



**Board of Selectmen
Minutes
Tuesday, August 2, 2011 at 7:00pm
Town Hall Meeting Room**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by Chair, Marie Sobalvarro in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Selectmen Marie Sobalvarro, Ron Ricci, Bill Johnson and Tim Clark were all in attendance as well as the Town Administrator Tim Bragan and Executive Assistant Julie Doucet.

Continuation of National Grid pole hearing

Marie Sobalvarro reported a site visit was held with National Grid, concerned neighbors and the town Tree Warden. The parties were able to come to an agreement.

On a Johnson/Ricci motion, the board voted to approve the amended proposal for construction of pole 37-84 for guiding purposes on Slough Road.

(Ricci – Aye, Johnson – Aye, Sobalvarro – Aye, Clark – Nay)

MINUTES

On a Ricci/Johnson motion, the board voted unanimously to approve minutes of 6/21, 6/28 and 7/19, as presented.

APPOINTMENTS

Cultural Council

Committee Chair Debra VanderWerf recommended Robin Calderwood and Fran Nickerson for appointment to two vacant three year terms. On a Ricci/Johnson motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint Fran Nickerson and Robin Calderwood to the Cultural Council. She also introduced Moriah Arnold for appointment as the student member. On a Ricci/Johnson motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint Moriah Arnold as student liaison to Cultural Council.

Election Officials

On a Ricci/Clark motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint election officials as requested by the Town Clerk.

SELECTMEN REPORTS

Five Year Strategic Plans

Marie Sobalvarro announced the September 7th deadline for submission of five year strategic plans to the Town Administrator. She asked if the board members had any updates. Bill Johnson said his liaisons are on track to meet the submission date. Sobalvarro noted the library trustees need to solicit community input to determine their strategic vision and with it being summertime they find it difficult to do this now. They will submit a plan but will have more meaningful input at a later date. Johnson said he sees this as a first pass and hopes all committees/boards are seeking public input. He thinks it is good for all departments/boards/committees to submit this first pass and use as

a working document. Ron Ricci commented the Water Commission is considering the town center sewer project road disruptions in their multi year plan so the road is not disturbed twice. They are also investigating alternate water sources. He noted the Board of Health as a regulatory body will consider ways they can increase public outreach regarding Lyme disease. Ricci said the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust is discussing how to make our housing plan more flexible. Tim Clark said the Park and Recreation Committee have been dealing with staffing and operational issues. He has not spoken with the Historic Commission but will follow up with them.

Master Plan Steering Committee

Tim Clark reported the committee has held two meetings and are well on their way to finalizing a draft Request for Proposal (RFP) by the end of August.

Marie Sobalvarro reported the Council on Aging is working on their plan and are working with the Elderly and Disabled Committee to meet needs of the tax abatement program.

Sobalvarro asked Clark for an update related to establishing an enterprise zone for the Transfer Station. Clark said he has been working with Finance Director Lorraine Leonard on this and it has been difficult to separate out costs. They have not yet been able to determine with certainty an enterprise zone would be better than the revolving fund that is set up now.

TOWN CENTER SEWER PROJECT

Town Administrator Tim Bragan reported on the recent bid opening stating the cost of the project has come in over the original amount. One of the circuit breakers agreed upon was if the project cost increased by more than 10% a town meeting must be held for approval. The additional amount is \$540,385. Bragan met with the Capital Planning & Investment Committee this morning and it has been determined the State Revolving Fund (SRF) program can handle the additional borrowing with an interest rate of 2%. He said after reviewing the cash flow of the project and payments coming back over time, we do not need an additional debt exclusion authorization as the original \$2,000,000 authorization is sufficient to cover the Town's portion of the project thus a special election for a ballot question will not be necessary. The board members agreed to hold a Special Town Meeting on Thursday, August 18th. Bragan explained the project must get started and be completed by June 2012 to receive the SRF funding. The contractors are aware the project will begin in September. Bragan said if we receive town meeting approval the next step will be to meet with engineers and SRF to discuss timing issues involved with the project especially considering it will be beginning when school is back in session. On a Ricci/Johnson motion, the board voted unanimously to call a Special Town Meeting at Bromfield School in the auditorium at 7:00pm on Thursday, August 18th to authorize additional borrowing for \$540,385.

Town Center Sewer Building Committee Chair Chris Ashley came forward to give a brief update. He noted this process began back in 2009 and anticipates the project moving forward now that all pieces are in place. He said this is a great opportunity for the town to

come back and ratify their decision and get this project underway. He also noted improvements to the wastewater treatment facility will need to be done regardless. This project provides the town with the ability to use the SRF program to take advantage of low interest rates. Bill Johnson suggested Ashley and Bragan craft a write up explaining the process thus far and implications moving forward. It is imperative town residents have a good understanding prior to the Special Town Meeting. He especially thinks we need to reach out to the town center residents. The board members agreed. Marie Sobalvarro added the BOS is anxious to appoint Sewer Commissioners but have not yet received any formal requests to serve. Ashley agreed appointment of commissioners is essential as they must turn the policy recommendations into actual policies for implementation.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Out of State Travel

Tim Bragan asked the BOS to approve an out of state travel request from Fire Chief Rick Sicard. He would like to attend the Fire Rescue International Expo in Atlanta August 25th-27th. Bragan supported the request. On a Ricci/Johnson motion, the board voted unanimously to authorize out of state travel for the Fire Chief. Tim Clark asked for a report when he returns.

Municipal Health Care Law

Bragan told the board due to the new legislation that was passed in July related to health insurance plan design he has and will continue to attend informational meetings/seminars on the subject. He said at this time the town is not taking any steps in this direction. We need to better understand the process and learn all the details. He noted the town must realize a 5% cost saving to make a move to the Group Insurance Commission (GIC).

Harvard/Boxborough flooding update

Bragan said it has been determined the culvert under Eldridge Road must be widened by 28ft. He explained since the culvert is in Harvard we would be responsible to make this improvement. There is FEMA grant funding that is available for the construction but there is no funding offered for the engineering which needs to be done first. He will ask the DPW Director to get some estimates.

Town Hall Exterior Improvements

Bragan said he would be attending the Historical Commission meeting tomorrow night to discuss exterior improvements to the town hall.

Regional dispatch

Bragan reported the information session was held. The only members of the public in attendance were two reporters. The final draft of the Inter-Municipal Agreement has not been completed but should be ready for the next BOS meeting. He confirmed Lancaster is defiantly on board, Shirley has not responded yet, Lunenburg is favorable and there other communities that may be interested.

MUNICIPAL BUILDING CHARGE

The board members were provided a draft charge developed by Marie Sobalvarro with some edits from Ron Ricci. The board agreed to remove the first paragraph, change the schedule to read: the MBC will report to the Capital Planning & Investment Committee, Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen in January 2012 and the design and construction schedule will be determined no later than October 18^h in conjunction with Capital Planning & Investment Committee, Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen. They also discussed the number of committee members seven or six. They decided to maintain the number seven and added the word voting. On a Ricci/Clark motion, the board voted unanimously to accept MBC charter as amended.

DISCUSS APPROACH TO MASTER PLAN

Bill Johnson began by stating it is not his intention to sell this approach but a starting point for discussion. Johnson noted the multiple planning challenges facing the town and the financial constraints we have to conform to. He referenced the 1998 and 2002 Master Plans which recommended hiring a professional/staff Planner. He understands the requirements that fall on the Planning Board to update the Master Plan but wonders if we can do effective Master Planning in a different way so as to ensure ongoing professional support for its execution – for the same cost? He said we invest in consultants for specific studies and reports but never retain their expertise for implementation and updating. He commented on the time and expertise placed upon committee/board volunteers. He is suggesting we shift the focus from a pretty document to taking the vision and implementing it. Marie Sobalvarro expressed concern over meddling with a project that is under the Planning Board's direction. She was unclear on what progress has been made so far on the Master Plan.

Planning Board Chair, Kara Minar came forward and said the Planning Board supports any good idea related to planning. She noted the Planning Board is elected and listed the credentials of each member. She feels the Planning Board has served the town well as an elected entity and confirmed updating the Master Plan is under their jurisdiction. She explained there are nine key elements that are mandated by the state that must be addressed. Minar thought it would be quite difficult to find the skills needed to update the Master Plan and experience required for a professional planner in one individual. She also noted updating the plan is a public process and currently 80% of the Master Plan has been implemented. She thought it would not be right to consider repurposing the \$35,000 voted on at the Annual Town Meeting for updating the Master Plan.

Master Plan member Al Combs agrees the need for a Planner is critical and has been noted in the past Master Plans. He said it will be a necessary position to assist with our need for commercial development assuming the economy recovers. He does not feel use of the \$35,000 for updating the Master Plan is the right approach. He is also skeptical any one person would be able to handle both. Combs noted we are in the early phase of this process and if the plan is worked well there may not be a need to utilize the entire \$35,000. He said it is important to hire consultants as a double check that we have covered all of our bases and we have to consider our time constraints as well. Combs will bring this idea to the Master Plan Steering Committee for their input.

Ron Ricci said he understands all points of view and falls somewhere in between but he admits he has very limited experience with the Master Plan. Tim Clark agreed a Planner on staff could help to support the process and he referenced the Town of Lancaster who has a community development office which handles implementation and provides support. He thinks investigating the creation of a staff position related to planning as a worth while effort. He noted updating the Master Plan as a public process that frames the discussion and a planner on staff could assist in maintaining the plan as well as moving it forward. Bill Johnson summarized the discussion by stating we are all in agreement investigation into how employing a Planner may help the town. Master Plan Committee member Joe Hutchinson explained the process is vision and implementation. He anticipates a very different vision this time around.

UNIFIED PERMIT FOR SOLAR PV- *Solarize Mass Program*

Bragan reported a meeting was held with Tim Clark, Building Inspector Gabe Vellante and Town Counsel to discuss development of a unified permit. The goal is to make the process easier and affordable for homeowners. He said in researching fees they are recommending a building permit fee of \$125 and \$36 per electrical inspection. New England Breeze has eleven committed homeowners with five who have already submitted a down payment. On a Clark/Ricci motion, the board voted unanimously to set a solar pv building permit fee of \$125 and set solar pv electrical inspection fee of \$36 per inspection and set fees go directly to inspector.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50PM.

APPOINTMENTS – volunteer form from Fran Nickerson dated 7.19.2011

Robin Calderwood dated 5.23.2011

Moriah Arnold dated 8.1.2011

Election officials letter from Town Clerk dated 7.28.2011

MUNICIPAL BUILDING CHARGE – draft dated 7.18.2011

DISCUSS APPROACH TO MASTER PLAN – Presentation by Bill Johnson

Meeting Harvard’s Planning Challenges dated 8.2.2011