

March 3, 2014

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

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

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

Request for Executive Session at 5:30 p.m. to discuss pending litigation.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen convene in Executive Session under MGL c. 30A, Section 21(a), Exemption No. 3 to discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public body, and the chair so declares, and to adjourn from Executive Session to reconvene in Open Session, by M. Redetzke.

2nd: M. Blanchard

Roll Call Vote: P. Gimas in favor; M. Redetzke in favor; M. Dowling in favor; M. Blanchard in favor.

The Board convened in executive session at 5:34 p.m.

The Board reconvened in open session at 6:45 p.m.

Correspondence

M. Redetzke read the correspondence list into the record.

Public Service Announcements

M. Blanchard announced that the Burgess budget meeting will take place on March 6th.

Kenneth MacLellan: Taxi/Livery License

Kenneth R. MacLellan, of Charlton, made an application for a taxi/livery operator license under the business license of Charles River Service, Inc., 2 Main Street.

The application was reviewed and approved by Chief Ford on February 13th and a copy was distributed to the Board's mailboxes. Mr. MacLellan appeared before the Board.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen approve a taxi/livery operator's license to Kenneth R. MacLellan, of Charlton, under the business license issued to Charles River Service, Inc., 2 Main Street, pursuant to the application approved by the Police Chief on February 13, 2014, by M. Redetzke.

2nd: M. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor.

Pole Relocation Hearing – Main Street

Verizon New England, Inc. and Massachusetts Electric Company petitioned to relocate the jointly owned utility pole (No. T.181/E.88) to a location 73 feet northwesterly from the center line of Hinman Street. This relocation is related to the redevelopment of the Cumberland Farms site on Main Street. The plan was forwarded to the Tree Warden and DPW Director for review and comment.

Elizabeth Caldwell of Verizon appeared before the Board to outline the relocation and answer any questions. The applicant provided evidence of notification to the certified abutters. There was a discussion regarding the possibility of moving the pole to the edge of the sidewalk.

MOTION: To continue the public hearing to March 17th at 6:45 p.m., by M. Blanchard.

2nd: M. Redetzke

Vote: All in favor.

Department Head Report – Chief Ford

Police Chief Thomas Ford reviewed his reports with the Board. He thanked retired Police Officer Pamela Desplaines for her service, and offered best wishes in her retirement.

Chief Ford announced that the Sturbridge Police Dept. had received the AAA Award for Traffic Safety and the Gold Award for safety.

Appointment of Principal Assessor: Ann Murphy

On February 26, S. Suhoski had emailed the Board a copy of the resume of Ann Murphy, of Monson, who has agreed to accept the position of Principal Assessor at a starting salary of \$62,000 per year effective on Monday, March 17th .

Ann has worked in the assessor's office in the town of Monson for nearly seven years, including five years as the Principal Assessor for the town. Before that she worked in the assessing and collector's offices in the town of Hampden for five years. She holds her Mass. Accredited Assessor certification (MAA #1170) and serves on the Hampshire County Assessing Association's Executive Board since 2013.

The Town received nearly a dozen applications, and the Finance Director and S. Suhoski had conducted five preliminary interviews. Ann was one of two preferred candidates that were introduced at a Board of Assessors' meeting, and her references are outstanding.

S. Suhoski and the Finance Director are confident that Ann will be a strong asset to the Town's Finance Department for years to come and S. Suhoski requested that the Board of Selectmen ratify the appointment.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen ratify the Town Administrator's appointment of Ann Murphy, of Monson, to the position of Principal Assessor at a starting annual salary of \$62,000 effective March 17, 2014, and subject to a six-month probationary period, by M. Redetzke.

2nd: M. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor.

Planning Board – Request for Support of Commercial Tourist District Plan

S. Suhoski said that the concept plan for the Commercial Tourist District has roots dating back to 2008 and 2009 when the Town collaborated with the Central Mass. Regional Planning Commission through a state grant to develop a vision for this key commercial corridor.

Since then, other initiatives have been informed by the needs in the CTD including the Master Plan Update, the Open Space and Recreation Plan, the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, the Recreation Trails Master Plan and the regional Central Thirteen Prioritization Project. Notably, the Master Plan update and Recreational Trails Master Plan had extensive public participation components.

In June 2012, Annual Town Meeting approved funds targeted towards bringing the “vision” into a substantive Commercial Tourist District Plan that would embody the long-term strategy for the district. The Town retained Pare Corp. and formed a CTD Working Group to work with and assist the consultants in drafting the plan.

The CTDWG met regularly from April 2013 through January 2014, conducting three public forums and a public hearing on the plan that culminated with the group voting unanimously on January 2, 2014 to recommend that the Planning Board adopt the plan as a guide for future development and to seek funding to implement the plan in the future.

Subsequently, the Planning Board adopted the plan on January 14, 2014, by a 7-0 vote, as a tool to guide future development proposals in the corridor and to serve as the basis to seek grant and other funding for implementation of the plan. A detailed chronology was provided to the Board.

On February 7th the Board of Selectmen had received a written request from the Planning Board to support of the Commercial Tourist District Plan so that the Town Administrator and Town Planner have clear direction to proceed with a search for funding to implement the plan’s recommendations. A copy of the full presentation was distributed to the Board, along with the Planning Board’s letter request.

S. Suhoski asked that the Board consider that:

- The Plan is consistent with MassDOT’s Healthy Transportation Policy Directive (announced September 20, 2013) that will require all state transportation projects to increase bicycling, transit and walking options.
- The Plan is consistent with the Commercial Tourist District Revitalization Plan, Master Plan and Recreational Trails Master Plan. The plan focuses not only on the utilitarian function of the roadway, but on creating linkages to natural resource areas, trails and other community assets.
- The Plan provides guidance to the Planning Board and MassDOT when considering access points on Route 20.
- The Plan will help facilitate safe development of the corner of New Boston Road and Route 20.
- The Plan will provide ADA compliance in regards to pedestrian clearance and accessible curb ramps.
- The Plan identifies locations for trees and landscaping, lighting, pedestrian furnishings and other elements that provide life, color and texture which in turn make a street comfortable, interesting and more usable for pedestrians.

- Since Route 20 is our Main Street, this project can help create a “sense of place” and a feeling that this is truly a Main Street where people want to visit, socialize and even exercise. This human interaction with the built environment, will, over time bring more people to this area to stay for longer periods of time.
- The Plan provides for enhanced pedestrian crossings that create a safer environment for pedestrians and the crossings are provided for at key locations such as the Host Hotel to Friendly’s, for example.

Based upon the support of Town Meeting to fund this plan, the series of public forums and a public hearing to solicit input, the Planning Board’s unanimous vote to adopt the plan, and the absolute need to improve this commercial corridor for the long-term economic health of the district, I request the Board of Selectmen to support the plan and to authorize the Town Administrator to seek funds for eventual implementation.

P. Gimas read a statement into the record regarding the chronology. Jean Bubon, Heather Hart, Sandy Gibson-Quigley and Charles Blanchard appeared before the Board.

S. Gibson-Quigley provided the Board with an overview and the Planning Board vote of January 14, 2014.

H. Hart discussed the Commercial Tourist District Working Group’s process.

P. Gimas said that this will allow the search for grants, then return to the Town for a decision. M. Blanchard pointed out that the Plan is an idea for future development. M. Dowling thanked everyone who was involved.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen vote to support the Commercial Tourist District Plan as adopted by the Planning Board on January 14, 2014, and to authorize the Town Administrator and staff to explore funding opportunities for implementation of the plan, by M. Redetzke.

2nd: M. Blanchard

Vote: Three in favor; M. Dowling opposed.

Emergency Operations Plan Acceptance

S. Suhoski noted that in November 2013, the Board of Selectmen had been briefed on the extensive work undertaken to update the Town’s Emergency Operations Plan. Key to this update are utilizing the “whole community” approach towards emergency management and making greater use of the

resources of the CERT program volunteers as part of the emergency management response.

The Board voted in November 2013 to continue to recognize the National Incident Management System and ICS as the protocol, but there was no formal adoption of the **“Sturbridge All-Hazard Emergency Operations Plan.”** The plan is composed of five volumes:

- VOLUME I: The Basic Plan and Introductions
- VOLUME II: The Response Organizations Functional Annexes
- VOLUME III: Hazard Annexes for Natural, Technological, and Human-caused hazards.
- VOLUME IV: Emergency Management Checklists, Forms, Tools and Procedures.
- VOLUME V: The Notification and Resource Manual (NARM)

The plan is predicated on the following proposed Mission Statement:

It is the primary mission of the Town of Sturbridge – Office of Emergency Management (OEM), to manage and coordinate a response to any emergency situation in a safe and timely manner. The primary goals of this plan are: the protection of lives; the preservation of property; the protection of the environment, and rapid resumption of business activity and community services. In order to accomplish these goals, the plan defines who does what, when, where, and how in order to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural, technological, and manmade disasters.

Since the Board’s meeting in November, the EOP components have been presented to the Local Emergency Planning Committee in January, and the Board of Selectmen received an update on the activities of the CERT program in February.

S. Suhoski submitted to the Board the promulgation statement and proposed succession of authority document for execution, if the Board should adopt the Sturbridge EOP.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen adopt the Sturbridge All-Hazard Emergency Operations Plan effective March 3, 2014, and execute the promulgation and succession of authority statements related thereto, by M. Redetzke.

2nd: M. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor.

Transfer of Class 2 License – 29 Main Street

Robert Cassim made a written request that his existing Class 2 used car dealer's license for 29 Main Street be transferred to his brother, William Cassim, who would operate the business under the name Billycars. William Cassim, who resides in Wilmington, has completed an application for the license and indicated that the business would be open Monday through Sunday from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. and that the lot will continue to hold no more than the 15 vehicles currently allowed. The Police Chief has not noted any concerns.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen approve the transfer of the Class 2 license of Robert Cassim to William Cassim d/b/a Billycars for the premises at 29 Main Street for a maximum of 15 vehicles, by M. Redetzke.

2nd: M. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor.

Master Plan Implementation Committee

The Board requested this discussion item. S. Suhoski had not had the opportunity to research the status of these items as of yet. It was the consensus of the Board to defer action to April 7, 2014.

Candidates' Night

MOTION: That on April 27, 2014 the Board of Selectmen host a one hour Meet the Candidates for the State Senate, by M. Dowling.

2nd: M. Redetzke

Vote: Two in favor; M. Blanchard and P. Gimás opposed.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen notify three candidates that the Selectmen are amenable to request a meeting to introduce the candidates in April and _____, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

BYOB Policy

S. Suhoski submitted to the Board a proposed policy for consideration by the Board of Selectmen in its capacity as the Local Licensing Authority with respect to enhanced monitoring and permitting of "bring your own bottle" (BYOB) establishments.

S. Suhoski said that Town Counsel had found that the town of Winchendon regulates its BYOB establishments through a policy adopted by the Board of

Selectmen, which had been previously provided to the Board. S. Suhoski's version was less detailed, but does codify certain expectations for BYOB establishments.

Based upon discussion S. Suhoski had with a local restaurant owner and the Chamber of Commerce, he suggested that the Board invite public comment from potentially impacted businesses before voting any policy with respect to this issue.

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

- **Municipal Buildings:**

- ***Library (updated 2/27)*** – 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. A recommended action plan is complete and will be put before the Capital Planning Committee this month.
- ***Town Hall / Center Office Building (updated 2/27)*** – The Finance Director and S. Suhoski re-set the automatic sensor in her office to a manual mode to eliminate the issue of the office suddenly lighting up in the middle of the night. No electrician required for that, but S. Suhoski still needs to schedule an electrician to estimate the cost and loading requirements for a portable generator at Town Hall and COB as requested by the Board of Selectmen. There are grant funds potentially available to assist with this project and the item will remain listed here until realized.
- ***Public Safety Complex (updated 2/28)*** – CME Associates has provided a revised timeline for completion of the bid documents and actual construction of the floor replacement. We anticipate receiving bids on or about May 12th with construction occurring between June 1st and August 1st.

- **Infrastructure Projects:**

- ***Mountainbrook Road Betterment / Drainage Project (updated 3/1):*** The DPW Director and Conservation Agent have ensured that the Conservation Commission review of the plans will occur on March 6th after which the project will be prepared for bid. They had hoped this

project was going to be reviewed in February; however, it will be put forward for bid once any conservation conditions are known. A target date of April 7th was originally established to bring a bid to the Board of Selectmen for award, but this may need to be extended depending upon ConCom review.

- ***Champeaux Road Bridge (updated 3/1)***: The standing report has been shortened as this project is the primary focus of the road management report contained in the FY15 budget books. That report identifies the general history and search for funds as well as the current effort to fund this project through state Chapter 90 allocations. Currently, the DPW Director advises that the plans are essentially complete, but, that he is awaiting certain plan sheets with additional detail before proceeding. This project will come directly to the Board of Selectmen prior to any construction.
- **Other Meetings / Miscellaneous**: Other items include: interviewed candidates for Principal Assessor; meetings or teleconferences relative to the Sturbridge Tourist Association matter; convened meeting with DPW, Fire and Water to update fire hydrant clearance responsibilities; attended meeting with Selectman Redetzke, Conservation Agent and Atty. Bob Levite relative to advancing the various conservation restrictions; extensive meeting and review of Senior Center repairs in basement and other needs; met with Building Inspector re: administrative issues; met with staff from Mass. Rehabilitation Commission re: potential internships of clients; met with member of Finance Committee regarding various department budgets.

9th Annual BB5K Charity Run/Walk – May 24 at Hyland Orchard

S. Suhoski submitted to the Board an email from Steve and Peg Hall seeking permission to run their ninth annual charity road race between roughly 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 24 from the Hyland Orchard facility. The event raises awareness and funding for melanoma research. Lieutenant Dessert's email approving the race from the Police Dept. perspective was also provided to the Board.

The Board of Health Agent advised S. Suhoski that Hyland has an approved plan for required septic upgrades which are scheduled in April.

- MOTION:** That the Board of Selectmen approve the 9th Annual BB5K Charity Run/Walk on Saturday, May 24, from Hyland Orchard, by M. Redetzke.
- 2nd:** M. Blanchard
- Vote:** All in favor.

Old Business

P. Gimas spoke to unsigned flyers being distributed to local businesses and residents which contain inaccurate information. She said that they are anonymous and not on letterhead, and are asking for \$125,000 toward the Commercial Tourist Revitalization project. She noted that the voters at Town Meeting have already approved the money. She urged residents and businesses to disregard the flyer; if anyone has questions, they should be directed to the Town Administrator, Board of Selectmen, Town Planner or the Planning Board.

M. Blanchard noted that the CTD article was voted on at the June 4, 2012 Annual Town Meeting, and \$60,000 of that was from the STA and Betterment, not property tax dollars.

P. Gimas said that there is no request for \$125,000 for the Commercial Tourist Revitalization project on this year's agenda, warrant or Annual Town Meeting; this has already been approved by the Town voters in 2012.

New Business

M. Blanchard said that she had read an article about central purchasing, designed to save money on supplies needed by Emergency Medical Service operations and ambulance crews. S. Suhoski said that Fire Chief Zinther will attend the meeting.

Citizens' Forum

Marilyn Desy read a statement into the record regarding the \$125,000 Commercial Tourist Revitalization project. She said that out of all of the business people contacted by the Planning Board, only three were in favor of the project; the remaining 23 people were opposed to it, and had expressed concern about traffic, and loss of business while the road is being dug up for construction of the roundabout.

M. Dowling said that the Planning Board had followed due diligence for a long time, and if any individual business was not aware of the project, that business has to do more to become aware of what is going on in the community. She noted that it has been in the newspapers, and there have been public forums on it. She said that the Town is not required to contact every individual business. Town Meeting had authorized a study and a plan for improvements to the Route 20 corridor. She said that as far as people losing business while the walkway is dug up, that is not true. She said that this would lead to never improving the infrastructure. She said that the Route 131 businesses had been inconvenienced during the sidewalk renovation, but they are still there. She said that she did not find the arguments compelling.

M. Desy said that the businesses in Fiskdale are small businesses, and cannot afford to lose business.

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Ginger Peabody, Wildwood Lane, congratulated the Selectmen on bringing forward improvements to Sturbridge.

Lona Blodgett, Holland Road, expressed her opposition to the Commercial Tourist Revitalization project. She suggested that utility lines be buried, and that landscaping could be done by Eagle Scouts and students. She felt that the overextended sidewalks and bike paths were too much. She asked whether the rotary would be different from the rotary in Southbridge. P. Gimas suggested that she contact the Town Planner, or attend a Planning Board meeting, as that is a question for them.

L. Blodgett asked why the sidewalks need to be redone. P. Gimas said that the sidewalks are not ADA compliant. M. Dowling added that they are not ADA compliant because telephone poles are in the middle of the sidewalks.

Barbara Search, Leadmine Road, read a statement opposing the Commercial Tourist Revitalization project. She stated that the cost of the conceptual plan is \$125,000. P. Gimas noted that it had been approved by the voters and the June 2012 Annual Town Meeting. B. Search said that the flyer that had been circulated implies that once that money is spent, if the Town does not continue with this, we will have wasted the \$125,000. She went on to review the proposed changes to Route 20. She said that the state has stated that they will not install a light at the intersection of Routes 20 and 131. She said that Sturbridge does not have properly painted crosswalks. She informed the Board that many people think that the proposed project is over the top, and they do not want it. P. Gimas said that the plan is going to go forward. M. Blanchard noted that it is a conceptual plan. B. Search said that most likely, the plans will change.

L. Blodgett asked whether the plan is guaranteed to go forward once the grant money is in place. P. Gimas said that it would still be subject to public hearings, and the Town voters will have the final say.

MOTION: To adjourn, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: M. Dowling
Vote: All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date