

March 13, 2013

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
MARCH 13, 2013**

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

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. following the Pledge of Allegiance.

Village Gateway District

T. Creamer said that a number of edits have been sent to the Board of Selectmen by the Planning Board. He noted that the Planning Board, with respect to the bylaw itself, voted to make sure that all of the edits were in place. The following represents the actions taken by the Planning Board with respect to items before the Board of Selectmen this evening:

1. Move to be the petitioner for the proposed sign bylaw and to amend Chapter Two with the definitions provided and to forward them both to the Board of Selectmen to begin the process.
Motion made by Mr. Blanchard
2nd: Ms. Hart
Vote: 6-0
2. Move to be the petitioner for the proposed Village Gateway District bylaw and to forward the bylaw to begin the process.
Motion made by Mr. Cunniff
2nd: Ms. Waters
Vote: 6-0
3. Move to be the petitioner for the proposed zoning map change to change the property at the corner of New Boston Road and Route 20 (21 New Boston Road) from part suburban residential and commercial to Village Gateway District.
Motion made by Mr. Blanchard
2nd: by Ms. Hart
Vote: 6-0

P. Gimas noted that everything that had been underlined represented changes made at the last meeting. T. Creamer said that the Planning Board had also voted in support of the Village Gateway District, which includes the parcel at New Boston Road and Rt. 20.

He said that as it is their petition, they will be able to make any necessary changes at their public hearing. He distributed an outline of what could be proposed for that lot.

**MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen refer to the Planning Board to report on their motions on the bylaws:
Move to be the petitioner for the proposed sign bylaw and to amend Chapter Two with the definitions provided and to forward them both to the Board of Selectmen to begin the process, and allow them to schedule a public hearing, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.**

T. Creamer said that the Regional School Committee will have questions for Chief Ford regarding the proposed School Resource Officer. Chief Ford said that he would be prepared to field any of their questions at this point. Chief Ford indicated that he has not had the opportunity to do a field implementation map, and it would be an effort on the part of the school and the Police Department to find out what their needs are. He said that he would draft a document for the Board of Selectmen.

Chief Ford said that his position is no different from the last time, and he will do an executive summary. S. Suhoski noted that the school administration needs to develop this with the Chief.

M. Dowling said that she would like to be forward looking, as opposed to looking back at four years ago. T. Creamer said that the Board should be fully prepared with information identifying the roles and responsibilities of the SRO.

Chief Ford said that the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee are the driving force behind creating that position. He said that the Board's support needs to be heard, and suggested letting the member of the committee know that the Town of Sturbridge is behind it and ready to support the position.

M. Redetzke asked whether the SRO position would require the purchase of another police vehicle. Chief Ford said that it would not, as officers do not have assigned cars.

M. Dowling asked Chief Ford to take the lead when going before the School Committee, as to why the position is needed. Also, at Town Meeting she will ask the Chief why this position is warranted, and how it will enhance the students' educational experience. S. Suhoski indicated at the same meeting that he has provided the avenue for funding the position.

M. Redetzke suggested that the officer who was the original School Resource Officer provide his input also. Chief Ford said that Officer Lombardi had been the SRO at that time, and it was the Chief's intention to bring Officer Lombardi along at the School Committee meeting as well.

Michael Caplette noted that there is a state law that enables out of town residents to attend, provided that they are heads of departments. He said that he could recognize Chief Ford at Town Meeting, and there is nothing to stop the Chief from addressing Town Meeting himself. He said that his policy to allow people who are not Sturbridge voters to participate at Town Meeting.

Chief Ford informed the Board that Officer Lombardi runs the Student Police Academy, and it is normal business for him to maintain contact with the school. T. Creamer said that the concept of the SRO is based in part on security, but that it is more about community policing within the school. He said that it enhances development of a good relationship between students and police. He said that it will be important for the Board of Selectmen to be kept in the loop, as representatives responsible to the community, once there is a program and parameters have been established for the program. He noted that the Finance Committee had voted 6:0 to support this program.

M. Blanchard said that she supported the program, but that Sturbridge should not fund the whole thing. T. Creamer noted that five towns comprise the district, but the logistics of determining when, where and how the SRO would be utilized during non-school periods would result in potential conflict between communities. As such, he believed it best for command and control purposes for the SRO to be paid for by one community, in this case Sturbridge, as Tantasqua is located within our borders.

Chief Ford said that on the Finance Committee's vote was on the concept of the SRO. They did not look at any numbers. M. Dowling said that a year ago it was not unanimous but they voted to support the SRO as contained in the budget within the wages of the Police Department. She noted that the clarification is important.

P. Gimas said that she would work through the community and get a support base. M. Redetzke said that she supports the position of SRO but strongly suggested looking into creative funding and seeking financial support from the other four towns. S. Suhoski said that funds are available and suggested building partnerships.

T. Creamer said that the proper process would be for the Board of Selectmen to meet with the executive branches of each of the communities and to petition the School Committee.

T. Creamer asked that members of the Board seriously consider the potential ramifications of a vote that is an important message to the community in terms of what the Board feels with respect to enhancing the educational experience of the children and find a way to support it.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen recommend funding the School Resource Officer in the Police Department budget consistent with the line item presented to the Board for FY14, by M. Dowling.

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2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: Four in favor; M. Blanchard opposed.

It was the consensus of the Board to post a meeting of the Board of Selectmen to meet with the Tantasqua School Committee on March 19th at 7:00 p.m.

MOTION: To adjourn, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:07 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date