

**MINUTES
OPEN SESSION
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
March 2, 2010**

Present at the meeting that was held at the Town Building were Selectmen Kathleen Farrell, Thomas Ruggiero, Laura Spear, and Ellen Sturgis.

Also present were Town Administrator William Wrigley and Administrative Assistant Susan McLaughlin.

Stephen Dungan joined the meeting in progress.

Acting Chair Ruggiero called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Public Input

None.

Chairman's Comments

None.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Wrigley reported the following:

- His annual joint boards meeting on the Town's financial health will be held later in the meeting.
- He asked the Board to appoint Brian Sterns as the Town's Veterans Services Officer. Current VSO Don Hawkes recently resigned, and worked closely with Mr. Stearns, Hudson's VSO. Mr. Wrigley noted the complexity of the state procedures and the certification requirement. He said Mr. Stearns is certified, serves the Hudson veterans well, and will also be an asset to Stow.
- The Town received notice from the EPA that they would take no action on Marlboro's permit modification application. Instead, it will be reviewed when permit renewals come up.
- An executive session on water negotiations will be held at the end of the meeting.

Meeting Minutes

February 2, 2010: Ms. Farrell moved to accept the February 2 minutes, as submitted; Ms. Sturgis seconded; and all voted in favor.

Appointment of Republican Registrar of Voters

Resident Jack Mileski, Republican Party member, visited the Board to apply for the vacant Registrar position. He has served the Town previously and is recommended by the Town Republican Committee chair for the position.

Ms. Sturgis moved that the Board appointment Jack Mileski as a Republican Party member of the Registrars of Voters for a three-year term, ending on March 31, 2012; Ms. Spear seconded; and all voted in favor.

Appointment of Veteran's Services Officer

On the recommendation of Mr. Wrigley, Ms. Farrell moved that the Board appoint Brian Stearns as Stow's Veterans Services Officer, to fill the remainder of an unexpired term ending on March 31, 2010, and then to serve a one-year term, ending on March 31, 2011; Ms. Sturgis seconded; and all voted in favor.

Elizabeth Brook Phosphorous and Storm Water Management

Conservation Commission member Ingeborg Hegemann Clark and Agricultural Commission member Dwight Sipler visited the Board to discuss a recent test result showing a spike in phosphorus in Elizabeth Brook. Mr. Sipler analyzed the data and felt that this result was an anomaly, caused perhaps by a sampling error. However, both he and Ms. Hegemann Clark agree that there is some small amount of phosphorus loading and "we'd like to keep it that way."

They proposed expanding the educational component of storm-water management for residents, farms, and golf courses. For example, UMass Amherst offers soil testing for reasonable prices (\$13 plus postage). The Town boards, e.g., AgCom, Conservation, and Planning, could tie into educational materials already available from OAR and the SuAsCo Council.

All agreed this should be pursued.

Pedestrian Walkway Sub-committee

Resident Kris Wile, chair of the Pedestrian Walkways Committee, presented the group's work and its proposal for improving and expanding Stow's walkways.

They propose two phases of development: 1) now, to connect existing walkways and 2) in the future, to prioritize needs by safety and access to desirable locations.

Phase 1 planning is underway and they are seeking the Board's approval to proceed with an RFP for design services, using funds already available in the Byways account. The Planning Board has stated its support for the plan and RFP.

Ms. Wile described, in detail, how existing walkways would be connected to create a seamless path from the Community Park on Old Bolton Road to the Lower Village. Due to snow removal issues, it would begin with three-season use.

Following questions and discussion by the Board, there was general agreement to support this effort, with any voting to come later.

Open and Close Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Mr. Ruggiero moved that the Board open the annual Town Meeting warrant this evening, March 2, 2010, and close it on March 12, 2010; Ms. Spear seconded; and all voted in favor.

Town Administrator's Joint Boards Meeting – Financial State of the Town

Mr. Wrigley held his annual Joint Boards meeting, per General Bylaw Article 4.10, with the Board of Assessors, Capital Planning, Finance Committee, and regional school districts attending.

- **Nashoba Regional School District** chair Brian Burke said that this year's budget is close to flat over last year, at \$44M. The \$48,000 increase is the result of cuts to operations and increases to union salaries. Stow's assessment is \$13M, a \$29k decrease from FY 2010.

- **Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District** representative Alice DeLuca reported Minuteman's FY 2011 budget at \$16,238,679, of which Stow's assessment is \$609k, a reduction from FY 2010.
- Minuteman has a warrant article for voter approval of feasibility study for renovation of the high school, the first in its history. The MSBA has approved a 40-percent reimbursement, which means a cost to Stow of \$25,856 over five years. The cost would be subsumed in the towns' assessment and not occur until FY 2012.
- **Board of Assessors** Principal Assessors Dorothy Wilber explained that her report provides the revenue side of the picture. The New Growth estimate for FY 2011 (their year starts in Jan) is \$325k, much less than four or five years ago. However, Stow is fortunate to have two condo projects going on, so we're in better shape than other towns. Mr. Wrigley said that New Growth is a large part of Local Receipts and that Stow will meet or beat his budget expectation for this year.
- **Finance Committee** chair Charles Kern said their annual public hearing is scheduled for March 18 and he encourages the public to attend.
- **Capital Planning** member Steve Jelinek reported that the committee received seven requests totaling \$436k, up from last year.

Mr. Wrigley concluded the meeting by describing the steps he took to balance the FY 2011 budget. He is spot on for a level services and level funded budget, with only a 1-percent increase over the current year.

Priorities Grid

Mr. Dungan reviewed a grid he made to track the Board's priorities and said he wants to Board to review it monthly.

Town Boundaries Perambulation

Mr. Dungan explained that, by state statute, towns are required to mark their boundaries every five years and it is time to do so again. It was agreed to ask the last group of participants to take on the project again.

Annual MMA Conference Report

At the annual conference in January, Ms. Sturgis reported that she attended a workshop on water systems management and the keynote address re a focus on services, instead of costs. She also was a judge for the 6th-grade essay contest.

Ms. Spear reported that the highlight for her was an economic development seminar she attended. To be successful, economic development needs someone to drive the process: identify the town's assets, then "package and sell" them. The Board of Selectmen needs to lead this.

Board of Selectmen's Master Planning

Mr. Dungan said the Master Plan draft for the 30-day public comment period would be available later in the month.

Liaison Reports:

- **Capital Planning:** Ms. Farrell said they were meeting with capital requestors.
- **SpringFest Planning:** Ms. Sturgis said they were planning.
- **Elementary School Building Project:** Ms. Sturgis said the pre-qualification notice for bidders was posted. Following reference checks, the project will go out to bid in May. Public hearings with the required boards were underway.

- **Pedestrian Walkways:** Mr. Ruggiero asked that, having heard the walkways plan tonight, the Board vote its support on March 16.
- **Municipal Affordable Housing:** Ms. Spear said the Trust has drafted a grant agreement document.
- **Community Preservation:** Ms. Spear said the committee is reviewing project proposals.
- **MAGIC:** Ms. Spear said the agency is doing a regional transportation study and that Mr. Wrigley wrote a letter of support for a grant to the Town of Acton.

At approximately 9:20 p.m., Mr. Dungan moved to enter Executive Session, for the purpose of discussing municipal water contract negotiations, per MGL C.39, s.23b, and not to return to Open Session before adjourning; Ms. Spear seconded; and all voted in favor by roll call vote: Spear, yes; Ruggiero, yes; Sturgis, yes; Farrell, yes, Dungan, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McLaughlin
Administrative Assistant

Approved as submitted, April 6, 2010