

April 2, 2012

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
APRIL 2, 2012**

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

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

Annual Special Use Permit: Northern Bass Alliance Tournament

S. Suhoski submitted to the Board the annual request of the Northern Bass Alliance to conduct a members only bass tournament at Big Alum Pond on July 22, 2012 from 6:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Because it is limited to members they anticipated 12 vehicles and boats to participate.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen approve a Special Use Permit for Northern Bass Alliance to conduct a member's only bass tournament at Big Alum Pond on July 22, 2012 from 6:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m., by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Three in favor; A. Ellison and M. Dowling absent.

A. Ellison arrived at 6:40 p.m.

Request for Sewer Connection: 67 Hall Road

S. Suhoski submitted to the Board the request filed by CMG Realty seeking a connection to the municipal sewer system for the 7,800 square foot structure at 67 Hall Road. This building was formerly a Fallon Clinic, and was more recently purchased and renovated for engineering offices, a physical therapist and anticipated doctor's offices.

The DPW Director has reviewed the request and the historical background and the Board's approval was requested with the condition that the design of the installation be submitted and approved by the DPW and that the applicants pay the \$1,200 connection fee.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen approve a sewer connection for 67 Hall Road subject to approval of the design by the DPW Director and receipt of \$1,200 connection fee, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Three in favor; A. Ellison and M. Dowling absent.

A. Ellison arrived at 6:40 p.m.

Sam's Food Store – Resubmission of Application for Liquor License

Attorney George Hammond appeared before the Board. Corrections had been made to Form 43.

MOTION: That the Board sign and resubmit Form 43 to the ABCC for Sam's Food Store, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: Four in favor; M. Dowling absent

M. Dowling arrived at 6:50 p.m.

FY13 Water and Sewer Rates

As initially discussed last week, further to the Board's stated request to minimize rate increases through use of reserves, the Finance Director, DPW Director and Town Administrator recommended adoption of the following rates for FY13 (effective April 2012):

WATER: \$4.98 per 100 cubic feet SEWER: \$7.97 per 100 cubic feet

Judy Knowles contacted all of the persons that had called the office with concerns following last year's more dramatic increases to advise them of Monday's discussion. S. Suhoski submitted to the Board the rate calculation sheets for actual pricing and with the adjusted rates utilizing fund balances to mitigate increases. Also for comparison purposes, it is worth noting the cost of receiving Sturbridge's water at the consumer's faucet versus the costs of other consumables, namely:

Hot Coffee: \$7.56 / gallon
Bottled Water: \$4.77 / gallon
Gasoline: \$3.79 / gallon
Sturbridge Water: Less than \$0.01 gallon

In summary, based upon the Board's clear direction to hold rates as low as possible, a rate structure that utilizes fund balances to mitigate against increases for the coming fiscal year was recommended. The result was that sewer rates can be held flat, but, the water rate (due to the Mass. DEP-mandated treatment facility upgrade) will need to rise by \$0.57 per 100 cubic feet even with the \$195,000 fund balance contribution. The rate recommendation sheet was also provided for the Board's review.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen, in its capacity as Water and Sewer Commissioners, adopt the following Water and Sewer rates for FY13 (effective 6/30/12):

FY13 Water Rate: \$4.98 per 100 cubic feet
FY13 Sewer Rate: \$7.97 per 100 cubic feet
And maintain FY13 flat sewer at \$150/quarter

By M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

BOS Budget Review

(Continuation of budget book review) Barbara Barry, Finance Director and Police Chief Thomas Ford appeared before the Board. S. Suhoski submitted to the Board a summary sheet for final clarifications and revisions to the Town Administrator's recommended budget. He presented an overview and reasons to fund the School Resource Officer.

Chief Ford discussed past history and discussed the 2000 SRO grant and federal funds. He said that SRO minimum at 75% of time as SRO, balance as Sturbridge patrol officer. M. Dowling said that she supported the SRO. M. Blanchard said that the SRO should be funded by the school district. P. Gimas indicated that she supported the SRO. A. Ellison said that she did not feel that this is the time to fund the SRO position or other new positions. T. Creamer said that he would support the SRO, but had reservations about the funding of such.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant

The proposed Annual Town Meeting warrant was emailed to the Board. There were a total of 31 proposed articles including the three citizen petitioned articles and the three placeholders for potential roadway acceptance.

It was S. Suhoski's understanding that the Planning Board will meet on April 10 to determine the status of the roadways; thereafter, the Board would vote to "lay out" the roadways during a public meeting prior to the Annual Town Meeting.

Article 3: Town Budget

MOTION: To place Article 3 on the warrant, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

Article 5: Water Department

MOTION: To place and support Article 5, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

Article 6: Sewer Department

MOTION: To place and support Article 6, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

Article 8: Community Preservation Debt Service

MOTION: To place and support Article 8, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

Article 9: Revolving Funds

MOTION: To place and support Article 9, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

Article 11: Betterment Committee

MOTION: To place Article 11, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

Article 12: Commercial Tourism District Plan

MOTION: To place Article 12, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To not support Article 12, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

T. Creamer stated that as the Betterment Committee and Sturbridge Tourist Association had allocated half of the funds necessary and that the current approach now resulted in a cost-sharing approach with respect to Hotel/Motel taxes dedicated for public improvement and tourism now shouldering half of the costs, he could support the reduced level of funding being requested at \$60,000 in Article 12.

MOTION: That the Board support Article 12 at \$60,000, by M. Dowling.

2nd: M. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor.

Article 13: Capital Improvement Plan

MOTION: To place Article 13, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

Article 17: Stabilization Fund

MOTION: To place and support Article 17, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.

Article 19: Proposed Zoning Amendment – Historic Commercial District

MOTION: To place and support Article 19, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.

Article 20: Proposed Zoning Amendment – Amend Chapter Two: Definitions

MOTION: To place and support Article 20, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.

Article 21: Proposed Zoning Map Amendment

MOTION: To place and support Article 21, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.

Article 22: General Bylaw: Regulation of Collection Receptacles

MOTION: To place and support Article 22, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.

Article 26: Amend Regional School District Agreement

MOTION: To place Article 26, by T. Creamer
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: Four in favor; M. Blanchard opposed.

MOTION: To support Article 26, by T. Creamer.

2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: Three in favor; M. Dowling and M. Blanchard opposed.

Article 27: Acceptance of Regep Lane

MOTION: To place Article 27, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Dowling
Vote: Four in favor; M. Blanchard abstained, as she is an abutter.

Article 28: Acceptance of Public Ways – Hunter Lane and Evergreen Lane

MOTION: To place Article 28, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Dowling
Vote: All in favor.

Article 29: Acceptance of Public Ways – Highland Lane and Meadow View Lane

MOTION: To place Article 29, by P. Gimas
2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Article 30: Citizen Petition – FY13 Budget

MOTION: To move Article 30 to after #3, by M. Blanchard

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To close the Annual Town Meeting warrant for June 4, 2012, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

Special Town Meeting

A Special Town Meeting is required for at least one known article: to transfer \$55,000 from free cash to the landfill purchase of services account to fund the higher than expected costs of leachate removal in FY12. As you know, this service was re-bid in February and a new vendor is now in place at a substantial savings going forward.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen call a Special Town Meeting to be held immediately following the Annual Town Meeting on June 4, 2012 and to open the warrant for same, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

Article 66: Transfer of Funds – Landfill/Leachate Removal

MOTION: To place and support Article 66, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

Miscellaneous Items

S. Suhoski's focus has remained on the ATM Warrant and finalizing the budget recommendations. Following are updates on other ongoing matters:

- **Mountain Brook Private Road Association:** (no change) Further to the Board's direction, additional research and reporting is being initiated.

- **Riverlands Environmental:** (no change from prior.) As reported previously, the groundwater sampling will be conducted this week with the final report and findings/recommendations anticipated by the first week in May. It is hoped that large portions of the site will be deemed "clear" and that any mitigation will be focused to specific areas.

- **Insurance Advisory Committee:** S. Suhoski conducted initial discussion with collective bargaining representatives, non-union personnel, retiree representatives

concerning the status of the Town's insurance plan offerings and potential modifications. Plan is to have follow-up meeting on Monday, April 9 or April 16.

- **Walker Road Improvements:** CME and the DPW Director field-walked and staked Walker Road to review potential impacts of a 21-foot wide ROW versus an 18-foot ROW. The draft plans will be shared with residents within the next 14 days for comment before bringing the matter back before the Board.

- **Walker Pond Drainage:** Dave Prickett of Tighe & Bond submitted a revised technical memorandum. It will be reviewed by the DPW Director and S. Suhoski next week so that they are prepared for discussion with the Board at an upcoming meeting.

- **Route 15 Wastewater/Water:** (no change) The report was emailed to the Board last week. Tighe & Bond can undertake additional work seeking USDA or other grants at a separate cost.

- **Other Meetings / Miscellaneous:** S. Suhoski attended meeting at CMRPC with Town Planner re: potential regional economic development grant and study; met with Finance Committee member re: budget; met with Town Planner and sign-maker re: Center Office Building signage; met with residents of private road re: drainage culvert and flooding concerns; attended Land Use Division meeting; met with MIIA insurance representative re: loss control and "rewards" program; attended "advanced" training session for Virtual Town Hall; met with Finance Director re: budget and warrant; met with DPW Director and debris monitoring vendor regarding documentation for October Nor'easter.

Correspondence

M. Blanchard read the correspondence list into the record.

Old Business

M. Blanchard asked about the status of the roads program. S. Suhoski said that it would be completed and presented in advance of the Annual Town Meeting. M. Blanchard stated that it would be helpful to have it in advance for budgeting purposes. T. Creamer also stated that the program has been requested on numerous occasions.

M. Dowling said that A. Ellison had offered to assist with ideas concerning updates to the Town's website.

MOTION: To direct A. Ellison to recommend methods to revise website and report back to the Board, by M. Dowling.

2nd: M. Blanchard

Vote: Four in favor; A. Ellison abstained.

April 2, 2012

T. Creamer advised the Board about a letter-to-the-editor calling into question the Board of Selectmen's information with respect to the budget. He composed a response on behalf of the Board, and stated that the allegations were incorrect and not factual.

T. Creamer addressed Article 4 and that, while he opposed increased staffing levels and pay increases for all non-union personnel, he does not support Article 4 as he believes it goes too far.

New Business

M. Dowling announced the Easter Egg Hunt to be held on the Town Common, and how it is a wonderful event.

M. Dowling thanked outgoing Selectman A. Ellison for being "genuine, intelligent and sincere." T. Creamer and M. Blanchard said that Selectman Ellison "was a pleasure to work with" and wished her well.

MOTION: To adjourn, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date