITIZEN SPEAK TIME:

Michelle Loubert asked that the citizens get a copy of the ballot questions.

Jennifer Tabakin distributed them.

Patrick Fennel asked why the Selectboard doesn't say the pledge before meetings.

Bill Wolford said that he is not against the project because of cost or education benefits. He said that all analyses that have been presented are from supporters of the project. He asked if there has been any independent analysis.

Superintendent Dillon responded that there have been a lot of meetings and he was asked the most nuanced questions that can't always be answered on the spot. All of the information is posted on the website.

9. SELECTBOARD'S TIME: None

10. MEDIA TIME: Eileen Mooney asked about the RFP for the Housatonic School.

Jennifer Tabakin responded that it hasn't been released yet.

11. ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion by Dan Bailly, seconded by Sean Stanton, the Board adjourned its meeting at 8:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Cara Becker
Recording Secretary