

August 16, 2010

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
AUGUST 16, 2010**

Present: Thomas Creamer, Acting Chairman
Mary Dowling
Ted Goodwin
Shaun Suhoski, Town Administrator

Mary Blanchard and Scott Garieri were absent.

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

T. Creamer's opening statement was as follows: "It is an unfortunate set of circumstances that see me sitting here this evening instead of Ted Goodwin. Job related demands have weighed heavily on Ted and as such he deemed it necessary to step aside as Chairman. Though I commend his selflessness in his commitment to our community, I also recognize the loss it is to this Board and our community. Ted's open, encouraging, and gentle manner helped create an environment wherein all voices - resident and officials alike - were heard with equal vigor. That is a true reflection of his open and honest approach to all issues and one that is a true Power of Example to all. I will endeavor to ensure that the environment Ted created is continually nurtured and extended, as he himself would have continued, were he remaining as chair."

T. Creamer announced that he and two reporters were recording the meeting.

Sam's Food Store – New Liquor License

S. Suhoski read the legal ad into the record. Attorney George Hammond appeared before the Board. T. Creamer noted that the application had come before the Board on April 20, 2010. Attorney Hammond said that the ABCC had rejected the previous application because the manager was not a U.S. citizen, and the owner was not a Massachusetts resident. He assured the Board that the situation has been remedied.

MOTION: To close the public hearing, by T. Goodwin.
2nd: M. Dowling
Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To grant a Package Store, Wine & Malt Liquor License to Sam's Food Store, by T. Goodwin.
2nd: M. Dowling
Vote: All in favor.

Jack's Gas – Class 2 License

S. Suhoski said that he had spoken with the owner, who indicated that he would like to withdraw the application without prejudice, as he needs to go through site plan review and the planning process first.

MOTION: To close the public hearing, by T. Goodwin.
2nd: M. Dowling
Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To allow Jack's Gas to withdraw their application without prejudice for a Class 2 License, by M. Dowling.
2nd: T. Goodwin
Vote: All in favor.

John Boniface – Access Road

John Boniface, 1695 Shepard Road, addressed the Board regarding his August 6, 2010 letter requesting that the access road from Sturbridge to Southbridge, on the Southbridge side of the Westville Recreation area, be allowed to remain open on a year round basis. He noted that the access road has been closed during winter months, and Southbridge doesn't want to plow the road.

T. Creamer said that the Board would welcome any input from Southbridge. He asked when the road is usually closed. J. Boniface said that it is closed at the first snowfall, and opened on May 30th. He noted that the road is under the floodplain. He said that after the flood of 1955 a dam was built, and the road was kept open for 30 years afterward. He said that a retaining wall had collapsed; Hamer Clark looked at it, said that the whole road could collapse, and it would be costly to fix it.

M. Dowling asked when the retaining wall had been repaired. J. Boniface said that the wall had been repaired in 2004. He noted that the park is used by both towns, and keeping it open in the winter would keep it alive.

S. Suhoski said that he had met with Chris Clark, Southbridge Town Manager, who indicated that there is a cost factor associated with snow removal. C. Clark said that he would assess the matter. T. Creamer said that the Board would have the ability to enter into an agreement with Southbridge to address it, should they be amenable to such. He indicated that it would need to be reviewed by the Sturbridge Town Counsel and DPW Director, and suggested it be reviewed by the Southbridge Town Council and DPW Director, and suggested that a letter be sent to the Southbridge Town Council to find a mutual solution for the issue. T. Creamer offered to speak to their Town Council members. M. Dowling said that the Sturbridge DPW Director and other representatives from Southbridge should

meet with the Board of Selectmen to discuss the matter. She noted that it would be useful to divert traffic on Route 131 by using the access road.

T. Creamer thanked J. Boniface for addressing this matter before the winter months, and assured him that the Board will address it as expeditiously as possible.

Water and Sewer Rates

S. Suhoski submitted to the Board the July 8 memorandum from the Finance Director documenting the debt service cost for the Wastewater Treatment Plant loan at \$106,223 for FY11. At a previous meeting, M. Blanchard had asked whether the rate was due solely to the debt payment. S. Suhoski and the Finance Director reviewed the Sewer Dept. budget again and proposed a revised rate recommendation for FY11. Based upon updated calculations, he said that it appears that the water rate can remain the same (no increase) and that a 3.5 percent bump in the sewer rate will cover the Wastewater Treatment Plant debt service.

MOTION: That the Board set the FY11 water rate at \$3.27 per cubic foot and the FY11 sewer rate at \$4.59 per hundred cubic feet, by T. Goodwin.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Special Town Meeting Warrant

S. Suhoski informed the Board that Sept. 8th is the start of Rosh Hashanah, a religious holiday, so he suggested that the Board change the date of the Special Town Meeting to September 1st. He noted that the Moderator and the school auditorium are both available on Sept. 1st.

MOTION: To reconsider the Special Town Meeting date, which was set for September 8, 2010, by T. Goodwin.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To move the Special Town Meeting date to September 1, 2010, and to meet all of the Town obligations and deadlines, by T. Goodwin.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Article 23: FY11 Budget Reduction

MOTION: To place and support Article 23, by T. Goodwin.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Article 24: Water Treatment Plant Upgrades

MOTION: To place and support Article 24, by T. Goodwin.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Article 25: Sewer Debt Service: WWTP Upgrade

MOTION: To place and support Article 25, by T. Goodwin.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Article 26: Fund DPW Contract

MOTION: To place and support Article 26, by T. Goodwin.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Article 27: Fire Dept.: Apparatus Bay Diesel Exhaust Repairs

MOTION: To place and support Article 27, by T. Goodwin.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Article 28: Unpaid FY10 Bills: Fire Department

MOTION: To place and support Article 28, by T. Goodwin.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Article 29: Transfer to Stabilization Fund

MOTION: To place and support Article 29, by T. Goodwin.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Article 30: Burgess School Project Land Swap

MOTION: To place and support Article 30, by T. Goodwin.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Article 31: Amend General Bylaw: Town Meeting Requirements

MOTION: To place and support Article 31, by T. Goodwin.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To close the Special Town Meeting Warrant, by T. Goodwin.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Senior Municipal Service Program

MOTION: To approve the application of Tina Galati of Wallace Road, to the Veterans' Agent department, by T. Goodwin.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Auctioneer License

MOTION: To approve the application of Robert H. Glass Auctions, LLC dated August 3, 2010 to conduct an auction at 5 Haynes Road on Saturday, August 28, 2010, by T. Goodwin.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Miscellaneous

Water Infrastructure/Fire Safety: Tantasqua Regional High School

S. Suhoski submitted to the Board a copy of correspondence from the Fire Chief indicating that there is "plenty of water in the building for the safety of the students and the faculty." The letter provided good detail on the fire suppression system. Also, S. Suhoski previously reported and issued a press release surrounding the favorable on-site meeting between town and school officials.

Revised Board and Committee Handbook

S. Suhoski said that this project was delayed, and the logistics of the relocation did not allow him to complete the further revisions. He located and unpacked his noted and prior draft, and expects to have a revised document ready before the Board's next meeting.

NOTE: Special BOS Meeting on August 30 at 6:30 p.m.

S. Suhoski said that a quorum of the Board indicated the ability to attend a special meeting on Monday, August 30th at 6:30 in the second floor rear conference room of Town Hall to conduct a second public hearing associated with the Whistling Swan liquor license transfer. He noted that this item had been delayed, and the Board's willingness to meet will allow the parties to meet their planned closing date of September 1st. T. Goodwin said that he had received a phone call from the real estate agent who is involved in this transaction, and who requested an earlier date for this meeting. It was the consensus of the Board to meet on August 30th.

Since his last report, S. Suhoski has been busy with the following summarized list:

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- a) Met with a member of the Finance Committee concerning various issues;
- b) Partnered with key staff to coordinate the move back to Town Hall and Center Office Building to include follow up on communications, punch list items, staff concerns, etc.;
- c) Received bids and coordinated award of contract for installation of audio-visual equipment in Town Hall and Center Office Building;
- d) Met with School Superintendent, water vendor, DPW Director and others at TRHS to discuss and learn about water infrastructure and to confirm adequacy of fire suppression system and plan;
- e) Met with current cleaning vendor to incorporate Center Office Building into brief extension pending issuance of a blanket cleaning contract for all applicable town facilities;
- f) Met with Dept. of Fisheries and Wildlife and Conservation Agent concerning conservation restriction/easement over Leadmine area and other matters;
- g) Met with local businesswoman, Town Planner and Building Inspector concerning zoning and development questions;
- h) Delivered grant reimbursement request, and discussed future funding possibilities with state DCR for Recreation Trails Grant;
- i) Received extension from MassDEP regarding pilot study submittal for Well #1 and Water Treatment Facility upgrades; and
- j) Unpacked boxes and helped empty trash as part of move.

Pizzeria Uno – Live Entertainment License

MOTION: To grant a Live Entertainment License to Pizzeria Uno, to include the hours on the license, by T. Goodwin.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Correspondence

S. Suhoski read the letter from Senator Brewer and Rep. Smola into the record regarding their correspondence seeking funding for the brick sidewalks along the Town Common.

Old Business

M. Dowling said that she would have her input regarding Town Administrator goals ready by the next work session. T. Creamer instructed her to send them directly to Judy Knowles. He would like to receive the Selectmen's input anonymously.

M. Dowling encouraged the public to tour the newly renovated Town Hall, and said that it is a great example of restoration of an old historic building. T. Creamer echoed her sentiments, pointing out that though he was initially in favor of the project, he had reversed his position due to the economy and had spoken against the project at Town Meeting, but that he was ecstatic that the better argument had prevailed at Town Meeting, as we now have two beautiful buildings we can be proud of.

T. Goodwin asked about the status of the brick sidewalks. S. Suhoski said that the Board had voted on the surface of the sidewalks; he did not yet have a funding answer regarding the cost, so he asked MassDOT to hold off on it. M. Dowling expressed concern about jeopardizing the \$180,000 cost by waiting for information on the \$800,000 overrun. T. Goodwin said that there is Chapter 90 money, with \$600,000 in the account. He felt that the investment in the brick sidewalks for the Town Common would pay off in the long term. T. Creamer said that he had asked the Community Preservation Committee to consider a level of funding for it. He expressed concern about curbing, and whether it would incur additional costs. M. Dowling noted that the Publick House had generously offered to pay \$25,000 for continuation of the brick sidewalk; MassDOT had quoted it as \$15,000. T. Creamer offered to discuss it with Michael Harrington and Michael Glick of the Publick House.

T. Creamer asked S. Suhoski if he had spoken with Linda Cocalis or Chris Clark regarding the landfill issue. T. Creamer said that the Southbridge Town Manager had indicated that Sturbridge needs to clean up its landfill. He is under the impression that there are some issues with the Sturbridge landfill that may impact individuals, and the EPA is investigating the Sturbridge landfill; there is no knowledge of that in the Sturbridge Board of Health. T. Creamer stated that we had an obligation to work with Southbridge on this concern in a positive and productive manner to ensure that our neighbors' concerns are fully vetted in a constructive manner. S. Suhoski said that he had spoken with the Board of Health, and they are confident that there is no merit to the Southbridge Town Manager's statement. The Sturbridge landfill is in good shape.

New Business

T. Creamer said that he had sent correspondence to S. Suhoski regarding the water shut-off scheduled for August 18th at Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park. He noted that this is prime time camping season with hundreds of campers at their Park. S. Suhoski said that he had spoken with Shane Moody of Veolia Water North America, who indicated that there is a scheduled water shut-off for Route 15 which will affect three customers. They had followed standard procedure regarding notification of the shut-off. He said that there is a concern that there is a water line that runs over a bridge over the Mass. Pike. He noted that night-time work is very dangerous, so there is a safety issue with that. The work will be done between the hours of 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

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T. Creamer said that he, M. Dowling and M. Blanchard had attended an award ceremony for Jacob Soper for weight lifting in the Special Olympics. He suggested that the Board issue a letter or proclamation to Jacob Soper, and present it to him during an upcoming meeting.

T. Creamer suggested that the Board express congratulations to Sturbridge resident and Tantasqua graduate Michael Willard, currently at Northeastern University, for his work on robots controlled by brain activity.

T. Creamer said that there are concerns about the Route 15 and Route 131 intersection, that the overall width of Route 15 has been reduced because of sidewalks that were planned seven years ago. There are concerns about through traffic and turn radius. He said that Linda Cocalis had made a suggestion that the stop lines be moved back on the eastbound side, and move the stop line on Route 131 north on the Library side to expand the turn radius. S. Suhoski said the he would forward that suggestion to MassDOT.

MOTION: To adjourn, by T. Goodwin.
2nd: M. Dowling
Vote: All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date