



**Board of Selectmen
Minutes
Tuesday, September 22, 2015 at 7:00pm
Hapgood Meeting Room**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by Chair, Ron Ricci in the Hapgood Meeting Room. Selectmen Lucy Wallace and Ken Swanton were in attendance as well as Town Administrator Tim Bragan and Executive Assistant Julie Doucet.

Employee appointment

On a Wallace/Swanton motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint Heidi Spinney as Assistant Treasurer/Tax Collector.

Town Hall & Hildreth House Construction Committee report

Committee Chair Rick Maiore said a master schedule has been issued and will be updated monthly. Jack Guswa is handling the scheduling. He requested the board approve the 4th application for payment from GVW. He estimated \$497,000 of the budget has been spent. Maiore is pleased to report with many of the building unknowns uncovered the contingency has barely been touched. Currently, the project is on schedule and on budget. He reported the old siding will be removed and new siding on by the end of October. His expectation is for the building to be secured before winter. He also reported the committee has authorized the Red Team (Combs, Barton, Carbonell) the ability to make decisions on items with a cost less than \$10,000 to keep the project on track. He asked the board to provide input and/or direction related to partitions for the second floor by January. Ken Swanton will be working with Al Combs to determine the best approach with respect to audio visual needs. On a Swanton/Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously to approve the 4th payment to GVW.

Second floor usage

Maiore received a sketch from the School Committee outlining the space they require for their administrative offices. He said at this time it is highly improbable their needs can be accommodated in this space.

Minutes

On a Swanton/Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously to approve the regular and executive session minutes from 9/8, as presented.

Town Administrators report

Bragan informed the board a notice of intent has been received from Charles and Richard Case for the sale of their property on Bolton Road. They are currently in Chapter 61 and have accepted an offer to purchase. The notice has been forwarded to the Conservation Commission and Harvard Conservation Trust for their consideration. Therefore the board will act on the Town's right of first refusal at an upcoming meeting.

Bragan reported DPW Director Rich Nota is working with homeowner Jennifer Fraser (60 Ayer Rd) to install a driveway ahead sign and convex mirror previously approved by the board. She is interested in having a speed study conducted on Ayer Road. Police Chief Ed Denmark has been asked to provide his input. Bragan will follow up with the board on this.

Bragan admitted there was a communication breakdown between him and the Finance Director about the Assistant Assessor position. They have decided to move forward with an internal posting to fill the 35 hour a week position. Assuming a qualified applicant is found through the internal posting, Bragan asked the board to allow training of the individual chosen prior to them making the official appointment on October 6th. He acknowledged the department is short staffed therefore waiting any longer will be difficult. The board agreed.

Bragan informed the board of MassDevelopment's annual Board of Directors meeting to be held on October 15th. The board instructed Bragan to draft a letter asking for a specific time (between 1 and 3 PM) to be set for them to meet with the Harvard Board of Selectmen.

Bragan will recommend a working group to review possible Town Administrator/Manager change. He will work with the Moderator on this as the Moderator has a specific role under the Town Manager model. Bragan will plan to present the five people chosen at the next meeting.

Leo Blair entered the meeting at 7:40pm.

Bragan said the Finance Committee has finalized their budget letter which will be distributed on October 1st.

Bragan distributed an updated calendar with important dates for the upcoming budget season.

Bragan reminded the board that capital budgets are due this Friday, September 25th. The board will review them at their first meeting in October.

Public communication

Paul Richards, Westcott Road, said a year ago he was involved with the discussions related to the town hall. He was surprised to read in last week's newspaper the board's thoughts and plans to move the school administration offices to the second floor of town hall. This disturbed him as he believes it is not legal for the board to consider this based on the wording of article passed at the special town meeting held last October. He said moving those offices to the second floor would constitute a major change from what was voted on. He thinks it is strange to go back to the design process when the construction is well underway. He thinks the building is too small to double the offices space never mind the limited parking available. He said it makes no architectural sense. He remembers last year with the push back on the project the board promised public outreach but this is yet to happen although a formal presentation was made to the school committee about this idea. Richards said changing course to eliminate the meeting room without consulting the public is wrong. He does not believe the board values public input evidenced by the board considering consolidating and/or eliminating committees. He said this is distasteful as the board needs more public input not less. It is no wonder residents are not interested in serving because they are treated so poorly. He wants the board to have more public outreach and be welcoming people into the government not keeping them out. He also does not agree with the board taking on more responsibility by serving as trustees on the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust. He views affordable housing as complicated, very political and time-consuming and does not see how the BoS has time to take it on.

Ron Ricci responded stating no decisions have been made to move school offices, it was simply an idea that was presented.

Bruce Nickerson, MAHT Chair, expressed his wish to continue on the trust. He personally welcomes more involvement from the BoS. He does not feel it is in the best interest for the majority of the BoS

members to serve on the trust. He also noted two trustees would have to be removed to accommodate this change which would be an unpleasant process.

HCTV resignation

On a Wallace/Blair motion, the board voted unanimously to accept resignation of Stephen Adrian from HCTV and send a letter of thanks.

General license, liquor license policies and fees

On a Wallace/Swanton motion, the board voted unanimously to approve the general license application, fees and policies with edits to the licensing process.

Committee/Board review

Economic Development Committee

Lucy Wallace met with Planning Board Chair Kara Minar to update her on the board's discussion about dissolving the EDC. The Planning Board as a whole has not yet discussed this but Minar's personal sense was maybe EDC activities could fall under a sub-committee of the Planning Board. She is aware the BoS may have this as an article at the annual town meeting.

Devens Economic Analysis Team

Wallace has spoken with committee chair Victor Normand. Normand told her DEAT will be ready to present a report to the board in October which includes recommendations on what their next steps could be. They will present their report to the Selectmen at its October 20th meeting. Wallace suggested their appointments be extended through the end of the year allowing more time to consider what to do next. On a Wallace/ Swanton motion, the board voted to appoint DEAT members through December 31, 2015 to be comprised of the following five members:

Victor Normand, Stephen Finnegan, Noyan Kinayman, Chris Roy and Paul Green.

Municipal Affordable Housing Trust

Leo Blair spoke with the current members and the overall consensus with exception of Bruce Nickerson was favorable. He envisions the five BoS members and then two members at large one of which will serve as chairperson. Blair spoke about the importance of affordable housing and how having the BoS more involved will provide a change in the current process which thus far has not produced many results. He said the visibility of the BoS will help with any misconceptions around the process. Wallace was not in favor of Blair's idea. She is concerned this does not follow the original intent of the trust when it was set up as an independent entity and she is also concerned about the time commitment. She offered the idea of having the trust come regularly to the BoS meetings providing them with a more public avenue.

Ken Swanton understands both views and acknowledges affordable housing is a political issue which in most cases affects those who will be neighbors of said project. He is torn on what is the best approach.

Blair pointed out in the entire time the trust has existed the town has produced zero affordable housing projects. He said if we continue using the same process we will not produce different results. He mentioned an opportunity which may arise to create senior housing near the Hildreth House.

Ron Ricci suggested they think more about this and discuss it again at their October 20th meeting. In the meantime, they decided to extend the terms of Bruce Nickerson and Emanuel Lindo. On a Wallace/Blair motion, the board voted unanimously to extend the terms of Nickerson and Lindo through December 31, 2015.

Upper Town Hall/Old Library public outreach

Ron Ricci began the conversation pointing out the upper town hall subject began to provide direction to the construction committee with respect to audio visual needs. He said no decisions have been made about relocating the school administration offices to the second floor. Ricci noted the discussion should involve future use of the old library as the school committee has considered that location for office space as well.

The board discussed how best to approach public input on the subject. They decided to hold a public input session on the second floor of town hall at their October 6th meeting and the old library on October 20th with both meetings beginning at 6pm. They will invite the School Committee to participate on the 6th and the resident group interested in resurrecting the cultural center concept on the 20th.

Any decisions made will require funding therefore must be voted on at the annual town meeting. Wallace added any decisions made with respect to the second floor of town hall must meet the program needs requested by the public: town offices, community/public meeting space, and dedicated space for volunteer boards.

Ayer Road traffic calming

Ron Ricci reported he has met with DPW Rich Nota, Stu Sklar and Planning Board Chair Kara Minar. They have discussed a possible roundabout at Poor Farm Road or Gebo Road. The Town Planner Bill Scanlan worked on attaining estimates from traffic engineering firms who can assess the impact of traffic. Ricci confirmed the goal is too slow traffic down and discourage truck traffic. The study will cost in the vicinity of \$14,000. Tim Bragan is investigating how this study can be paid for. They will vote on the study at their October 6th meeting.

Selectmen reports

Leo Blair reported the Devens Enterprise Commission voted to support Harvard's initiative requesting DHCD use the current area median income (AMI) for Devens. He is confident they will be supportive of the request.

Ron Ricci reported he and Stu Sklar met with Doug Thornton about the weeds growing on the McCurdy Track. Thornton plans to contact the installer to help solve the weed problem.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.

Documents referenced:

Appointment – Spinney resume dated 9.17.2015

THCC report – dated 9.14.2015

Adrian resignation letter – dated 9.10.2015

Liquor license policy – dated 9.8.2015

General License application - dated 9.17.2015

Ayer Road – estimate & scope dated 9.21.2015