

November 13, 2001

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
NOVEMBER 13, 2001**

Present: Arnold Wilson, Chairman
George Dib
Charles Blanchard
Doris Sosik
James Malloy, Town Administrator

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. following the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: To approve the minutes of November 5, 2001 as corrected, by G. Dib.

2nd: C. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of October 1, 2001 as submitted, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

Police Chief Thomas Button – Monthly Report

Chief Button read his report to the Board (copy on file). G. Dib said that he had met with Barbara Search, Council on Aging Director, who had raised concerns about the crosswalk in front of the Senior Center. J. Malloy said that the Council on Aging had sent him a letter requesting that he do something about the crosswalk situation. J. Malloy has been working with Larry Adams on several similar issues, and L. Adams forwarded a request to Mass. Highway Dept. regarding this specific issue. Chief Button said that there will be increased vigilance on the police officers' part to stop motorists who fail to stop for pedestrians at the crosswalk. C. Blanchard suggested that the police officers issue tickets to those motorists who fail to stop.

J. Malloy noted that Sgt. Alan Curboy and Officer Joseph Lombardi went to Ground Zero in New York to assist the NYPD, on their own time. He suggested that the Board send them a note of appreciation.

C. Blanchard asked about the Hanna Award Ceremony, which is a significant event. J. Malloy attended the event, which was held in the House Chamber, and the Governor had given a speech on public safety. The Governor reviewed what each officer had done to receive the award.

C. Blanchard asked about the status of the DARE Grant. Chief Button said that he applied for the same amount as last year, and the grant provides for parties, dances and other youth-related events, in addition to DARE activities at school.

Fire Chief Leonard Senecal – Monthly Report

Chief Senecal read his report to the Board (copy on file). He said that on November 2nd the Sturbridge Fire Dept. went to help with the brush fire in a mountain range area in South Hadley, as part of the Mass. Statewide Mobilization Operation. Five communities responded with 27 firefighters; five firefighters from Sturbridge were there, with engine #4.

Chief Senecal informed the Board that there was a training session at the State Fire Academy regarding procedures in handling suspicious envelopes. The Police and Fire Departments will work together in dealing with the issue.

Correspondence

- Oct. 23 Roberta Dunn, Tantasqua High School – Regarding Government Partnership scheduling for next semester.

- Nov. 1 Denise Jones, Director of Regulatory Compliance and Planning, Charter Communications – Regarding their annual rate justification filing for 2002.

- Nov. 8 Lawrence Adams, Town Planner – Copy of a letter sent to Thomas Waruzila, Mass. Highway Dept. regarding Route 20 safety concerns.

Taxation Aid Committee

MOTION: To appoint Chris Wilson to the Taxation Aid Committee, by D. Sosik.

2nd: C. Blanchard

Vote: Three in favor; A. Wilson abstained.

Nipmuc Application

J. Malloy spoke with Nick Mullane about the law firm that North Stonington, CT uses in Washington, DC, as well as some other issues regarding the recognition process. Mr. Mullane forwarded a copy of a recent GAO study entitled, "Improvements Needed in Tribal Recognition Process" (copy on file). Mr. Malloy also spoke with Guy Martin at the law firm of Perkins Coie in Washington, DC, and he will forward a package of information for the Board to review. Mr. Martin indicated that the Town is on the right track in seeking interested party status, and that it was not unusual for it to take 3-4 months to receive notification on the interested party status from the BIA.

"Stream Team"

Nancy Ryder provided information regarding a cooperative effort between the towns of Sturbridge and Southbridge (copy on file).

Senior Municipal Service Program

J. Malloy submitted to the Board a copy of Modestina Galati's application to work for the Veterans' Agent.

MOTION: To approve the work program under the Senior Municipal Service Program for Modestina Galati to work for the Veterans' Agent to develop local veterans' census data, by D. Sosik.

2nd: C. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor.

Ballard Property

The Purchase and Sale Agreement has been executed by the property owner and is ready for the Board's signature. The Town is purchasing approximately 72 acres for \$55,000 which will be paid from the Lucent Gift Account. The Town is applying for a self-help grant application in which the Town would be eligible to be reimbursed approximately 65% (\$35,750) of the purchase price, lowering the amount that would be spent from the Lucent Gift Account to \$19,250. The property is located at 127A Stallion Hill Road and abuts town property and Old Sturbridge Village property.

MOTION: To authorize the Board of Selectmen to execute the purchase and sale agreement dated October 30, 2001 between the Town of Sturbridge and Edward Ballard for

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the amount of \$55,000 for 127A Stallion Hill Road, by G. Dib.
2nd: D. Sosik
Vote: All in favor.

Electrical Power for Pump Stations

Jay O'Reilly from Tighe & Bond sent a letter explaining the issue of the electrical power at the pump stations. Based upon his letter and the estimated cost to install the converters, the cost difference is negligible. According to Greg Morse, DPW Director, the converters were completely installed by Thursday and are awaiting inspection from the Electrical Inspector so that Mass. Electric can be authorized to provide electric service to the pump stations. J. Malloy will follow up on it.

Miscellaneous

The Town of Spencer contacted J. Malloy and asked whether one of the Selectmen would be able to make a presentation to their Board on December 10th at 7:00 p.m. It was the consensus of the Board to schedule a separate informational meeting.

C. Blanchard noted that the USDA grant for Big Alum is supposed to be awarded in December; he suggested obtaining letters of support from Senator Brewer and Rep. Hillman.

Old Business

G. Dib met with Barbara Search, Council on Aging Director to discuss the crosswalk issue. He received a call from Dorothy Wright, and will meet with her and Barbara Search to address their concerns.

G. Dib attended the July Celebration Committee meeting last Thursday. They plan to hold a significant event on July 5, 2002 including fireworks and the Springfield Symphony Orchestra, with a budget of approximately \$70,000. The suggested donation from the Town of Sturbridge is \$5,000. They would also like to use the Town's ladder truck.

C. Blanchard asked what the next steps would be regarding Westville Road. J. Malloy said that he would talk to Mike Coughlin about it.

A. Wilson received a call from Kathy Neal of the Elementary School Committee, who said that they wanted to avoid having a potential

candidate for the Committee brought in front of the TV camera. A.Wilson suggested that a subcommittee consisting of Board of Selectmen and School Committee members to present their findings to the joint session; however, they prefer to have all of their members involved in the selection process. They will schedule interviews, and notify the Board of Selectmen. It was the consensus of the Board to get their proposal in writing, then compare it to the information that Town Counsel provided.

A.Wilson said that according to state law, any proposal for hiring a public relations firm relative to the casino issue needs to be advertised. C. Blanchard suggested finding out from New Braintree what they had spent. A.Wilson recommended putting it before the Town at the Special Town Meeting in December. D. Sosik noted that the townspeople should be informed of the plans, which are not definite at this time. She expressed doubt about being able to raise \$500,000 from local businesses. C. Blanchard agreed. G. Dib suggested focusing on public awareness, since the public does not know the details of what could still happen. He suggested advertising in the two local newspapers, and getting people involved to fight the casino by writing letters themselves. D. Sosik suggested getting the grassroots committee started immediately.

New Business

A.Wilson received a call from a Selectman from the Town of Princeton, who pointed out some inequities in Chapter 70 & 71 in all regional school districts, and would like to elicit support of towns to approach the state to have them correct the inequities. He will send their calculations to the Board.

D. Sosik announced that there will be a Mass. Municipal Association meeting in Charlton on November 29th regarding housing and land use. A.Wilson and C. Blanchard will attend.

Ask the Selectmen

Peter Zeh appeared before the Board to ask about the status of the petition regarding a moratorium on building in the Town. A.Wilson informed him that a copy of the petition had been sent to the Planning Board. J. Malloy suggested that he talk to the Town Planner regarding the different subdivision applications.

G. Dib took a call from Tony Celuzza, who asked if Frank Danna's petition had been certified by the Town Clerk. J. Malloy said that it had not been

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certified by the Town Clerk because the petition did not ask for any action, such as a warrant article. G. Dib said that Tony Celuzza asked about Doris Sosik's status on School Committee appointment votes. J. Malloy said that D. Sosik should recuse herself from voting on such appointments.

G. Dib took a call from Dolores Anger, who expressed concern about the dangerous situation at the intersection of Rt. 20 and Fiske Hill Road, with cars traveling at high speed, making it difficult to turn, especially at night. She suggested having a street light installed to improve visibility. J. Malloy said that the Town Planner will discuss it with Mass. Highway Dept. A. Wilson suggested referring it to the Traffic Safety Committee; Mr. Malloy suggested notifying the Street Light Committee.

MOTION: To adjourn, by C. Blanchard.
2nd: D. Sosik
Vote: All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date