



**Board of Selectmen
Minutes
Tuesday, February 23, 2016 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, Leo Blair, Ken Swanton and Stu Sklar were in attendance as well as Town Administrator Tim Bragan and Executive Assistant Julie Doucet.

Hildreth House window replacement

Ron Ricci reported 38 windows have been ordered and 10 have been installed. Volunteers plan to install another 10 this weekend. Ricci asked members of the public willing to help to contact the Selectmen's office.

Legislative update – Senator Jamie Eldridge and Representative Jen Benson

Senator Eldridge distributed a letter outlining his priorities for the FY17 budget process. His focus will be on protecting local aid, improving public transportation, maintaining funding for vital social safety net services and begin to fully fund recommendations of the Foundation Budget Review. He continues to advocate for significant investments in capital infrastructure. Eldridge also supports 1% of the budget being dedicated to the environment.

Rep. Benson mentioned a letter is being sent to the House Ways and Means Committee requesting the amount per pupil in the budget be increased from \$20 to \$25. She also spoke about how the Charter School reimbursement could have a negative impact on cities and towns. She acknowledged it may not be of big concern in Harvard but certainly something to bear in mind. She expects this to be a hot topic for debate. Benson complimented Harvard for our compliance with the public records law.

Stu Sklar spoke about the Suburban Coalitions efforts related to changing the Chapter 70 formula. Blair asked for clarity on the charter schools reimbursement. Wallace asked about the process to obtain a local bus shuttle. She commented on the horrible condition of the current MART van. She asked for their assistance in getting a new one. Swanton asked how it is determined where to increase and decrease areas of the budget. Ricci mentioned how the prevailing wage law hurts communities when trying to do small projects such as the Hildreth House window replacement. He encouraged the Senator and Rep. to assist in moving our home rule petition for action at our annual town meeting.

Apple Blossom Festival

Town Administrator Tim Bragan announced an entertainment license request for the Apple Blossom Festival to be held on May 7th.

Minutes

On a Blair/Swanton motion, the board voted unanimously to approve the 1/26 minutes, as presented.

On a Wallace/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to approve the 2/2 minutes, as presented.

Acceptance of gift of land

On a Wallace/Swanton motion, the board voted unanimously to accept gift of land from the Damons of 35 acres on Brown Road.

Personnel Policies

On a Sklar/Wallace motion, the board voted to adopt the harassment of individuals in protective classes. (4-1, Ricci – Nay)

On a Sklar/Wallace motion, the board voted to approve the employment of relatives as written. (4-1, Blair – Nay)

Presentation from Weston Development for project on Ayer Road

Developer Mark O'Hagan and his partner Sotir Papolito presented their proposal for the development of 18 affordable homes at 361 Ayer Road. O'Hagan described where the property is located and how they plan to develop the parcel. They will go through the comprehensive permit process, using the MassHousing "Housing Starts" program. O'Hagan explained the program is similar to the Local Initiative Program (LIP) process but will take less time. They are meeting with local boards/committees to gain feedback for further development of their plans. O'Hagan confirmed the affordable units will be held in perpetuity. They are targeting a price point in the high \$300's for the market rate units and approximately \$170,000 for the affordable units. Lastly, O'Hagan asked the board to consider allowing the chair to sign a small project exception letter stating the acquisition value is appropriate. This will allow them to streamline the process by not requiring an appraisal for the parcel. The board members offered to handle this at their next meeting. Blair complimented the plan acknowledging the developers great track record in town.

Devens Enterprise Commission (DEC) appointments

Ricci reminded the board Eric Stoltzfus was serving as a commissioner but requested stepping down to the associate position due to time commitments. The current associate, Duncan Chapman, volunteered to step into the commissioner spot. Subsequently, resident Joseph Hutchinson submitted a volunteer form to serve on the DEC.

The following motions were made:

Blair made a motion to appoint Duncan Chapman as commissioner.

Wallace made a motion to appoint Joseph Hutchinson as commissioner.

The motion to appoint Chapman passed with a 3-2 vote (Wallace & Sklar – Nay)

On a Blair motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint Eric Stoltzfus as associate member.

Ricci instructed the Town Administrator to send a letter to the Governor's office requesting his official appointment.

Board of Assessors

Due to the recent resignation from the Board of Assessors, Bragan informed the board resident Peter Warren is willing to serve on the BOA in the interim. Warren has served as an Assessor in the past. On a Blair/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint Peter Warren through June 30, 2016.

Nashua River Wild & Scenic Study Group

On a Wallace/Blair motion, the board recognized the resignation of Michele Girard. Wallace asked anyone interested to contact her.

Super Town Meeting request from MassDevelopment

Senior Vice President at Devens Thatcher Kezer was present. Wallace began the discussion by respectfully requesting the BoS have the proposed language and plan prior to calling for a Super Town Meeting. He explained the intent of the letter was to formally begin the process to revisit article 4 (rezone the southern portion of the Grant Road zoning district from residential to commercial/industrial) from the Super Town Meeting in June of last year. He said with the required public hearings a long lead time is necessary to meet the May 9th date they are targeting. This date was chosen to coincide with Ayer's annual Town Meeting as they have a quorum requirement. Kezer said a draft will be circulated within the next couple of weeks.

Caucus warrant

On a Wallace/Swanton motion, the board voted unanimously to approve the warrant for caucus as presented.

Town Meeting Warrant review

The board reviewed all 60 articles.

On a Blair/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to move article 36 (Charter Committee – Home Rule) before article 33 (additional authority to Town Administrator).

They also decided to move article 43 (payment of debt on town hall renovation) before article 44 (amend funding sources for town hall renovation project).

Blair suggested they remove the following articles:

Article 55: Conservation Land Acquisition

Article 57: Address old library accessibility issues

Article 58: Senior Housing Study

Blair is aware articles 57 and 58 did not follow the appropriate process to be included.

They discussed removing article 55 (conservation land acquisition) suggesting the commission use CPA funds to purchase the property. They asked Bragan to confirm this can be done without approval from town meeting.

On a Wallace/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to put question 1 and 2 on ballot for the town election to be held on April 12th.

On a Ricci/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to approve warrant as amended removing article 55 subject to funding and articles 57 and 58.

On a Wallace/Blair motion, the board voted unanimously to close the warrant.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30pm.

Documents referenced:

Acceptance of gift of land – deed dated Feb. 2016

Personnel Policies – Harassment dated 01.29.2016

Employment of relatives dated 01.15.2016

Weston Development proposal – dated 02.18.2016

DEC appointment – volunteer form Chapman updated 01.07.2016

volunteer form Stoltzfus dated 06.03.2013

volunteer form Hutchinson dated 02.04.2016

Resignation letter – Girard dated 01.25.2016

Super Town Meeting request letter – dated 02.18.2016

Caucus Warrant – dated 02.23.2016

Town Meeting Warrant – draft 4