

March 7, 2005

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
MARCH 7, 2005**

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

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

A.Wilson announced that the Planning Board will hold a public hearing on March 8th regarding Old Sturbridge Village, for a change in zone in the area of the Oliver Wight house and motel.

A.Wilson announced that on March 9th at 7:00 p.m. in the Jr. High School Library the Tantasqua Regional School Committee will hold a public hearing relative to their proposed budget.

A.Wilson announced that the architect, DRA will present their proposed plans for upgrading Burgess Elementary School at the Board of Selectmen meeting on March 14th. The public is invited.

A.Wilson announced that the Annual Town Meeting will be held on April 25th at 7:00 p.m. at Tantasqua High School Auditorium.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: To accept the minutes of February 7, 2005 as corrected, by D. Sosik.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To accept the executive session minutes of February 7, 2005, to remain confidential, by D. Sosik.

2nd: D. Schmida

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To accept the minutes of February 14, 2005 as corrected, by D. Sosik.

2nd: H. White

Vote: Three in favor; D. Schmida abstained.

Robert Spain, Charter Communications

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Robert Spain of Charter Communications appeared before the Board. A. Wilson noted that the Board receives numerous complaints from the public about the sound quality of the meetings, although the televisions in the media room indicate that the broadcast sounds fine. J. Malloy added that one TV is a direct line from Charter, which accurately indicates how the public views and hears the meetings. He said that there is a problem with certain areas of town. R. Spain said that the system is checked on a monthly basis, and if there is a problem in a specific area, their technicians will address it.

H. White asked whether there was a senior discount available for Sturbridge. R. Spain said that there was not, but it could be discussed when the contract is about to expire. He explained that Charter's policy is not to re-negotiate contracts. A. Wilson requested written communication from Charter regarding the necessary procedure.

H. White suggested that Charter provide a la carte programming so that subscribers would not have to pay for a lot of channels that do not interest them. R. Spain said that it would be difficult to determine which channels to eliminate since people have individual tastes, and that people would end up paying more for the channels that they did receive. He said that they put channel packages together to mitigate rising costs. H. White suggested that Charter should clearly indicate the different ways of using their services and the costs of each, so that people could choose between the different packages. D. Sosik suggested that Charter include a mailing with their monthly bills to inform everyone of their options. She read a letter into the record from a resident who had been unaware that there was a less expensive rate available. R. Spain said that descriptions of all of the packages are posted on Charter's website.

Anthony Silvestri, 16 Beaudry Road, said that not all areas of town have cable service. R. Spain said that it was possible that Charter could not get an easement to install service in that area of town.

Fire Chief Leonard Senecal – Monthly Report

Chief Senecal read his report to the Board (copy on file). He announced that the new fire truck has come in and is now in service, and the new ambulance should be in service by the end of the week.

Chief Senecal expressed the need to expand the Fire Dept. secretary's hours from 20 hours/week to 40 hours/week in a memo dated February 15, 2005 (copy on file), which stated that the workload has increased substantially, and a 40 hour/week position is necessary for the department to run efficiently. He informed the Board that he met with the Finance Committee. J. Malloy noted that the issue was brought before the Personnel Committee in the fall, and they had determined that there was not a need to increase staffing in the Fire Dept. at this

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time. They had indicated that additional assistance could be provided by a senior staff member. A.Wilson suggested that they make use of a senior volunteer, when one becomes available. L. Senecal said that he needs someone who is trained properly in Fire Dept. issues in order to be effective. D. Sosik said that Chief Senecal needs the consistency and expertise that his secretary has, so she should be the one handling this job. It was the consensus of the Board to take the matter under advisement pending further information.

Publick House – Change of Manager on Liquor License

Attorney Robert George and Michael Glick appeared before the Board. Their application was complete.

MOTION: To approve the application for a Change of Manager for the Publick House, for Michael J. Glick to be named as the manager of record, by H. White.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

Mary Berry, Sturbridge Retirement Co-op – Sewer Privilege Fee

Attorney Julie Morrill and Mary Berry appeared before the Board. J. Morrill submitted to the Board a written argument (copy on file) for the retirement mobile home park to have a lower sewer privilege fee than single family homes. She stated that the sewer privilege fee is really an impact fee based on potential use. She said that DEP recognizes the significantly lower usage in a retirement mobile home park; thus, the estimated usage is rated at 45% of a single family home. She noted that 75% of the 175 units in the park have only one person in occupancy, and she said that basing the fee on actual water usage would be a fair measure.

A.Wilson suggested that J. Malloy inform the Board as to how changing the sewer privilege fee calculation would impact future calculations for all present and future subdivisions and extensions. J. Malloy requested a breakdown of one and two bedroom units.

The Trail Association Abatement Application

J. Malloy said that one of the issues that the Selectmen had discussed with representatives of The Trail Association was whether a conservation restriction on the property would be a valid basis for granting an abatement for the two parcels that the association holds in common ownership among the property owners. Town Counsel has opined that it is, but the Board of Selectmen should ensure that the conservation restriction is permanent, which requires approval of the Secretary of the EOE. J. Malloy said that there is a four month timeframe

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for the Board to act on an abatement application; after that time, it is automatically denied. He said that he would inform Kathy Harrington about that.

Route 131 Engineering

MOTION: To authorize the Town Administrator to execute a contract with Parsons Engineering for \$224,000 plus direct costs as identified in their bid dated January 25, 2005, by D. Sosik.

2nd: D. Schmida

Vote: All in favor.

Senior Municipal Service Program

MOTION: To approve the Senior Municipal Service Program for Pauline Julien to work for the Police Department, by H. White.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

Electric Utilities

J. Malloy submitted to the Board information relative to electric rate history with Mass. Electric and projections based on the most recent 1 ½ year rate history, extended out for the next two years. It was the consensus of the Board to wait until Mass. Electric's rates come in.

Appointment

MOTION: To confirm the Town Administrator's appointment of Geraldine Krupika to the Council on Aging for a term to expire in 2008, by D. Sosik.

2nd: H. White

Vote: All in favor.

Water/Sewer Abatement

MOTION: To approve the abatement application for account #0085 in the amount of \$876.43, by D. Sosik.

2nd: D. Schmida

Vote: All in favor.

One-Day Liquor License Application

MOTION: To approve the one-day liquor license for St. Anne's Parish for March 19, 2005 from 6:00 p.m. through 12:00 a.m. (midnight), by D. Sosik.

2nd: D. Schmida

Vote: All in favor.

IOD Claim

MOTION: To approve the IOD claim filed by Police Officer Larry Bateman, as provided for in MGL Ch. 41, §111F for an injury on duty sustained on 2/19/05, by H. White.

2nd: D. Schmida

Vote: All in favor.

Special Town Meeting Warrant

Article #66: Fire Academy Training

MOTION: To add Article #66 to the April 25, 2005 Special Town Meeting warrant, by H. White.

2nd: D. Schmida

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To close the April 25, 2005 Special Town Meeting warrant, by H. White.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

Burgess Elementary School Budget

MOTION: To approve \$7,493,039 for Burgess Elementary School, by H. White.

2nd: D. Schmida

Vote: All in favor.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Article #8: Town Meeting Time

MOTION: To support Article #8, by H. White.

2nd: D. Sosik

Vote: All in favor.

Article #9: Substitute Motions

A. Wilson said that the Board should be specific regarding substitute motions, and two copies should be provided. H. White suggested that the Moderator initial it. J. Malloy said that he would draft an amendment to the motion for the Board to consider at the next meeting.

Article #22: Sturbridge Area Tourist Association

MOTION: To place and support Article #22 for \$96,403.08 as outlined in the Town Administrator's update, by H. White.

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2nd: D. Schmida
Vote: All in favor.

Old Business

There was no old business

New Business

D. Sosik, who is the alternate to the CMRPC, said that she cannot attend their next meeting on Thursday, March 10th at 6:30 p.m.

A.Wilson announced that the Planning Board will discuss the rezoning article for Old Sturbridge Village at their meeting on March 8th.

A.Wilson announced that the Tantasqua Budget Meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 9th at 7:00 p.m. at the Jr. High School Library.

A.Wilson announced that the Annual Town Meeting will be held on Monday, April 25th at 7:00 p.m. at Tantasqua High School Auditorium.

J. Malloy said that he would organize a pre-town meeting informational meeting for new residents or people who have questions, to be held at the Burgess cafeteria in April. He will provide details at the next Board meeting.

Ask the Selectmen

D. Sosik received a call from a resident who informed her that the sound was turned off at Ask the Selectmen.

MOTION: To adjourn, by D. Schmida.
2nd: H. White
Vote: All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date