

September 6, 2005

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 6, 2005**

Present: Arnold Wilson, Chairman
 Hal White
 Doris Sosik
 David Schmida
 William Emrich
 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 August 15, 2005 as amended, by H. White.
 2nd: D. Sosik
 Vote: All in favor.

Sabrina Boyd – Operation Friendship

Sabrina Boyd presented the Board with two Coat of Arms plaques and letters from the Borough Council of Craigavon and the Borough of Dungannon & South Tyrone in Northern Ireland, commending their representatives of Operation Friendship who are visiting Sturbridge.

Tax Classification Hearing – Board of Assessors

Marita Tasse, Donald Mapplebeck and Tom Chamberland appeared before the Board. They estimated new growth to be \$593,187 and the proposed breakdown by class as follows:

	<u>FY2006</u>	<u>FY2005</u>	<u>DIFFERENCE</u>
Residential	961,403,644	862,458,624	98,945,020
Commercial	157,048,556	141,153,676	15,894,880
Industrial	33,614,200	32,514,500	1,099,700
Personal Property	31,499,149	26,632,900	4,866,249
	<u>1,183,565,549</u>	<u>1,062,759,700</u>	<u>120,805,849</u>

They submitted an analysis (copy on file) of the effect that a 5%, 10%, 25%, 35% and 50% shift would have to the taxpayer. T. Chamberland said that the price of land in Sturbridge has gone up significantly.

J. Malloy noted that last year the Board had made the decision to maintain the ratio on the tax burden between the commercial, industrial, personal property (CIP) and residential so that the tax burden remained the same as it was prior to the revaluation. To continue to maintain the tax burden at the approximate rate would require a CIP shift of 1.30 and a residential factor of 93.0676. Using this shift, the pre/post revaluation percentage of the tax burden would be as follows:

<u>Pre</u>		<u>Post</u>	
Residential	75.6%	Residential	75.6%
Commercial	16.9%	Commercial	17.2%
Industrial	3.7%	Industrial	3.7%
Personal	3.8%	Personal	3.5%

MOTION: To adopt a residential factor of 93.0676, by H. White.
2nd: D. Schmida
Vote: All in favor.

J. Malloy noted that there was a 25% - 30% decrease in the new growth figure in one year. A. Wilson said that the Board of Selectmen will meet with the Board of Assessors, Finance Committee and Visions on October 10th.

Tom Chamberland, Veterans' Agent – Veterans' Day Activities

Tom Chamberland, Veterans' Agent, appeared before the Board. He announced that American Legion Post 109, in partnership with the Town of Sturbridge Veteran Services Department, is hosting a Welcome Home, Operation Blue Star Banner Dinner on Friday, November 11, 2005 starting at 6:00 p.m. Veterans and their immediate families, who have been discharged since Sept. 11, 2001 are invited to attend and be recognized for their service to our nation. Also, the Post will welcome current residents who have an immediate family loved one serving in any branch of the Armed Forces anywhere in the world, to attend and receive a blue star banner. The Music Dept. of Tantasqua Regional High School and the Quaboag Highlanders will provide entertainment for the evening. The Post requests donations from the community and assistance in providing the meal, and to utilize the Veteran Services of the Town to contact known veteran families in Sturbridge and to coordinate the event. He requested that interested individuals call him at 508-347-3386, or the Post at 508-347-3248.

T. Chamberland invited the Selectmen to participate in this event by declaring November 11, 2005 as an official "welcome home" day for Sturbridge Veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraq Freedom. Senator Stephen Brewer and Rep. Todd Smola have also been invited.

Sturbridge Host Hotel & Conference Center – Transfer of Liquor License

A representative from the Sturbridge Host appeared before the Board.

MOTION: To approve the transfer of license application from Cedar Lake Innkeepers Inc. to Milestone Hospitality International, LLC d/b/a Sturbridge Host Hotel & Conference Center, with Steven Micks as manager of record, by H. White.

2nd: D. Schmida

Vote: All in favor.

Sturbridge Housing Authority

Charles Blanchard, Pat Jeffries and Marie Belisle of the Sturbridge Housing Authority appeared before the Board. They had submitted a letter to the Board dated August 31, 2005 (copy on file) including substantial background information, with three recommendations: To replace the elected Housing Authority with an appointed Local Housing Partnership; Adopt an inclusionary zoning bylaw; Establish an Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

C. Blanchard said that the Sturbridge Housing Authority need to certify to the state that it is no longer needed. M. Belisle added that a change needs to be made regarding the Housing Authority account so that the money will still be available.

J. Malloy noted that a charter change would be required. He agreed to research what is necessary to be done, and will send a letter to the Housing Authority and Board of Selectmen regarding what steps need to be taken.

Charter Review Committee

J. Malloy informed the Board that the Town Charter requires the Selectmen to form a Charter Review Committee to review the Charter every five years. During the last Charter review, Town Counsel clarified that the Selectmen's duty was to form the Committee, and the Town Administrator appointed the members, subject to the Selectmen's confirmation.

MOTION: To form a Charter Review Committee of five residents to study town government and to recommend any changes deemed advisable to the Selectmen in time to place on the 2006 Annual Town Meeting warrant, by D. Sosik.

2nd: D. Schmida

Vote: All in favor.

Crescent Way

J. Malloy informed the Board that the Public Safety Departments expressed no concern over Crescent Way, as there are no other streets with a similar name in Town.

- MOTION:** To approve the name leading into the Crescent Gate subdivision at 450A Main Street as "Crescent Way," by D. Schmida.
2nd: H. White
Vote: All in favor.

Personnel Policies

J. Malloy informed the Board that an employee had asked whether it would be possible to utilize sick leave to take an immediate family member to the hospital. Mr. Malloy was under the impression that the Board had approved an amendment to the Personnel Policies to include a provision to allow up to three days of sick leave to cover allowances under the Family Medical Leave Act. Mr. Malloy said that he would compose it and submit it to the Personnel Committee for their review.

Resignations

- MOTION:** To accept the resignation of Officer Paul Newsham as a full-time officer in the Sturbridge Police Department, effective September 7, 2005, by D. Sosik.

2nd: H. White
Vote: All in favor.

- MOTION:** To accept the resignation of P. Edward Norris from the Open Space Committee, by D. Sosik.

2nd: H. White
Vote: All in favor.

- MOTION:** To accept the resignation of Nancy Campbell as Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Board and Design Review Committee Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk, by H. White.

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

Appointment

- MOTION:** To confirm the Town Administrator's appointment of Mary Lou Volpe as a Firefighter/EMT in the Sturbridge Fire Department at a starting rate of \$13.49 per hour, by H. White.

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

Water Line – Laurel Woods

J. Malloy submitted to the Board the Fire Chief's comments regarding extending the water line to the intersection of Cooper Road and Cedar Street (copy on file). J. Malloy said that it is a public safety issue, and the extension would be at no cost to the Town. He noted that there is the capacity within the water system to provide the service.

It was the consensus of the Board to get information about the status of water pressure.

Zoning Board Clerk

J. Malloy said that during the time that he has been filling in for the Town Planner, he has discussed the work of the Zoning Board Clerk with Nancy Campbell. He noted that in the past the Personnel Committee has not recommended upgrading this position based on the requests and justification given to the Committee; however, N. Campbell indicated to him the work that she does for the ZBA, and from J. Malloy's own knowledge of how the ZBA once operated and how it now operates, his conclusion was that it may be appropriate to review this position again. In the past, the ZBA Clerk only did the minutes and set up the agenda; currently the ZBA Clerk also writes the ZBA decisions, reviews applications for completeness, etc. J. Malloy suggested that it be reviewed and a determination made as to whether this is work that the ZBA Clerk should be doing; if it is, then the classification for the position should be reviewed and modified as appropriate. If it isn't, then a decision should be made as to whether the Town Planner or Chair of the ZBA should be doing this work. A. Wilson suggested reviewing it as a full-time position.

Sewer Rate Relief Fund

J. Malloy informed the Board that the Town receives a grant for a portion of the Sewer Rate that is dedicated to paying off debt; for the Town to continue receiving this grant, the Board needs to certify the necessary form (copy on file).

MOTION: To certify the amounts stated in the application were issued as debt after 1/1/90 for the costs of planning, designing or construction of a water pollution control project or part thereof required to meet the provisions of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and MGL Ch. 21, §26 to 53, by H. White.

2nd: D. Schmida

Vote: All in favor.

Woodside Circle Sewer Project

J. Malloy submitted to the Board a summary spreadsheet which includes the results of the survey of Woodside Circle/Westwood Drive area residents (copy on file). In summary, the survey results were:

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Woodside Circle project only	55% in favor
Woodside Circle/Westwood Drive project	65% in favor
Westwood Drive residents' interest in being included	80% in favor

William MacDonald, 28 Woodside Circle, suggested obtaining funding assistance from the government to help with the cost of the project. He noted that the project is a dire necessity for people whose septic systems are failing.

A. Wilson said that he was in favor of keeping an open forum. He said that if the residents of Woodside Circle are not unanimously and enthusiastically in favor of the project, it may be difficult to get it approved at Town Meeting.

J. Malloy said that he would bring it up to the Board when a Special Town Meeting is set this fall, and provide notification to the residents that the matter will be coming up. He said that he would apply for grants, but it would be more difficult to compete because it is a small project.

Old Business

H. White asked about the status of the letters that were sent out regarding sewer privilege fees. J. Malloy said that they have all been resolved.

H. White asked about the status of the legal opinion regarding the Galonek gravel permit. J. Malloy said that he was waiting to hear back from Town Counsel.

New Business

MOTION: To appoint J. Malloy as Acting Town Planner, by D. Schmida.
2nd: H. White
Vote: All in favor.

D. Sosik announced that if anyone is interested in making a contribution toward the Hurricane victims, they may do so at Burgess Elementary School. She said that the PTO is handling the money and will make the donation directly to the Red Cross.

A. Wilson announced that there will be a public meeting regarding improvements to McGilpin Road on Thursday, September 8th at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall.

A. Wilson announced that the Board of Selectmen will meet at 6:00 p.m. on September 12th at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, to return to Town Hall at about 7:00 p.m. to meet with the Finance Committee regarding financial goal settings.

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A.Wilson announced that on Thursday, September 29th at 7:00 p.m. all of the Boards of Selectmen of the five towns will meet at Holland Town Hall to discuss the election of one Selectman to represent all of the towns in negotiations.

W. Emrich asked about the status of setting up a meeting for the Burgess School Building Committee. J. Malloy said that he was working on finding a date when all of the members would be able to be present.

A.Wilson announced that the Quinebaug Shetucket Heritage Corridor will present "For the Common Good" on Sept. 16th at 9:00 a.m. at the Information Center on Rt. 20.

A.Wilson announced that the Walking Weekends will be held on Oct. 7-10 and 14-16.

Ask the Selectmen

D. Schmida received a call from Ginger Peabody, who explained that the ZBA tasks have increased over time; she indicated that she would be available to answer any questions.

D. Schmida received a call from Russell Chamberland, who indicated that the plaques from Ireland were gifts to the Town, and should be displayed at Town Hall.

MOTION: To convene in 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. Sosik.

2nd: H. White

Roll call vote: All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date