

February 3, 2014

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
FEBRUARY 3, 2014**

Present: Priscilla Gimas, Chairman
Mary Blanchard
Mary Redetzke
Mary Dowling (arrived at 6:28 p.m.)
Shaun Suhoski, Town Administrator

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. following the Pledge of Allegiance.

It was the consensus of the Board to reschedule the executive session to March 3, 2014 to discuss pending litigation, due to the weather.

Public Service Announcements

M. Redetzke announced the Tax Assistance Program (due by February 15, 2014).

M. Redetzke announced the Library Book Sale to be held on February 8, 2014, from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

M. Blanchard asked whether the Tax Assistance Program had been published in the newspaper.

M. Blanchard announced that nomination papers must be taken out by February 21, 2014, and due back to the Town Clerk by February 24, 2014.

M. Blanchard announced the Burgess School Committee budget hearing.

Correspondence

M. Redetzke read the correspondence list into the record.

FY13 CDBG – Administration Contract

The Board had been emailed the proposed tri-party grant administration contract between the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Town of Sturbridge and Sturbridge Retirement Cooperative. S. Suhoski said that the total costs for administration of the \$630,000 grant are \$40,000 to be split evenly between the Town and SRC. He provided the scope of work to the Board.

Note that the Town's administrative costs are wholly funded by the grant. The SRC will contribute their portion from private resources. The agreement had been approved by the Dept. of Housing & Community Development.

Following execution of the contract, the PVPC will next complete documentation for environmental review clearance and release of federal funds, while Beta Engineering will contemporaneously advance the designs towards complete public bid documents. S. Suhoski requested that the Board authorize the Chair to execute the grant administration contract.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen authorize its Chair to execute a tri-party contract for grant administration services between the Town, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and Sturbridge Retirement Cooperative (SRC) in an amount not-to-exceed \$40,000. Funding for such contract shall be \$20,000 from the Town's FY13 Community Development Block Grant Reserves allocation and \$20,000 from the SRC, by M. Redetzke.

2nd: M. Blanchard

Vote: Three in favor; M. Dowling absent.

Budget Development Ongoing

S. Suhoski and the Finance Director have been carefully reviewing departmental budget requests and working to finalize a FY15 proposal that is balanced and within revenue projections. This document is anticipated to be ready for dissemination on February 21st to allow time for review prior to the Budget Kickoff Meeting on Saturday, March 1st.

Other Matters: Following are brief updates on other pending matters.

- **Municipal Buildings:**

- ***Library (updated 1/17)*** – The Town's insurer has elected to secure tarps over the skylight system to abate any leaks over the winter. Funding for the replacement has been submitted for the FY15 capital plan. The Library Director, Building Inspector and S. Suhoski have met together on several occasions – including with outside vendors – to review the exterior needs of the Library including the gutter replacement and projected needs for slate roof repair, exterior painting and cupola repair. They are working on an action plan for presentment next month.
- ***Town Hall / Center Office Building (updated 1/2/14 – no change)*** – Separately, S. Suhoski is working to have an electrician provide a cost estimate and loading estimate for generation at Town Hall and Center Office Building as requested by the Board of Selectmen. He had previously advised that, between the efforts of Lt. Mark Saloio, and a grant opportunity that S. Suhoski is exploring, they 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 1/31)** – CME Associates have been authorized to proceed with final design and development of bid documents for this project that was approved at the January 27 Special Town Meeting. S. Suhoski will forward the projected timeline, once received from the engineers.
- **Infrastructure Projects:**
 - **Mountainbrook Road Betterment / Drainage Project (updated 1/17):** The DPW Director and S. Suhoski met with four representatives of the Mountainbrook Private Road Association to review final draft plans and discuss bidding timelines. It is expected that plans will be submitted to the Conservation Commission for review and approval in February with bidding to commence thereafter. A target date of April 7th has been established to bring a bid to the Board of Selectmen for award.
 - **Champeaux Road Bridge (updated 1/23):** 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 11th 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 2nd 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.
 - In late January 2014, requested state legislators and area representative to support including this project in state transportation bond bill.
 - Received confirmation that project was included in the House version of the transportation bond bill. This is a necessary step, but will still require Senate concurrence and release of funds from the Governor.
 - 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: attended Special Town Meeting; assisted BOH Agent with interviews for public health inspector position; held extensive briefing session with Chief Ford and Chief Zinther; conducted preliminary interviews with two candidates for Principal Assessor; initiated work on approved STM articles; extensive meetings with Finance Director re: FY15 budget development.

Town Administrator's Evaluation

The Board discussed a composite evaluation as prepared by Selectman Gimas and reviewed by Selectman Dowling. The Town Administrator had previously submitted a self-evaluation form and requested a 1.5 percent merit pay for 2013. Supplemental information was offered during the evaluation.

P. Gimas read the composite scores from the Selectmen. S. Suhoski provided a response.

MOTION: That the Board sign the Town Administrator's evaluation, attesting that it reflects the general consensus of the Board of Selectmen, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Three in favor; M. Dowling absent.

M. Dowling arrived at the meeting at 6:28 p.m.

MOTION: That the Board offer 1% merit, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: P. Gimas

After much discussion, the motion was withdrawn.

MOTION: That the Board offer 1% merit, with 0.5% to be awarded now, and 0.5% to be held in abeyance, subject to review by June 30, 2014, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: P. Gimas and M. Blanchard in favor; M. Dowling and M. Redetzke opposed.

MOTION: That the Board review a possible merit increase in this fiscal year, subject to further review, by M. Dowling.
2nd: M. Blanchard
Vote: M. Blanchard and M. Dowling in favor; P. Gimas and M. Redetzke opposed.

MOTION: That the Board support a 0.5% merit increase for the Town Administrator, by M. Redetzke.
2nd: M. Blanchard
Vote: Three in favor; M. Dowling opposed.

P. Gimas stated that she had voted “yes” with reservation, as she would support a higher amount.

Minutes

MOTION: To approve the minutes of January 6, 2014 as amended, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: M. Redetzke
Vote: All in favor.

Common Victualler License Application – Sweet Kiwi, 440 Main Street

The owners of Sweet Kiwi had been invited to attend the meeting to respond to any questions concerning their Common Victualler license application. The business is owned by the same family that owns Kaizen Restaurant. The applicant was unable to be present, so it was the consensus of the Board to reschedule the matter to the February 18th meeting.

S. Suhoski noted that the applicant will need to specify the days of operation and whether Cynthia Tsang is an officer of the corporation.

Old Business

MOTION: To designate the Finance Director to coordinate ongoing surplus computer equipment disposal to the School Department, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Three in favor; M. Redetzke opposed.

M. Redetzke suggested that the Board review the Master Plan Implementation Committee checklist at the March 3rd meeting.

M. Redetzke reminded Town staff to check and lower the thermostats in their offices on nights and weekends.

New Business

M. Redetzke suggested that the Board discuss the potential railroad stop during the March 17th meeting.

Citizens' Forum

The Board heard the statement of Marilyn Desy concerning the Commercial Tourist District Plan via a letter dated February 1, 2014.

MOTION: To adjourn, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date