



**Board of Selectmen
Minutes
Tuesday, May 6, 2014 at 7:00PM
Town Hall Meeting Room**

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

MINUTES

On a Wallace/Sobalvarro motion, the board voted unanimously to approve minutes of 3/18, as presented.

On a Wallace/Sobalvarro motion, the board voted unanimously to approve minutes of 4/15, as presented.

EMPLOYEE APPOINTMENTS

Finance Director Lorraine Leonard was present to request the appointment of two new employees.

Assistant Assessor

Leonard said sixteen resumes were received and five interviews were conducted. She asked the board to appoint Amanda Belliveau. On a Sobalvarro/Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint Amanda Belliveau to position of Assistant Assessor commencing on May 19th subject to a pre-employment physical.

Assistant Treasurer/Collector

Leonard said seventeen resumes were received and six interviews were conducted. She asked the board to appoint Amy Haley. On a Sobalvarro/Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint Amy Haley to position of Assistant Treasurer/Collector commencing on May 12th subject to a pre-employment physical.

LIBRARY TRUSTEE APPOINTMENT

Library Trustees Gail Coolidge and Marty Green were present to request the appointment of Stacie Cassat Green to fill vacancy left by Joseph Newpol. By a roll call vote, Green – Aye, Coolidge – Aye, Wallace – Aye, Sobalvarro – Aye, Blair – Aye, Ricci – Aye, Sklar – Aye, the boards voted unanimously to appoint Stacie Green through the next election.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

Billy Salter, 3 Elm Street, questioned the amount of space defined in the new designs. He was skeptical the space could accommodate the town hall offices and all the “stuff” that goes with them.

Dan Page, 1 Fairbank Street, distributed a memo sent by him and his wife to their neighbors about their concerns related to additional events happening on the town common. He said they are big fans of traditional events such as the Apple Blossom Festival and tree lighting but are becoming increasing concerned about events which have nothing to do with the town or the residents. He has been surprised by how loud PA systems are and how far the sound travels. He

also commented on residents being able to sleep in on a Sunday or work in their garden without being disturbed. Page was horrified to hear about the upcoming encampment planned with overnight campers. He asked the Selectmen to consider our residential neighborhood when weighing requests to use the common.

Michele Page, 1 Fairbank Street, talked about two encounters she has had with participants from the Longboarding event. She was driving on Littleton Road when she almost had an accident with a participant and was also disturbed during dinner one night by profanity from other participants. She also stated residents on Oak Hill Road were woken by the PA system used during the Bare Hill Triathlon. Page said those who live on the common take pride in their properties which makes Harvard the beautiful town it is. She said taxpayers deserve respect as residents of town.

Laura Andrews, 13 Scott Road, supports the request from the Page's and said the town needs to take into account the effects such events have on residents quality of life.

Bill Salter, 3 Elm Street, asked what the process is for approval of events such as the longboarding or the civil war encampment. Are there conditions placed on such events? He also asked about liability to the town.

Fay Martin, 5 Fairbank Street, supports the memo from the Page's. She was astonished to discover the Longboarding event was increased to three days.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Tim Bragan distributed copies of the town's financial statement and management report. He told the board the auditor can come to the next meeting to review.

Bragan announced the school drama department is holding an outdoor Shakespeare production again this year on May 30, 31 and June 1. They will also hold a barbeque dinner on the 31st. The stage will be set up on May 17-18 and will be taken down June 2-3.

Bragan asked the board to review and approve payment of a recent invoice from LLB.

Bragan informed the board of upcoming hearings Charter Communications will be holding regarding television rates. However, he said he spoke with Charter's Director of Government Relations Thomas Cohan who informed him Charter is working on a deal with Comcast. He said once approved by the FCC their license will be transferred to Comcast. Bragan said the town will continue to negotiate a new contract with Charter which will have to be honored by Comcast. He said public hearings will be required to approve the transfer.

Bragan asked the board to rescind the One Day Liquor License they approved for the Congregational Church. He said they will be doing BYOB instead. On a Wallace/Sobalvarro motion, the board voted unanimously to rescind the one day license for the Congregational Church.

LLB invoice – On a Blair/Sobalvarro motion, the board voted unanimously to approve payment of the invoice.

DEVENS ECONOMIC ANALYSIS TEAM (DEAT) REPORT

Committee members Victor Normand, Duncan Chapman, Paul Green, Chris Roy and Steve Finnegan were all present. Normand explained this report is for fiscal 2013 and includes an overview of municipal income and operating expenses. They also investigated the Devens utility operations. Normand explained their methodology for estimating operating expenses using eight comparable towns. He said they found a deficit of \$863,683 mostly due to the recession.

Public Utilities

Paul Green said the utilities are run as a semi-independent entity but they are owned by MassDevelopment. The committee believes the utility operation is a great asset which should be run as super utility shared by the three towns and the Devens area.

Marie Sobalvarro asked some questions about the Devens tax rate. She noted the federal government has PILOT agreements with Devens. She understands the conservative approach the committee has taken but does not agree with their conclusion. She does not believe there is a significant gap between revenue and expenses. Paul Green said the next step would be to bring someone in who can work on the municipal approach. Steve Finnegan said DEAT's report demonstrates good reason for Harvard to dig deeper. He acknowledged more resources are necessary to do so. Stu Sklar summarized the take away to be the economics show they are self-supporting and not an economic drain. Leo Blair said the committees approach is interesting but certainly not the way he would go. He said information from MassDevelopment is essential to being able to simulate how Devens would run as a town.

They discussed how understanding the finances helps with deciding on the future direction with Devens. Leo Blair said if the overlay district is established it allows the towns to try before they buy.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (EDC)

Committee members Chris Sintos, Duncan Chapman and Peter Warren were present along with Melissa Fetterhoff President from Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce. Chapman explained EDC is working with the Nashoba Chamber of Commerce to get businesses in town to join the chamber. He said the committee voted to hold a gathering at Mangel Architects on June 5th. This will be an opportunity for town officials and Harvard businesses to improve communication and enhance the business climate in Harvard. Peter Warren asked the Selectmen to endorse the letter being sent to Harvard business owners about the event. Marie Sobalvarro suggested inviting Senator Eldridge and Rep. Benson. On a Blair/Ricci motion, the board voted unanimously to authorize the Chair to sign letter dated May 7, 2014.

IMMACULATE HEART ROAD RACE REQUEST

Teacher Steven McCallan explained the road race to be a fundraising event which involves about 75 students and will take about an hour. He did speak with Police Chief Denmark who approved their request. On a Wallace/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to approve the road race for May 20th.

APPLE BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

On a Wallace/Ricci motion, the board voted unanimously to approve the Apple Blossom Festival for May 10th.

EVENT POLICY

Leo Blair said he received calls from residents along the common after the vote on the Longboarding event. He was encouraged to suggest a policy be implemented to set some guidelines such as informing residents on the common, limit the number of events, set fees and specify what kind of events. As most of these events require an Entertainment License, Lucy Wallace suggested the current policy for Entertainment Licenses be reviewed and, perhaps, expanded to include these considerations. Ron Ricci also suggested using the existing Entertainment License policy and adding standard conditions such as times for amplified music. The board discussed some ideas and asked the Town Administrator to investigate options.

TOWN ADMINSTRATOR REPORT CONTINUED

Bragan reported he has given the Home Rule petitions to Representative Jennifer Benson.

Bragan said he will have the advertisement ready for the Human Resource position at the next meeting.

TOWN HALL RENOVATION

Stu Sklar began the discussion by suggesting a building envelope assessment be done prior to the Selectmen making a decision on which option to choose. He said this will allow us to better understand if the building is structurally sound and can accommodate the necessary programs. He is mindful this needs to be done expeditiously. Sklar was interested in having the assessment done before the board voted on which option to choose. He also expressed some concern over the lift option instead of a fully operating elevator. Marie Sobalvarro, Lucy Wallace, Ron Ricci and Leo Blair were in favor of having the assessment done but did not want to wait on taking a vote. Blair said if the assessment suggests the building is not structurally sound then the board can always revisit their vote. He was reluctant to not make a decision tonight after struggling with this project for years. He said we actually have a plan that might work. Lucy Wallace pointed out the two issues she has with the proposed plan. The first one is the shared break/copy room and the other is no volunteer work space.

Tim Bragan recognized the town hall renovation has been a long road for the board. He acknowledged since last fall the board has done all they could to meet program needs within the budget voted on. He told the board the options before them are not the only ones. He introduced the idea of leasing property for municipal offices, fixing the exterior of the building and working toward revitalizing the town hall building as a community center. He reminded the board how this whole renovation discussion started back when he applied for CPA funds to fix the front and

sides of the building. That cost was a mere \$100,000 in comparison to the \$3.97million we are discussing now. Bragan said if we were operating as a business this would be the best option. He said it would also alleviate the need for continued building maintenance and fit in with our long range capital plan. Sobalvarro admitted the proposal is interesting, provocative and driven by cost consciousness. Bragan asked the board to consider this option before making a final decision. He suggested the board take a dual track by voting on an option and allow him to obtain costs for leasing and investigate the community center idea further.

On a Sobalvarro/Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously to have an independent envelope assessment done provided we also vote on an option tonight.

On a Ricci/Blair motion, the board voted to approve “Option 1b” as presented, omitting utility lighting in crawl and attic space (from main list) and add them with window replacement as add alternates subject to minor revisions in floor plan as determined by the board.
(Sklar – Nay)

The board instructed the Town Administrator to:

- Communicate priorities to Drayton Fair
- Obtain names of companies who can do the envelope assessment
- Investigate space for leasing

The board voted to spend up to \$10,000 for the envelope assessment.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15pm.

Documents referenced:

EMPLOYEE APPOINTMENTS – Haley resume dated 3.30.2014

Belliveau resume dated 3.27.2014

LIBRARY TRUSTEE APPOINTMENT – Green volunteer form dated 4.22.2014

DEVENS ECONOMIC ANALYSIS TEAM (DEAT) REPORT – dated 3.11.2014

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (EDC) – letter dated 5.7.2014

IMMACULATE HEART ROAD RACE REQUEST – email dated 4.15.2014

TOWN HALL RENOVATION – cost matrix dated 5.6.2014