

**MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
February 26, 2013**

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

Resident and Concerned Citizens' member Paul McLaughlin made several requests of the Board regarding the Building Projects Oversight Committee it recently formed. The requests were:

- Keep the taxpayers in mind.
- Distinguish between Wants and Needs.
- Do comparisons with other towns similar to Stow.
- Present real data to back up analysis of the projects. "No sandbagging."

Mr. McLaughlin also asked whether the meeting would be open to the public and Mr. Kern reminded him that the Oversight Committee and all the building project committees are governed by the Open Meeting Law.

The Town Clerk reminded Stow-TV viewers of the Committee Recruitment Event on Wednesday night, with additional reminders of census forms and dog licenses.

Chairman's Comments

Mr. Kern encouraged the public to attend the Committee Recruitment Night.

Meeting Minutes

12/1/12: Mr. Hawkes moved to accept the December 11, 2012 minutes, as amended; Mr. Salvie seconded; and all voted in favor.

1/22/13: Mr. Hawkes moved to accept the January 22, 2013 minutes as written; Mr. Salvie seconded; and all voted in favor.

Joint Boards Meeting on the FY 2014 Financial Outlook for the Town

Pursuant to the Town Charter, the Town Administrator is required to convene a joint boards meeting with the Boards of Assessors and Selectmen, Finance and Capital Planning Committees, and Nashoba Regional and Minuteman school district representatives.

Mr. Wrigley opened the meeting by explaining the purpose and asked the school districts to begin.

Minuteman Regional Vocational School District

Minuteman Superintendent Dr. Ed Bouquillon, who was accompanied by School Committee Chair Alice DeLuca, hit the highlights of his FY14 budget, which was approved by the school committee in January.

The FY14 operating budget is up by 4.7%; the overall budget is up by 7.5%. The 7.5% is due to an increase in capital costs for the building and stabilization fund. Member assessments will increase by 3.4 %. Stow's FY14 assessment, based on 26 FTE students, is \$766,081.

Over five years, the average increase has been 1.2 % per year.

The FY14 budget drivers are:

- Increase in total students (70)
- Increase in Special Education costs
- Increase in COLA (2% per the teachers' contract)
- Increase in Health Insurance costs (7%)
- Capital repairs as a bridge to the MSBA project. They are trying to extend the life of what they already have.

Regarding the MSBA feasibility study, they hired Skanska as the OPM, following a Designer Selection Review on Jan 28 and an MSBA Selection of Designer on February 19. They launched a website for the building project. It is located at <http://minutemanschoolbuilding.org/>. This work is being done in parallel with the District Sustainability Study.

There is legislation to increase the state support for building projects; it is Senate Docket 1052, An Act relative to regional school district capital project funding. If the legislation passes, MSBA reimbursement could go as high as 70%.

Dr. Bouquillon and the selectmen discussed the out-of-district student issue regarding tuition and capital expenses. For example, it is illegal for Minuteman to assess the other towns for additional costs beyond the operating expenses. So while 40% of Minuteman students are out-of-district, the capital project expenses cannot be included in their tuition.

Mr. Salvie said that he wants to hear more about the legislation when our legislators visit the Board and he invited Dr. Bouquillon and Ms. De Luca to return to do a presentation before Town Meeting.

Nashoba Regional School District

No one from NRSD was present.

Board of Assessors

Principal Assessor Dorothy Wilbur and Board Chairman Dom Pugliese spoke for the Board of Assessors. Ms. Wilbur said that her department's New Growth forecast is \$262,000, the same figure as last year. That is because Arbor Glen is finished and Villages at Stow is wrapping up. There are two new subdivisions coming but they are at least two years away.

Capital Planning

Chairman Steve Jelinek said they have FY14 capital requests totaling roughly \$600,000, a 46-percent increase over last year. The committee is looking at every department's requests in detail.

Finance Committee

Chairman Peter McManus said there is nothing extraordinary to report at this time. The committee still has a healthy balance in the FY13 Reserve Fund, with a \$57,000 balance from a \$70,000 allocation.

Deficit Spending of FY 2013 Snow and Ice Account

With quorums of both the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee present, the members were able to take a joint vote to allow the Town to overspend the FY13 Snow and Ice Account, as needed, to be reconciled at the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Ryan moved, pursuant to Mass General Law Chapter 44, section 31D, to allow deficit spending of the Fiscal Year 2013 Snow and Ice Account; Mr. Salvie seconded; and all voted in favor.

Four members of the Finance Committee were present and voted with the selectmen: Chair Peter McManus, Bruce Walbridge, Chris Sarno, and Ann Deluty.

Annual Town-wide Cleanup for Earth Day

Sandy Taft visited the Board to request a permit to use Town land for the 5th annual Earth Day Town-wide Clean-up. The group would like to settle on scheduling the event for the first Saturday in April.

He and a small group of organizers use the Lower Common as a staging area, where they hand out gloves and trash bags to the volunteers and record which Town roads are being covered.

Mr. Taft and a small group of volunteers began the clean-up five years ago and it has grown each year. The number of volunteers now ranges from 130 to 160 people. Stow Hardware and the Stow Police Department donate gloves and trash bags. The Highway Department picks up the bags on Monday. He said they always find something interesting; once they found a kitchen sink. The event cleans up from 10 to 14 cubic yards of trash each year.

Mr. Ryan moved to permit Sandy Taft and his group of volunteers to use the Lower Common as a staging area for the 5th annual Earth Day Cleanup on Saturday, April 6, 2013 from 7:30 AM to noon. Mr. Salvie seconded and all voted in favor.

Mr. Taft said the group would like to have an over-the-street banner announcing the event and would welcome funding to purchase it.

Appointment of At-Large Member to Building Projects Oversight Committee

The Board received two applications in response to the At-Large member posting: residents and registered voters Michelle Mase of Gates Lane and Bruce Fletcher of South Acton Road.

Ms. Mase visited the Board to introduce herself and explain her interest. She has an extensive background in architecture and construction with which she could contribute to the committee. She has lived in Stow for one year now and is looking for a way to get involved in the community.

Mr. Fletcher was unable to attend due to a family situation. In his cover letter, Mr. Fletcher said he brings decades of experience in municipal and private sector building projects, a detailed knowledge of the properties under consideration, and his experience with capital needs assessments and capital planning. He said that the buildings and properties should be looked at as a whole, from a global perspective, and then a program should be developed and presented to the voters. Mr. Fletcher is a life-long resident and has been the Town's Superintendent of Streets and Fire Chief and is now the Highway Engineer and Tree Warden. He serves on several Town committees and non-profit boards.

Board members said how pleased they were to meet Ms. Mase and that her professional knowledge and experience will be valuable to the Town. This committee will be doing work more suited to Mr. Fletcher. They invited her to attend the Committee Recruitment Night the following evening.

Following the discussion, Mr. Ryan moved to appoint Bruce Fletcher as the At-Large member of the Building Projects Oversight Committee, to serve on an as-needed basis with a target completion date on or about September 30, 2013, with the appointment effective March 1, 2013. Mr. Salvie seconded and all voted in favor.

Mr. Hawkes asked Mr. Kern when the Board would discuss the scope of the Oversight Committee's work. Mr. Salvie said he would email his earlier draft on this, with edits, to the Board for later discussion.

Combining the Annual Town Election with the State Primary Election

The Town Clerk visited the Board to ask that they vote to combine the annual Town Election with the state primary election on April 30. This means pulling in the date of the Town election from its present date of May 14 to April 30. The annual Town Meeting would still be held on May 6, which puts the election ahead of Town Meeting. On April 30, the voters would elect Town officials. If debt-exclusion votes are required, they would be voted by a separate ballot during the June state election.

Mr. Salvie moved that the Board vote, pursuant to Section 2 of Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2013, and after consultation with the Town Clerk, to change the date of the Annual Town Election to coincide with the date of the Special State Primary on April 30, 2013, and further, pursuant to the authority of said Chapter 2, the last day for filing nomination papers with the Board of Registrars for said local election will be March 19, 2013, notwithstanding the provisions of G.L. c.53, §7, and that the remainder of the election calendar for said Annual Town Election shall be set as required by statute and shown on a calendar prepared by the Town Clerk, posted in her office, and on the Town's official website; and further, to direct that the Town Clerk to work to ensure that information about the rescheduled election be widely publicized in a manner calculated to best inform the public of the change in date of the Annual Town election and related election calendar. Mr. Hawkes seconded and all voted in favor.

At 8:30 p.m., Mr Kern excused Mr. Wrigley from the remainder of the meeting.

Liaison Reports

NRSD: Mr. Bernklow said the budget vote would be held on March 12. The annual audit is complete and posted on the NRSD website. The date for the Stow school committee reps to meet with the selectmen has been set for March 3.

SMAHT: Mr. Salvie said the Trust plans to ask the Board to declare three land parcels as being surplus municipal property to the Town and to transfer control of the parcels to the Trust, so that affordable housing can be built on them. The Trust is working with Town Counsel Jon Witten on language for the warrant articles, which will include the condition that the properties return to the selectmen's control if the housing does not materialize.

Lower Village: Mr. Salvie said he met with business owners, the Conservation Commission, the Planning Board, and Mr Wrigley about drilling test wells on the Heritage Lane open space. Test wells can ensure that the water flow is adequate for the needs of the businesses. Health Agent Jack Wallace is working with the business owners and the group is looking at design costs. There

was agreement among Board members that government had now done all it can do in the process and that all of the costs of acquiring and maintaining the water will be borne by the business owners.

Boxborough: Mr. Salvie said that he and Mr. Kern had a conversation in June with a Boxborough selectman about the possibility of Stow residents having access to the Boxborough transfer station. As a first step, Boxborough is looking at the pricing for stickers. Residents pay \$200 but this is heavily subsidized by the Town and they would not be subsidizing Stow's cost. They are looking at a pilot program with 100 or so Stow residents to see how feasible it is. Mr. Salvie will keep the Board posted.

Emergency Management: Mr. Ryan said the Fire Chief is getting reimbursements from MEMA for storm-related costs from the most recent storm. It is a lot of work on the Chief's part but well worth it.

Fire Station Building Committee: Met with the Planning Board on possible use of 323 Great Road property for a public water supply and a site for a new fire station.

Highway Department: Mr. Hawkes said that during the snow storm, his road, a dead-end street with many trees, was hardly passable. Although it is plowed, the trees make it difficult to get some of the snow. He said the Highway Department uses its front-end loader to remove the extra built-up snow. He is grateful.

Planning Board: Mr. Hawkes said there is interest in the Planning Board's collaboration with UMass on a Gleasondale "Master Plan," the main part of which involves refurbishing the mill.

Correspondence

Mr. Hawkes asked about the Mass Municipal Personnel Association (MMPA) salary survey. Ms. McLaughlin said that the Selectmen's Office is an MMPA member and is often requested to provide salary data for comparative surveys across the member towns. Mr. Hawkes supports our participation in the MMPA.

At 8:55 p.m., Mr. Hawkes moved to adjourn; Mr. Salvie seconded; and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McLaughlin
Administrative Assistant

Approved March 12, 2013