

July 9, 2012

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MINUTES  
JULY 9, 2012**

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

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

**Public Service Announcements**

T. Creamer announced that he will request an executive session so that the Board may review updated information regarding 310 Main Street.

M. Redetzke announced that the next "Meet the Selectmen" will be held on Thursday, July 12<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Town Common, with T. Creamer and M. Redetzke. She suggested that attendees bring chairs, as there will be a concert afterward.

M. Redetzke announced that the Joshua Hyde Library will hold a book sale on Saturday, August 11<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the lower level of the Library. She encouraged residents to attend and purchase books, as the sale is an important source of revenue to support the many programs offered by the Library.

M. Redetzke announced that the Senior Center will hold a Swing and Ballroom Dance on July 18<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Lessons on swing dancing will be offered between 6:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. She noted that it is not just for seniors so anyone may attend.

M. Redetzke announced that a Senior Talent Show will be held on July 25<sup>th</sup> at the Senior Center from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Rehearsals will be held on July 20<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. She noted that this event is also open to everyone.

T. Creamer announced that a recording device was being used by a member of the press. He said that he had spoken with Lauren Goldberg of Kopelman and Paige, and requested an update on the Open Meeting Law with respect to announcing recordings of meetings.

P. Gimas said that she had received phone calls from residents complaining about children playing ball with bats and hard balls at the Concerts on the Common. She expressed concern about concert attendees being hit by hard balls and being injured.

She said that children may play with soft balls at the Common, but asked that they not bring bats or hard balls. S. Suhoski will follow up with the Recreation Director on this matter.

M. Dowling arrived at 6:40 p.m.

### **Department Head Reports**

Scheduled were the Building Inspector, Police Chief and Fire Chief. T. Creamer noted that the Town Administrator switches the order of presentation so that one department head does not always have to be last and leave late.

David Lindberg, Building Inspector, reviewed his report with the Board. He noted that building permit activity is up 15% over the previous year, and there has been no significant trend up or down. He said that there have been nine building permits issued for commercial projects, which is worth about \$3.4 million in new growth to the Town, which is encouraging. He said that there have been five permits for single family dwellings so far this year.

T. Creamer said that there are four or five foundations on Route 131 for projects that have not been completed. He said that until projects have been completed, it is unknown what the benefits will be, as they are not generating money as of right now.

T. Creamer said that Mark Lev, the former Building Inspector, listed in his end of year reports the amount of new growing from construction and the estimated value, and in his monthly reports he would list potential new growth. He suggested that D. Lindberg consider doing that, and noted that it is important data. It was the consensus of the Board that the information be provided quarterly.

P. Gimás said that massive violations have been occurring on weekends. She said that during flea market weekends, Route 20 looks like Brimfield, with items being sold in parking lots on Route 20. She suggested that D. Lindberg consider working one Saturday per month (unannounced) at his discretion, and then taking a day off during the week. D. Lindberg said that it would be possible to work something out.

T. Creamer said that there were three complaints which were hand delivered to the Building Inspector regarding zoning violations on a certain street. After two months had passed, the residents contacted T. Creamer, citing a lack of response on the Building Inspector's part. T. Creamer said that 112 days had passed prior to the residents receiving any response from the Building Inspector or Zoning Enforcement Officer. He said that he still has not received a response as to why it had taken so long to respond to the residents, or a justification of how the Building Inspector had arrived at his decision. He said that when he requests information on behalf of residents, he expects to get a response, and residents should not have to wait an unreasonable time for a response. He suggested that the Town Administrator and Building Inspector take a look at the customer service approach.

T. Creamer said that he had been informed by a number of residents that a construction project had started in Sturbridge without all of the necessary paperwork being submitted or signed. He had also been told that a member of the Building Department staff had been told to take care of the paperwork and sign off on it. He reached out to that staff member who confirmed that in fact there was paperwork that was given to her, and she was asked to process the paperwork in advance of the Building Inspector reviewing the project. He asked whether there was something in state law that authorizes the Building Inspector to deputize staff to take on functions for him, and if such is the case, then there is no issue or concern.

D. Lindberg assured the Board that no one on his staff had been asked to sign off on anything, as it is his responsibility. T. Creamer said that the staff member said that she was told to process the paperwork, and that the project could go ahead void of the necessary paperwork. D. Lindberg said that the project being discussed is a multi-phased project that has been properly permitted for the work that is being done. He noted that there are components of that job that have not been finalized yet, but there is no construction work going on for those components yet.

T. Creamer said that either the staff member had not provided him with accurate information, or she is confused as to what she was asked to do. He asked D. Lindberg to clarify with his staff what she should and should not be doing, as there had been a misunderstanding.

Under the Police Chief's report was an update from the Emergency Management Working Group that S. Suhoski had established with Chief Ford to advance upon the Board's stated goal for him *"to develop a written plan and funding proposal to ensure a functional emergency management structure and Emergency Operations Center."* Based upon our preliminary work to date, it was obvious that the first item to be addressed was to develop an improved "functional emergency management structure" through an updated All-Hazards Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan tailored for the Town of Sturbridge. Thereafter, the plan and budget for an EOC that meets the needs articulated in the plan can be developed.

Under the Fire Chief's report, it was requested that the Board review the Chief's memorandum received July 3<sup>rd</sup> relative to the house numbering on Walker Road. The house numbers on this road advance in a "descending" manner from the entrance at New Boston Road rather than a traditional "ascending" manner, which may be due to the closure of the outlying portion of the road through the state forest. The Chief and S. Suhoski are seeking guidance on whether the Board wishes to consider this issue as part of the discussion over road improvements, or, whether the Board would prefer it be handled as a separate matter. It was the consensus of the Board that S. Suhoski be permitted to raise this issue during the August 6<sup>th</sup> public hearing.

M. Dowling left at 8:30 p.m.

### **Government Service Study Committee**

A copy of the white paper prepared by Chairman Creamer was copied to the Board's packets. A copy of the posting for citizen-at-large vacancies with a closing date of July 23<sup>rd</sup> was submitted to the Board.

T. Creamer asked whether the Board would accept the white paper, with the amendment about the membership, as the basis for the study. M. Blanchard said that the Government Service Study Committee should review it first and make recommendations. She did not like the word "confidence" on the title page.

It was the consensus of the Board that the members of the GSSC review the document under the chairmanship of P. Gimas, and make a determination at that point as to which direction to take it.

T. Creamer said that the Board of Selectmen will review the applications and choose the people who meet the preferred qualifications to serve on the committee.

### **Regional Trails Master Plan**

The legal ad was read into the record.

T. Creamer noted that some updated documents were sent to the Board by the Trails Committee. He asked the Town Administrator to post the new information on the Town's website. S. Suhoski said that there is a direct link to the Trails Master Plan under Current Events on the Town's website. He noted that it was also placed on the Public Hearing banner.

It was the consensus of the Board to continue the hearing to July 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:45 p.m.

M. Dowling returned to the meeting.

### **FY13 Senior Municipal Service Program – Initial Appointments**

S. Suhoski informed the Board that the Assessor's Office has qualified the first five applicants for the FY13 program. He noted that the initial group were people that Bill Mitchell will have working on special projects to organize and update his office, as well as a volunteer for the Town Administrator's office that helps to maintain Town Hall in a clean condition. S. Suhoski requested that the Board approve the following individuals for the FY13 SMSP to be assigned as indicated:

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Address</u></b>	<b><u>Department</u></b>
Barbara Berthiaume	Clarke Road, Fiskdale	Assessing
Bernice Brioso	Crescent Way, Fiskdale	Assessing
Margaret Fox	Cricket Drive, Sturbridge	Assessing

July 9, 2012

Diane MacNaughton  
Wayne Belles

Camp Road, Fiskdale  
Crescent Way, Fiskdale

Assessing  
BOS / TA

**MOTION:** That the Board of Selectmen approve the above-named persons and assignments under the FY13 Senior Municipal Service Program, by M. Blanchard.

**2<sup>nd</sup>:** P. Gimas

**Vote:** All in favor.

### **Town Hall Office Hours**

S. Suhoski said that as discussed at the Board's July 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, all Town Hall and Center Office Building departments have adapted lunch schedules so as to provide coverage between the hours of 12-1:00 p.m. S. Suhoski submitted to the Board a copy of the department schedules. He noted that there will be exceptions to coverage where part-time or limited staff offices are involved, or, during vacation or sick leave. Whenever offices are not covered during the lunch hour they are posted as such.

### **Stump Removal Program and Grant Application**

S. Suhoski submitted to the Board a memo from the DPW Director responding to two requests for cost information from the Board. One item was the estimated stump removal costs for Willard Road at \$4,760+/- . DPW crews have already removed four stumps through force-account labor and in-house equipment. A contracted grinder will begin work on the larger stumps on July 10. The grant application to the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs was filed on July 6<sup>th</sup> and acknowledged as received. Based upon additional debris estimates on the trail system, the final proposal was for \$310,000 in debris removal, reclamation and specialized equipment costs. The Board was copied on the application.

### **Conservation Agent**

S. Suhoski and the Conservation Commission Chairman are determining another finalist to interview, as one withdrew when his current position was re-funded for FY13, and another is pursuing private-sector work. They reviewed over 40 applications, interviewed six preliminary candidates and one finalist. Because of the withdrawals, S. Suhoski anticipates that the Board will be provided with information on his recommended appointee prior to the July 16<sup>th</sup> meeting for requested action on July 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Other Matters:** Following are updates on various ongoing items:

- **SCTV Equipment Upgrade IFB:** The bid opening was conducted on July 6 with three vendors submitting: (1) Valley Communications of Chicopee, (2) Boreal Media of Hudson, NH, and (3) The Camera Company, of Norwood. The Cable Advisory Committee will review the bids on July 10 with the Town Administrator and will request an award be made by the Board of Selectmen at the July 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. S. Suhoski

noted that this equipment, once fully installed and operational, will greatly enhance the scheduling and playback of programming, as well as provide the platform for “video on demand” for public meetings.

- **Town Hall / Center Office Building Project:** (no change) S. Suhoski sought quotes for installation of the screening for the HVAC units at Town Hall and is seeking quotes for installation of outdoor water spigots at Town Hall (and, alternatively at COB). He met with the Town’s project manager and he outlined a recommended process for advancing the HVAC and remaining warranty claim (plaster / paint repair on first floor). He will keep the Board apprised.

- **Solar Power Project Status:** The Energy Advisory Committee is now seeking a meeting date in advance of a requested July 23 presentation to the Board of Selectmen. On July 23, the EAC and BlueWave Capital will present site alternatives and a recommended course-of-action.

- **Riverlands Environmental:** The draft final report was provided to the Town and disseminated by email to the Board. S. Suhoski will need to further review in consult with the project engineer to determine the implications of the testing and to recommend next action steps. It is clear that more work will be required in a couple of targeted areas.

- **Insurance Advisory Committee:** (no change) The Board included insurance review as a specific goal. Given the pendency of Town Meeting, S. Suhoski will seek to schedule additional meetings once completed.

- **Walker Road Improvements:** S. Suhoski and the DPW Director met with a group of residents on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, and the office has received additional written correspondence from other residents. The discussion centered upon roadway width, impact to trees within right-of-way, aesthetic concerns, safety/speed concerns, likely improved house values with paved street, etc. There is a mix of opinion. The Chairman has set a Public Hearing for August 6<sup>th</sup> and all abutters to the road will be invited by letter as well as the traditional postings.

- **Walker Pond Drainage:** (no change) Dave Prickett of Tighe & Bond presented phasing options at the May 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. S. Suhoski learned recently from the DPW Director that Mr. Prickett is no longer with the firm. Separately, he initiated inquiries about potential grant funds for portions of the work.

- **Route 15 Wastewater/Water:** (no change) The report was emailed to the Board. Tighe & Bond can undertake additional work seeking USDA or other grants at a separate cost. S. Suhoski and the Town Planner successfully worked to include this project in the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy document prepared by the regional planning commission. It is helpful to have projects shown as a regional priority when seeking grant funds and S. Suhoski appreciated Jean Bubon’s assistance on this item.

- **Municipal Buildings Study:** Lamoureux-Pagano Associates has initiated their field work and will promptly prosecute the scope-of-work. S. Suhoski anticipates the report to be completed by September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- **Mountain Brook Private Road Association:** (no change) S. Suhoski sent a courtesy email on 6/29 inquiring of status of road association's efforts.
- **Town Administrator Goal #4 and #5:** The first quarterly report for these goals was completed on July 2<sup>nd</sup> and submitted to the Board's mailboxes.
- **Other Meetings / Miscellaneous:** S. Suhoski met LPA to discuss additional maintenance scope for building study; met with Fire Chief re: various operation/personnel matters; met with (2) citizen walk-ins re: Walker Road; conducted resident meeting with DPW Director for Walker Road Improvement project; prepared and submitted tornado recovery grant; met with D. Fairbrother re: cable equipment bids; met with walk-in citizens re: late tax payment (tendered in pennies); reviewed, assisted and posted vacancy notices for part-time data collector and part-time clerk for Board of Health.

### **Old Business**

M. Dowling inquired as to when the Sturbridge Lakes Advisory Committee was going to return. T. Creamer indicated that it would likely be in September. S. Suhoski will ask the SLAC Chairman about the revised regulations.

M. Dowling asked S. Suhoski when and how a document can be brought to the Board for discussion. S. Suhoski advised that he has requested Town Counsel's guidance, as it is not clear how this document (a personnel record) can be brought forward publicly, or whether it would be the appropriate subject for an Executive Session. M. Dowling indicated that she would continue to bring it forward until it is resolved.

M. Blanchard asked when the afghan that was donated by the Senior Center would be hung up in Town Hall. S. Suhoski stated that the afghan is in the office, but had not been a top priority, but that he would get the fabric hung up.

M. Blanchard said that there had been citizen concerns regarding low wires on Shepard Road. S. Suhoski said that he had been in contact with both Verizon and National Grid, and both utilities will work together. He said that Verizon did acknowledge that the wires were too low, but that he was not yet provided with a timeline or scope of work.

M. Redetzke asked about the status of the leak in the Library roof. S. Suhoski advised that C & C Temperature Controls will be on site on July 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> to seal the HVAC intake fan as recommended by the municipal building study architects. He is awaiting a response from Applied Roofing to add a seal to the Main Street side of the building under the skylights.

July 9, 2012

T. Creamer advised that there have been requests for water exception meters, and that he would like to schedule a policy discussion by the Board. The Board would like examples of the rate impact if there were exception meters. S. Suhoski said that Town staff could provide illustrative examples at a "gross level" but that a consultant would be needed for an entire rate structure review.

T. Creamer requested that he be provided with the "raw" minutes before the Town Administrator's review. M. Redetzke said that she would like them also.

M. Dowling said that businesses should be allowed to capitalize during the Brimfield flea market weeks.

### **New Business**

M. Redetzke noted that the Town would be responsible for maintenance of the Honor Roll on the front lawn of Town Hall, and asked whether there was special care that should be utilized for the bricks. S. Suhoski said that he would review it and advise.

T. Creamer asked whether there was any progress on the use of the Wetlands Protection Fund for Conservation staffing. S. Suhoski said that he had discussed it with the Conservation Commission Chairman, and the Recording Secretary could be paid on a percentage basis, as her work is essential to the duties of the Commission in fulfilling Wetlands Protection Act work. S. Suhoski said that this would be determined in the coming weeks.

T. Creamer asked for the Board's thoughts on whether to sell advertising space in the Town Report to help defray costs. The consensus of the Board was not to pursue advertising.

T. Creamer said that all committees should have their minutes posted online. S. Suhoski will remind them.

### **Ask the Selectmen/Citizens' Forum**

A caller commented on inadequate parking for the Concerts on the Common. S. Suhoski will discuss the matter with the Police Chief and Recreation Director.

**MOTION: To adjourn, by M. Blanchard.**  
**2<sup>nd</sup>: P. Gimás**  
**Vote: All in favor.**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

July 9, 2012

Judy Knowles

---

BOS Clerk

Date