

Holbrook Board of Selectmen

Minutes of the Regular Session of

Tuesday, August 23, 2011

Present: Timothy J. Gordon, Chairman
Brinsley A. Fuller, Clerk
Richard B. McGaughey, Associate
Kevin J. Sheehan, Associate

Absent: Matthew V. Moore, Vice-Chairman

In attendance: William J. Phelan, Interim Town Administrator
Marjorie E. Godfrey, Selectmen's Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Gordon, in the Selectmen's Meeting Room, 50 North Franklin Street, Holbrook, MA 02343, and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES:

The minutes of July 26, 2011 were postponed until the next meeting.

MOTION: By Mr. Fuller, second by Mr. McGaughey, to approve the minutes of the regular session of August 9, 2011, as printed

VOTE: 4:0

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Phelan reported that:

- In the CROSBY/EDGEWOOD PARK matter, he contacted the Department of Revenue (DOR) about the process of transferring property to a new owner when there are back taxes owed on the property. The town would have to take the taxes out of the Overlay account, which is nonexistent. When this preliminary opinion was given to the town, the representative from the DOR requested a written request for a formal legal opinion from the DOR. William Pritchard, Esq., is preparing a settlement document on behalf of Mr. Crosby, and that document will be given to the DOR along with the request. A structured settlement could be developed so that Overlay will not be affected. If Mr. Crosby is not successful in developing the property and paying the town, the town could take the property for back taxes, and it would be free and clear. Mr. McGaughey asked if the town could be the first mortgagee, in order to protect the town. Then the town could just foreclose on the mortgage, which would be faster. Mr. Phelan said the Department of Revenue and the appeals court will both have to be satisfied with the agreement.
- The PERMANENT SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE has contacted the towns of Avon, Abington and Braintree about setting up meetings to explore a cooperative effort with Holbrook to pool school resources, as requested by the Mass. School Building Authority (MSBA). Tuitioning out, regionalization, sharing schools, etc. will be explored. Senator John Keenan, Rep. Ronald Mariano, and Rep. Mark Cusack have sent a letter to Robert G. Nunes the Deputy Commissioner & Director of Municipal Affairs for the Division of Local Services in support of a grant to the Town of Holbrook to help alleviate the costs of this study. Holbrook will be meeting with Avon on September 1, 2011.

- The cost of cleaning up the health hazard at 7 ARNOLD STREET was \$7,300. The Finance Committee has approved a transfer of funds from the Reserve Fund because of the public health emergency situation. The property has been boarded up and is in tax title. The Finance Committee has suggested that the town approach the nursing home where the owner of the property is being cared for and ask that they obtain guardianship of the owner, who is now incompetent to make decisions. The town could then deal with the guardian. The town is currently owed close to \$80,000 for back taxes and the cost of the cleanup.
- Mr. Phelan met with two gentlemen who serve as consultants to assist municipalities in acquiring the National Grid STREET LIGHTS in their town. The town can save money by buying the street lights for what the utility company claims they are worth. Conservatively, the town could save 50%. The consultants will make a presentation to the Board of Selectmen. An outside company could be hired to maintain the lights, or the electrical inspector may be able to do it.
- A meeting has been scheduled on September 8th with the Town Administrator from Easton to discuss issuing a request for proposals for a SOLAR PANEL PROJECT at the former landfill.
- The TRI TOWN WATER BOARD met to discuss the maintenance of the dam and dredging of either the Richardi Reservoir or the Upper Reservoir. Two more meeting dates were chosen. There was no discussion about the proposed new treatment plant. The contract for the consultant who will compare the town's WATER ALTERNATIVES has been signed. Mr. Phelan said that if Holbrook pays its fair share going forward, the town will save money compared to the current agreement, which has been unfair for many years.
- The JOINT WATER BOARD has not met, but should be scheduled. There will have to be a discussion about infrastructure costs, and a determination of expenses inside and outside of Proposition 2 ½ . A consultant should be engaged to make sure that what is done is cost effective.
- There was a meeting with an Avon selectman and the Town Administrator about sharing the services of an ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER. Avon has appropriated \$10,000, but does not have an ACO at this time. The options have been discussed with the Animal Control Officer. Avon has presented a draft memorandum of understanding, which will be reviewed at the next Selectmen's meeting. The agreement could be on a short term trial basis. The discussions with the Animal Control Officer will be formalized for the next meeting. There is a question about whether this would have to go to town meeting prior to instituting the services. A collaboration may open the town up to more grant money.
- There were no bids submitted in response to the Request for Proposals issued for the lease of 227 PLYMOUTH STREET, the former school department central office. Mr. Phelan said that it is possible that the town could enter into an agreement with someone without an RFP if the term were shorter or the rent were lower.

Mr. McGaughey discussed the condition of the WENDELL CEMETERY which has not been mowed in quite some time due to a lack of funds. Mr. David Reilly, a member of the Board of Health, and Selectman Kevin Sheehan volunteered their time and mowed the cemetery. They were thanked for their efforts. Anyone willing to volunteer to help mow the cemetery was encouraged to contact Mr. David Reilly in the Board of Health.

Mr. George O'Neill, Chairman of the PERMANENT SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE (PSBC), was present to provide the Board with an update. He explained that a meeting was held in response to a letter from Katherine Craven, the Executive Director of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), requiring Holbrook to take a closer look at regionalizing, tuitioning out, or providing programs

for students in a sustainable way. The letter clarified the next step in the process for Holbrook. Abington, Avon, and Braintree have been contacted to meet with Holbrook. The Superintendent of Schools, School Committee Chairperson, Town Administrator/Manager/Mayor and Board of Selectmen Chairperson were asked to attend. Letters went out to each town in June to analyze the pros and cons of a possible collaboration. A meeting has been set up with Avon on September 1, 2011 at 7:00 pm at the Central Office in Holbrook. A report will be sent to the MSBA. The Board asked that Ms. Craven be invited to a future PSBC meeting, and that she be asked to send letters to the towns encouraging their cooperation in the process.

Constance Orlando, the Coordinator of the Council on Aging, was before the Board about her request for VACATION CARRYOVER from FY11. Since she is a Salary Administration employee, her carry over request should have been voted by the Board of Selectmen in June. Ms. Orlando presented information she obtained from the Treasurer's office regarding her vacation time accrued and the time she used from FY2007 through FY2011. Considerable discussion took place about how to resolve her request to carry forward 398 hours. The last time the Board of Selectmen voted on a request for Ms. Orlando was in FY2006.

MOTION: By Mr. Fuller, second by Mr. Sheehan, that in the matter of Constance B. Orlando's vacation carryover request for FY2006 through FY2011, we approve the carryover of 102 hours from FY2006 and the carryover of 84 hours from FY2011, for a total carryover of 186 vacation hours into FY2012

VOTE: 3:1 (Mr. Gordon against)

Discussion took place regarding the policy on TIME CARDS and the reporting of employee sick, vacation, and personal leave. Although paid time off is recorded on the payroll vouchers submitted for payment each week, the individual employees' pay stubs do not necessarily indicate the correct amount of time available. Department heads have been tracking the available time for the employees in their respective departments. This may be a software issue. The discussion will continue at the next Selectmen's meeting.

The PUBLIC SAFETY DISPATCH FUNDING will be discussed at the next meeting and on a monthly basis thereafter.

Public Works Supervisor Benjamin Ecord has reported that the drainage improvements on SPRING LANE will be completed when he has a full crew scheduled to work for more than four consecutive days.

Chairman Gordon has asked the Public Works Department to illuminate the American FLAG in front of the town hall. Supervisor Ecord has met with an electrician about placing a spot light on the front of the building.

The engineering of ROUTE 139 will be discussed at the next meeting.

The SOLAR PANEL PROJECT at the landfill will be discussed at the next meeting. Mr. Phelan took a tour with one company, and is unclear whether it is considered a suitable site or not due to the slope of the land, which creates a shadow. Mr. Phelan will review a request for proposals that another company prepared for the town.

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The Chairman discussed BENCHMARKS and the accountability of the departments by collecting data so that productivity can be assessed. Mr. Phelan said that the Town of Easton has a program, and he will consult with the Town Administrator there. He indicated that although Holbrook runs very shorthanded, it runs very efficiently, but that the collection of the data would be a good long term planning tool.

Mr. McGaughey said that the SUMMER HELP hired by the Public Works Department has done a very good job, and has made the work of the department more visible. He suggested that some of the temporary help be kept for a while if there is more work available.

ADJOURN:

MOTION: At 9:05 pm, by Mr. Fuller, second by Mr. McGaughey, to adjourn the meeting
VOTE: 4:0

Brinsley A. Fuller, Clerk

Documents:

Agenda

Draft minutes

Documentation from Constance Orlando
and 2006 approval letter

Public Safety Dispatch Funding information