

**MINUTES  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
September 11, 2012**

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

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

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

**Public Input**

None.

**Chair's Comments**

Mr. Kern noted that the error on the new Center School sign is being fixed.

**Town Administrator's Activities Report**

Mr. Wrigley reported on the following:

- Regarding Mr. Salvie's interest in economic development – In November 1966, the Board created a local acceptance related economic development and industrial commission (EDIC). Reviving this would be a means to get started. More recently, Bill has written a job description for a community development manager to provide management for this type of work.
- High School science labs project – Bill spoke with the MSBA. A statement of interest was submitted by NRSD. The MSBA had money previously appropriated and offered it to the schools. The MSBA is not interested in approval by the towns, only by the school committees.
- Center School project – The takeover agreement with the new GC has been executed. Some insurance deliverables were not done; however the project is almost complete. This issue is being worked.

**Meeting Minutes**

**July 24:** Mr. Ryan moved to accept the July 24, 2012 minutes, as written; Mr. Bernklow seconded; and all voted in favor.

**Public Hearing on Sylvan Drive Street Acceptance**

Mr. Kern opened the public hearing at 7:18 p.m., reading the hearing notice and list of abutters, several of whom were in attendance.

He then read the Superintendent of Streets' recommendation to accept the street. Mr. Dodd, member of the Planning Board, was present and stated that the Planning Board had voted to recommend acceptance of it, as well.

Sylvan Drive residents then spoke about various concerns: Adam Wagman of 115 North Shore Drive asked who maintains the cul-de-sac, that it was getting overgrown. Mr. Wrigley replied that the Town takes care of any public safety problems and the residents usually do cosmetic care, such as mowing. Thomas Kulas of 25 Sylvan Drive asked who will clean up the construction debris. Mr. Dodd replied that it is the developer's responsibility. Joseph Ondrus of 35 Sylvan Drive said his asphalt had been destroyed by construction equipment. It was agreed that Habitech

and the Planning Board would check on it. Andrew Ferguson of 39 Sylvan Drive said he has been asking the developer for help for a year, at which time Mr. Salvie asked developer Bruce Wheeler to contact Mr. Ferguson on the following day, September 12.

Mr. Wrigley explained to the public that when the Town accepts a street, any problems with it become the Town's. So the Town has a strong interest in having any issues in the public way resolved. Habitech's legal counsel Lou Levine asked the homeowners to send issues to both Habitech and the Planning Board.

There was little deliberation on whether the Town should accept the street. Mr. Salvie stressed that he wanted to ensure that communication between the residents and developer were good. Mr. Kern closed the public hearing.

Mr. Salvie moved to approve the layout of Sylvan Drive as reflected in our Report and Laying Out of Sylvan Way, provided that necessary administrative changes are made; Mr. Bernklow seconded; and all voted in favor. The Board then signed the report.

### **Joint Boards Meeting on Capital Building Projects**

Mr. Kern opened the meeting by stating that his expectations in convening a meeting with the Capital Planning Committee and the Finance Committee were to hear the status and any problems with the three building projects and to see whether there was some consensus among the committees and the boards on which options to recommend to Town Meeting.

**Community Center:** Committee chair Jim Sauta reported the architects of Kaffee Kang Associates made several designs but then the focus turned to adding the fire station to Pompo and they had to shift gears to estimate that. He said the committee feels that Pompo is not the right place for it and both former Chief Soar and his surveyors and current Chief McLaughlin discouraged Pompo as a site. The committee has no ballpark figures yet for design costs.

Mr. Wrigley said, with the warrant closing on September 17, the committees must provide the minimum requirements for the warrant articles: the design development costs and the total project cost. He will work with bond counsel to write the articles and ballot questions.

It was noted that, according to former NRSD Facilities Manager Bill Spratt, to run Pompo occupied costs \$120,000 yearly and to run it empty costs \$100,000. Mr. Wrigley advised that when the Town is given the building, there should be an article for building operating costs and a facility manager. The Owner's Project Manager is responsible for taking the leftover equipment and cleaning the building. Mr. Wrigley will work with Building Commissioner Martin to get the building in shape and the utilities priced. He stressed the importance of getting the projects costs fast.

**Fire Station:** Ross Perry, the Capital Planning Committee's representative on the Fire Station Building Committee, enumerated the project options and estimated costs:

1. Paint and polish with repairs (\$800,000)
2. Reno of existing building (\$3,600,000)
3. Add/reno (\$6,400,000)
4. New building with a basement (\$7,200,000)
5. Move to Pompo (yet unknown)

He pointed out that there is only an \$800,000 difference between the add/reno and the new fire station, a small difference relative to the large benefit the Town gets in return.

Because the fire station is considered a “critical building,” current building codes require that it meet seismic standards for safety.

The committee is in unanimous agreement that the Crescent Street location is preferred for many reasons. And members are moving to consensus on the recommended building option.

Architect Brett Donham said he has complete estimates on the options.

He said the building is slowly collapsing and listed a number of deficiencies. The existing building has one-third of the space needed. The systems are well past their useful life. There is no vehicle exhaust system and firefighters sleep at the firehouse, in the unhealthy air.

A new building would have a 20-year life, the length of a bond.

Mr. Perry said that 60 years ago, the emergencies were 100 percent fire and the department was all call firefighters. Today, there are more emergency medical calls than fires (now two-thirds of the calls). He is strongly leaning toward Option 4.

Mr. Kern said that a new building at Crescent Street is the same price as a new building at Pompo; there is no cost advantage in moving to Pompo.

Asked about firehouses in comparable communities, Mr. Perry said that the committee visited several new firehouses to learn about their experiences and Stow is on the low end of fire stations.

Regarding growth, there will be no additional FTEs and the only add-on equipment will be an ambulance (keeping the old one when a new one is bought).

Questions and answers:

- Should they split Fire and Rescue? Not efficient.
- Outsourcing EMTs? Even if you outsource, you still need an ambulance. They continue to look at regionalizing ALS.
- Are there hazardous materials under the fire station, left there from the Hale School fire? Tests are being done this week to see what's there.

**Randall Library:** Building Committee chair Tim Reed described the project status and listed the options for renovation and expansion. He said the building had its structural and historical analyses and would have a building systems report in the future.

Option 1: Keep the original footprint, work on the water infiltration, fix congestion, and improve handicapped access. The second floor cannot support heavy stacks, so the adult collection cannot go there (as was hoped). Instead, the children's section with half-stacks will move there.

There is no way to permanently fix the water problem in the new (1975) addition. It had a useful life of 20-25 years (1995-2000). The architects say it will start leaking again after any attempted fixes.

Option 2: Tear down the 1975 addition and build a new structure. This would feature the original building and restore the natural grade (moving soil away from the walls). With a new structure, the full-size stacks could go on the second floor. So upstairs would be adult reading, quiet space, many more computers. The children's and teen room would be on the first floor.

Costs estimates just received from architects: total project cost of Option 1 is \$2.0M and the cost of Option 2 is \$4.0M. New furnishings would cost \$200,000-\$230,000; they would use existing furnishings and fundraise for the rest. The cost to restore the old building ranges from \$464,000 to \$465,000; the Town could use Community Preservation Act funds for this.

Regarding state funding for the project, the statute requires more linear feet of parking than Stow has and Stow does not want the amount of shelving required. We need space for patrons, not books. There are 19 towns on the list and \$115,000,000 of unfunded construction. It would likely be six to ten years before Stow would be reviewed.

Mr. Reed compared the Randall Library space of the new building to Boxborough, Bolton, Acton, and Harvard, all of which have more space than Stow. He also compared the number of employees, noting that Stow does not plan any new hires. Stow has four FTEs, compared to five, nine, and 12 from the other towns.

In summary, the committee favors tearing down the 1975 addition and rebuilding. He noted that there is a 4-percent multiplier for every year you don't build. There is an annual cost of the water infiltration if nothing is done. Mr. Reed answered questions from board members. As to what happens if Town Meeting votes down the project, several points were made: it is the risk of going in with one option; the Town still has the plans and specs for another try; and they now know the condition of the building.

### **Joint Boards Wrap Up**

Wrapping up the joint boards meeting, Mr. Wrigley said when he first came to Stow 20 years ago, it was decided that the fire station would be the next project. It has never happened.

Mr. Kern said there will be public forums on the projects. He asked Mr. Wood to present the science lab project at the forums.

Mr. Wrigley said the intent was to have these three projects presented together with the design costs plus the estimated total project cost of each.

The process for the Town Meeting is to have a presentation for all four projects (including the science labs) before any votes. The Moderator can decide the order of the presentations, or they can go in the order in the warrant (alphabetically), or the Board of Selectmen can do randomly.

The joint boards meeting concluded at 9:30 p.m.

### **Discussion of NRSD Science Lab Projects**

Members expressed concern that they had seen nothing descriptive about the project yet. They were concerned with the process of getting the funding and upset at the MSBA for not following their own rules (to include the Towns).

It was noted that the students are excelling in the existing labs and it was unclear whether the renovation would fix the scheduling problem the administration has with space.

There was a desire to have more information from the public records and to hear the opinions of the Stow representatives on the school committee on the science labs project. Meeting with them on the alternate Tuesdays from the selectmen/school committee meetings was suggested.

Ross Perry from Capital Planning said this is a case of affordability, process, and merit. NRSD should be on the Town's five-year capital plan.

**Discussion of Pompo Surplus Equipment**

Town Clerk Linda Hathaway brought a list of suggested prices for the surplus equipment remaining at Pompo and proposed a sale on the upcoming Saturday. Following discussion, there was general agreement on this.

**Approve Relocation of Polling Place to Center School**

The Town Clerk next sought approval from the selectmen to move the polling location from Hale School to Center School. The Board voted in favor of the move.

**Liaison Reports**

**Joint Cable Committee:** A public hearing on the Comcast license renewal is set for Sep 19.

**SMAHT:** Received two applications to its RFP for consulting services.

**Economic development:** A meeting is scheduled for the following night.

At 10:10 p.m., Mr. Hawkes moved to adjourn; Mr. Salvie seconded; and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McLaughlin  
Administrative Assistant

Approved November 13, 2012