

March 17, 2003

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
MARCH 17, 2003**

Present: Arnold Wilson, Chairman
 Charles Blanchard
 Hal White
 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 February 3, 2003 as submitted,
 by C. Blanchard.
 2nd: D. Sosik
 Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of February 18, 2003 as amended,
 by C. Blanchard.
 2nd: H. White
 Vote: Three in favor; D. Sosik abstained.

MOTION: To approve the executive session minutes of February 18,
 2003 as submitted, to remain confidential, by C.
 Blanchard.
 2nd: H. White
 Vote: Three in favor; D. Sosik abstained.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of March 3, 2003 as amended, by
 C. Blanchard.
 2nd: H. White
 Vote: All in favor.

Police Chief Thomas Button – Monthly Report

Chief Button read his report to the Board (copy on file). The Police Department received a \$2,000 grant for a comprehensive emergency management plan from MEMA-EOPS. They will train community volunteers for the Community Emergency Response Team in May or June.

March 17, 2003

Sgt. Alan Curboy addressed the Board regarding the seat belt use enforcement campaign entitled "Click It or Ticket." The goal is to increase safety belt use by 60% in 2003. The Police Dept. is attempting to raise public awareness by handing out literature at schools and local businesses, posting permanent signs on existing posts and temporary magnetic signs on police cars, conducting student traffic observation studies, and conducting a survey of drivers on safety belt usage rate. A. Wilson read a proclamation declaring the week of March 17, 2003 as Buckle Up Sturbridge Week.

MOTION: To authorize A. Wilson to sign the proclamation, by H. White.

2nd: C. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor.

Uno Restaurants – Transfer of License and Pledge of License on Liquor License

Scott Francis, Manager of Pizzeria Uno Chicago Bar & Grill appeared before the Board. J. Malloy verified that all of the required information had been submitted.

MOTION: To approve the Transfer of License and Pledge of License for Uno Restaurants, LLC d/b/a Pizzeria Uno Chicago Bar & Grill, by D. Sosik.

2nd: C. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor.

Regal Capital Corp. – Proposed Hotel/Motel Development on Haynes Road

John Reid, Vice-President of Regal Capital Corporation and Arthur Towne, Senior Project Engineer with Dewberry-Goodkind, Inc. appeared before the Board to request that town water and sewer be installed in Haynes Road at the Town's cost to serve the proposed hotel/motel development. A. Wilson said that the Board relies upon their professional staff and engineers, and recommended that they consult Greg Morse, DPW Director, Tighe & Bond and the Planning Board.

John Reid said that they propose to construct a 110 unit hotel with accommodations for suites, or smaller rooms and banquet facilities. Arthur Towne informed the Board that the Corps of Engineers gave their approval to regrade the site. A. Wilson said that there is a maximum of 65 rooms

under the current zoning, and it would be necessary to go to Annual Town Meeting for a 2/3 majority vote in order to change the zone to accommodate a hotel of that size, and the Annual Town Meeting warrant has been closed for this year. J. Malloy asked if it would be possible to construct the hotel with a private well and septic system. A. Towne said that due to the small size of the site, it does not meet DEP requirements for a private well and septic system. C. Blanchard noted that the town has never extended water and sewer at its own cost; the cost has always been borne by the developer. J. Malloy noted that the intersection of Haynes Street and Rt. 131 in that area was not designed to handle a large volume of traffic, so the zoning change would be unlikely unless the intersection situation was addressed.

Fee Structure

J. Malloy had conducted a fee survey last fall, which was included in the budget packet for the Selectmen and Finance Committee. He sent the information to the various departments, boards and committees for their comments, and gave the following recommendations:

MOTION: To approve the fee schedule increases as recommended effective May 1, 2003 with the exception of annual licenses already approved for 2003, which will go into effect January 1, 2004. Any new annual licenses issued after May 1, 2003 would be subject to the new fee schedule, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

TEA-21 Grant Application

J. Malloy was informed about two weeks ago about a grant cycle for TEA-21 grant funds (Federal Highway Transportation Enhancement Act) that was required to be submitted by March 14, 2003. Although there wasn't much time, Larry Adams, Sturbridge Town Planner, Sandy Acly, Southbridge Community Development Coordinator, Tom Chamberland, Merle Bassett (ACE), John Desmond, MADEP, Hamer Clark, Southbridge DPW Director, Nancy Ryder, Sturbridge Conservation Commission and Carol Childress, Opacum Land Trust, worked together to complete the grant application in a timely manner. The plan is to connect the lengths of trail that have been developed and to expand the Grand Trunk Trail system from the Polish Club in Southbridge to Route 15 in Sturbridge, approximately 3.5 miles.

The Board thanked all of the participants in the effort and suggested that a letter be sent to express the Board's appreciation.

Liquor Licensing Issues

MOTION: To sign the ABCC statement indicating that the seasonal population of Sturbridge is 20,000, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To approve the ABCC Seasonal Renewal Application, by D. Sosik.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To approve the ABCC Seasonal Renewals for Woods & Waters, Inc. and Marc Palmer, Hemlock Ridge Golf Course, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

Resignation

MOTION: To accept the resignation of Michael Couture from the Police Department, by D. Sosik.

2nd: C. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor.

PWED Grant

J. Malloy submitted to the Board the letter for the Public Works Economic Development Grant that the Town of Sturbridge received in cooperation with Old Sturbridge Village for the Gateway project.

MOTION: To accept the PWED grant #G-9615 and authorize Arnold Wilson, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, to execute the agreement and all other documents as the authorized signatory, by D. Sosik.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

Traffic Safety Committee Issues

March 17, 2003

J. Malloy submitted to the Board two items of correspondence from the Traffic Safety Committee. One involved a complaint regarding a vehicle parked on Church Street, an issue which the Traffic Safety Committee considered in July 2002 and March 2003, and recommended taking no action on the complaint. The second involved a dangerous section of Wallace Road with recommendations that a "Dangerous Curve Ahead" sign be erected and to advise Mr. Mongeon to make changes to his driveway to allow him to pull out safely onto Wallace Road.

MOTION: To approve the Traffic Safety Committee's recommendations and ordering any actions necessary to be implemented as soon as practicable, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

Blackstone Valley Bass Anglers Request

The Blackstone Valley Bass Anglers requested the Board's permission to hold a fishing tournament on Big Alum Lake on May 17, 2003.

MOTION: To approve the use of the Big Alum public access ramp and authorize Arnold Wilson to sign the special use permit application for the Public Access Board, by D. Sosik.

2nd: C. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor.

Request to Raze a Building

Roxann Smith and David Peterkin submitted a letter offering their house on 70 Holland Road for use by the Fire Dept. as a training exercise. They plan to raze the house and rebuild on the same site. Chief Senecal considered it to be a great training opportunity for the firefighters and requested the Board's permission to conduct this training.

MOTION: To approve the use of 70 Holland Road as a training exercise for the Sturbridge Fire Department, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

Special Town Meeting Warrant

Article #54 – Burgess Fire Alarm Engineering

MOTION: To support Article #54, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

Article #56 – Fire Dept. Wages Account

MOTION: To place and support Article #56 in the amount of \$25,000, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

Article #57 – Fire Dept. Transfer

MOTION: To place and support Article #57, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

Article #55 – Town Counsel Budget

MOTION: To place and support Article #55, by D. Sosik.

2nd: C. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor.

Article #58 – Submission for Special Legislation

MOTION: To place and support Article #58, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To close the Special Town Meeting Warrant, by H. White.

2nd: C. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor.

Water Rate

J. Malloy provided the Board with additional information on the water rate estimates including a spreadsheet (copy on file) showing past water usage, and showing that the town is down from 34.1M cu. ft. to 26.6M cu. ft. from 2001 to 2002 (7,571,500 cu. ft.); a second spreadsheet (copy on file) showing all of the different meters at OFS Fitel (formerly Lucent) during the same period, indicating a 7,697,801 cu. ft. decrease in water use; and a third spreadsheet (copy on file) comparing the Finance Dept's water billing records showing a total accounting of 261,496,236 gallons for 2002 and the Water Dept.'s records showing a total accounting of 261,505,000 gallons during 2002, for a difference of 8,764 (0.003%). The

first column on the first spreadsheet used the three-year average, resulting in a water rate of \$2.34 per 100 cu. ft.; the second column used the past year to account for the water reduction at OFS Fitel, resulting in a water rate of \$2.68 per 100 cu. ft.; the third column used the one-year total including \$24,000 for the cell tower lease on the St. Anne's Tower, resulting in a water rate of \$2.59 per 100 cu. ft.

MOTION: To set the Water Rate for FY04 at \$2.68 per 100 cu. ft., by C. Blanchard.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To create a separate fund for the cell tower lease revenues to be used for future painting and other maintenance on the Town's water towers, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

Senior Municipal Service Worker

MOTION: To approve Ellen Speed as a Senior Municipal Service Worker in the Town's Finance Department, by D. Sosik.

2nd: C. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor.

Budget

MOTION: To set the Town Administrator's salary at \$83,500, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To recommend approval of the Burgess budget at \$7,152,889, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: A. Wilson

Vote: Three in favor; D. Sosik abstained.

MOTION: To recommend approval of the Tantasqua budget at \$3,107,025, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

March 17, 2003

MOTION: To recommend approval of the Tantasqua transportation figure at \$113,599, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To recommend approval of Town Road Maintenance at \$100,000, by A. Wilson.

2nd: H. White

Vote: Three in favor; C. Blanchard opposed.

MOTION: To recommend approval of the Insurance blanket at \$175,350, by H. White.

2nd: A. Wilson

Vote: All in favor

J. Malloy will evaluate the two insurance bids and report back to the Board.

Annual Town Meeting

Article #2 – Utilization of Free Cash

MOTION: To change the recommendation on Article #2 from \$300,000 to \$200,000, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

Article #7 – Zoning Bylaw Amendment – Non-Conforming Uses

Article #8 – Zoning District Amendment – Suburban Residential to Commercial

Article #9 – Whistling Swan/Boardwalk Rezoning

MOTION: That the recommendations be provided at Town Meeting for the zoning articles #7, #8 and #9, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

Article #11 – Tri-Annual Revaluation

MOTION: To change the wording of Article #11 to read: “To raise and appropriate \$56,000 for the purpose of conducting state mandated . . .” and to recommend approval of the article, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

Article #12 – Community Preservation Report

Article #13 – Community Preservation – Acquisition of Open Space

Article #14 – Community Preservation – Historic Preservation

MOTION: That a recommendation be provided at Town Meeting for Articles #12, #13 and #14, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

Article #22 – Capital Improvement Plan

MOTION: To recommend approval of Article #22 as submitted, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

Article #26 – Digitized Tax Maps

MOTION: To change the wording of Article #26 to read: “To raise and appropriate” and recommend approval, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

Article #27 – Burgess School Fire Alarm

MOTION: To change the wording of Article #27 to read: “To raise and appropriate” and provide a recommendation at Town Meeting, by A. Wilson.

2nd: C. Blanchard.

Vote: All in favor.

Finance Director Salary

Barbara Barry provided a salary comparison of the towns that are usually surveyed by Sturbridge, broken down between Treasurer/Collector and Finance Director. B. Barry believes that although her position was upgraded to Finance Director in 2002, the salary for the position remains closer to the Treasurer/Collector positions. She found out that the figure provided by Orleans was incorrect, and the actual wage for Orleans is \$88,000, which would bring the range for the Finance Director's position to \$61,668 to \$83,434, resulting in the Finance Director being paid under the salary range for the position; the proposed FY04 salary is \$56,653. She requested that the Board make an adjustment to her salary.

It was the consensus of the Board to refer the matter to the Personnel Classification and Policy Committee.

Wallace Road Safety Issue

Kevin Mongeon, a resident of Wallace Road, submitted a letter to the Board outlining his concern about a safety issue regarding the curve in the road in the area of 116 Wallace Road. He stated that the curve is in a thickly settled area with no speed limit posted which allows for 30 MPH. There have been two accidents in that area since November, and numerous close calls.

Chief Button informed Mr. Mongeon that the Traffic Safety Committee had reviewed the matter and recommended that a "Dangerous Curve Ahead" sign be erected, and that Mr. Mongeon make changes to his driveway to allow him to pull out safely onto Wallace Road.

A.Wilson noted that the only speed limit sign is at the beginning of Wallace Road, and suggested putting another sign closer to the curve to remind motorists to slow down. Chief Button suggested a sign stating "Slow – Dangerous Curve Ahead."

Board of Registrars

A.Wilson received a letter from the Town Clerk indicating that the Republican Town Committee recommended the current member as a candidate for the Board of Registrars.

MOTION: To appoint Frances Kosakowski to the Board of Registrars, by C. Blanchard.
2nd: A. Wilson
Vote: All in favor.

Old Business

C. Blanchard asked about Andre Cormier's request for a sewer connection, and asked that J. Malloy follow up on it.

C. Blanchard asked about the status of issuing landfill stickers. A.Wilson said that he had spoken with the Town Clerk, who indicated that she and Nancy Campbell have been issuing the stickers. They are now available in the Board of Health office, Town Clerk's office, Selectmen's office and Conservation office. There is a senior employee in the Board of Health office on Fridays from 8:00 a.m. until noon, who issues the stickers.

March 17, 2003

D. Sosik noted that J. Malloy had spoken to Bob Chartier from the Chamber of Commerce, who indicated that the arrow will be removed from the bottom of the sign on Rt. 20 in front of Old Sturbridge Village, and the sign will be re-set at a different angle.

New Business

C. Blanchard had attended the public hearing regarding the Haynes Street Bridge. The project is in the preliminary design stage. The seals and expansion joints have failed. During construction there will always be one lane open, and there will be a trailer nearby.

MOTION: To send a letter to Mass. Highway Dept. requesting that if an area next to the river is used for their field trailer and office, any work that they would consider doing to improve access to the river for use by the public would be appreciated, by C. Blanchard.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

D. Sosik informed the Board that she will go out with the Meals on Wheels program during their public awareness campaign on April 22nd from 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., during school break.

Ask the Selectmen

There were no calls.

MOTION: To enter into executive session under MGL Chapter 39, §23B, Paragraph #3: To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, not to reconvene in open session, by H. White.

2nd: C. Blanchard

Roll call vote: All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date