

**MINUTES  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
February 22, 2011**

Present at the meeting that was held at the Town Building were Selectmen Stephen Dungan, Charles Kern, Thomas Ryan, James Salvie, and Laura Spear.

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

Chairman Spear called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.

**Public Input**

None.

**Chairman's Comments**

Ms. Spear said that Cameron Kerr, who is serving in Afghanistan, was seriously injured by an improvised explosive device. Cameron, son of John and Mary Kerr of Stow, is a Stow Troop One Eagle Scout Alumnus.

She also said that Lyle "Corky" Tindall of Berlin, NRSD Class of 1966 and Center School custodian for the past 15 years, passed away on February 16, 2011.

**Town Administrator's Report**

Mr. Wrigley reported on the following topics:

- Reuse of Pompo School: He restated former Town Counsel Jake Diemert's 2002 legal opinion that the Pompo School building can be converted to a municipal use facility. He said the necessary steps for the conversion are: 1) an affirmative vote by the NRSD School Committee transferring use to the Town and 2) two affirmative votes by Town Meeting, one to rescind the original 1964 vote and one to convert the building's use to municipal and/or private uses (e.g. child day care facility).
- Harvard Acres wells: Of 175 wells, only five remain to be fully disconnected. Of the 50 loan applications, 30 have been approved and picked up by Town Counsel for recording and 20 remain to be finalized.
- Police Chief search: Candidates now have three weeks to complete essays.

**Master Plan**

Now that the Master Plan is complete, Mr. Dungan said that he and Mr. Salvie would identify actionable items in the plan.

**Meeting Minutes**

**January 25:** Mr. Dungan moved to accept the January 25, 2011 meeting minutes, as submitted; Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

**February 8:** Mr. Ryan moved to accept the February 8, 2011 meeting minutes, as submitted; Mr. Salvie seconded; and all voted in favor.

### **Permit for Earth Day Use of Lower Common**

Thanking the organizers and volunteers who participate in this annual event, Mr. Dungan moved to permit the Stow Earth Day Clean-up Group to use the Lower Village Common on Saturday, April 9, 2011 as a staging area for the event; Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

### **Town Administrator's Financial State of the Town: Joint Boards**

Mr. Wrigley opened the joint boards meeting by citing the Town Charter requirement that he convene an annual meeting of the Assessors, Capital Planning, Finance, and the two school districts for a "30,000-foot" review and forecast of the town's finances.

He said his current budget is based on town department requests, the Governor's 1 budget, and his own forecasting experience and shows a 6.23-percent increase from fiscal year 2011 to fiscal year 2012.

### **Board of Assessors**

Principal Assessor Dorothy Wilbur said she gave Mr. Wrigley a New Growth estimate of \$275,000, down from last year's \$411,000. Contributing factors for the drop are that Arbor Glen is complete, the one active subdivision is building one house at a time; and Villages at Stow is moving slowly as well.

Chair of the Board Dom Pugliese added that although we have seen a stabilization of values in Stow, we have not see an increase in values. Furthermore, interest rates might rise. So New Growth will be weak for the next few years.

Mr. Wrigley agreed that Ms. Wilbur's \$275,000 forecast for New Growth is a realistic figure for this year.

### **Capital Planning Committee**

Finance Committee appointee Ross Perry said the committee will start meetings with the departments this week and will continue through the first two weeks of March.

### **Finance Committee**

Chair Gary Bernklow said the committee is concerned with increases in FY 12 Capital and current Reserve Fund transfer requests.

### **Nashoba Regional School District**

Assistant Superintendent George King discussed the school committee's budget vote on March 3. The Board thanked Mr. King for the district's efforts to hold the assessments down but noted that this year's and last's year's budgets reflect a good deal of pre-paid expenses. And, the district is currently without a teachers' contract. In response to a question from Mr. Wrigley, he acknowledged that they are not making any accommodations for Cost of Living Adjustments in FY 2012.

Summarizing the Board's worries, Mr. Salvie said he is concerned about the frequent use of "unsustainable" regarding the assessments.

### **Minuteman Regional Vocational High School**

Superintendent Ed Bouquillon began by saying that, for FY 2012, there is not sufficient revenue to keep a level-services budget, so reductions are required. He presented two positive trends in right sizing at Minuteman that should help turn this around:

- *Increase in attendance:* This year, there was a 60-percent increase in the freshman class, a huge number. Next year should surpass that number. In addition, Minuteman's per-pupil cost is now competitive with other vocational schools
- *Decrease in staffing:* In FY 11, 22 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions were eliminated. In FY 12, another 15 FTEs will be cut. Remaining teachers and staff will be reassigned as effectively as possible.

Stow's assessment for FY 12 is increasing by \$160, 000. Dr. Bouquillon attributed this to three factors:

- A correction in special education assessments: Although Stow had seven special education students in FY 11, Stow was not assessed a fee for them. In general, there is a \$4,500 assessment per student with an individual education plan (IEP). As of October 1, 2010, Stow had 14 students or roughly half of its students on IEPs, which determines the assessment for FY 12.
- The state minimum local contribution for Stow increased by \$56,000 per the Department of Revenue. The minimum contribution is based on property values and median household income.
- Stow had a 30-percent increase in enrollment, from 25 to 29 students.

Following his presentation, Board members said they were pleased that he is taking the actions he is, showing that he clearly hears the messages from the member towns.

He briefly summarized the work of the Regional Agreement Task Force. At present four of the five recommendations have been agreed to. Meetings will be held to reach agreement on the fifth, until a final decision is brought to the school committee in May.

#### **Town Administrator's Performance Review**

The Town Charter calls for the Board to perform an annual performance review for the Town Administrator and to report a summary of the results at an open meeting. The categories of performance to be ranked are:

- Work quality
- Responsiveness
- Problem solving skills
- Reliability
- Initiative
- Management skills

Citing Mr. Wrigley's successful accomplishments for the year and positive comments from all of the Board members, Ms. Spear said that Mr. Wrigley had earned a perfect score of "4" in overall performance.

#### **Liaison Reports**

**Public Safety** – Mr. Ryan said the Police Chief search committee is getting comments from the departments and residents.

**Pompo School Reuse** – Mr. Kern said the Pompo Reuse Study Committee held its second public forum.

**Conservation** – Ms. Spear said the Conservation Commission is investigating its opportunities to lease agricultural land.

**MBTA Shuttle** – Mr. Dungan said he is trying to locate a place in Stow to park cars for the shuttle.

**Public Walkways Committee** – Mr. Salvie said the committee received the construction plans but the implementation would be expensive, e.g., using granite curbing all the way down Great Road.

At 8:30 p.m., Mr. Dungan moved to adjourn; Mr. Salvie seconded; and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McLaughlin  
Administrative Assistant

Approved as amended, March 8, 2011