



**Board of Selectmen
Minutes
Tuesday, January 21, 2014 at 7:00PM
Town Hall Meeting Room**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chair, Marie Sobalvarro in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Selectmen Stu Sklar, Ron Ricci, Lucy Wallace and Leo Blair were all in attendance as well as the Town Administrator Tim Bragan.

BROMFIELD HOUSE DISCUSSION WITH SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The School Committee came to discuss their recent decision to not renovate the Bromfield House. School Committee Chair SusanMary Redinger stated they require 1500 sq. ft. of space for the school administration. She said this does not include special/community education or conference/lunch rooms. She explained the committee based their decision on finding the best option for the town which will provide optimal space for the least amount of money. Sobalvarro asked if they considered just addressing accessibility improvements. Redinger said the committee is skeptical to begin any upgrades not knowing where you stop. Lucy Wallace asked if they would consider removing the house from the location and possibly incorporating school administration with repairs needed to the K-wing. They also discussed exploring use of space in the new town hall or in the old library. Leo Blair was pleased with the School Committees decision. He encourages the town to have a real conversation on what makes sense when it comes to building uses. Stu Sklar was in favor of investigating the K-wing and Ron Ricci suggested investigating other space in the schools. Sobalvarro proposed the School Committee compare the costs to upgrade the electric and accessibility at the old library against the cost quoted in the Galeota report for the repairs to the Bromfield House. She invited the School Committee to come back to the Selectmen's February 18th meeting following up on the dollar for dollar comparison in terms of accessibility and legality of use of funds if property is sold. Sobalvarro confirmed this is not an urgent issue but the Selectmen will discuss how they may incorporate school administration offices when reviewing the feasibility study of town hall.

ELDERLY & DISABLED TAXATION AID COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT

Applicant Dale Welch and committee member Ann Taylor were both present. Welch explained why he is interested in serving on the committee. On a Wallace/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint Dale Welch to the Elderly and Disabled Taxation Aid Committee.

PLANNING BOARD – REVIEW BYLAW AMENDMENTS

Chair Kara Minar was in attendance to briefly review the six proposed bylaw amendments. She said two of the proposed bylaws are housekeeping and four others are more substantive. She explained the two housekeeping bylaws are to have the floodplain districts consistent with new floodplain maps and the adoption of the revised zoning map.

The other amendments are:

1. Temporary Moratorium on Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers
2. Amend Section 125-3 Existing structures and Uses, to make consistent with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40A Section 6 and more user friendly for applicants
3. Driveways to clarify ambiguous language
4. Adoption of adult entertainment bylaw

Hearings will be held on Monday, February 3rd for all articles except the adult entertainment bylaw which will be held on Monday, February, 24th

MEET WITH MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Committee members Victor Normand and Lucy Wallace were present. Normand said Phase 1 was completed back in April 2012 and included a survey. The survey identified five primary areas of focus for Phase 2:

- Understanding the impact of Devens on Harvard's municipal budget, schools, economic development options, housing, town culture, and government.
- Diversifying Harvard's economy and tax base with an appropriate mix of residential and commercial development.
- Increasing the diversity of housing types in Harvard to meet the needs of a greater variety of households while ensuring that new housing is harmonious with the character of the community.
- Emphasizing Town Center's role as the central community gathering place while providing safe, convenient and attractive circulation choices for pedestrians that reduce parking demands.
- Conserving natural, historic and cultural resources to improve and sustain Harvard's rural and historic character and assure the health of its natural resources.

Normand said the committee is soliciting feedback from all boards/committees on the five primary areas. He asked what the Selectmen would hope to find in the Master Plan. Marie Sobalvarro suggested input on road layout, sidewalks, and pedestrian access to assist the DPW Director in his future capital plan for town center reconstruction. Wallace asked if there were other areas not captured in the five primary areas the Selectmen see as significant. Sobalvarro mentioned a commitment to infrastructure considering the continued issues with many of the town buildings. Leo Blair asked how implementation of the Master Plan goals are handled. Wallace said there is a section which includes this and they are adding to it who is responsible for following through with each goal. Blair views the Selectmen's role as the shepherds of the process. Sklar questioned the ability of Harvard to diversify its tax base. Sobalvarro also suggested a "where to go" when it comes to what has been done thus far when it comes to Devens. Ron Ricci and Leo Blair spoke about the real need for more convenient services in the Ayer Road commercial district. The board discussed finding the right balance between preserving the rural and historic nature of Harvard while providing the necessary conveniences residents' desire. Normand asked what other information Harvard may need related to Devens. Leo Blair is interested in a legal determination related to the jurisdiction and how to change it. It was decided the Selectmen would send additional comments on Devens to Wallace or Normand by Tuesday, February 4th.

LARGE CAPITAL ITEMS – 2016 – 2019

Fire Chief Rick Sicard and DPW Director Rich Nota came to give an overview, explanation and field questions on their long range capital plan items.

Fire: study on central fire station, new tanker truck, refurbish fire station (building & systems), purchase used ladder truck and replace command car.

DPW: costs to reconstruct and repair town roads, new public works facility, town center reconstruction, well field development and emergency generator for water pump house.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Tim Bragan reported Littleton County Road will be closed from Old Schoolhouse Road to the Littleton town line for repairs from April 1st through July 31st. He said the road will be closed during the day and open at night. DPW Director Rich Nota is holding a meeting with the schools and other town departments to discuss the details.

Bragan gave the Selectmen their options related to a recent dog related issue. He said they can hold a dog hearing and either have the dog restrained permanently to owner's property, euthanize the dog and or fine the owner. He explained the current fine structure Harvard has is far less than what the state allows. Sobalvarro reviewed changes that were made to state law governing animal control in 2012. The Selectmen decided to hold a hearing at their February 4th meeting.

Bragan asked the Selectmen to set a deadline for the annual town meeting warrant articles. He reminded them with the ATM date on April 1st the warrant needs to be ready for the printer by the end of February. They decided on February 14th as the deadline.

Bragan summarized Selectmen warrant articles to be: amend dog bylaw, digitizing files, human resource/assistant town administrator position and authority to lease land for a commercial cell tower. He explained the sole purpose of the tower is for public safety.

TOWN HALL FEASIBILITY

Marie Sobalvarro reported her and Leo Blair met with architects from LLB last week. The discussion involved how they can assist in reducing the cost of the project while staying within the existing footprint of the building. LLB provided a proposal for architectural and engineering feasibility study services to review a reduction in project scope and to investigate reduced construction cost. The board reviewed the proposal details. Blair also described the scope of work which was discussed. On a Wallace/Blair motion, the board voted unanimously to authorize the chair to sign the proposal from LLB dated January 14, 2014.

SELECTMEN POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Leo Blair proposed the following revisions:

- Adopting a policy to allow the Chair to serve up to three consecutive years
- Adopting a policy where appointments require 4 out of 5 votes in favor
- Allow the Special Town Meeting warrant to be open for 7 days

Blair explained why he has proposed the revisions and each board member gave their opinion. The Selectmen will approve any revisions at their next meeting.

SIGNAGE ON STILL RIVER ROAD

Stu Sklar asked if he could speak with the Police Chief and DPW Director about posting speed limit signs on Still River Road between Madigan Lane and Prospect Hill Road. He said residents in this area have expressed concern. The board supported this request.

CIVIL WAR ENCAMPMENT

Stu Sklar reported Park & Recreation, Fire Chief Sicard and Police Chief Denmark have approved the encampment for the weekend of June 7th. He said they will set up on Friday, June 6th, provide an educational program for the 8th graders and be open to the public from 9am-5pm Saturday, June 7th. He said the school trust is funding the event. All abutters will be notified. On a Ricci /Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously to approve the encampment.

CHAPTER 90 REIMBURSEMENTS (crack filling)

On a Blair/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to approve the requests.

ENTERTAINMENT LICENSE – CHAPMAN/RUZE

On a Wallace/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to approve the license with conditions presented.

**** On a Wallace motion, the Board voted unanimously by a roll call vote: (Sobalvarro – Aye, Ricci – Aye, Wallace –AYE, Sklar – Aye, Blair - Aye) to enter into executive session at 10:00pm, as authorized by Chapter 30A, Section 21.3 of the Massachusetts General Laws, at a meeting for which 48-hours' notice has been given, to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigating if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. . Following the executive session, the Board will reconvene into open session. ****

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30pm.

Documents referenced:

BROMFIELD HOUSE DISCUSSION – assessment & cost estimate report dated 10.2.2013
ELD & DIS TAX AID COMM APPOINTMENT – Welch volunteer form dated 1.6.2014
PLANNING BOARD - BYLAW AMENDMENTS – hearing notice dated 2.3.2013
MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE – conversation document dated 1.21.2013
LARGE CAPITAL ITEMS – 2016 – 2019 – FY15-19 capital submissions spreadsheet
TOWN HALL FEASIBILITY – Proposal from LLB for scope reduction dated 1.14.2014
ENTERTAINMENT LICENSE – CHAPMAN/RUZE – dated Jan 2014

