

**MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
February 8, 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

Linda Hathaway asked viewers to continue to mail in their census forms and get their dogs licensed. And she thanked the Highway Department for what a good job they did with the snow.

Chairman's Comments

Ms. Spear repeated Ms. Hathaway's point on dog licenses, announced a Bullying Prevention workshop, and referred people to the Town website for a list of jobs and volunteers opportunities.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Wrigley prefaced his report on the FY 12 budget by noting that the Building Commissioner and Fire Chief had inspected all the Town buildings for any signs of stress or damage and that the buildings are safe. He said the bulk of his report, on the FY 12 budget, will come later in the meeting.

Meeting Minutes

None.

Appointment to the Veterans' Graves Committee

Philip Moseley, owner of Stow Farm on Maple Street, was recommended for membership to the committee by both other members: George Veracka and Jeffrey Lance.

Mr. Dungan moved to appoint Philip Moseley to complete an unexpired one-year term on the Veterans' Graves Committee, ending on June 30, 2011; Mr. Salvie seconded; and all voted in favor.

Following his appointment, Mr. Moseley suggested that the Board consider dropping the requirement that Committee members be veterans, as it becomes more and more difficult to find candidates.

Fire/Rescue Mutual Aid Agreement

Fire Chief Mike McLaughlin visited the Board to recommend that the Town opt in to two newly revised statewide mutual aid agreements: one for Public Safety and one for Fire.

He said they have better language to protect Good Samaritans and responding towns, and other benefits. In response to a question of who decides whether to respond to a request for aid, Mr. Wrigley advised keeping it simple by having the department head who is asked to go decide

whether they are able to go, e.g., Fire Police, Building, Highway, Board of Health. And, unless there is a compelling reason not to participate, Stow should respond.

Regarding support for the new agreements, Chief McLaughlin said that all 24 of the District 14 communities have committed to participate.

Following discussion, Mr. Dungan moved that the Board of Selectmen vote to opt in to the Statewide Public Safety Mutual Aid Agreement, pursuant to MGL C 40, s 4J, and authorize the chairman to act on behalf of the Town of Stow to notify the Director of the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency of this vote in writing.

He further moved that the Board of Selectmen vote to opt in to the Statewide Fire Mutual Aid Agreement, pursuant to MGL C 48, s 59A and authorize the Stow Fire Department to go to aid another city, town, fire district, or area under federal jurisdiction, and to authorize the Fire Chief to extend such aid subject to such conditions and restrictions as may be prescribed therein.

And he further moved to authorize the chairman to act on behalf of the Town of Stow to notify the Director of the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency of this vote in writing.

Mr. Salvie seconded and all voted in favor. The motion passed.

Chairman Spear signed a document confirming the vote, which the Fire Chief will submit to the MEMA Director.

Town Administrator's Report Preliminary FY 2012 Budget Report

Mr. Wrigley began his presentation by reminding the board that this "preliminary" budget is composed of the departments' requested budgets on the expense side and his projections for receipts on the revenue side.

At present, he is using the Governor's recommended budget, tax estimates from the Assessors' office and the Department of Revenue, and his own projections. He will continue to refine the numbers as the House and Senate versions of the state budget become available. On the expense side, he is using the departments' requested expense budgets and capital purchases, and early school district assessment estimates.

In a brief discussion on unused levy capacity, he said the Town has hit a 10-year high mark, with \$1.4M in stored assets, an enviable position.

Mr. Wrigley noted the next steps in the annual budget process: a Joint Boards meeting, which he convenes, on the financial health of the Town, scheduled for February 22, and his recommended budget presented to the Board of Selectmen, scheduled for March 22.

Harvard Acres Well Loans

Mr. Wrigley said that on March 15, Assabet Water will be shut down. He expects that all residents will have their own wells by then.

He has announced to Harvard Acres residents that February 28 is the deadline for applying for a well loan. People need only initiate the process by the deadline, not have it completed.

NRSD Budget

In a brief discussion on the NRSD budget meetings being held, Mr. Salvie notes that they are doing “modified zero-based budgeting.” For the track, which has been a potential capital item for several years, they are doing repairs. The plan for turf is out.

Deficit Spending for Snow & Ice Account

Mr. Wrigley said the Highway Department has spent the budgeted amount in the Snow and Ice account and asked the Board to approve deficit spending. For deficit spending to be legal, both the selectmen and Finance Committee must approve it.

Mr. Dungan moved to allow the Town to do deficit spending of the Snow and Ice account, in accordance with MGL Chapter 44, section 31d; Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

Chapter 61 Response Amendment

Vin Antil, chair of the Open Space Committee and of the Chapter 61 Quick Response Team, visited the Board to report on the dry run the team did on the Boxboro Road property. According to the Chapter 61 process, this is the report that would go to the Joint Boards for a recommendation to purchase.

Mr. Antil said the team was able to pull the report together in four days. Everyone was impressed with the quality and amount of information in the report.

He said that as chair of the Open Space Committee, one of the joint boards group, he would like to receive the team’s report ASAP, to meet with his committee. He said the discussion among committee members and knowledgeable people about a Chapter 61 parcel before the joint boards will be important

As to whether SMAHT should be on the Quick Start Team, Mr. Salvie said they probably don’t have input but should be on the joint boards.

Ms. Spear walked the selectmen through a list of questions she compiled and the Board decided to make the following changes: Item # 3 on periodic reconsideration of the land use priorities; Page 12 paragraph 5 on the composition of the team, and a change in the evaluation flowchart, as recorded by Ms. Spear.

Then Mr. Dungan moved to adopt the amended process for Chapter 61 land purchase decision making, as agreed at the February 8, 2011 selectmen’s meeting; Mr. Salvie seconded; and all voted in favor.

Mr. Wrigley said he would not suppose that the information being collected is enough for a Go/No Go decision on purchase. Mr. Antil agreed that much about the property will only be known through discussions before the joint boards.

It was agreed to schedule a joint boards meeting for Stage 2 of the dry run.

Opening and Closing the Annual Town Meeting Warrant and Ballot Additions

The Town Clerk learned that vacancies for elected positions that are placed on the ballot must be approved by the Board of Selectmen. Therefore, an additional vote was taken this year.

Mr. Dungan moved to open the May Annual Town Meeting warrant on Tuesday, February 8, 2011 and to close it on Friday, March 11; Mr. Salvie seconded; and all voted in favor.

Per MGL, Ch. 41, section 10, Mr. Dungan moved that the Board approve including the following offices on the May 2011 Town Election ballot: Housing Authority (to fill an unexpired term ending 2012) and Assessor (to fill an unexpired term ending 2012); Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

Master Plan Implementation

Mr. Dungan distributed an implementation table of all the actions listed in the plan, in logical groupings, with priority rankings.

The Board discussed what they should be involved in, what to delegate, and what belongs to other groups. Mr. Dungan emphasized that they “don’t want the Master Plan to gather dust.”

Ms. Spear suggested a facilitated event and Mr. Dungan suggested a workshop for the Board. There was discussion of who the audience would be and other questions.

Mr. Wrigley suggested the Board approach it from which items are actionable, that is, projects, vs. programs. He noted that the selectmen were the one board responsible for implementation and advised that they get tangible results.

Comprehensive Permit Policy Taskforce

Ms. Spear opened the topic by noting this was a follow-up to an earlier discussion of using the policy to evaluate Plantation II and Pilot Grove II. The purpose is to review and update the 2002 version of the policy.

The recently completed Housing Production Plan identifies three boards to form a task force for the project: the Stow Municipal Affordable Housing Trust, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Planning Board. The selectmen will ask that SMAHT lead the effort.

Following discussion, Mr. Salvie moved to create a task force composed of representatives of the Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Board, and Stow Municipal Affordable Housing Trust for the purpose of reviewing and updating the Selectmen’s Dec 18, 2002 Comprehensive Permit Policy Statement. Mr. Ryan seconded and all voted in favor.

Board of Selectmen’s 2010 Annual Report

Ms. Spear proposed that the Board approve a version of the selectmen’s annual report that she had distributed for review.

Mr. Dungan moved to approve the chairman’s draft of the 2010 selectmen’s annual report, dated Feb 4, 2011, as amended; Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

Liaison Reports

Public Safety: Mr. Ryan applauded the work of the Highway Department, calling it “a great job.”

ESBC: Mr. Kern said the Finance Committee is preparing a new tax impact statement of the school building costs under the revised budget. There will be some slip in the schedule due to weather. And the project is running at 21 percent cost with 20 percent of the work complete.

Pathways Committee: Mr. Salvie said they are working on a problem with the swale at Villages of Stow. The responsibility for town-wide maintenance of the pathways needs to be identified. The committee has spoken with several towns on their methods. He will meet with Superintendent of Streets Clayton. Lastly, he emphasized again that the walkways must be staked before construction so that everyone can see the impact.

SMAHT: The Trust wants to make a loan to the Plantation II project but it is a complicated process.

At 8:50 p.m., Mr. Dungan moved to adjourn; Mr. Salvie seconded; and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McLaughlin
Administrative Assistant

Approved as submitted, February 22, 2011