

**MINUTES  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
October 23, 2012**

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

**Chairman's Comments**

Mr. Kern announced that Treasurer-Collector Pam Landry recently renewed her professional certification, so we can be assured that the Town's money is being handled by someone qualified.

He noted that only 5-10% of the Town's registered voters attended Town Meeting. From a population of 6,600 with 4,400 registered voters, only 200-400 attended Town Meeting.

**Town Administrator's Activities Report**

Mr. Wrigley reported on the following:

- He sent out his FY 2014 budget message to the departments this week. FY14 will have level services of salaries and expenses; given the economic climate, it is prudent to tightly control spending. He is recommending a three-percent COLA for Town employees because a good portion of the reason we are in a preferred financial state is due to the departments. COLAs are not budget busters. Department budgets are due to him at the end of December and he reviews and meets with departments January through April to development the Town's operating budget.
- The completion contractor for the elementary school building project took over in June. But they have not yet provided the insurance amounts required by the contract.
- He summarized the status of the NRSD science lab project. It is the selectmen's article, not the district's; he would advise a motion to Take No Action on it.

**Meeting Minutes**

None.

**Corzine Property Conservation Restriction**

Conservation Commission assistant Pat Perry and Stow Conservation Trust (SCT) members John Beusch and Tom Shepherd met with the Board for the Board's approval of placing a conservation restriction (CR) on the Corzine property purchased by the SCT. Town Meeting supported the CR by voting to spend Community Preservation Act funds on it.

The Board asked some questions on access and the point was raised again about using conservation land for municipal needs, such as putting in a well or for active recreation instead of passive. Mr. Ryan said he wants the least restrictive CR possible. Mr. Salvie offered to draft a policy on this for the Board. It was noted that Bentley and Bain's properties were coming up as PCDs, which meant that more open space would come to the Town where the use would need to be defined.

Mr. Salvie moved, on the recommendation of the Conservation Commission, to approve the conservation restriction for the Corzine Woodlands open space, to the Stow Conservation Commission, as being in the public interest, pursuant to MGL Ch 184, sections 31-33; Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

### **Comcast Cable License Renewal**

Chair of the combined cable access and license advisory committees Bob Glorioso opened the presentation with an overview of how the licensing process had progressed to date. The Town's 10-year contract with Comcast is due for renewal. Members of the two committees, Stow TV staff, and Attorney Bill August determined what equipment and financial benefits the Town wishes to include in the next decade-long contract, 2012 to 2022. The four areas of consideration are 1) cable infrastructure, 2) technical performance, 3) customer issues, and 4) capital equipment and the operation of Stow TV.

For example, Comcast now gives Stow one programmable channel while Verizon gives Stow two. The new Comcast contract will give Stow two. Both LACAC and CLAC voted to recommend that the Board accept this contract.

Following questions and comments from the selectmen, Mr. Salvie moved to approve the 10-year cable license agreement between Comcast and the Town of Stow, effective November 1, 2012; Mr. Hawkes seconded; and all voted in favor.

### **Use of Pompo Portable Classrooms**

Mr. Hawkes introduced this topic, saying at a recent public forum on the building projects, comments were made that the highway department would have one of the Pompo portable classrooms and the second would be sold. He wants the public to know it will have ample opportunity for input to these decisions.

Mr. Wrigley explained that any department wishing to move and rehab one of the classrooms, given the cost over \$10,000, would need support from the Capital Planning Committee and the approval of Town Meeting. As to resale, there is a procurement process to be followed. In addition, nothing will happen to the building until May. So there will be ample time and opportunity for the public to be involved.

### **Letter of Support for Pilot Grove II and Plantation II Funding**

At the request of the Board of the Stow Elderly Housing Corporation, the Board voted to re-issue its letter of support for the SEHC affordable housing project, to accompany the latest grant application to the state.

Mr. Salvie moved to re-issue the Board's letter of support to Mass DHCD regarding the Plantation Apartments II project to include with the 2<sup>nd</sup> funding proposal, dated October 12, 2012; Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

### **License Fees for 2013**

The Board set the license fees on liquor, common victualer, and used car sales for the upcoming calendar year. Mr. Salvie said that with the poor economic situation and Stow's few businesses together with the Town's good financial position, he was reluctant to increase any of the fees. The other members agreed and the following votes were taken.

**Liquor licenses**

Mr. Salvie moved to keep the same liquor license fees for 2013 as charged in 2012 (restaurants full alcohol \$2,200; restaurants wine and malt \$880; package store all alcohol \$2,000; package stores wine and malt \$880); Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

**Common Victualer licenses**

Mr. Salvie moved to keep the same common victualer license fee for 2013, as charged in 2012 (\$25); Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

**Class 2/ Used Car licenses**

Mr. Salvie moved to keep the same used car sales license fee for 2013, as charged in 2012 (\$100); Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

**Support of October 29 Town Meeting Articles**

Members had an extended discussion on the building project warrant articles, with special attention to the costs to taxpayers. The following points were made:

- At the public forums, people were very concerned with the impact on taxes.
- Town government needs to do all it can to mitigate the impact, e.g. use of Free Cash, sequencing projects, flatten out spikes in Town debt.
- The fear of waiting is that borrowing costs and construction costs will increase. The estimate for construction costs is 4-6% a year, so that is 10% for two years.
- Mr. Wrigley said construction costs in the past two decades have increased more than forecast. Based on merit and affordability, \$700,000 is short money to get a good handle on Go/No Go.
- There was concern with the unknown ongoing operating expenses of the buildings. These can be determined between October special town meeting and May annual town meeting.
- Mr. Kern, Mr. Ryan, and Mr. Salvie support design funds for the project; Mr. Hawkes does not at this time because it is not affordable. "In tough times, you make do."

**Article 1. Design Funds for Community Center Building Project – Plan 1**

Mr. Ryan moved to support Article 1, at \$144,000; Mr. Salvie seconded. Three voted in favor (Kern, Ryan, Salvie) and one opposed (Hawkes). The motion carried.

**Article 2. Design Funds for Community Center Building Project – Plan 2**

Mr. Ryan moved to recommend No Action on Article 2; Mr. Salvie seconded; and all voted in favor.

**Article 3. Design Funds for Fire Station Building Project**

Mr. Ryan moved to support Article 3, as printed in the warrant; Mr. Salvie seconded. Three voted in favor (Kern, Ryan, Salvie) and one opposed (Hawkes). The motion carried.

**Article 4. Design Funds for Randall Library Building Project**

Mr. Salvie moved to support Article 4, as printed in the warrant; Mr. Ryan seconded. Three voted in favor (Kern, Ryan, Salvie) and one opposed (Hawkes). The motion carried.

**Article 5. Funds for Nashoba Regional High School Science Labs and Other Work**

Mr. Hawkes moved to recommend No Action on Article 5; Mr. Salvie seconded; and all voted in favor.

**Article 6. Pompo Building Maintenance**

Mr. Hawkes moved to support Article 6, as printed in the warrant; Mr. Salvie seconded; and all voted in favor.

**Article 7. Transfer Funds for Fire Station Public Safety Tower Rental**

Mr. Ryan moved to support Article 7, as printed in the warrant; Mr. Hawkes seconded; and all voted in favor.

At 8:55 p.m., Mr. Kern permitted Mr. Wrigley to head home.

The topic on warrant articles concluded with members agreeing that Articles 8-10 were intrinsically supported by their earlier votes.

**Liaison Reports**

**ESBC:** Still active with an “eagle eye” on the punch list.

**Public Safety:** The Fire Department had a great BBQ last weekend with a fantastic turnout. They are starting work installing the new radio antennae. The Police Department obtained a \$19,000 grant for 911 training.

**Planning Board:** They are getting more serious inquiries on subdivisions, e.g. two on Walcott Street.

**Tri-Town:** The towns asked NRSD’s George King and Bill Cleary about capital projects. The district is doing five-year plans and does not anticipate any upcoming capital projects.

It was stated again at this meeting that the Board wants to meet regularly with the school committee members. Quarterly seemed right.

**Correspondence**

No discussion.

At 9:07, Mr. Hawkes moved to adjourn; Mr. Ryan seconded; and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McLaughlin  
Administrative Assistant

Approved December 11, 2012