

MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Open Session
July 26, 2011

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

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

Mr. Salvie called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Public Input

None.

Chairman's Comments

Mr. Salvie announced two weather-related items:

- The Council on Aging department in the Town Building is a "cooling center," if people need a place to go during the continuing heat wave.
- A tornado clean-up day for Brimfield is being held by a private enterprise. Mr. Ryan has the information.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Wrigley reported on the following:

- Good news: Local receipts through the end of May are \$195,286 higher than budgeted. With June included, he projects that total FY 2011 local receipts will exceed the budgeted amount by between \$250,000 and \$300,000.
- The process continues to fill the open patrolman's position left vacant with former Sgt. Bosworth's promotion to Chief. Mr. Wrigley, Mr. Ryan, and Chief Bosworth hope to have a recommendation for the Board in August.
- The Town Building parking lot expansion began this week with site preparation and should take several weeks. It will result in roughly 17 new parking spaces.
- He and the Treasurer-Collector are doing a cost/benefit analysis of the state GIC insurance program compared to the Minuteman Nashoba Health Group program that Stow presently uses. Stow has used Minuteman since 1994. Joining the GIC is a local option, which can be voted by the Board of Selectmen.
- Rep Hogan is meeting with him to discuss planning for a regional transportation conference she hopes to convene in the fall.
- He reviewed the proposed Wildlife Woods mowing contract between the Town and resident Anthony Parrinello and recommends some changes that would provide reasonable liability protection for both parties.
- In response to questions from House Counsel on the special legislation for the Deerfield Lane open space parcel, the Conservation Commission voted to submit a letter of clarification to Rep Hogan, EOEEA, and House Counsel.

Meeting Minutes

June 14: Mr. Ryan moved to accepted the June 14, 2011 meeting minutes, as amended; Ms. Spear seconded; and all voted in favor.

June 28: Mr. Ryan move to accept the June 28, 2011 meeting minutes, as amended; Ms. Spear seconded. Three members voted in favor (Kern, Ryan, and Spear). Two members abstained, having been absent (Bernklow and Salvie). The motion passed.

Middlesex County Retirement System Update

Thomas Gibson, chairman of the Middlesex County Retirement System Board, visited the Board to meet the selectmen and update them on recent activities. He said this is his first invitation to visit Stow.

He began with a detailed history of the retirement system and board, from 1946 to the present. Stow is one of 31-plus municipalities, school systems, and others who are members of the system. Stow was eligible by being a municipality with a population of less than 10,000.

He explained how, in 2006, the Board transferred management of its liquid assets to the state pension fund, following a \$36.0M loss due to a fund manager's fraud. It will have the option to take back the assets in 2012.

Recently, the Board is working to connect with Town employers, where, in the past, its concentration has been on the retirees.

He explained the Board's present assumed rate of return of 8 1/8th percent. Several selectmen questioned the rate but Mr. Gibson said it is based on past performance and he has no reason to doubt it. The Middlesex Board's goal is to be fully funded by 2035. The state set their date as 2040.

He noted several pension reform initiatives and agreed to send information on the upcoming reforms.

Regional Nursing Services and Field Drivers

Board of Health Chairman Marcia Rising visited the Board about the Town's need for a field driver and a regional nursing initiative she is involved with.

Field drivers are responsible for rounding up livestock that has escaped its enclosures. At present, they are elected by Town Meeting each year and the selectmen are given the role. Ms. Rising asked the Board to give responsibility for field drivers to the Board of Health, which would then create a process and manage the work. A discussion followed on details, such as how to identify the animals' owners and whether fines for loose animals can be imposed.

It was agreed that the Board of Health take responsibility for managing field drivers and that the request for a change in responsibility and for a budget could be taken to Town Meeting.

Regarding the regional nursing initiative, Ms. Rising said that Stow is one of 15 towns that are members of a recently formed MetroWest Public Health and Nursing District Planning Group. Acton is the lead town. They received a \$30,000 grant for planning and will request grant funds for implementation later.

Stow presently has nursing services for three hours on one day, once a week. Stow's hope is to get more hours as a result of this program.

Mr. Wrigley added that Stow spends \$11,000 a year for the limited service we have now. The plan is to provide a cafeteria-style program from which municipalities could select the services they need.

Wildlife Woods Open Space Maintenance

This item was tabled at the request of the Wildlife Woods residents' representative. Mr. Ryan moved to table the topic; Ms. Spear seconded; and all voted in favor.

Common Victualer License for the Stow Café

Having received all the required documentation and with inspections completed, the Board approved Stow Café's license for its new owner.

Mr. Ryan moved to approve a Common Victualer's license for the Stow Café, effective July 27, 2011 and expiring on December 31, 2011; Ms. Spear seconded; and all voted in favor.

The Board agreed to pro-rate the annual \$25 fee for the license.

Town Meeting Warrant Opening and Closing Dates

Mr. Ryan moved to open the warrant for the November 7, 2011 Special Town Meeting on July 26, 2011 and close it on September 30, 2011; Ms. Spear seconded; and all voted in favor.

Gift Bench Acceptance Policy

Ms. Spear presented a memo she drafted on accepting gifts of benches, which members then discussed.

It was agreed that it would be called a guideline, not a policy.

It was agreed that Mr. Salvie would write a policy for the Board on accepting gifts.

Mr. Wrigley recommended that the Board leave enough flexibility to allow for good decisions and said the Wellesley policy being used as an example may be too complicated, with the requirement for a public hearing.

Following an extended discussion, Ms. Spear moved to adopt the guidelines for accepting donated benches, dated July 20, 2011, as amended with alternate language for #7; Mr. Kern seconded. Four voted in favor (Bernklow, Kern, Salvie, and Spear); one opposed (Ryan). The motion carried.

Invasive Plant Problem at Delaney

Mr. Ryan, having heard a constituent's concern with invasive plants at Delaney, waited to let the Board know that he had contacted rep. Hogan about the issue, since the property is owned by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. He has heard there might be funds available for mitigation. He will keep the Board informed.

Liaison Reports

Public Safety: The Police and Fire departments have plans in place to set up shelters when the need arises. The Fire Department is holding a memorial at the firehouse on September 11.

Capital Planning Development: The committee met with the Fire Chief, Chair of the Library Trustees Tim Reed, and chair of the Pompo Reuse Committee Jim Sauta on the three large capital projects.

Mr. Wrigley said that Chief McLaughlin is ready to ask for design funds now and construction funds at annual Town Meeting in May. Mr. Sauta said that the Pompo Reuse group will ask for funds now to do fact finding, in order to make a decision on how to reuse the building, with and without the library. Then they will ask Annual Town Meeting to decide how to use the building. Mr. Reed said the library is looking at the costs of renovating the existing building, because their public forums have shown a strong preference to remain there.

Mr. Salvie would like to hold a joint boards meeting in October to coordinate the recommendations for the Special Town Meeting.

Pedestrian Walkways: The Town received two bids for the Hudson Road to Harvard Road segment and for the Town Center segment.

Planning Board: The Board received an application for boat rentals at Crow Island.

Move to Executive Session at approximately 8:55 p.m.

Mr. Ryan moved to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Fire Chief contract negotiations, per MGL C.39, s.23b; Ms. Spear seconded; and all voted in favor by roll call vote (Ryan – Aye, Kern – Aye, Spear, - Aye, Bernklow – Aye, Salvie – Aye).

Return to Open Session at 9:10 p.m.

Upon return to Open session, Mr. Ryan moved to approve the Fire Chief's FY12 contract; Mr. Kern seconded; and all voted in favor.

Mr. Ryan moved to allow the Town Administrator to execute the contract on behalf of the Town; Mr. Kern seconded; and all voted in favor.

At 9:15 p.m., Mr. Ryan moved to adjourn; Mr. Bernklow seconded; and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McLaughlin
Administrative Assistant

Approved as written, August 23, 2011