

January 6, 2014

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MINUTES  
JANUARY 6, 2014**

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

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

**Public Service Announcements**

M. Dowling announced that it is the duty of the individual businesses to clear snow from the sidewalks in front of their business following a storm, unless the storm is so severe that the Town Administrator directs DPW to plow them. She noted that some businesses have not cleared the snow, making it impossible for people to walk on the sidewalks. S. Suhoski said that the Town has not started to issue tickets yet this year.

**Department Head Report: Lynne Girouard, Recreation**

Lynne Girouard appeared before the Board, and provided an update on various ongoing programs.

**Federal Highway Reimbursement for October 29, 2011 Nor'easter – \$18,786.70**

S. Suhoski said that Town staff diligently works to document and obtain state and/or federal reimbursement of costs associated with the various natural disasters of the past few years.

While FEMA and MEMA funds have been received, he submitted to the Board a notice from MassDOT that our request under the FHWA Emergency Relief Program has been determined eligible for up to \$18,786.70 in reimbursable costs from the Halloween Nor'easter of 2011. This program covers certain costs on so-called "federal aid" eligible roadways that are not covered by the FEMA program (i.e. Brookfield Rd., Fiske Hill Rd., Mashapaug Rd., New Boston Road).

Public works and safety administrative staff, primarily Elissa Splaine and Melissa Rozzen, had to separately account for response costs on these roadways. Now, two years after the fact, the Town is eligible to receive its reimbursement upon execution of the standard grant contract.

S. Suhoski thanked Elissa and Missy for their efforts to deal with the reporting requirements so that the Town is able to receive these benefits.

**MOTION:** That the Board of Selectmen authorize the Town Administrator to execute any required information to access reimbursement under the FHWA Emergency Relief Program for the October 29, 2011 severe storm and snowstorm, by M. Redetzke.

**2<sup>nd</sup>:** M. Blanchard

**Vote:** All in favor.

### **Community Development Block Grant Project Update**

S. Suhoski said that on December 26<sup>th</sup> the Town received the counter-signed grant from the Dept. of Housing & Community Development in the amount of \$640,000 to complete the wastewater improvement project in the Kelly Road neighborhood.

On December 20, S. Suhoski met with Jim Mazik of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Mary Berry of Sturbridge Retirement Cooperative and Barbara Barry, Finance Director, to discuss the status of the grant, bid-ready design drawings for the improvements and grant administration.

S. Suhoski noted that because the CDBG reserve funds had significantly fewer administrative costs, the SRC will help subsidize the costs so that PVPC can manage the grant on behalf of the Town as was proposed in the original grant application. He noted that over the next few months, the plans will be further advanced for public bidding, the parties will need to enter into appropriate subgrantee or consulting agreements to facilitate the work, and various administrative requirements will need to be fulfilled so that the grant funds can be timely accessed. Any agreements will come before the Board of Selectmen for approval and S. Suhoski will update the Board as the project advances.

**Other Matters:** Following are brief updates on other pending matters from the Town Administrator's report.

- **Municipal Buildings:**

- ***Library (updated 1/2)*** – A single leak has been detected from the skylight system and our vendor has been notified for temporary repair. As you know, the skylight project has been submitted for the FY15 capital plan. The gutter replacement project requires re-bidding and separation from other painting and repair elements. It was learned this week that the initial cost quoted omitted the need for a lift for the rear elevation (Town Common) of the Library.
- ***Town Hall / Center Office Building (updated 1/2)*** – The Town's HVAC vendor had to replace several faulty valves in both Town Hall and COB. It appears that these valves may be an ongoing maintenance issue, so a few extra were ordered. S. Suhoski is working to have an electrician provide a cost estimate and loading estimate for generation at Town Hall and COB as

requested by the Board of Selectmen. He had previously advised that, between the efforts of Lt. Mark Saloio, and a grant opportunity that he is exploring, he may gain access for up to \$12,500 towards installation of a portable generator for Town Hall. This item will stay on the report until realized.

- **Public Safety Complex (updated 1/2)** – CME has completed design development and the funding is part of the Special Town Meeting warrant.
- **Infrastructure Projects:**
  - **Champeaux Road Bridge (updated 1/2):** This project is eligible for state Chapter 90 funds. The Board has also requested that S. Suhoski research whether other sources of funds are available to help cover the estimated \$1.45 million total cost of bridge replacement. Following is a concise summary of the recent chronology:
    - November 2012: Study report completed by CME Associates, Inc.
    - March 2013: Town Administrator and DPW Director met with Army Corps of Engineers project manager re: project and potential funding.
    - June 2013: Town Administrator and Board of Selectmen author letters to Governor supporting increase to general Chapter 90 allocation.
    - July 2013: Governor increases initial Ch. 90 allocation from \$150M to \$200M (or \$432,116 for Sturbridge).
    - July 2013: Town Administrator met with representative from USDA-Rural Development concerning various funding opportunities for public projects.
    - July 2013: Champeaux Road residents met with Board of Selectmen to discuss project and timeline.
    - August 2013: Town Administrator submits letters-of-interest through CDBG-DR grant program for Champeaux Road bridge replacement and for Walker Pond drainage improvements.
    - August 2013: DPW Director and Town Administrator met with residents of Champeaux Road to review preliminary plans and timeline as requested by Board of Selectmen.
    - August 2013: following request of Town Administrator, Rep. Todd Smola inquires about state funding through MassDOT (none available, however, MassDOT regional engineer to work with DPW Director on review of CME plans and options).
    - CME incorporated verbal comments from Army Corps of Engineers into preliminary plans.
    - The DPW Director completed review of preliminary plans.
    - Site meeting with CME, DPW Director and MassDOT conducted on October 11<sup>th</sup> to further design development and inquire about state bridge funding.
    - DPW Director completed review of 75 percent design plans. Meeting with DPW Director, Town Administrator and CME engineers held on January 2<sup>nd</sup> to offer final comments. Once design approved by DPW

Director it will be presented to the residents and then the Board of Selectmen. Ultimately, the project will need to be budgeted through Ch. 90 and/or other resources by approval of Board of Selectmen.

- Next: project estimated for January-February 2014 bid with one year construction period commencing early summer 2014 subject to availability of funds. The Town is seeking to incorporate penalties for slow performance and modest bonuses for early completion and avoidance of lengthy detours.
- **Other Meetings / Miscellaneous:** Other items include: completed performance evaluations of department heads; conducted Insurance Advisory Committee meeting; met with Tree Warden; participated in “PJ story time” at the Library; met with Conservation, Trails, DPW and CME Associates regarding Grand Trunk Trail TEA grant scope of work; met with DPW Director regarding Champeaux Road status and Mountainbrook Road design status.

### **Correspondence**

M. Redetzke read the correspondence list into the record.

### **Public Hearing – Layout of Turner Lane**

S. Suhoski submitted to the Board notifications of the Board’s intent to layout Turner Lane and conduct a public hearing. The Planning Board voted on December 10<sup>th</sup> to petition the Board of Selectmen to lay out this way. The Board voted its intent to lay out Turner Lane on December 16<sup>th</sup> and scheduled the hearing.

S. Suhoski submitted to the Board the December 26, 2013 joint memorandum from the Town Planner and DPW Director advising that the road is constructed in accordance with the approved plans and recommending the Board adopt the Order of Layout and recommending acceptance of Turner Lane to Town Meeting (*see proposed 1/27/14 STM Article No. 28*).

P. Gimas asked if there was any public comment.

**MOTION:** To close the public hearing, by M. Blanchard.  
**2<sup>nd</sup>:** M. Redetzke  
**Vote:** All in favor

**MOTION:** That, whereas the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Sturbridge, acting pursuant to MGL c. 82, §§21-24, having deemed that common convenience and necessity require the lay out as a town way of Turner Lane, hereby lays out Turner Lane as a public way as shown on the plan referenced below, and

**Whereas the boundaries of said way as laid out are shown on a plan entitled “Whittemore Woods: Sturbridge, MA, Acceptance Plan for Turner Lane” prepared**

for Turner Lane Homeowner's Association, dated November 14, 2013, prepared by Waterman Design Associates, Inc., which plan was referred to the Planning Board and which plan is hereby adopted as a part of this order, and all land lying within the above described boundaries of Turner Lane is hereby laid out as town ways.

The aforementioned plan is hereby forwarded to the Town Clerk for filing and the foregoing layout is hereby reported to the Town for acceptance, by M. Redetzke.

2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor

S. Suhoski requested that the Board sign the Order of Layout and he will advise the Town Clerk of the Board's approval.

### **Public Hearing: Logging Permit – Fiske Hill Road, Hall Road, Chase Road**

Craig Masterman, of Yankee Woodlands appeared before the Board and described the proposed operations. He submitted an application for logging permits on behalf of two abutting properties that share some common ownership, namely,

- 74+/- acres off Fiske Hill Road owned by The Adam Trust and The Watson Trust (DCR approved cutting plan File No. 287-6770-14), and
- 36+/- acres off Hall Road and Chase Road owned by the Adam Trust (DCR approved cutting plan File No. 287-6771-14).

Both of the forest cutting plans were approved for the period of December 20, 2013 through December 20, 2015 by the state forester.

The Conservation Commission had reviewed the plans and submitted a memorandum of approval stating that *"Mr. Masterman has done a wonderful job of selecting trees for harvest and leaving a significant number of these [large oak tree] monarchs for seed trees and forest regeneration."*

The DPW had submitted a memorandum stating that the required \$5,000 road maintenance bond must be submitted for the landing site off Chase Road prior to any trucking commencing. The hauling from the Fiske Hill Road site will be to Route 20 through the New England Truck Stop property, and thus no local road bond is required.

A copy of the combined certified abutter's list for the parcels was submitted to the Board, and roughly 75 percent of the "green cards" have been returned as of this date. Proof of notification for the balance, as well as the newspaper tear sheet, will be required.

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Abutters to the property said that they had been given short notice regarding the public hearing. It was the consensus of the Board to continue the hearing to January 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

**MOTION: To continue the public hearing to January 21, 2014 at 7:00 p.m., by M. Blanchard.**  
**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Redetzke**  
**Vote: All in favor.**

**Selectman Dowling: Discussion re: Sturbridge Tourist Association**

This item had been requested by Selectman Dowling. She distributed a memorandum dated January 6, 2014 outlining potential revisions to the STA bylaw. Brian Amedy was supportive of it; Kevin Smith agreed with the ideas; and Carol Childress agreed with the suggestions, and they were supportive of reviewing options to improve..

It was the consensus of the Board to continue to matter to January 21, 2014.

**Donation of Land off Stonybrook Drive**

S. Suhoski informed the Board that this potential donation dates back to 2008-2009. Apparently, at that time the Town was considering of land from Rehabilitative Resources, Inc. for certain parcels in the Stonybrook Drive subdivision. According to Town Counsel, there were title issues that precluded the transfer at that time.

Earlier this year, Atty. Edmond Neal advised that he had resolved the title issues and inquired about whether the Town would now accept the land. The offer includes six parcels of land totaling 8.69 acres. Information was disseminated to various committees for review and the acquisition was supported by:

- Open Space Committee (5-0 vote on July 18, 2013)
- Planning Board (6-0 vote on July 23, 2013)
- Conservation Commission (5-0 on July 18, 2013)
- Town Planner (email dated December 31, 2013)

Perhaps the best descriptor of the parcels and why they would be beneficial for acquisition comes from Carol Goodwin's report for the Open Space Committee:

This property begins at the dead end of Stoney Brook Road (sic) with a right of way onto Cricket Drive. In the middle of the largest lot is where Stoney Brook, a perennial stream runs. This stream connects into various wetlands on the backland of Route 20 and ends up as a tributary to the Quinebaug River. Consequently, the property contains a valuable water resource. Also, because of wetlands on adjacent properties and the proximity of the 43 acres of Sanctuary (sic) preserved open space, a sizable wildlife corridor is being created. The Cricket Drive neighborhood has many small lots and is a densely developed. This property gives some actual

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preserved open space as the Open Space Subdivision Bylaw would, only after the fact. The new open space property would increase the value of the adjacent homes. Accepting this property as conservation land is a win-win.

Following the same process as the 2013 donation of land off Old Mashapaug Road from Buddy Soper to the Conservation Commission, S. Suhoski recommended the Board approve it.

M. Redetzke inquired as to the reasoning for accepting the parcels. She noted that there were buildable lots within the six parcels being donated to the Town. M. Redetzke questioned the reasoning as to why we are removing these parcels from the tax rolls. M. Redetzke also questioned the future development of this property relative to costs and potential nuisance issues for abutters. She noted that these questions were informational in nature and not an opposition to accepting donated property.

**MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen confirm and assent to the gift of six parcels of land off Stonybrook Drive from Rehabilitative Resources, Inc. to the Conservation Commission as proposed by correspondence and accompanying legal description from Atty. Edmond A. Neal, III dated April 12, 2013, by M. Redetzke.**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Blanchard**

**Vote: All in favor.**

**Special Town Meeting: Monday, January 27, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.**

S. Suhoski submitted to the Board the proposed Warrant as revised following the Board's December 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, and with review and revisions from Town Counsel and the Finance Director. He suggested that the Board vote its recommendations on the various articles.

S. Suhoski suggested that the Board "re-open" the Warrant to include the Board of Health articles, which are now complete.

**MOTION: To re-open the Special Town Meeting warrant, by M. Blanchard.**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: P. Gimás**

**Vote: All in favor.**

**Article 27: Acceptance of Tannery Road**

**MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 27, by M. Blanchard.**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: P. Gimás**

**Vote: All in favor.**

**Article 27: Acceptance of Turner Lane**

**MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 28, by M. Blanchard.**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: P. Gimás**

**Vote: All in favor.**

**Article 29: Zoning Bylaw Amendments**

**MOTION:** That the Board place and support Article 29, by M. Blanchard.

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

**Vote:** All in favor.

**Article 30: Request for Special Legislation – Sewer Betterment Abatement for 47 Hillcrest Street**

**MOTION:** That the Board place and support Article 30, by M. Blanchard.

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

**Vote:** All in favor.

**Article 31: Transfer of Funds – DPW/SEIU Collective Bargaining Agreement**

**MOTION:** That the Board place and support Article 31, by M. Blanchard.

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

**Vote:** All in favor.

**Article 32: Transfer of Funds – Purchase Front-End Loader**

**MOTION:** That the Board place and support Article 32, by M. Blanchard.

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

**Vote:** All in favor.

**Article 33: Transfer of Funds – Replace Police Dept. Garage Floor**

**MOTION:** That the Board place and support Article 33, by M. Blanchard.

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

**Vote:** All in favor.

**Article 34: Transfer of Funds – Fire Dept. Accounts**

**MOTION:** That the Board place Article 34, by M. Dowling.

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

**Vote:** All in favor.

**MOTION:** That the Board support Article 34, by M. Dowling.

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

**Vote:** Two in favor; M. Redetzke opposed; M. Blanchard abstained.

**Article 35: Transfer of Funds – Unpaid FY13 Bills**

**MOTION:** That the Board place and support Article 35, by M. Blanchard.

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

**Vote:** All in favor.

**Article 36: Transfer of Funds – Unpaid FY13 Bills Sewer Fund**

**MOTION:** That the Board place and support Article 36, by M. Blanchard.

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

**Vote:** All in favor.



**Article 37: Transfer of Funds – Stabilization Fund**

**MOTION:** That the Board place and support Article 37, by M. Blanchard.

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

**Vote:** All in favor.

**Article 38: Transfer of Funds – Board of Health**

**MOTION:** That the Board place and support Article 38, by M. Blanchard.

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

**Vote:** All in favor.

**Article 39: Transfer of Funds – Board of Health**

**MOTION:** That the Board not place Article 39, by M. Blanchard.

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

**Vote:** All in favor.

**MOTION:** That the Board close the warrant for the January 27, 2014 Special Town Meeting at Tantasqua High School Auditorium, and direct the Town Administrator to implement proper posting of same, by M. Blanchard.

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

**Vote:** All in favor.

M. Redetzke requested that the Board reopen the warrant to revise her vote on Article 34. She stated that she wanted to clarify her vote as one not in opposition but in abstention. M. Redetzke stated that she agreed with M. Blanchard's request at a prior meeting for additional detailed information about the overtime expense request in Article 34. The information was not received; therefore, she could not in good conscience support the request.

**MOTION:** That the Board reopen the Special Town Meeting warrant to reconsider the vote on Article 34, so that a member may revise her vote, by M. Dowling.

**2<sup>nd</sup>:** M. Blanchard

**Vote:** Three in favor; P. Gimas opposed.

**MOTION:** That the Board reconsider the vote on Article 34, by M. Dowling.

**2<sup>nd</sup>:** M. Blanchard

**Vote:** Three in favor; P. Gimas opposed.

**MOTION:** That the Board support Article 34, by M. Dowling.

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

**Vote:** Two in favor; M. Redetzke and M. Blanchard abstained.

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**MOTION:** That the Board re-close the warrant for the January 27, 2014 Special Town Meeting at Tantasqua High School Auditorium, and direct the Town Administrator to implement proper posting of same, by M. Blanchard.  
**2<sup>nd</sup>:** P. Gimas  
**Vote:** All in favor.

### **Town Administrator Evaluation Methodology**

P. Gimas requested that the Selectmen submit their comments to her by January 15, 2014. P. Gimas will compile and give to M. Dowling (for secondary review) by January 22<sup>nd</sup>. S. Suhoski's evaluation will take place on February 3, 2014.

It was the consensus of the Board to include a tool to reflect actual Board member statements.

### **Old Business**

There was no old business.

### **New Business**

M. Blanchard suggested that the Saturday Budget Meeting be scheduled on March 1, 2014 starting at 8:30 a.m.

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

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

Respectfully submitted,  
Judy Knowles

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BOS Clerk

Date