

**MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
June 26, 2012**

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

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

None.

Town Administrator's Activities Report

Mr. Wrigley reported the following:

He asked the Board to support a joint letter to FEMA from the Town Administrators of Boxborough, Littleton, and Stow, requesting a \$710,000 grant to upgrade the three towns' public safety communications equipment. The three towns are the last in the Central Middlesex District to upgrade radio frequencies to UHF, a higher band.

With the departure of the school project General Contractor, the surety company is arranging for a replacement who is experienced in assuming control of distressed construction projects. He asked the Board to agree to have him sign the take-over agreement, of which they have a draft copy. The Town needs to move ahead quickly to minimize further disruption of the project. The members agreed to have Mr. Wrigley sign the contract.

He said he would discuss his other two activities, a union contract renewal and the high school lab renovation, later in the meeting.

Meeting Minutes

None.

Recognition of Edward Brown

Resident and long-time public official Ed Brown visited the Board to receive a certificate of recognition for his 15 years of service as the Town's representative on the Board of the Hudson Light and Power Department.

Mr. Kern read the following proclamation into the public record:

Proclamation in Tribute to Edward A. Brown

On this 26th day of June 2012, the Stow Board of Selectmen hereby bestows their best wishes and sincere thanks to Edward A. Brown on the occasion of his retirement as the Stow Advisory Member of the Hudson Light and Power Board of Directors.

Ed served the Town in this official capacity from 2005 to the present, providing much needed communication between the Town and municipal utility. The position was created as part of a settlement agreement between the Town and Hudson Light and Power Department. An accomplished professional in the energy field and former CEO of New Hampshire Yankee, Ed brought technical know-how and negotiating skills to the table and, as a member of the Stow Municipal Electric Department, created in 1995, obtained payments in lieu of taxes to the Town.

Ed has been in life-long service to his country and community. He is a decorated veteran of the Korean War, receiving the Bronze Star as a combat engineer leader. Today he continues to serve his community as Treasurer of the Stow Lions Club, a giving organization. Thank you, Ed!

In response, Mr. Brown complimented the Stow officials and HL&P Board on their productive work together. Asked if he could recommend a candidate for his replacement, he said he could not. He suggested the Board appoint someone with a business background who can analyze operations and projects.

Lew and Judy Halprin's Gifts to the Town

Residents Lew and Judy Halprin visited the Board to offer three gifts to the Town: a "bike-boat" for recreational use at Lake Boon, a framed panel of artwork done by Ms. Halprin, and a TV monitor for showing Stow TV in the Town Building lobby.

The Board gratefully accepted the bike-boat on behalf of the Recreation Commission, following the Board's policy for accepting gifts. Mr. Ryan moved to accept the donation of the bike-boat described in Mr. Halprin's April 17 letter for use at the Town Beach, as requested by the Recreation Commission, to be under the care and the custody of the Commission; Mr. Bernklow seconded; and all voted in favor.

Ms. Halprin described her artwork and its significance. It is the 4th panel of the cover to the traffic control box in the Town Center, which she painted in a floral motif. Her work was funded by a grant from the Stow Cultural Council so it belongs to the Town. It could not be installed on the control box and, rather than put it elsewhere, she wanted it hung in the entryway to the Town Building, from where you can see the control box.

Board members discussed a concern that accepting gifts of art for display in the Town Building would set a precedent, which they did not want to do. Other locations were suggested, such as the new Community Center. It was agreed that they would continue the discussion at the next meeting, when all five members were present and people had time to consider the other options.

Lastly, Mr. Halprin asked the Board to accept a TV monitor, to be installed in the Town Building lobby, to help spread awareness of Stow TV. It would show the "Bulletin Board" feature, not programs.

None of the selectmen spoke in favor of it. Mr. Kern noted that Mr. Halprin had brought the request to the Board twice before, and both the Boards at the time rejected the idea. Following the discussion, Mr. Ryan offered a motion to accept the donation but there was no second. The motion failed and the Board did not accept the monitor.

Tree Warden on Sudbury Road Tree Decision

Tree warden Bruce Fletcher and Willem Jansen of 269 Sudbury Road brought an objection to the Tree Warden's decision to the Board's decision, the statutory process by which the removal of public shade trees can be appealed. Mr. Fletcher explained his reasoning for approving the removal of one white pine for public land abutting Mr. Jansen's property and the objection he received from a resident. He decided that leaving the single tree could be problematic after the surrounding trees were gone because it would be vulnerable to wind and storm damage. He saw multiple targets (five houses), plus power lines and the street, that the tree could strike. Mr. Jansen explained why he was removing his trees, judging them unsafe, as well. The resident's letter argued for saving the tree in a general sense but not for its value or particular location.

Mr. Bernklow moved to have the Tree Warden issue a permit regarding the 30-foot pine at 269 Sudbury Road, the disposition to be made at the Tree Warden's discretion, Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

Annual Appointment to Veterans' Graves' Committee

Veterans' graves Committee member George Veracka having agreed to another term, Mr. Bernklow moved to reappoint Mr. Veracka to the Veterans' Graves Committee, for a one-year term ending June 30, 2013; Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

Date for Fall Special Town Meeting

Mr. Wrigley opened discussion by saying that he had just heard from NRSD Superintendent Michael Wood that the District was planning a renovation of the high school science labs, another capital project, following the recently approved athletic complex renovation. He asked that the NRSD School Committee not approve the borrowing before the window in which the towns could also vote on the borrowing at a special town meeting.

He noted that the original intent of the Stow Fall Town Meeting was to bring all three of the Town's capital projects together at one time. Now the NRSD project would need to be included. The time period for the school project was late October to November 19. The Town's building committees were planning for November.

It was agreed that the Town Clerk would lay out the possible dates for a Town Meeting and Special Election, in light of the many variables such as the state election and availability of facilities, and bring that information back to the Board. Mr. Wrigley would contact the building committees to check dates.

Public Employees Local 1154 Collective Bargaining Agreement

The clerical union contract was approved with no discussion, the only change being the 3-percent COLA increase to salaries, approved at Town meeting for fiscal year 2013. Mr. Ryan moved to approve the Public Employees Local 1156 collective bargaining agreement with the Town, dated June 26, 2012; Mr. Bernklow seconded; and all voted in favor.

Liaison Reports

NRSD: Mr. Bernklow attended the lab tour. The total project cost will be \$5 million to \$10 million, with MSBA reimbursement of 45 percent. The District needs \$160,000 now for a feasibility study.

Finance Committee: Peter McManus is the new chair; Ross Perry was appointed their rep on the Capital Planning Committee. Mr. Bernklow was reappointed to the ESBC.

Fire Station Building Committee: There is a preliminary estimate of all the necessary space.
Police Sergeant Search Committee: They are meeting Saturday to interview the three candidates.

At 8:35 p.m., Mr. Ryan moved to adjourn; Mr. Bernklow seconded; and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McLaughlin
Administrative Assistant

Approved July 24, 2012