

Strategic Planning Session  
Fruitland's Museum – Wayside Visitors Center  
June 4, 2013 – 3:00pm – 5:30pm

Chair Marie Sobalvarro opened the meeting asking the board members to speak to each of their goals explaining why they chose them and how they envision achieving them. She expects to conclude the meeting by determining specific goals for the upcoming year.

Operational – Ron Ricci

Ricci explained to ensure the departments under the BOS are operating in an efficient and appropriate manner independent audits should be conducted periodically by a third party. He said it is important the services provided are inspected to determine how operations are performing adding this will eliminate the reliance on one individual.

The Town Administrator can coordinate this effort with department liaisons.

Financial

Overview of Debt- Marie Sobalvarro

Sobalvarro reviewed the debt service spreadsheet highlighting projects coming up and how it affects capital planning and funding maintenance. The spreadsheet included figures for non-exempt debt (CPIC) and exempt debt. They next reviewed the Capital Plan which indicates several serious capital building projects that are coming up such as the Bromfield House repairs. She said the overall financial picture and other anticipated funding needs are important for the BOS to understand.

Lucy Wallace suggested the BOS find ways to keep the public informed on what issues are driving the budget. She offered the idea of periodic write ups on town finances in the local papers.

Municipal buildings: repair/renovation/expansion

Restoring Town Hall – Stu Sklar

Stu Sklar said as our biggest expenditure of the year it is important the project is done in a timely fashion and kept on budget. He recommended the BOS support the Town Hall Building Committee by working closely with them so the project is not delayed. Leo Blair anticipates the rehab project could go over budget and recommends the BOS communicate with the public on any delays or issues as they arise.

Timing of large capital projects – Marie Sobalvarro

Marie Sobalvarro proposed the idea of establishing a standing building committee. Leo Blair suggested hiring professionals to prepare cost estimates every three to five years. He said experts could offer guidance on how to prioritize projects. Stu Sklar and Ron Ricci were in favor of employing a facility maintenance person to handle repairs and preventative maintenance.

### Hildreth House – Stu Sklar

Stu Sklar reiterated his previous comments on the Town Hall project as the same with the Hildreth House; support committee in their efforts. Lucy Wallace reported the HHIC is on track for coming to the 2014 ATM with a request for funding final design/construction drawings and construction funds. There have been significant cost reductions (anticipating local donations, such as furniture and appliances) and current estimated project cost is \$3.5 million. She reiterated Stu's comments on supporting the HHIC.

### OPEB (other post employment benefits) – Stu Sklar

Stu Sklar said we need to be proactive on this and decide how to fund. Tim Bragan explained some of the options. Leo Blair suggested the Finance Committee handle forming a sub-committee as it is a financial matter.

### Selectmen Policies & Procedures/Role of BOS

Marie Sobalvarro asked all the members to review the policy. Lucy Wallace offered to gather edits and compile for action at a BOS meeting. The board members discussed their role as Selectmen and how they can assist in improving volunteerism. They were in agreement all the standing committees need to be evaluated for relevance.

### Devens

The board members discussed utilizing the JBOS forum as a platform where MassDevelopment can report out but not as a decision making board. Lucy Wallace would like to see the BOS work with and support the Planning Board on the Devens piece of the Master Plan. Stu Sklar is interested in determining the sense of the town and what they will support.

### Goals:

- Audits by third party or other external entity – all departments  
(Set up by Town Administrator)
- Financial:
  1. Outbound communication ahead of what is coming up with building projects and financial situation
  2. Independent contractor to review capital building projects
  3. Focus on Facilities Manager – ongoing maintenance
- Review all procedures, policies and evaluate committees.
- Establish committee to work on funding approach for OPEB
- Devens – Outbound communication with JBOS/MassDevelopment reporting  
Support Planning Board in Master Plan and determine direction from the voters
- Support Town Hall building project

Summer Schedule: July 9<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>  
August 20<sup>th</sup>

Annual Town Meeting – discussed trying evenings? Get feedback from public.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30pm