

September 12, 2011

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 12, 2011**

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

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

T. Creamer announced that the variance had been granted by the Architectural Access Board for the front doors of Town Hall conditional upon a new handrail being installed in front of the entrance. The consensus of the Board was that S. Suhoski address the handrail issue immediately. T. Creamer commended the Board and expressed gratitude to Thomas Hopkins, Executive Director, for his assistance, and S. Suhoski for the submittal. He said that the hearing regarding the Center Office Building will take place on September 26th.

**Liquor License Hearing – Apple New England LLC d/b/a Applebee’s
Neighborhood Grill & Bar: 120 Charlton Road**

S. Suhoski submitted to the Board the application for a transfer of license, change of manager, pledge of license and pledge of inventory filed by Apple New England LLC for various Applebee Restaurants in 28 cities and towns. The Mass. Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission has issued an August 12, 2011 guidance document to all local licensing authorities concerning this bulk transaction essentially indicating that the ABCC will require only the signed “Form 43” from the local authorities. Unique to Sturbridge, however, was also a requested change of manager to Mr. James Serewicz of Holden, MA.

M. Blanchard read the legal notice into the record. James Serewicz and Attorney Matthew Eiler appeared before the Board. Attorney Eiler read a statement to the Board.

MOTION: To close the public hearing, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: A. Ellison

Vote: Three in favor; P. Gimas and M. Dowling absent

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen approve transfer of license, pledge of license and pledge of inventory application filed by Apple New England LLC d/b/a Applebee’s Neighborhood Grill & Bar, 120 Charlton Rd., Sturbridge, and to approve the change of manager to James Serewicz, of Holden, MA, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: A. Ellison

Vote: Three in favor; P. Gimas and M. Dowling absent.

Community Development Advisory Committee

S. Suhoski said that when the Route 15 sewer report was issued, he had recommended that the Board authorize him to facilitate a Community Development Block Grant application for the Sturbridge Retirement Cooperative. Since then, he and Jean Bubon, Town Planner have worked with SRC's Mary Berry and engaged (with the Board's support) the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) as the grant writer and administrator. He noted that recently the PVPC reported a strong response rate for the neighborhood survey indicating a qualifying income level for National Objective (qualifying) purposes. He said that an important and required component of any CDBG application is a document referred to as the "Community Development Strategy" (CDS) which must be prepared for ultimate adoption by the Board of Selectmen in advance of the CDBG application. He said that fortunately, due to all of the planning recently completed through the Town Planner, Planning Board and Master Plan update, the Town will have the advantage of using those plans to guide the CDS. To assist in creating the CDS for the grant application, he requested that an ad-hoc work group, ideally composed of two members of the Planning Board, two members of the Board of Selectmen, one member of the Master Plan Implementation Committee, and two residents be formed. He requested two volunteers from the Board of Selectmen with some daytime availability and two residents from the list of attendees at prior meetings at SRC. The charge of the committee would be to: (1) Be the 1st layer of review for the CDS before going to the Board; (2) Serve as an ad hoc advisory board to the Board on the grant application, process and program; and (3) To enhance the public participation scoring within the application.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen approve forming a Community Development Advisory Committee comprised of two members of the Planning Board, two members of the Board of Selectmen, one member of the Master Plan Implementation Committee, and two residents designated from the target neighborhood to develop and recommend a Community Development Strategy to the Board of Selectmen and conduct other advisory tasks associated with the Town's proposed Community Development Block Grant application, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: A. Ellison

Vote: Three in favor; P. Gimas and M. Dowling absent.

P. Gimas and M. Dowling arrived at 6:55 p.m.

Senior Municipal Service Program

S. Suhoski informed the Board that the SMSP is fully subscribed, likely due to better outreach, but is also surely reflective of the poor economy and rising costs against static

income. In response to separate discussion with two members of the Board, and through discussion with the Principal Assessor, the Board of Assessors may consider whether the Overlay Account can accommodate an increase in participation in the SMSP. Currently, the SMSP is limited to \$10,000 total, which equates to 20 participants maximum. An increase of \$5,000 to the program would allow up to 30 participants. He noted that this is a program of mutual benefit as the Town receives senior "volunteers" at the state's minimum wage (currently \$8.00 per hour). He said that there are currently two qualified applicants that cannot be accepted for FY12 due to the program being fully subscribed.

Accordingly, S. Suhoski submitted to the Board a DRAFT revised SMSP program regulation document that would increase the annual allotment from \$10,000 to \$15,000. The only other change was an update to the income limit appendix by operation of law. He noted that the income limits are now tied to the HUD "low" income limit for Worcester County. The new HUD income limits were reflected in the document and represent an increase of \$200 per annum for a one-person household (now \$44,950) and \$250 per annum for a two-person household (now \$51,400).

MOTION: Subject to confirmation from the Board of Assessors as to sufficiency of funding in the Overlay Account, that the Board of Selectmen amend the Senior Municipal Service Program Regulations Section 2.0(F) by increasing the maximum program amount from \$10,000 to \$15,000, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

Special Town Meeting

S. Suhoski said that the recommended date for a Special Town Meeting is Monday, November 7 at 7:00 p.m. at Tantasqua Regional High School Auditorium. He made a final call for any outstanding items from department heads and will have the warrant complete for distribution to the Board by September 30 (for adoption on October 3). Some likely articles for consideration are:

- Charter revisions if recommended/adopted
- Budget adjustments as needed for debris cleanup
- Some cleanup of Design Review Bylaw changes from Annual Meeting
- Potential adoption of "Stretch Code" (Green Communities)
- Article 97 language to specifically allow active recreation on Shephard Parcel
- Article to complete appropriation for new ambulance
- Citizen petition seeking Saturday Town Meetings (or BOS sponsored article)
- Potential article for any unpaid FY11 bills

Miscellaneous Items

S. Suhoski only listed those items that have progressed as there had been four workdays since his last update:

- **Land Lease for Solar Power:** Issued Addendum No. 1 to RFQ. Deadline for submittals is September 19th, after which the Energy Advisory Committee will begin its advisory review.
- **Walker Pond Road Drainage Study:** Participated in meeting with Dave Prickett of Tighe & Bond, the DPW Director and nine area residents to review and gain feedback on the status of existing drainage system and conditions and suggested approach towards improvements. Tighe & Bond will present report to Board of Selectmen on September 19.
- **Walker Road Drainage:** CME engineers and DPW Director reviewed project site. Engineer indicated likely project cost of \$600,000 to \$750,000. A written report is expected within the next 14 days.
- **Debris and FEMA:** Finance Director, FEMA representative and Town Administrator to review initial 70-hour submittals from DPW, Fire and Police early next week. DPW Director and S. Suhoski met with state monitoring vendor for contract start-up and coordination.
- **Water / Sewer Rates:** TA still responding to calls and complaints about water and sewer invoices. S. Suhoski issued the Board a memorandum concerning the initial flurry of calls. He will meet with the DPW Director, Water Project Manager and Finance Director during the week of September 19.
- **Cable Advisory Committee:** Scheduled interviews with top two candidates for part-time clerk position. Plan is to receive CAC concurrence prior to the Town Administrator proposing an appointment to the Board.
- **Town Hall and COB Architectural Access Board Variances:** Completed additional work and filings for the AAB variance requests. Attended Historical Commission meeting re: same and obtained comment letters from HisCom and ADA Coordinator for project. Spoke with Mass. Historical Commission to advise of projects and requests. Forwarded additional requested materials to MHC for their review.
- **Water Treatment Facility Upgrades:** Participated in pre-construction meeting with Wright-Pierce, Veolia, R.H. White and DPW Director for contract execution and coordination of work. All bonds and documents are in place and contractor will develop schedule that seeks to complete work by mid-spring 2012 in advance of the MassDEP deadline.
- **Department Head Meeting:** Conducted monthly department head meeting focused upon staffing needs of departments and administrative revisions to use of compensatory time.

• **Economic Development Committee:** Extensive meeting with member of Economic Development Committee. Began process of compiling sample mission statements for future BOS discussion. Organized expressions of interest from seven candidates (for three seats) and scheduled interviews with four candidates (one completed).

Town Administrator's Evaluation

T. Creamer provided an introduction regarding the composite input from the Board. M. Dowling added that the composite reflected five personal evaluations of the Town Administrator. T. Creamer read the composite into the record, along with various comments.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: To approve the minutes of June 8, 2011 as amended, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.

Old Business

M. Blanchard said that she understood some people's reluctance to speak on TV, but by not having the tornado recovery meeting televised, the Board is now picking and choosing which meetings it wants recorded and televised. P. Gimas said that the meeting in question was not a Board of Selectmen meeting per se; it was a meeting of the survivors of the tornado, an emotional composite of the recovery process. She noted that people have been traumatized, and they have personal stories to tell that they don't want televised. She did not think it was being selective, she thought it was being compassionate. T. Creamer agreed with P. Gimas, with one exception, that it is being selective in an appropriate way. He supported not televising the meeting. M. Dowling agreed, and said that the Board retains its discretion in situations.

M. Blanchard asked about the status of the Personnel Committee's review of the Veterans Agent position. S. Suhoski said that the job description had been approved. He said that an Interim Veterans Agent would be appointed by an agreement with a neighboring town.

M. Blanchard asked about the status of the Tree Warden position. S. Suhoski said that Tom Chamberland had provided feedback to the Personnel Committee, so that they can discuss it at their next meeting and establish a formal job description for the Tree Warden.

M. Blanchard said that she had received input from people regarding the honor roll to be placed in front of Town Hall, who would like to see what it will look like. T. Creamer said that he had spoken with Mike Loin, the engineer, who indicated that they use a

computer program which could produce a draft of the monument to scale. He noted that it will be the same height as the previous monument, but will be longer at either end to accommodate future names.

M. Dowling said that a few families on McGregory Road wanted to publicly thank the Police Department for the job they did following Tropical Storm Irene. The police had offered the use of generators and conducted follow-up calls to the residents.

M. Dowling asked about the status of the riverlands testing by Tighe & Bond. S. Suhoski said that the testing had to be put on hold, as the drilling company could not get their rig through the water from the Holland Road side, and could not get through the ravine from the Old Sturbridge Village side. The testing has been postponed until a better solution is found. Greg Morse, DPW Director, suggested finding a different vendor that has a different type of drilling equipment.

New Business

M. Blanchard requested a copy of the policy for recognizing people for having served on boards. She noted that Bob Williams deserves some recognition for having served on the Finance Committee for years. S. Suhoski said that he would check on that, and noted that there were a few other people who should receive recognition at the Special Town Meeting. He said that he would provide a copy of the policy to the Board.

M. Blanchard said that the Board had received a letter from the selectmen from neighboring towns regarding the selection of a representative from the Sturbridge Board of Selectmen to go to the meeting at Wales Town Hall, so that they could pick one selectman to be on the negotiating team for Tantasqua. T. Creamer said that he and M. Blanchard would be attending the Planning Board meeting that evening. M. Dowling said that she would try to go.

M. Blanchard noted that the certificate in the elevator at Town Hall had expired. S. Suhoski said that he had entered into an agreement with Bay State Elevator in Worcester to have them do the inspections. He explained that the certificates are valid for six months beyond the stated date, so they will schedule an inspection and be in attendance when the state commissioner is here.

M. Blanchard asked about the status of the election officials (poll workers). T. Creamer said that the Board had never received a list of names.

M. Blanchard asked whether the Burgess School Committee had sent a letter regarding the use of the school for the Town Election. She said that the committee had voted to not allow the Town Elections to be held at the school due to a safety concern. She said that the North Gym is now being used as a temporary library, and the new gym instructor said that conducting an election there would disrupt the curriculum. P. Gimás noted that a lot of schools in other towns have been getting away from it due to safety concerns for the children. T. Creamer said that those communities may have different

polling places where they can do this. He said that he was not convinced that there was a good enough reason (speaking as a taxpayer) to not hold elections at Burgess. He noted that the Town would have to pay to lease another site. M. Blanchard said that schools in other towns that still allow elections to be held there have no school on election days. T. Creamer suggested that they hold professional development day on election days. He said that people are accustomed to voting at Burgess, and it is in a convenient location. He noted that security concerns could be addressed by controlling ingress and egress. M. Dowling asked where other towns were holding their elections. M. Blanchard said that they use American Legion posts, senior centers, armories and town halls. S. Suhoski said that Jennifer Harwich is going to converse with Lorraine Murawski, Town Clerk, about logistics, space needs and costs. He noted that in October the School Committee will meet with the Board of Selectmen regarding a joint appointment to fill a vacancy, which would be a good opportunity to discuss the matter with them.

Ask the Selectmen/Citizens' Forum

M. Blanchard received a call from Sue Waters regarding the water main problem on Blueberry Lane and Farquhar Road. S. Suhoski said that Greg Morse, DPW Director, had received the releases, and there had been an initial meeting.

MOTION: That the Board convene in executive session under MGL c. 30A. Section 21A, Exemption #3: To discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares; not to reconvene in open session, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

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

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date