

**MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
March 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

Town Clerk Linda Hathaway announced that the 2010 Federal census figure for Stow is 6,590.

Chairman's Comments

Ms. Spear announced the deadline for dog licenses, upcoming rabies clinic, and volunteer openings.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Wrigley said his budget, which is the bulk of his activities report, would be discussed later.

Regarding a question about employee retirement programs, he said the annual 8.2-percent increase being forecast for Middlesex County Retirement is unrealistic. The Board could invite them to visit but he is not hopeful it would have any effect. A past attempt by 19 communities coming together to try to influence the agency was unsuccessful.

There are only four Harvard Acres well loans left to process: 53 of 57 loans have been approved.

Meeting Minutes

None.

Veterans' Services Officer Appointment

Mr. Dungan moved, per MGL Chapter 115, to appoint Brian Stearns as Stow's Veterans' Services Officer for a one-year term to expire on April 1, 2012; Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor. The Board thanked Mr. Stearns for his service to the veterans.

Eagle Scout Recognition

Thompson Hangen visited with the Board, and Ms. Spear presented him with a certificate on behalf of the Board recognizing his outstanding achievement in attaining the rank of Eagle Scout. The Board wished Mr. Hangen well in his future endeavors.

Master Plan Implementation and Priorities

It was agreed to defer the Master Plan review, then review the organizational structure, check if the last column is correct, then review the priorities.

MASSpirg and Updated Bottle Bill

Mr. Ryan asked the Board to discuss whether they wished to support MASSpirg's position on a new bottle bill. Following the discussion, Mr. Dungan moved that the Board send a letter of support in favor. There was no second. The motion did not pass and no action was taken.

Annual Run for the Woods Permit

Aims Coney, in his third year leading the Stow Conservation Trust's fundraiser Run for the Woods, asked the Board to approve a permit for this year's event. He said the race now draws 450 walkers and runners and raises \$5,000 a year for the Trust.

Public Safety Officer Sgt. Tim Lima explained what he considers when recommending that a permit be issued: the location, the number of participants, the safety of the runners, flow of traffic, and access of emergency services. For large events, they set up movable barriers to direct the runners and control traffic.

He said that Town-sponsored events should always get permits. Permits for private events are not needed. As a courtesy, out-of-town events coming through Stow should inform the police department, especially if they involve a large number of participants. For example, last year, a neighboring town had hundreds of bikes come through without notifying the Town, which could have created a safety issue. In general, permits are always a good idea.

Mr. Dungan moved to approve a permit for the Run for the Woods event on May 22; Mr. Salvie seconded; and all voted in favor.

Town Administrator's Recommended FY 2012 Budget

Mr. Wrigley presented his FY12 budget proposal for the Board's approval with the following comments:

- The General Municipal Budget (i.e. town departments and town-wide expenses) is going up 3.38 percent, driven mostly by insurance.
- There is a 1-percent cost of living increase for employees.
- Information technology: budget is as close to zero-based as possible. Hardware and software maintenance contracts represent a large part of annual costs. He pulled out all new software this year and moved this year's requests to next year in order to do due diligence.
- Fire Department: He will benchmark Stow expenses by comparing to neighboring towns.
- Capital: He has plugged in an amount for an appraisal of the land being requested by the Cemetery Committee. To obviate issuing an RFP, we would need to prove that it is a unique parcel. Because it is adjacent to Brookside, it may be considered unique, for procurement purposes. Capital Planning is meeting Thursday to vote.

Board members spoke of two concerns: first, the NRSD low assessment this year and last are unique and Stow should be prepared for it to increase in the future and, second, the high and increasing cost of employee healthcare.

Following discussion, Mr. Salvie moved to accept the Town Administrator's recommended FY 2012 budget, dated March 22, 2011, with Mr. Wrigley's plug number for the cemetery land; Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

May 2011 Town Meeting Warrant Approval

Mr. Dungan moved to approve and accept the 2011 Annual Town Meeting warrant, as approved by Town Counsel, with "non-binding" under the ballot question; Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

The Board agreed to discuss and vote on specific warrant articles at its next meeting.

Public Hearing – Sunday Liquor License Hours

Ms. Spear opened the public hearing by reading the official notice:

*Notice Of Public Hearing
Hours of Sunday Liquor Sales for On-premise Licensees*

The Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, August 17, 2010 at 8:00 pm in the Town Building, 380 Great Road, Stow, MA on the question of changing the Town of Stow's permitted hours for serving alcoholic beverages on Sundays.

A new law amending M.G.L. c. 138, §33B authorizes local liquor licensing authorities (Board of Selectmen) to permit on-premise licensees (restaurants) to sell alcoholic beverages beginning at 10:00 a.m. on Sundays. The Town of Stow currently permits restaurants to begin serving liquor at 11:00 a.m.

At the conclusion of the public hearing, the Board will decide whether to change the start time of Sunday alcohol sales in restaurants from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

All concerned residents and business owners are encouraged to attend to present their views. Comments may also be sent in writing but must be received before the public hearing to be considered.

The Board received no written input and there was no public input at the hearing. The Board discussed whether the change was desirable and whether it would help the affected businesses.

Following discussion, Mr. Dungan moved to close the public hearing; Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

Mr. Dungan then moved to accept the statute as promulgated; Mr. Ryan seconded. Four members voted in favor (Dungan, Ryan, Salvie, and Spear), one voted opposed (Kern). The motion carries.

Liaison Reports

Pedestrian Walkways – Bruce Fletcher will manage the construction of Phase 1 of the project.

NRSD – The school committee did not issue the letter releasing Pompo from school use following the completion of the Center project, as hoped. Mr. Wood would like Mr. Wrigley to approve the content first. Mr. Wrigley said that he had already done so.

Tri-Town Meeting – Bolton wants to disapprove the proposed FY12 NRSD assessment and Lancaster is “on the fence.”

Town Building -- regarding expansion of the Town Building parking area, DEP has agreed to a variance, so the well will not have to be relocated.

COA – looking for a better way to dispatch vans. One possibility is for a group of towns to hire a shared dispatcher.

Public Transportation – met with the church people on parking for Commuter shuttle.

Track Road – met with Assabet National Wildlife Refuge staff. The parking lot at the north end has more room than Sudbury Road.

Conservation and ESBC – walked the Center School grounds looking at wetland issues.

MAGIC – Stow hosting on April 7.

Police Chief search – group is meeting Friday to review applicants' essays.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McLaughlin
Administrative Assistant

Approved as amended, April 26, 2011