

May 3, 2004

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
MAY 3, 2004**

Present: Arnold Wilson, Chairman
Charles Blanchard
Doris Sosik
Hal White
David Schmida
James Malloy, Town Administrator

J. Malloy called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. following the Pledge of Allegiance. He called for reorganization of the Board.

MOTION: To nominate Arnold Wilson as Chairman, by H. White.
2nd: D. Schmida
Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To nominate Charles Blanchard as Vice-Chairman, by H. White.
2nd: D. Sosik
Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To nominate Doris Sosik as Clerk, by D. Schmida.
2nd: H. White
Vote: Four in favor; D. Sosik abstained.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: To approve the minutes of April 12, 2004 as submitted, by C. Blanchard.
2nd: D. Schmida
Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of April 20, 2004 as submitted, by C. Blanchard.
2nd: H. White
Vote: Three in favor; D. Sosik and D. Schmida abstained.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of April 26, 2004 as submitted, by C. Blanchard.
2nd: H. White
Vote: All in favor.

Department Head Quarterly Reports

Jean Joel, Town Accountant, read her report to the Board (copy on file). As the end of fiscal year 2004 draws near, she will notify all departments of deadlines for submitting end of year invoices and encumbrances. She anticipates a smooth transition from one year to the next.

J. Joel said that R.E. Brown & Co. has completed the FY2003 audit and distributed a rough draft to be reviewed before the final one is issued. The audit process was more time consuming than in past years, due to the initiation of GASB 34. She has been informed that there will not be a management letter this year. J. Malloy noted that this is the 5th year in a row without a management letter. He explained that the management letter points out weaknesses, deficiencies, violations of state law, and gives recommendations for addressing them. He said that this is a significant accomplishment for the financial team, and offered congratulations to them.

J. Joel informed the Board that she and Barbara Barry, Finance Director, have completed a Financial Procedures Manual, which covers everything from account definitions and numbers to Chapter 30B requirements to Workers' Compensation procedures. It has been distributed to all department heads at their last meeting in April.

Bev Poirier, Assistant Assessor, read her report to the Board (copy on file). She said that they are in the middle of a revaluation for the FY05 tax bills. She said that Vision Appraisal has their data and is presently conducting the analysis of sales. They will convert the data to their latest upgrade and will then install it on the system. The Assessors maps are being digitized by Full Circle Technologies, and the database has been returned for review.

B. Poirier said that 55 supplemental bills have been mailed totaling \$121,502.55 and \$2,835.63 in CPA assessment.

Larry Adams, Town Planner, reviewed his outline with the Board (copy on file). Regarding subdivision activity, the appeal for Estates South has been withdrawn, but may be resubmitted in another form. The Allen Homestead subdivision is less than half completed. Regarding The Sanctuary, May 18th is the deadline for the widening of Arnold Road to be completed. Construction has not been started. The public hearing will be re-advertised. Regarding Whittemore Woods, the Planning Board has

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endorsed it, and Bill Swiacki will request an extension for that project. Regarding The Estates at Sturbridge Farms, there are some concerns about some lots that the state may not approve because of a list of deficiencies and habitat issues. Dan Flynn has proposed a 150 unit project on Rt. 131, and more engineering and design work will be submitted.

H. White noted that the Board had voted on town sewerage for 15 units on Farquhar Road, and they want to build about six houses with septic systems. J. Malloy expressed concern about development on some of the lots. He said that when the Board approves a sewer connection it should be subject to Planning Board and Conservation Commission approval. He suggested that the Board give preliminary approval, then take a final vote after the other approvals are in place.

L. Adams said that regarding elderly housing, Wind Gate on Route 20 has applied to the state for approval of a 69-unit complex. The senior housing on Hall Road proposed by Waterman Design is a 60-unit complex, and there are some issues regarding water.

L. Adams informed the Board that Site Plan reviews included the Empire Chinese Restaurant on Rt. 20, Bed Rock Place, Hobbs Brook, Pioneer Oil and the Veterinary Hospital.

L. Adams indicated that the last Open Space Workshop will be held on May 11th regarding better subdivision design. He said that six department heads will be trained to use the GIS software, and Assessors parcels are being digitized. He expressed appreciation for Town Meeting support for additional hours for his staff and his office.

Barbara Search reviewed her report with the Board (copy on file). She said that regarding attendance at the Senior Center, there was an unduplicated count of 203 from November 18 to 24, 2003. Parking is a continuing issue; several times a week the lot is full and people park across the street.

B. Search said that New Learning Experiences for Adults is a designation given to academic, recreational and cultural programs that are taught by professionals or knowledgeable people in a given field. The NLEA programs include Beginner Birding, Conversational Spanish, Computer Class and Drawing, and they have been well attended.

B. Search said that a Transportation Study group has been formed to investigate and research options for transportation for the homebound to senior activities, as well as local and out of town transportation for small groups of seniors. She is looking into the possibility of obtaining a van, and also subsidizing transportation with Elderbus with some of the money that the Friends have raised.

EBT Environmental Consultants

MOTION: To authorize the Town Administrator to accept/sign the proposal from EBT Environmental Consultants as proposed/dated April 19, 2004, by D. Sosik.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

Admiral T.J. O'Brien's – Alter Premises on Liquor License

J. Malloy read the legal ad into the record (copy on file). Tim O'Brien appeared before the Board. His application was in order.

MOTION: To approve the Alter Premises application for Admiral T.J. O'Brien's to include the deck on their liquor license, by D. Schmida.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To close the public hearing, by H. White.

2nd: C. Blanchard.

Vote: All in favor.

Resignation/Appointment

MOTION: To accept the resignation from Michael Beaudry from the Planning Board, by H. White.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To confirm the Town Administrator's appointment of Anthony Silvestri to the Open Space Committee for a term to end 2005, by H. White.

2nd: C. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor.

Old Business

D. Sosik said that she had noticed that the Hearthstone Inn is now under "old management." J. Malloy explained that the state had rejected their license transfer due to a tax issue, so their management has reverted back to the previous licensee.

A. Wilson asked whether DEP had sent any word regarding the new well. J. Malloy said that Mike Zylich of Tighe & Bond had contacted DEP, and they are almost done with their review. The end of April marked the end of the 90-day period. Mr. Malloy said that he would contact Senator Brewer and Rep. Reed Hillman and request that they contact DEP.

C. Blanchard suggested asking Tighe & Bond to analyze the flow and find out whether it would be cost effective to proceed.

A. Wilson noted that there were two proclamations, one for Albert Cournoyer, and the other regarding Tree City USA. He suggested inviting Tom Chamberland, Tree Warden, to the next meeting on May 17th.

New Business

C. Blanchard announced that the Board and the public are invited to attend the meeting at Burgess Elementary School on Wednesday, May 5th. The School Committee appointed a subcommittee to look into the feasibility of work to be done at Burgess, as well as to hear concerns and comments from the public.

A. Wilson noted that there had been a letter from residents in the neighborhood of the skatepark, indicating that there are ongoing issues. He suggested that the Board schedule a public hearing relative to the operation of the skatepark on June 7th. J. Malloy will notify residents, the Recreation Department and Police Department of the public hearing.

MOTION: To schedule a public hearing relative to the operation of the Recreation area including the skatepark on June 7, 2004 at 6:35 p.m., by A. Wilson.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

A. Wilson said that Town Meeting had approved a proposal to form a committee relative to leaving the Tantasqua union, consisting of one Selectman, one member of the Finance Committee, one resident, one

School Committee member and J. Malloy. He suggested sending letters to both Sturbridge representatives to the School Committee and Burgess.

Police Chief Thomas Button – Monthly Report

Chief Button read his report to the Board (copy on file). The Sturbridge Police Department assisted Southbridge with a critical incident drill. Sturbridge was awarded the Mass. Emergency Management Agency \$5,000 grant to be used for a functional Emergency Management Exercise scheduled for June. Also awarded was a \$1,500 Community Emergency Response Team Grant to be used for training.

D. Sosik asked for the Chief's comments regarding the problem at the recreation area. Chief Button said that the matter had been brought to his attention, and he has directed the officers to patrol the area more often. He noted that there have been a number of non-residents in their early 20s frequenting the skatepark. He said that every summer there are vandalism and damage issues at the skatepark. The Police Department will prepare a report of their observations regarding the skatepark.

Andy Cormier, Escape Estates – Water and Sewer Connection

Andy Cormier appeared before the Board to seek water and sewer connection to a proposed subdivision off Cedar Street. Larry Adams, Town Planner, indicated that he did not have a set of plans yet. Mr. Cormier submitted a package to the Board for their review and requested that they take it up at the next meeting on May 17th.

John Massauro, Waterman Design – Senior Housing Project on Hall Road

John Massauro, Bob Havasy of Blue and Gold Development and Jim Monty appeared before the Board. They had originally proposed a senior housing project on Wallace Road, then withdrew the project after the abutters expressed concern over density and other issues. They presently propose a similar project on Hall Road. The project is a 71 unit senior housing project (condominiums) on a 17 acre parcel, the same parcel that had previously been proposed for an assisted living facility. They submitted a set of conceptual plans.

B. Havasy said that the housing project would create a sense of community and social interaction for seniors, as well as a support system for them. J. Massauro said that the traffic impact would not be great. C.

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Blanchard noted that the Rt. 20 Study Committee had identified Hall Road as a dangerous stretch of road, with traffic patterns from existing buildings. J. Massauro said that they have not looked at traffic in the intersections. C. Blanchard said that there is a need for senior housing, but in order for the Board to be comfortable with it, there should be some indication about the impact on the intersections. J. Massauro agreed to do that. He said that it is a plan that provides flexibility for the future.

C. Blanchard expressed the need for input from abutters. A. Wilson said that the Board needs input from the Planning Department and Greg Morse, DPW Director. It was the consensus of the Board to hold its decision. J. Malloy suggested they come back before the Board on June 21st for a public hearing.

Mike Loin, Bertin Engineering Assoc. Inc. – Sewer Extension Request

Mike Loin, Paul Hatch and Mary Berry, Manager of the Sturbridge Retirement Cooperative Corp. appeared before the Board with an update on the request to extend sewer to the Kelly Road Retirement Community. Mary Berry submitted a letter to the Board (copy on file). P. Hatch said that the Kelly Farm Partnership would like to apply for a Community Development Block Grant to help pay for the connection. The cost of constructing the sewer connection is estimated at \$1,700,000. P. Hatch said that if they do not get the grant, it would result in higher cost paid by the residents of the Sturbridge Retirement Cooperative Corporation. C. Blanchard requested a breakdown of the costs to the SRCC.

H. White said that it would change the dynamics along that road. Abutters would have to connect unless they get a waiver. J. Malloy said that they would have to put in a gravity line. He said that the flow capacity should be considered, and they should be prepared to pay the cost of purchasing additional flow from Southbridge.

Gary Galonek said that it is necessary for the future development on Route 15; the Route 20 Study Committee results indicate an overwhelming mandate to move light industry away from Route 20 and to Route 15. He indicated that his partnership is willing to sign on.

It was the consensus of the Board to take some time to review it, and to obtain more information about the cost of on site disposal for the existing units, and a cost analysis.

Freedom of Information Request

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J. Malloy informed the Board that he had received a Freedom of Information request from Kathleen Reynolds. It will take some time for him to go through 1,000 pages of archived emails.

Ask the Selectmen

There were no calls to Ask the Selectmen.

A.Wilson announced that there will be a workshop on May 11th entitled "Development Alternatives to Conserve Open Space" sponsored by the Planning Board, and the Green Valley Institute will be present.

A.Wilson announced that there will be a meeting on May 27th at 7:00 p.m. at Tantasqua Jr. High School Library regarding community service activities, and to call 508-347-7381 X 234 for further information.

MOTION: To enter into executive session under MGL Chapter 39, §23B, Paragraph #6: To consider the purchase, exchange, taking, lease or value of real property, not to reconvene in open session, by D. Schmida.

2nd: H. White

Roll call vote: All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date