

**MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
November 13, 2012**

Present at the meeting that was held at the Town Building were Selectmen Gary Bernklow, Donald Hawkes, Charles Kern, and James Salvie. Thomas Ryan 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 reminded people that the Special Town Meeting would be held the following night.

Town Administrator's Activities Report

Mr. Wrigley reported on the following:

- At last Tuesday's Town Election, a majority of voters approved the Fire Station and Community Center borrowing but not the Randall Library's. At next week's Town Meeting, voters need to approve the corresponding articles by a two-thirds majority in order for the design development of these two projects to commence.
- He supports the Fire Chief's request to appoint 10 Apprentice Firefighters to Stow's force.
- Pompo is being readied for its return to the Town from the Nashoba Regional School District. The punch list is proceeding, with the two most important items being the Title 5 approval and water quality correction, per DEP's notice. Mr. Martin will make a walk-through inspection on November 19. (Mr. Bernklow commented that Michael Wood confirmed that the district has no need for the modular classrooms.)

Meeting Minutes

September 11: Mr. Salvie moved to accept the September 11, 2012 minutes, as written; Mr. Hawkes seconded; and all voted in favor.

October 9: Mr. Salvie moved to accept the October 9, 2012 minutes, as amended; Mr. Hawkes seconded; and all voted in favor.

Tax Classification Hearing

Board of Assessors Chairman Dom Pugliese, member Michael Dugas, and Principal Assessor Dorothy Wilbur joined the Board for the annual tax classification hearing, at which the Board of Selectmen vote on whether to have a single or multiple tax rates for the town.

Mr. Kern opened the public hearing at 7:10 p.m., reading the legal notice and explaining the purpose and process for the hearing.

Mr. Pugliese made the case for staying with a single rate, as has been the case in prior years. He said that 25-30 percent of the tax base would have to be commercial to make it affordable for the businesses, far from the case in Stow. With the current mix, a higher rate for commercial property could save residents roughly \$377 per year but would cost businesses roughly \$9,800. Stow is comparable to Harvard and Bolton in its composition and those towns have single rates. Multiple

rates tend to be used in urban areas with considerable infrastructure. Unlike urban areas, Stow's services are not burdened by our commercial enterprises.

Following discussion, Mr. Kern closed the hearing at 7:45 p.m. Mr. Bernklow moved, on the recommendation of the Board of Assessors, to keep a single tax rate for fiscal year 2013, taxing all property classes at one rate, per the options available to municipalities, described in MGL Chapter 40, section 56; Mr. Salvie seconded, and all voted in favor. The Board signed the DoR form confirming the vote for the assessors.

RECESS

The Board invited members of RECESS (Raising Extra Capital for the Elementary School in Stow) to visit in order to thank them for their outstanding efforts. The group formed a 501(c)(3) organization and raised \$44,000. Having raised more than 1 percent of the building costs, the district was eligible to receive a ½-percent match from the Mass School Building Authority.

The Board presented the following RECESS members with a letter of appreciation on behalf of the Town:

- Greta Morgan, President, 34 Apple Blossom Lane
- Eleanore Recko, Treasurer, 37 Robert Road
- Melissa Rollins, Clerk, 18 Carriage Lane
- Claudia Dragun, 109 Kirkland Drive
- Pina Rocca, 7 Blueberry Court
- Lisa D'Allessio, 44 Robert Road

Eagle Scout

Boy Scout Kevin Benoit visited the Board to request acceptance of his Eagle project, a boat launch into the Assabet River at the Sudbury Road Bridge. In May, he sought permission from the Board, which has custody of that piece of Town land, to construct the launch. He spent 130 hours on the project, creating steps and a handrail from the street to the water.

He chose to name it Magazu's Landing in memory of Eagle Scout Michael Magazu because the launch was Michael's idea but he died in 2004 before beginning it.

The selectmen viewed photographs of the finished product and commented on the excellent workmanship. Then Mr. Salvie moved to approve and accept Boy Scout Kevin Benoit's Eagle Scout project, the construction of a trail and boat launch at the Sudbury Road Bridge, named Magazu's Landing; Mr. Hawkes seconded; and all voted in favor.

Connie Schwarzkopf and the West School Society

Mrs. Schwarzkopf was unable to attend and was to be rescheduled.

Appointment of Apprentice Firefighters

Fire Chief McLaughlin submitted a request to the Board to appoint a number of people as apprentice firefighters. He wrote that they had all successfully completed the apprentice training program and passed the many written and practical exams. All but one of the recruit firefighters are already certified EMT's. He said it is noteworthy to mention that the recruits and instructors are not compensated for the many hours of training.

Mr. Bernklow moved, on the recommendation of the Fire Chief, to appoint the following people to the position of Apprentice Firefighter for the Town of Stow:

- Armangau Benoit
- Matthew Blood
- Andrew Bolton
- Michael Cisek
- Krista Ellis
- James Fortin
- Matthew Olson
- Jack Stafford,
- Michael Volkert
- Chris Whitley

Mr. Salvie seconded and all voted in favor.

Surplus property

Earlier in the year, Ms. Emily Beyette of the Gleason family asked the Town to sell a small parcel of property back to her. The parcel abuts her land in Gleasondale and was sold to the Town in 1897 by the Gleasons to expand the area where a Rock Bottom school would be built. Today, it is used as a parking lot by neighbors and the grass is cut by the Highway Department. Highway also maintains a metal fence that surrounds the parcel. Ms. Beyette would like to extend her gardens and lawn to the parcel.

Following Ms. Beyette's request, all the Town boards were polled as to whether they would have use for it. Although none had an immediate use, several replied that the parcel had several potential futures uses and asked the Board to keep the land.

Following review of the written recommendations of several Town boards, Mr. Salvie moved to retain the 0.28-acre Gleasondale property shown on Assessors' Map U8 as Parcel 12, as potentially useful to the Town and not declare it to be surplus property; Mr. Hawkes seconded; and all voted in favor.

Community Innovation Challenge project

Mr. Wrigley reported that Concord and Westford have joined the group of towns working on the regional transportation project funded by the Community Innovation Challenge Grant. The application for Part 2 of the grant is due on November 30. The Board will be asked to sign the support form at the next meeting.

At 8:00 p.m., Mr. Kern permitted Mr. Wrigley to head home.

Liaison Reports

NRSD: Salaries in the schools are budgeted to increase by 3.5 percent in FY14.

Solar energy: Arnie Epstein, chair of the Town's energy working group, is doing energy audits of the Town Building, Highway barn, and Police station. It might be feasible to have a small solar facility on municipal land or on a building.

SMAHT: They hired a consultant to evaluate Town parcels for affordable housing, with the idea of bringing an article to Annual Town Meeting.

Tri-Town: Capital Planning Committee member Ross Perry reviewed Stow's capital planning process for the group. NRSD Superintendent Wood reported that the high school roof is nearing the end of its 20-year life. He said the high school population is currently 1,120 and the building

has a maximum capacity of 1,250. It will not take too many new housing developments to reach this. The next Tri-Town Meeting will be held on January 9 in Lancaster.

Correspondence

Mr. Hawkes noted the Board of Health's request to meet with the selectmen on implementation of Chapter 193 of the Acts of 2012, on the further regulation of animal control.

At 8:15 p.m., Mr. Hawkes moved to adjourn; Mr. Bernklow seconded; and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McLaughlin
Administrative Assistant

Approved January 22, 2013