

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
OCTOBER 5, 2016
REGULAR SESSION

Members Present: David Andrade, Nelson Almeida, David Viera,
Michelle Hines, David Parker

Town Administrator: Shawn E. Cadime

Chairman Andrade opened the meeting at 7 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence.

He announced that, in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 20, anyone recording the meeting must notify the Chairman. The Board of Selectmen is recording via audio and visual.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE OPENINGS UPDATE

Mr. Almeida announced that volunteers are needed on the Board of Health (2 Board of Selectmen appointments), Conservation Commission (3 BOS), Economic Development Committee (1 BOS), Historical Commission (2 BOS), Property Tax Work-Off Committee (2 BOS), Zoning Board of Appeals (1 BOS), Permanent Building Committee (5 BOS), Recreation Committee (1 BOS), Recycling Committee (1 BOS), Finance Committee (1 Moderator), Energy Committee (2 BOS).

Talent Bank forms are available at Town Hall and on the website.

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES BRIEF OVERVIEW – Recycling Committee

Chairman William Kirchmann expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve on this committee. It has been a great experience so far. Currently, there are two members of the committee. There should be at least three in accordance with the by-laws in order to have a quorum. He urged anyone interested to contact him. American Recycling Day will be observed on Saturday, November 5, 2016, at the Seekonk Public Library. They will also have a display in the entrance to the library. Earth Day is observed in April. He applied and will receive a grant for additional education and activities to boost recycling. The committee meets once a month for about an hour. They have volunteers who work throughout the year.

COMMUNITY SPEAKS

Town Clerk Janet Parker advised there will be 80 hours of early voting for the upcoming presidential election beginning October 24 and ending on November 4, 2016. The schedule was published in the newspaper and will run again during the election process. The hours are on line and flyers designed by Mr. Saad will be distributed through the schools. A sample ballot is on line under the Town Clerk site. She suggested that people read the red book they got in the mail. Voter status can be checked at www.123voter.com. She noted she could use more poll workers.

PRIORITY MATTERS

Consider the Conditional Offer of Employment to Michael R. Tyler for the Position of Assistant Superintendent of Public Works

Mr. Cadime explained that three top candidates were interviewed by Mr. Cabral, Mr. Alexander Mr. Aubin, and himself. Mr. Tyler was the unanimous recommendation of the interview committee.

He recommended extending a conditional offer of employment to Mr. Tyler.

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Parker, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To extend a conditional offer of employment to Michael R. Tyler, pending background check.

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In discussion prior to the vote, DPW Supt. David Cabral said Mr. Tyler has been Acting Superintendent in Rehoboth since 2012. He has experience with payroll, snow removal, FEMA and Chapter 90 projects. His brother, David Tyler, is a DPW employee. That is not an issue. He felt Mr. Tyler will be a great asset to the Town.

Mr. Almeida asked if the position was advertised in-house.

Mr. Cadime said one internal applicant was interviewed.

Mr. Almeida asked at what point Mr. Tyler would delegate orders to his brother.

Mr. Cadime advised Mr. Cabral is in charge and then all directions go through the foremen.

Mr. Cabral said he coordinates day to day activities with the foremen.

In response to Ms. Hines' question, Mr. Cabral said he has worked with Mr. Tyler. Occasionally, Seekonk, Rehoboth, Attleboro and sometimes Swansea meet to discuss strategies about Chapter 90 and snow removal.

Mr. Cabral is comfortable working with Mr. Tyler. He will fit right in with the guys.

Consider the Conditional Offer of Employment to Neal H. Abelson for the Position of Building Inspector

Mr. Cadime recommended the Board rescind the conditional offer of employment to John Ferreira due to the background check. He commended the Police Department for the thorough job they do to make sure the Town employs the right individuals to fit the needs of Seekonk.

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Mr. Cadime also recommended that the Board extend a conditional offer of employment to Mr. Neal Abelson. He was one of the top two and the interview committee felt that Mr. Abelson was a very strong candidate and is comfortable with his appointment. He will be a great asset to the Town with his background in building and also planning.

Mr. Abelson would have to resign from the Planning Board and ZBA.

A motion was made by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Viera, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To rescind the offer of employment to John M. Ferreira as building inspector.

A motion was made by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Viera, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To extend a conditional offer of employment to Neal Abelson as building inspector, pending completion of background check.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion of Roadway Opening Permit for 680 Arcade Avenue

DPW Supt. David Cabral advised that three representatives from the gas company were in attendance as a follow up to the previous meeting. He worked with Justin Brown about Ledge Road.

Mr. Brown, Construction Supervisor for Columbia Gas, explained there is existing service stubbed into the property. It was presented that it was cut off due to a fire but it was actually cut off in 1975. The customer who applied for gas was unaware the road was under moratorium. They purchased new gas appliances. The gas company cannot tie into steel service lines. They would have to cut 5 by 7 ft. They would utilize the old service to insert plastic through to minimize the disturbance to the sidewalk. As far as restoration, they would put sand over the new service and backfill with flowable fill up to 12 inches below grade. They would pour concrete, let it set and asphalt over that. The work would not affect the travel lane.

Chairman Andrade questioned why it was presented as an emergency.

Mr. Viera asked if it would be appropriate to get a bond from the gas company and hold onto it.

Mr. Cabral said he is comfortable with the gas company in terms of restoration. However, he would not sign the road opening permit because it is against the by-law.

A motion was made by Mr. Parker, seconded by Ms. Hines, and it was

VOTED: 4 Ayes; 1 Nay; To approve the roadway opening for 680 Arcade Avenue, as submitted.

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The vote: Mr. Parker – Aye; Ms. Hines – Aye; Mr. Viera – Aye; Chairman Andrade – Aye; Mr. Almeida – Nay.

In discussion prior to the vote, Mr. Parker noted the homeowner purchased the property and appliances without knowing about the gas shut off back to 1975.

Mr. Almeida noted the homeowner is living in the house.

He asked if residents are notified about the moratorium.

Mr. Cabral said yes.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider the Conversion of Health Insurance Trust Fund to OPEB Trust Fund

Finance Director Bruce Alexander was in attendance.

Mr. Cadime stated a little over \$800,000 is left over in the health care trust fund. The Town transitioned to a fully insurance program with Southeast Mass. Health Group. They are looking to transfer this funding into the OPEB trust fund. A portion has to go back to employees. The Dept. of Revenue has signed off on an employee insurance holiday.

Mr. Alexander explained the Town was required to maintain this account for a period of two years and then could give a portion back to employees. The amount should be \$800,000 to move into the OPEB trust fund.

Mr. Cadime said it would bring the stabilization account to \$1.6M. A lot of communities have not yet established a stabilization account.

Mr. Alexander said this came up with bond rating questions.

Mr. Cadime recommended the Town move forward with the transfer. Employees are not getting money. The health insurance payment will not be deducted from their paychecks in December. It covers current employees and retirees who are not on Medicare.

A motion was made by Mr. Almeida, seconded by Mr. Viera, and it was

VOTED: 3 Ayes; 2 Abstentions; To move forward and transfer the \$800,000 and give employees \$301.74 for family plan and \$170.21 for individual for the month of December.

The vote: Mr. Almeida – Aye; Mr. Viera – Aye; Chairman Andrade - Aye; Ms. Hines – Abstained; Mr. Parker – Abstained.

Update from the By-Law Study Committee

Mr. David Sullivan, Chairman of the By-Law Study Committee, explained they had a very aggressive timeline trying to have a proposal ready for the November Town Meeting. However, at this time, he formerly requested a Special Town Meeting in February 2017.

Mr. Cadime felt it is important to have a Special Town Meeting to focus on the by-laws. It would be rushing it to try to have it for the November Town Meeting.

Board members agreed.

Ms. Hines suggested the committee notify the Board when the public hearings will be.

Mr. Cadime said it will be three separate hearings: public safety; DPW, Board of Health, Planning, and Conservation; and general and animal control.

Mr. Viera said there should be other items on the warrant to make sure there is a quorum.

Mr. Sullivan said the by-law changes will be on the town website. Residents should have the information at least a month ahead of time.

Consider the Acceptance of a Donation to the Animal Shelter from Stephanie Haugen in Memory of Darlene Leddy

Mr. Cadime recommended the Board approve the \$50 donation.

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Parker, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the \$50 donation to the animal shelter from Stephanie Haugen in memory of Darlene Leddy.

Consider the Approval of August 24, 2016 and September 7, 2016 Regular Session Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Viera, seconded by Mr. Parker, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept the Regular Session minutes of August 24, 2016 and September 7, 2016.

COMMUNITY SPEAKS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Discuss Other Topics not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chairman 48 Hours Before the Meeting – None.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

Mr. Cadime stated the Town had its bond rating at AA plus, which is one level down from the highest level (AAA) at Standard and Poors. He has talked to the finance team about ways to possibly improve the bond rating. Within the next couple of months, he will have written policies to be approved. These policies will be in place when they go back to the bond rating company in two years.

The Department of Revenue certified free cash at \$3.5M. That was also used as part of the bond rating review with Standard and Poors. There should be some recommendations for Town Meeting vote for the appropriation of stabilization and capital accounts.

A NEMA conference scheduled for today was cancelled because the hurricane condition changed.

Mr. Alexander and he met with School Department Administration to discuss capital and budget planning going forward. A Quad Board meeting (Board of Selectmen, School Department, Finance and Capital Improvement Committee) is scheduled for Wednesday, October 26, 2016, at 7 p.m. at the library to start the 2018 budget process.

The warrant closes on Monday, October 17, 2016.

In commemorating National Community Policing Week on October 2-8, 2016, the Seekonk police had lunch with senior citizens today. Residents are invited to have “coffee with a cop” on Tuesday at the Country Kitchen from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Mr. Cadime noted Seekonk has great officers and a great department.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN LIAISON REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Veterans Memorial Committee Liaison Report

Mr. Viera said they are in the process of adding 72 new bricks. They will repair the others after the new bricks are in. Hopefully, this will be completed by the end of the month.

He said it was great to have a representative from the gas company who knew what is going on.

He asked about road work at the Grist Mill area.

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Mr. Cadime said the bridge has gotten final approval. 0

Mr. Parker asked for an update on the animal shelter.

Mr. Cadime said the committee is looking at other options. They will meet with the Board of Selectmen when they have recommendations.

Mr. Parker inquired about the cemetery.

Mr. Cadime said there is some concern about surveying the parcels. It is under review by the attorney.

Mr. Parker asked about the Maple Avenue property.

Mr. Cadime advised the Department of Environmental Protection got immediate contamination out. An application was submitted to Mass. Development in terms of funding for clean up.

Ms. Hines announced the Food for Fuel fundraiser to be held on Wednesday, October 12, 2016 from 4:30 to 7 p.m. at the high school. Tickets are on sale.

Mr. Viera asked about the old police station. He said they might go through another winter without heat in that building.

Mr. Cadime said pictures have to be submitted to the Mass. Historical Commission. Atty. Klein from KP Law is working on this.

Mr. Almeida said to give them a 30 day extension. If no action, the Town should sell the building.

Mr. Cadime noted it would take a vote at Town Meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – None.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Viera, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To dissolve at 8:03 p.m.

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The vote: Mr. Parker – Aye; Mr. Viera – Aye; Mr. Almeida – Aye; Ms. Hines – Aye; Chairman Andrade – Aye.

Respectfully submitted,

David Viera, Clerk

Prepared by:

Patricia Gamer, Secretary

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