

March 12, 2012

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
MARCH 12, 2012**

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

Angeline Ellison and Mary Blanchard were absent.

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

Jamey Pedro – One-Day Liquor License

Jamey Pedro requested a one-day liquor license for a birthday party being catered by Cedar Grill at 8 Caron Road, Sturbridge on March 17, 2012.

MOTION: To approve the one-day liquor license pending notification of the Police Chief, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Dowling

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

Cable Advisory Committee – Tantasqua Education Channel

Mary Afable of the Cable Advisory Committee discussed the Charter contracts of the towns of Brimfield and Brookfield, and suggested that they participate in funding the Tantasqua education channel.

T. Creamer said that he would reach out to the Brimfield Board of Selectmen and discuss the possibility of meeting with them to address the situation, and if amenable, he would like to have two members of the Sturbridge Board of Selectmen participate in the discussion should a meeting be arranged.

Budget Discussion

T. Creamer outlined the outstanding issues with respect to the warrant article request for funds specific to the Commercial Tourist Development Plan. He noted that the Sturbridge Tourist Association had discussed this at a public meeting and will allocate \$35,000 to CTD. S. Suhoski said that Betterment will review it at their March 13th meeting. He said that he would provide the Board with a budget breakdown for the March 19th meeting.

M. Dowling submitted copies to the Board of information regarding the Tantasqua Regional School District budget and administrative salaries.

March 12, 2012

It was the consensus of the Board to get details on the Building Inspector's permits by category and historic numbers.

Lyme Disease Awareness Month – Sturbridge Lyme Awareness of MA (SLAM)

S. Suhoski informed the Board that SLAM is again seeking to adorn the Town Common with lime green ribbons to promote awareness of Lyme Disease. The group has booked the Town Common for Saturday, May 5 with a May 6 rain date for their event. The group has requested the Town to provide "porta potties", however, this is not an expense carried in any budget, and, the Town does not provide these for any private events whether non-profit or otherwise. T. Creamer suggested that they seek funding from the Sturbridge Tourist Association.

SLAM founder Trish McCleary of Sturbridge has been asked by Governor Patrick to serve on a newly assembled 'Lyme commission' to study Lyme disease within the Commonwealth and she is eager to begin that work.

As noted in Ms. McCleary's attached email, SLAM's monthly "Tick Talk" meetings take place at The Joshua Hyde on the 2nd Tuesday of every month. There is more information on the group in the email.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen authorize the placement of lime green ribbons on the Town Common in recognition of the month of May being known as Lyme Disease Awareness Month, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: Three in favor; two absent.

Department Head Reporting

The following was offered for the Board's consideration. S. Suhoski said that over the past year, due to the extraordinary events, we have lost the consistency in terms of timing for department head reports to the Board. He said that it would be helpful to return to a predictable schedule, so that staff can prepare and schedule their evenings before the Board. Historically, department heads appeared every other month. S. Suhoski suggested a quarterly reporting schedule for the coming year that will also include rotating appearances from some of the "smaller" departments:

April 2012:

Police
Fire
DPW
Water / Sewer

January 2013:

Fire
DPW
Water / Sewer
Police

+ Conservation/Trails

+ Council on Aging

July 2012:

Water / Sewer

Police

Fire

DPW

+ Recreation

April 2013:

Police

Fire

DPW

Water / Sewer

+ Conservation/Trails

S. Suhoski noted that the Town Planner and Finance Director are not included as they typically appear before the Board several times per year on an as-needed basis.

It was the consensus of the Board to postpone action until the next meeting, when a full Board is present.

Personnel Policy re: Flex Time

At the last meeting, the Chairman had raised a question concerning so-called “comp time” with the view towards discussion. S. Suhoski said that notwithstanding “past practice,” there is no mechanism in Sturbridge to grant compensatory time that would accrue for non-exempt (salaried) employees. These employees are typically the department heads. In order to provide a mechanism for equity, Section 6.6 of the Personnel Policy allows the Town Administrator to exercise discretion to adjust the schedules of exempt employees “when additional hours have been worked on special projects, emergencies or attending evening meetings.” In S. Suhoski’s view, this policy is effective and he has consistently outlined his expectations to the staff. T. Creamer reminded all that policy is the sole domain of the Board of Selectmen, and that the Board needed to determine the validity and appropriateness of any Flex/Comp time initiatives. He read the following from the Personnel Policy Handbook: “Any changes must be initiated and approved by the Board of Selectmen. No other representative of the Town has the authority to change, modify or alter statements made in this handbook.” He went on to say that the Board of Selectmen needed to review this policy for consistency and equity.

Storm Related Vegetative Debris Removal

S. Suhoski reported that both the Route 15 and Route 20 sites have been cleared of debris. The contractor and DPW will conduct final cleanup in the near term. Also, the cleanup of the Town Barn fields and DPW access road is also complete. The only remaining debris activity associated with the tornado is the forest plan for Stallion Hill Conservation Area which was recently approved. The next action steps will be to ensure documentation for reimbursement from FEMA / MEMA from whom additional contract documents were received this week.

Conservation Easements

Old Sturbridge Village: S. Suhoski said that for the last three years, Conservation staff has been negotiating terms of an easement on Old Sturbridge Village property. The easement adjacent to the Leadmine Mountain Conservation Land was planned to provide a handicapped accessible parking area and trail segment to accommodate handicapped users. This document was drafted by Town Counsel and is presently going through the approval process with the OSV Board of Directors. The original easement document was signed by the members of the Conservation Commission, and notarized. The Conservation Commission requested that the Board of Selectmen approve and sign it, and return it to the Conservation Department.

MOTION: That the Board approve the conservation easement from Old Sturbridge Village to the Town of Sturbridge, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Dowling

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

Spaho (Regep Lane): S. Suhoski said that as part of the approval of the Spaho (Regep Lane) subdivision Order of Conditions DEP #300-720, two properties within the subdivision were conditioned requiring Conservation Easements (Lot 5 and Lot 4). The Conservation Commission requested that the Board of Selectmen approve and sign both conservation easements, and return them to the Conservation Department.

MOTION: That the Board approve the conservation easements for Spaho Lot 4 and Lot 5 Regep Lane, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Dowling

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

Miscellaneous Items

Following are some updates from Tuesday through Thursday this week:

- **Mountain Brook Private Road Association:** The MBPRA is scheduled to speak with S. Suhoski to discuss the project budgets and financing options. He had an initial conversation with Town Counsel concerning whether the Town can serve as financier through betterments.

- **Riverlands Environmental:** The Town is awaiting results and recommendations from the additional drilling and sampling activities from early February which are expected by the end of March.

- **AAB Variance Update:** The Contractor completed removal of the old railings and steel affixed to the granite today. The completed coring of the granite to accept the new railings which are now stored on site, but ran into ledge just

below the bricks that will require additional removal for a sufficient concrete base. S. Suhoski expects the work to be completed on Friday. Once complete S. Suhoski will document the work to the AAB to close out this item.

- **Walker Road Improvements:** (No change) CME is near completion of an initial plan, profile and cross-sections and expects to share preliminary drawings with Town staff by the end of February. After any further revisions required by Town officials, the draft plans will be shared with the Board of Selectmen and the DPW Director and S. Suhoski will seek a follow-up meeting with the residents of the road.

- **Walker Pond Drainage:** (No change) Dave Prickett of Tighe & Bond has advised that they have a bit more work to do to finalize next steps and recommendations. He indicated a report would be forthcoming this month.

- **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.

- **WWTP Noise Concerns:** At S. Suhoski's behest the DPW Director informed the project engineer that a formal change order proposal should be presented to the Board no later than the March 20 meeting. S. Suhoski requested the engineer's presence that evening to outline the rationale for the mitigation.

- **Other Meetings / Miscellaneous:** Discussion with Sterling Municipal Light Dept. general manager regarding solar and muni utility issues; conducted department head meeting; met with Plumbing Inspector; prepare for and meet with Energy Advisory Negotiating Sub-committee and BlueWave Capital to initiate power purchase agreement discussions; met with Finance Director and DPW Director to review various water/sewer abatement requests.

Correspondence

T. Creamer read the correspondence list into the record. He said that Mrs. Brosnan had sent an email to the Board regarding her tax issue; he will copy it for the Board.

T. Creamer said that the Board had received a citizens petition, and the Town Clerk had certified the signatures. It was to request a transfer from free cash the sum of \$315,000 for the Town to purchase the property and building at 310 Main Street (next to Town Hall).

MOTION: To open the warrant for the June 2012 Annual Town Meeting, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Dowling

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

MOTION: To place the citizens petition on the June 2012 Annual Town Meeting warrant, by P. Gimas

2nd: M. Dowling

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

Old Business

M. Dowling announced that there is still time to sign up to enter the Recreation Committee's "Family Ham Toss" to be held on Friday March 16th at 6:00 p.m. Participants will be eligible to win a free ham.

P. Gimas announced that Alberto Mercado's book signing will be held on March 24th at noon at the Sturbridge Coffee House.

P. Gimas asked about the status of the DPW vehicles. S. Suhoski said that the DPW vehicles are marked with identification on their doors. He noted that the DPW Director and Operations Manager have the ability to bring their Town vehicles home. T. Creamer requested a list of the individuals who are authorized to take Town vehicles home, and the rationale behind it.

T. Creamer said that there have been complaints about the condition of the rest rooms at the Information Center on Route 20, and there is the sense that the Sturbridge Tourist Association is not doing its job, but they are not responsible for cleaning or maintenance of those rest rooms; they are maintained under the Town's cleaning contract.

T. Creamer said that the information regarding the Sturbridge Tourist Association membership on the Town's website should be updated.

T. Creamer said that the Sturbridge Tourist Association will come forward with a warrant article for the Special Town Meeting to transfer \$15,000 from Special Events into Community Support. He noted that because of bad weather, some special events had not been held.

T. Creamer thanked the Community Preservation Committee for their informative presentation. He noted that the vast majority of CPA articles that involve borrowing require a 2/3 vote at Town Meeting.

T. Creamer said that there had been a recent Letter to the Editor which called into question comments made by three members of the Board of Selectmen. On behalf of the Board, he responded and read his statement into the record which clarified the misinformation.

March 12, 2012

T. Creamer asked about the status of the clothing bin bylaw. S. Suhoski said that Town Counsel had drafted language for the bylaw, and it will appear in the next draft warrant.

T. Creamer said that the Police Chief had sent an email which verified that Pizzeria Uno had served their suspension on February 6, 2012.

New Business

M. Dowling spoke to the Boston magazine listing of best places to live and how Sturbridge has all of the positive qualities, such as open space, schools, infrastructure improvements, etc.

T. Creamer asked about the Local Emergency Planning Committee, and when they had last met. S. Suhoski said that they had last met in October, and they meet quarterly. T. Creamer said that the Town is required to have the LEPC under state and federal law, and noted that there are nine vacant spots on that committee. He asked S. Suhoski to schedule a meeting of the LEPC, and to find out where the Town stands in terms of emergency management, and the status of its membership.

T. Creamer asked how many department heads have been NIMS trained, which can be done online, with a certificate to be printed after completion. S. Suhoski said that he would provide that information to the Board. He noted that the Finance Committee had approved the emergency notification system funding.

Ask the Selectmen/Citizens' Forum

P. Gimas received a call from Ginger Peabody, who said that sidewalk crossings throughout Sturbridge have become very faint and difficult to see. She suggested that they be repainted. S. Suhoski said that he would speak to Greg Morse, DPW Director, about it.

Barbara Search read a statement into the record regarding solicitation of signatures at the Senior Center being allowed under state law. She said that she would allow Selectmen candidates to collect signatures at the Senior Center.

MOTION: To adjourn, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Dowling

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

March 12, 2012

BOS Clerk	Date
-----------	------