

November 21, 2011

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
NOVEMBER 21, 2011**

Present: Thomas Creamer, Chairman
Mary Dowling
Mary Blanchard
Angeline Ellison
Priscilla Gimas
Shaun Suhoski, Town Administrator

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

Walker Road Update

S. Suhoski noted that the Board had authorized CME to initiate tasks #1 and #2 under the design contract. S. Suhoski said that CME confirmed that pricing remains as per the proposal, and will begin work.

Farquhar Road Update

S. Suhoski informed the Board that the DPW Director has indicated that, subject to favorable weather conditions, this project will commence no later than Monday, November 28. He said that based upon a brief telephone discussion with Greg, the work may commence the week of November 21 if debris operations and weather cooperate.

Preliminary Discussion on the Town Administrator's Evaluation

T. Creamer noted that the Board of Selectmen had changed the numeric ratings, but not category names. He said that he would send the categories to the Selectmen for discussion on November 28th. It was the consensus of the Board that S. Suhoski do a self-evaluation.

Donna Degraide, 85 Westwood Drive

Donna Degraide, 85 Westwood Drive, appeared before the Board to discuss the recent power outage and said that the Town Administrator should make grinder pumps without power a higher priority. T. Creamer suggested that she attend the Map Your Neighborhood meeting.

D. Degraide then discussed her November 13, 2011 correspondence.

Municipal Vehicle Use Policy

S. Suhoski provided the Board with a further revised Municipal and Personal Vehicle Use Policy proposed for adoption. He had originally proposed a policy in May, which had been discussed by the Board. In response to questions from the Board, suggestions from the public, and further research into the Town's insurer's recommendations, modest changes were made to the policy including:

- Listing of items included in IRS mileage rate
- More stringent cell phone and electronic messaging language, and
- Specific motor vehicle accident section including damage to personal vehicles used for work purposes

Given that several town officials utilize fleet vehicles in the performance of their duties a uniform and consistent management policy was recommended. The Board of Selectmen discussed and made some clarifications to the expense reimbursement language.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen approve the Town of Sturbridge Municipal and Personal Vehicle Use Policy as amended, effective November 21, 2011, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

S. Suhoski noted that the various energy audits and assessments being conducted as part of the "Green Communities" initiative are nearing completion, after which the Board will be presented with a policy concerning municipal vehicle energy use. He provided the Board with a listing of the municipal fleet vehicles.

A. Ellison left the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Correspondence

M. Blanchard read the correspondence list into the record.

Miscellaneous Items

• **Tropical Storm Irene – FEMA Reimbursement:** The Police Chief's administrative assistant is coordinating under direction of Finance Director to complete this filing in one package.

• **Walker Road Drainage:** Scott Young of CME is reviewing the scope and fee and will have a written response to confirm that the pricing still holds.

- **Riverlands Environmental Monitoring:** The Board approved the revised contract and Tighe & Bond has scheduled the drilling rig for the second week in December. The access road needs to be checked for storm debris.
- **MIIA Insurance Matters:** The Town has received payment of \$29,727.63 in approved insurance claims for municipal property damaged in the tornado. The total claims submitted were \$59,472.63, however, roughly \$30,000 in fencing costs are not covered under the policy. These costs (primarily at the Town Barn ballfields and the entirety of the Stallion Hill water tank fencing) will now be submitted for FEMA reimbursement at 75 percent. FEMA requires all applicable insurances to be utilized before they will issue reimbursement.
- **AAB Variance Update:** Detailed specifications, prevailing rates and request for written quotes were faxed to three vendors in the region. There were no responses. Due to the storm S. Suhoski was unable to place follow-up telephone calls; however he will seek to do this and request additional vendors to participate in the coming week.
- **Town Hall and COB Building Project Update:** CAM HVAC was retained by the general contractor to diagnose HVAC issues. The Town is awaiting a report from the general contractor on further actions. On a somewhat related note, the state elevator inspections for both buildings were conducted. COB passed without any condition and the Town Hall passed with a 90-day follow-up required as the phone line programming needs repair. This is scheduled for completion within the next 21 days through Worcester Elevator. The carpet in the Town Hall elevator that was burned by cleaning chemicals has been replaced by the responsible vendor.
- **Farquhar Road Drainage:** As discussed above, the DPW Director is scheduling this work during the next two weeks.
- **Ambulance Bid Documents:** A single bid was received on November 16 for just under \$155,000. This cost, plus any additional after-market equipment, is being tabulated by Chief Senecal so it is available for the Special Town Meeting.
- **Veterans Services Director:** S. Suhoski completed interviews with two very viable candidates for the position. He anticipates, subject to reference checks, to submit an appointment for the Board's consideration on November 28. This was likewise delayed due to the storm response.
- **Solar Power RFQ:** Completed review of seven proposals and the Energy Advisory Committee met with three respondents on October 26 from 1-4 p.m. The EAC further deliberated and is developing a presentation for the Board outlining its top three candidates and preferred vendor. Due to additional reference checks as to financial viability, and the need to rescheduled the EAC

due to recent events, this presentation is not yet complete. Selectman Gimas is the liaison to this process and participated fully in the interviews and discussion.

- **Visitor Center Dumpster Enclosure Fence:** The dumpster enclosure at the Route 20 visitor center was in a severe state of disrepair and is in the process of being replaced by Fence Co. Plus of Auburn for a cost just under \$1,800. The old fence has been removed and work has begun for the replacement enclosure.

- **FY13 Budget, Capital and Betterment Planning:** The budget message was released earlier this week. As indicated previously, regardless of whether Annual Town Meeting is in April, May or June there will be no “lag” time in terms of budget preparation this fiscal year.

- **Meetings and Other Participation:** S. Suhoski met with FEMA, MEMA, Tree Warden and DPW Operations Manager concerning debris; met with several resident “walk-ins”; met with Police Chief, COA Director and two members of COA concerning emergency communications; attended Cable Advisory Committee meeting and Economic Development Committee meeting; met with Building Inspector and Library Director re: various building issues.

Old Business

P. Gimas commented that the local access is now recording School Committee meetings, and is working well.

M. Dowling thanked A. Ellison for the Trunk or Treat event, which had been a big success, and suggested that it be continued next year.

M. Dowling discussed the November 7th Special Town Meeting, and said that the Board had met and decided unanimously to offer a motion to recess or adjourn. She said that the Moderator had been fair, and residents should ask for a recount in the future where they deem it appropriate.

M. Dowling said that a date should be set to meet with the Tantasqua Regional School Committee regarding the regional agreement. It was the consensus of the Board to meet to discuss the superintendent’s request on December 12, 2011. T. Creamer reminded all that the Board had agreed to ensure that the request for placement of the TRSC amendment to the Regional Agreement would be placed on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant, and that the Board needed to come to a consensus as to whether they would support and place it, or just place it, while offering an alternative or substitute motion to the article. He further stated that he felt it critical that the process for joint appointments be one where both parties were equal in the process by way of actual voting numbers as a means of ensuring equity for all. P. Gimas stated that she would only support an agreement that represented equity for all in terms of voting numbers and that

if that couldn't be agreed to, she would only support the current agreement, which gives sole appointing authority to the Selectmen.

New Business

There was no new business.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: To approve the minutes of June 22, 2011 as written, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Four in favor; A. Ellison absent.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of June 27, 2011 as written, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Four in favor; A. Ellison absent.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of October 11, 2011 as amended, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Four in favor; A. Ellison absent.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of October 17, 2011 as written, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Four in favor; A. Ellison absent.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of November 4, 2011 as amended, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Four in favor; A. Ellison absent.

MOTION: To approve the minute of November 18, 2011 as amended, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Four in favor; A. Ellison absent.

Ask the Selectmen/Citizens' Forum

Anthony Celuzza pointed out that many people with summer homes are also Sturbridge residents.

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S. Suhoski said that Doreen Avallone had asked whether the Town would extend the date for tax payments more than two days. It was the consensus of the Board that the residents must comply with the law as it is.

Don Miller commented on the November 7th Special Town Meeting, and said that he will ask the Moderator to explain how to request a head count.

Don Miller questioned the financial impact of the stretch code. S. Suhoski said that he would talk to David Lindberg request an update on stretch code costs.

Allan Butts said that the mandatory regulations on private roads were troubling.

MOTION: To convene in executive session under MGL Chapter 30A, §21, Paragraph #3: To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation; not to reconvene in open session, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Roll call vote: M. Dowling in favor; T. Creamer in favor; P. Gimas in favor; M. Blanchard in favor; A. Ellison absent.

The Board convened in executive session at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date