

September 24, 2012

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 24, 2012**

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

P. Gimas, Vice-Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. following the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Service Announcements

M. Blanchard announced that the ribbon cutting and open house for Burgess Elementary School will be held on Sunday, September 30th at 1:00 p.m. at Burgess Elementary School.

M. Redetzke announced that the next Meet the Selectman will be held on September 28th at 9:00 a.m. at the Sturbridge Coffee House, with M. Blanchard and M. Dowling.

M. Redetzke announced that Trails Work Day will be held on Saturday, September 29th from 9:00 a.m. till noon.

The Winebuyer's Outlet – Change of Location

Attorney Edmond Neal appeared before the Board. As the applicant had not notified the abutters, it was the consensus of the Board to continue the hearing to give the applicant time to comply with that requirement.

MOTION: To continue the hearing for the Winebuyer's Outlet for a change of location on their liquor license to October 1, 2012 at 6:35 p.m., by M. Blanchard.
2nd: M. Redetzke
Vote: All in favor.

Water Exception Meters

S. Suhoski, Shane Moody, Veolia Water North America, Greg Morse, DPW Director made a Powerpoint presentation regarding the water exception meters, followed by a lengthy discussion.

T. Creamer arrived at 7:00 p.m.

M. Dowling asked whether the Town could legally treat condominium owners differently from homeowners when all sewer users use the same water that is not treated at the sewer plant. She asked about 5% vs. 45%. S. Suhoski said yes, it will change the rate impact.

M. Dowling mentioned the survey of communities. S. Moody spoke to that.

John Degnan presented information regarding Crescent Gate. He said that 40% of water use at Crescent Gate going to irrigation, and that invoicing could be an illegal tax. He asked about a reduction meter.

M. Dowling suggested that the Town Administrator inquire of Town Counsel whether the billing procedure followed by the Town has ever been ruled as an illegal tax by the courts.

Thomas Ford, Sturbridge Hills Condominium Trustee, requested that they not be charged sewer for outdoor irrigation. He noted that there were 120+ meters, and 27 meters for irrigation.

Peter Zeh said that he will pay for watering his lawn, but the sewer rate is ridiculous.

Charles Roncaioli said that sub-metering is common, and suggested checking with National Grid.

T. Creamer spoke to the concerns regarding exception meters and general community costs. He said that communities that do allow deduction meters have conditions.

M. Blanchard agreed with T. Creamer and said that no property has 100% of water go into sewer, so 1:1 is the fairest way.

M. Dowling said that everyone's rate is the same, with no savings shown to the Town.

Ronald Uminski said that irrigation meters are already in the system.

T. Creamer said that there may be valid exceptions under very limited circumstances, and he was open to reviewing the issue more comprehensively.

Mark Edmonds suggested spreading the rate over all taxpayers.

Greg Morse spoke to inflow and infiltration and costs of treatment options.

Charles Roncaioli offered to assist with the review.

Draft Water Regulations

MOTION: To adopt preliminary regulations pending the outcome of the public hearing or modifications if the Board of Selectmen adopts the exception meters, by T. Creamer.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

Old Business

None.

New Business

M. Blanchard announced that Heather Hendrick had resigned from the Economic Development Advisory Committee.

MOTION: To accept the resignation of Heather Hendrick with regret and thanks, by M. Dowling.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

T. Creamer questioned whether the EDAC has sufficient guidance and reminded the Board that the membership will be present for the October 1 meeting.

S. Suhoski spoke to the CDBG process and the need for a public hearing on the updated Community Development Strategy document. The Board agreed to schedule the discussion for the October 15, 2012 agenda. The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission will be the principal grantwriter and will publish the legal ad for the hearing. The Town Administrator and Planner will provide local support.

MOTION: To convene in executive session under MGL Chapter 30A, §18-25, 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: P. Gimas in favor; T. Creamer in favor; M. Redetzke in favor; M. Dowling in favor; M. Blanchard in favor.

The Board convened in executive session at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date

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