

April 28, 2014

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
APRIL 28, 2014**

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

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

Public Service Announcements

None.

Minutes

MOTION: To approve the Board of Selectmen minutes of April 15, 2014 as amended, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Three in favor; M. Redetzke abstained; M. Dowling was absent.

Lyme Disease Awareness Month

S. Suhoski said that initiated by great effort of Sturbridge resident Trish McCleary, and with a strong assist from Sen. Stephen Brewer, the issue of Lyme disease awareness gained greater traction when Governor Deval Patrick declared May to be Lyme Disease Awareness Month last year. This year, the Governor has again made such a declaration.

Locally, May has been so designated dating back to at least 2010 through the efforts of Ms. McCleary and SLAM. Once again such designation is sought, as well as permission to place lime green ribbons around the Town Common and perhaps fly a banner over the Common during the month of May.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen proclaim May to be “Lyme Disease Awareness Month in Sturbridge” and authorize placement of lime green ribbons and a banner on the Town Common to raise awareness of this important health issue, by M. Redetzke.

2nd: M. Blanchard

Vote: Four in favor; M. Dowling was absent.

License Agreement for Fiber Installation – Charter Communications

April 28, 2014

S. Suhoski noted that this item was not related to the upcoming negotiation of the License Renewal Application of Charter Communications for provision of cable television and related services.

Chris Ferguson of TRM appeared before the Board to describe the project. Charter requires access to a portion of the Public Safety Complex property to install a fiber optic cable that will ultimately run to the communications tower at the Mass. State Police barracks. There are already at least two conduits and several cables (including electric service) running through the PSC to the tower.

During a site meeting held in March, there was discussion about whether Charter could improve the connectivity of the Public Safety Complex as part of the project in exchange for "sharing" an existing conduit under the I-84 on ramp. However, it appears that this was not feasible and there is no direct link between Charter's request and the PSC building.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen approve the license agreement in favor of Charter Communications Entertainment I, LLC dated April 28, 2014, for installation of fiber optic facilities within a portion of premises known as 346 Main Street, Sturbridge, as shown on plan prepared by Advanced Engineering Group, P.C. entitled "4WL0714B WL714 / Mass. State Police Tower, 315 Charlton St., Sturbridge, MA" dated November 4, 2013. This approval is conditioned upon review and approval of construction details and schedule by the Town Administrator in consultation with the Police Chief, Fire Chief and DPW Director, together with evidence of satisfactory liability insurance, prior to any construction, by M. Redetzke.

2nd: M. Blanchard

Vote: Four in favor; M. Dowling was absent

P. Gimas announced that a reporter from the Telegram & Gazette was using a recording device.

IOD Claim for a Police Officer

S. Suhoski provided the injured on duty documents to the Board for a Sturbridge police officer.

MOTION: To approve the IOD claim as requested by Chief Ford in his memo dated April 22, 2014, by M. Redetzke.

2nd: M. Blanchard

Vote: Four in favor; M. Dowling was absent.

Community Innovation Challenge Grant – Intermunicipal Agreement

April 28, 2014

S. Suhoski informed the Board that the consortium of 30 towns participation in this innovative collaboration to understand and document stormwater challenges ahead of the next MS4 regulatory permit would continue into its third year. For Sturbridge, the DPW Director, Operations Manager and Conservation Agent have participated in this process. S. Suhoski provided the Board with an informational sheet, and copy of the proposed IMA.

S. Suhoski said that this year's grant request was only partially funded by the state, thus requiring a local match of \$4,000 per community. These funds are included in the existing "matching grant funds" line item under the Town Administrator's budget.

At a point in the future, the efforts of this coalition will result in an educational presentation to the Board of Selectmen – and community – to inform residents about the increased regulatory efforts of the EPA and the more stringent requirements on cities and towns to ensure proper stormwater management. It is something Greg Morse has been predicting for years and I recommend the Town continue with the collaboration.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen approve and execute the Intermunicipal Agreement for Matching Grant Funds with the town of Spencer to continue implementation of the 2014 Community Innovation Challenge grant stormwater management program, by M. Redetzke.

2nd: M. Blanchard

Vote: Four in favor; M. Dowling was absent.

6:45 p.m. – Old Sturbridge Village – Change of Manager

Dennis Santelli appeared before the Board. S. Suhoski informed the Board that Old Sturbridge, Inc. d/b/a Old Sturbridge Village is seeking approval of a change in manager to Dennis Santelli, of Holland. You may recall that Dara Griswold was the last appointed manager and was expected to be an interim employee.

The application appeared to be complete. Mr. Santelli has worked with Sodexo Management Service for over 11 years including ten at Nichols College and the past year at Old Sturbridge Village.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen approve a change of manager from Dara Griswold to Dennis Santelli, of Holland, for the license held by Old Sturbridge, Inc., d/b/a Old Sturbridge Village, 1 Old Sturbridge Village Road, by M. Redetzke.

2nd: M. Blanchard

Vote: Four in favor; M. Dowling was absent.

Department Head Reports

April 28, 2014

The Board heard from water/sewer project manager Shane Moody, DPW Director Greg Morse and COA Director Melissa Beauchemin.

Shane Moody of Veolia Water North America reviewed his report with the Board. He said that there had been 22 emergency repair calls and 16 service calls during the month of March 2014. They have finished flushing the hydrants. Meter reading was conducted with the new software. He said that he had spoken with Barbara Barry, Finance Director, about sending out a questionnaire to customers to get their contact information.

Greg Morse, DPW Director, reviewed his report with the Board. He noted that they had a late start on sweeping the roads. They picked up the ice rink in early April. He said that they are widening the channel at the Robinson Crusoe property, and he needs to see the water line on the plan.

M. Dowling arrived at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes

MOTION: To approve the Board of Selectmen minutes of April 7, 2014 as amended, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Three in favor; C. Moran and M. Redetzke abstained.

Reorganization of Board of Selectmen

The Board needed to vote a Chair, Vice-Chair and Clerk for the upcoming year.

MOTION: To nominate M. Blanchard as Chair, by C. Moran.

M. Blanchard accepted the nomination.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To nominate P. Gimas as Vice-Chair, by M. Blanchard.

P. Gimas accepted the nomination.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To nominate M. Redetzke as Clerk, by M. Dowling

M. Redetzke declined the nomination.

MOTION: To nominate M. Dowling as Clerk, by M. Blanchard

M. Dowling accepted the nomination.

2nd: M. Redetzke

Vote: All in favor.

Department Head Report

Melissa Beauchemin, Council on Aging Director, reviewed her report with the Board. She submitted to the Board a list of programs and special events to be held at the Senior Center. She thanked her volunteers for their valuable work. She discussed the restoration and cleanup at the Senior Center.

Annual and Special Town Meeting Warrant Recommendations

S. Suhoski said that the Board must finalize its language and recommendations by the end of April according to the General Bylaws. This would also include any final tweaks to the budget proposal as that is included as Article No. 6 on the ATM Warrant.

During a meeting on April 22nd with the Finance Committee it was apparent that the Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator and FinCom are in substantial agreement on both the budget proposal and the bulk of the warrant language.

However, there are a couple of questions unresolved and the potential for a pair of new articles relative to business development (tax incentives) as well as the need to reach closure on how to handle the STA budget and bylaw articles.

Also, based upon the discussion last week, S. Suhoski suggested that the Board may wish to place an article seeking special legislation to allow some form of tax abatement for members of the National Guard or military reserves that are deployed to a foreign nation to receive some form of tax abatement through a program retroactive to September 11, 2001.

With respect to the Special Town Meeting warrant, the Finance Director, Town Accountant and S. Suhoski have reviewed the impact of high pricing through the Hampshire Council of Government collaborative for electricity during the months of January and February, and project that the water and sewer departments will need a transfer of funds from their respective fund balances for the balance of FY14.

As noted on the spreadsheet prepared by the Accountant, S. Suhoski said that the water department will need approximately \$14,000 and the sewer department \$2,000 to ensure sufficient funding for the balance of the year. Funds not expended revert directly back to the fund balance account. Some Town departments – such as the Public Safety Complex – may also fall a bit short on this utility; however, projections indicate that the reserve fund has more than adequate capacity to address any needs.

MOTION: To reopen the Special Town Meeting Warrant, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Redetzke
Vote: All in favor.

Article 39: Transfer of Funds – Sewer Dept. Pickup Truck

Article 40: Transfer of Funds – Water Dept. Pickup Truck

MOTION: To place and support Articles 39 and 40, by P. Gimas

2nd: M. Redetzke

Vote: All in favor.

Article 41: Transfer of Funds – Sewer Dept. Sludge Handling

MOTION: To place and support Article 41, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Redetzke

Vote: All in favor.

Article 42: Transfer of Funds – Water Dept. Fiske Hill Booster Station

MOTION: To place and support Article 42, by M. Redetzke

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

Article 43: Transfer of Funds – Water Dept. Electricity

Article 44: Transfer of Funds – Sewer Dept. Electricity

MOTION: To place and support Articles 43 and 44, by M. Redetzke.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

Article 45: Transfer of Free Cash – Mountainbrook Road Betterment Project Financing

M. Redetzke stated that she fully supports the Mountainbrook project, which is a private road project, as it was first presented. She questioned why the cost of holding the loan was not disclosed to the Board when this was first presented. She stated that she fully supports the town seeking the loan for the betterment of the private road.

M. Redetzke stated two reasons why she will not vote in favor of spending \$300,000 from free cash to fund this project:

- (1) \$300,000 is worth more today than it will be tomorrow or next week or next year. The funds should be returned to taxpayers or used to offset town projects and liabilities, which would lower taxes.
- (2) This is setting a precedent going forward which allows funding of private projects from free cash.

M. Dowling supported funding betterment consistent with past practice, and not using the Town as a bank. She favored increasing free cash for tax rate relief.

MOTION: To place and support Article 45, by P. Gimas

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: Three in favor; M. Dowling and M. Redetzke opposed.

April 28, 2014

MOTION: To close the Special Town Meeting Warrant, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Blanchard
Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To reopen the Annual Town Meeting Warrant for June 2, 2014, by M. Redetzke.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.

Article 6: Town Budget

MOTION: That line item 67 Senior Center Supplies be changed to \$7,900, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Blanchard
Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To reconsider line item 76 Police Dept. Overtime, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: That line item 76 Police Dept. Overtime be changed to \$255,304, to decrease the overtime for the Blue Grass Festival, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To reconsider line items 77 Police Dept. Purchase of Services and 78 Police Dept. Supplies, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Redetzke
Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: That line item 77 be changed to \$76,557, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: That line item 78 be changed to \$59,830, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To reconsider line item 17 Town Accountant Salaries/Wages, by M. Dowling.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

M. Redetzke stated that she could not support the two-step increases, which is a 4% increase on top of the 2% additional increase to employees, the reasons given due to

April 28, 2014

Sturbridge unemployment is at 6.5%, the economy has not recovered and Social Security was only given a 1.5% increase this year.

MOTION: To amend line item 17 to \$12,411, by M. Dowling.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke opposed.

MOTION: To reconsider line item 28 Finance Director Salaries/Wages, by M. Dowling.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To amend line item 28 Finance Director Salaries/Wages to \$102,329, by M. Dowling.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke opposed.

MOTION: To reconsider line item 54 Town Planner Salaries/Wages, by M. Dowling.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke opposed.

MOTION: To amend line item 54 Town Planner Salaries/Wages to \$29,904, by M. Dowling.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke opposed.

MOTION: To reconsider line item 75 Police Dept. Salaries/Wages Quinn Bill Incentive, by M. Dowling.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To amend line item 75 Police Dept. Salaries/Wages Quinn Bill Incentive to \$1,666,933, by M. Dowling.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke opposed.

MOTION: To reconsider line item 88 Building Inspector Salaries/Wages, by M. Dowling.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To amend line item 88 Building Inspector Salaries/Wages to \$21,104, by M. Dowling.

2nd: P. Gimás

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke opposed.

MOTION: To reconsider line item 107 DPW Salaries/Wages, by M. Dowling.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To amend line item 107 DPW Salaries/Wages to \$681,528, by M. Dowling.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke opposed.

MOTION: To reconsider line item 131 Council on Aging Salaries/Wages, by M. Dowling.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To amend line item 131 Council on Aging Salaries/Wages to \$46,614, by M. Dowling.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke opposed.

Article 6: Town Budget

MOTION: To place and support Article 6 at \$28,140,568, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke opposed.

Article 7: Water Department

MOTION: To place Article 7, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

Article 8: Sewer Department

MOTION: To place Article 8, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

Article 11: Revolving Funds

MOTION: To place and support Article 11, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

Article 12: Sturbridge Tourist Association

MOTION: To place and support Article 12 FY15 for STA at \$77,000, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Redetzke
Vote: All in favor.

April 28, 2014

M. Redetzke left the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Article 19: Tax Rate Relief

MOTION: To amend Article 19 to \$200,000, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

P. Gimas withdrew the motion; C. Moran withdrew the second.

MOTION: To place and support Article 19 at \$250,000, by M. Dowling.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke was absent.

Article 22: Board and Committee Stipends

MOTION: To reconsider Article 22, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke was absent.

MOTION: To place and support Article 22 as amended, by M. Dowling.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke was absent.

Article 25: Authorization to Seek Special Legislation to Offer Tax Exemption for Military Deployed Overseas

MOTION: To place and support Article 25 as written and delete “or insert dollar limit” and insert the dollar amount for 2016, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke was absent.

Article 26: Transfer of Real Property to Conservation Commission

MOTION: To place and support Article 26, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke was absent.

Proposed TIF Agreement with Om Shri Ambika LLC (Holiday Inn Express)

This item needed to be discussed in the context of the Annual Town Meeting warrant. Jay Patel and his son appeared before the Board.

- Letter of request dated April 16 and formally received on April 24, 2014
- Schematic design of modified prototype Holiday Inn Express
- Property information cards for two parcels proposed for “Gateway Economic Opportunity Area”
- Illustrative map of proposed EOA
- Draft TIF Agreement for new hotel

April 28, 2014

S. Suhoski has been in discussion with site developer Jay Patel and Town Planner Jean Bubon for well over a year as plans for a 77-unit Holiday Inn Express – and potential future restaurant and bank tenants – have been developed and revised due to varying site, traffic and zoning constraints.

Mr. Patel's introductory letter spelled out the many reasons that a tax increment financing agreement is needed to redevelop this vacant site into a modern and attractive economic amenity for the town of Sturbridge.

The TIF proposal is aggressive during the initial three-year start-up phase of hotel operations before ramping down to a 10 percent exemption in year ten. However, the financial and social gains of advancing this long-stalled project to completion greatly outweigh any accommodation on the property taxes.

The hotel itself is predicted to generate upwards of \$140,000 yearly in room tax (based upon 58 percent occupancy). This benefit is not subject to the TIF exemption and would be realized as the hotel occupancy ramps up.

Further, if the hotel project moves forward, it will logically create a synergy to facilitate retention of a restaurant tenant. The value of the restaurant building, and any other commercial building, is also not subject to the TIF exemption under the new EDIP program rules. Thus, the Town will receive even greater property tax base growth and an infusion of an estimated \$17,000 to \$25,000 yearly in new meals tax revenue.

But, tax revenue itself is not the only gain for the Town. S. Suhoski asked the Board to consider the impact of new full-time and part-time jobs upon the community and the spin-off contracts for landscaping and maintenance that such facilities will generate.

Although the timing feels "quick" in the government world, S. Suhoski recommended that it move forward now so that final design, financing and project construction can commence to restore this blighted site to a true "gateway" befitting the Town of Sturbridge.

Article 27: Gateway Economic Opportunity Area Designation

MOTION: To place and support Article 27, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke was absent.

Article 28: Tax Increment Financing Agreement and Project Certification Om Shri Ambika LLC d/b/a Holiday Inn Express

MOTION: To place and support Article 28, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke was absent.

MOTION: To close the Annual Town Meeting Warrant, by M. Dowling.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke was absent.

Common Victuallers License – Enrico’s Brick Oven Pizzeria

S. Suhoski submitted to the Board the application of new owner Elizabeth Alicea for a common victuallers license for the business known as Enrico’s Brick Oven Pizzeria at 500 Main Street. S. Suhoski conferred with all permitting offices and there were no objections to this issuance.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen approve a Common Victuallers license for Nicalmay S-Corp (Elizabeth Alicea) d/b/a Enrico’s Brick Oven Pizzeria at 500 Main Street, with hours of operation from 11:30 a.m. until Midnight daily, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke was absent.

Correspondence

M. Dowling read the correspondence list into the record.

The AMVETS had extended an invitation to the Selectmen. C. Moran offered to attend.

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

• **Municipal Buildings:**

- ***Library (updated 4/4)*** – Pending Town Meeting. The Capital Planning Committee included replacement of the skylight system, and sufficient funds for replacement of the gutter system, in its FY15 recommendations.
- ***Town Hall / Center Office Building (updated 4/22)*** – The electrician and generator representative that toured Town Hall in March for cost estimating purposes could not specify a generator based upon their inventory and experience. Mr. Southworth did suggest a generator manufacturer that might be able to accommodate this type of project.
- ***Public Safety Complex (updated 4/24)*** – The final bid documents await only “front end” requirements from the Town with advertisement for bids expected to issue this coming week and construction between June 1st and August 1st.

• **Infrastructure Projects:**

- ***Mountainbrook Road Betterment / Drainage Project (updated 4/24)***: The DPW Director completed the NOI and the Conservation Commission is reviewing the project on May 1st. Once the order of conditions issues it can be incorporated into the final design and the project put out to bid.

April 28, 2014

- ***Champeaux Road Bridge (updated 4/24):*** The \$1.45 million authorization for funds was included in the final transportation bond bill. Once the Governor's action is known then the Town can seek whether the administration will release these funds. Greg Morse and S. Suhoski have discussed and believe we should wait until we get a firm read on the bond bill funding before committing the bulk of our Chapter 90 funds to the project. The DPW Director will bring this project back before the Board of Selectmen prior to any construction.
- **Other Meetings / Miscellaneous:** S. Suhoski completed revisions and advertised RFP for water and wastewater operations with a deadline of May 21st; attended Land Use meeting; telephone conference with Town Planner and MOBD regarding TIF for hotel project; attended MMA/STAM training on CORI process and dangerous situations by Mass. State Police; met with Fire Chief re: new job description proposal and discussed same with Labor Counsel; participated in MEPA scoping session for Hamant Brook Restoration Project; met with COA Director re: insurance claim punchlist; attended Finance Committee meeting to finalize budget; conducted initial negotiation session with Sturbridge Police Association.

Old Business

Regarding the solar project, M. Dowling asked whether there was a complete agreement between the state and Blue Wave. S. Suhoski said that he has not seen it yet, but will share the finalized copy with the Board once he gets the agreement.

M. Blanchard asked about the status of the Riverlands. S. Suhoski said that he has emailed Tighe & Bond and is waiting for the draft.

M. Blanchard reminded the Board about signing the weekly payroll and payables warrants.

New Business

M. Blanchard requested that S. Suhoski contact Gary Galonek, Chairman of the Republican Town Committee, for nominations to the Board of Registrars so that the Board of Selectmen can make the appointment.

M. Blanchard requested that Judy Knowles provide C. Moran with the liaison list from last year.

M. Blanchard said that the goals for the Town Administrator don't need to be done until June 1st, and suggested extending it to the second meeting in May to have it in.

MOTION: To adjourn, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke was absent.

April 28, 2014

The meeting was adjourned at 10:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date