

**MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
February 14, 2012**

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.

Chair's Comments

Mr. Salvie reminded people of the voter registration deadline for the presidential primary election and that nomination papers would be available the next day at the Town Clerk's office.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Wrigley said that his FY 2013 budget report scheduled for later in the meeting would serve as his activities report.

Meeting Minutes

December 13, 2011: The minutes were tabled in order to correct the section on building committee appointments.

Elementary School Project Status

Paul Griffin of Construction Monitoring Services (CMS) in Marlboro, the Owner's Project Manager, visited the Board to explain the recent slip in the project schedule. Mr. Salvie began by stating that it was unacceptable that Clerk of the Works Glenn Davis was not present, as the Board requested. Mr. Griffin replied that he gave Mr. Davis permission not to attend and that Mr. Davis is a CMS employee, and as such is under Mr. Griffin's direction. Mr. Salvie said he would discuss this further off line.

Regarding the schedule slip, Mr. Griffin said that he and Mr. Davis were caught by surprise, learning at the last minute that the heating contractor had not completed his work. He said that the Board of Health and Building Inspector were willing to grant a temporary (30-day) occupancy permit to allow the children to move in. The Certificate of Occupancy will be issued on February 16.

As to why they did not find out about the problem until January 24, Mr. Griffin said that they "got duped." The heating contractor said that he told P. J. Stella, the General Contractor (GC), about the problem, which Stella denies.

To make up the lost time, Stella agreed to compress the schedule by breaking up the Phase II work into five sections and managing the asbestos abatement so that some space could be available sooner. This will save 20 days. He is still hoping to finish the project on June 27.

Mr. Griffin said that, per the GC's contract, the OPM is not allowed "to badger" the contractors for information. This communication should happen at the status meetings. He began meeting

with the subcontractors two to three months ago, when everything was coming up short. They first met every two weeks, then every week. Coordination is critical in Phase II because they are working on the existing building, not new unoccupied space.

The good thing about the slip is that they cleaned up a lot of the punch list items and it allowed them to take a second look at a lot of the work.

The specific changes instituted since the earlier slips are:

- Splitting up the work and redoing the schedule.
- Changes in the meeting structure.
- The architect has picked up the pace.
- The two contractors who were not performing have been issued stern warnings.

He is carrying \$400,000 in outstanding liability (for potential losses) with 80 percent of the construction done. The remaining 20 percent, Phase II, is the “cosmetic” end of the building. So he still has a very healthy contingency left.

Individual selectmen had more questions concerning the slip, such as how the MSBA views it.

Mr. Salvie summarized by saying that he feels better now that he has a better understanding. He asked Mr. Griffin to think about how he can use the Board to help him.

Appointment to the Council on Aging

Steve Dungan requested appointment to a voting member position on the COA. Since leaving the Board of Selectmen, he joined the boards of the Stow Elderly Housing Corporation and the Stow Community Chest and is a member of the Randall Library Building Committee and an associate member of the COA. COA Director Alyson Toole sent an email stating the COA’s enthusiastic support of the appointment.

Ms. Spear moved that the Board appoint Steve Dungan to the Council on Aging for an indefinite term; Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

Liaison Reports

- Fire station building project: The committee toured the Lunenburg and Leominster stations. Seventeen companies attended the Stow open house.
- Pompo reuse project: RFPs are due on February 17.
- Capital Planning: Meeting with the departments for the FY 2012 budget and annual town meeting.
- Library building project: RFP is out. There have been 47 requests for copies.
- Track Road: Project is at a crossroads. Federal funds cannot be used for motorized access. A definitive answer on wetlands is needed, which requires a very expensive aerial survey. Track Road can be (and is) used now, in its current state. The problem is paving it for the ARRT.
- MAGIC/MAPC: There might be a regional effort on housing coming.
- Water protection agreement with the Town of Hudson: Will hold a joint boards meeting with the Planning Board to decide on the agreement.
- COA: provides tax help for seniors.
- Local Area Cable Advisory: Met on the Comcast renewal with the Town’s cable license attorney.

- NRSD: FY 2013 budget has an overall increase of 3.13 percent, with a corresponding 4.03 percent increase in Stow's assessment. Salaries account for the largest increase.
- Tri-Town: Will meet on reduced plans for the NRSD athletic complex, with a new total cost of \$2.2 million. There was discussion on gate and concession revenues being applied to maintenance. The school committee has not voted on the newest proposal.

Appointment of Call Firefighter/EMT

Ms. Spear moved to appoint Eoin Bohnert as a call firefighter for the Town of Stow, as recommended by Fire Chief McLaughlin; Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

Town Administrator's Preliminary FY 2013 Budget Report

Mr. Wrigley began his presentation with projected revenues for FY13, which he estimates will increase over FY12 by roughly 4.4 percent, with property tax revenues being the largest source. He noted that his budget would be adjusted incrementally over the next few weeks as more information became available.

He level funded Local Aid, based on the Governor's budget. He will adjust this once the House and Senate produce their budgets. He expects a significant increase in Local Receipts, based the current year-to-date trend. He plugged in \$200,000 of Free Cash to fund capital projects that are approved at Town Meeting. At present, the sum of the Stabilization Fund and Free Cash is roughly \$2.0 million, a very healthy reserve.

Total requested expenditures show a 3.38-percent increase over FY12. Most numbers in his report are departmental requests, but there are also committed expenditures like county retirement and debt service that cannot be controlled. The general municipal budget, containing wages and department expenses, are a 2.59-percent increase over FY12. Group health insurance will drop with insurance reform; the general and property liability and workers' comp are expected to increase significantly due to several slip-and-fall injuries. Prevention measures have been put in place.

A budget driver for Stow is its debt service, and FY13 will see a \$200,000 increase over FY12 due to interest payments on the Center School project.

Mr. Wrigley also reviewed the school district assessments, special articles, capital articles, and the tax recap.

He asked the Board for approval to begin the process of filling the vacant sergeant position, formerly held by Chief Bosworth and the selectmen agreed.

He reminded everyone that the Board must have a debt exclusion ballot question on the NRSD athletic complex to the Town Clerk 35 days before the Town Election.

Asked if Stow was ready for an "override" to reduce its unused levy capacity, he said not at this time, knowing that the school expenses will increase. If it is reduced now, in two to three years, the Town would need an override.

There was some general discussion on the capital projects being debt exclusions and on the value of setting the levy limit down.

Mr. Wrigley left for home at 9:00 p.m.

Updated Letter of Support for Plantation II and Pilot Grove II Projects

The SCHC requested an updated letter of support from the Board for its newest grant application to the state.

Ms. Spear moved to reissue the Board's letter of support for the Plantation Apts II and Pilot Grove II affordable housing projects to the Mass Department of Housing and Community Development, with a new date of February 14, 2012, to accompany the latest grant applications, and to authorize our chairman to sign on behalf of the Board; Mr. Bernklow seconded; and all voted in favor. Mr. Salvie signed the letter for mailing.

Update on Stow Musket

Ms. McLaughlin said she is waiting to hear back from the display case builder on the installation plan.

Executive Session Canceled

Mr. Salvie canceled the Executive Session listed on the agenda, saying that it was unnecessary at this time.

Review of Master Plan Priorities

Ms. Spear said that 85 percent of the items on the Board's priorities grid relate to "planning" and belong to the Planning Board. Mr. Kern said that everything on the list is getting worked on and at some stage of completion.

Mr. Salvie will reach out to the Lake Boon Commission on education for the lake residents on water protection and to the Stow Housing Authority for a general visit. He is working on the economic development listed on the priorities grid. This includes an idea of promoting agriculture for tourism.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McLaughlin
Administrative Assistant

Approved as amended, March 13, 2012