

August 4, 2014

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
AUGUST 4, 2014**

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

Mary Redetzke was absent due to illness.

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

Public Service Announcements

M. Blanchard, personally and on behalf of the Board of Selectmen, expressed sympathy to the family of Al Cook, who passed away last week. He had served on the Tantasqua School Committee.

M. Blanchard announced that the meeting was being recorded by a newspaper reporter.

Minutes

MOTION: To accept the minutes of July 7, 2014 as amended, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke was absent.

Firefighter Appointments: Jonathan McNamara and William White (FF/EMT-P)

The resumes of Firefighter EMT-Para candidates Jonathan McNamara and William White were previously distributed to the Board. S. Suhoski submitted to the Board the July 11, 2014 memoranda from Chief Zinther outlining the credentials and request for appointment of two individuals as full-time Firefighter EMT-Paramedics subject to their successful completion of the Physical Abilities Test administered at the Mass. Firefighters Academy.

Mr. White, of Douglas, was certified as Firefighter I/II through the part-time academy and has been a paramedic for over two years. He worked as an EMT-Basic for five years prior. He holds a master's degree in Forensic Studies from Stevenson University and a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and Communications from Worcester State University. He has been a member of call fire departments in Sutton and Douglas since 2005 and works full-time with Alert EMS as an EMT-paramedic. He is eager to join the ranks of the Sturbridge Fire Dept. and S. Suhoski welcomed his addition.

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Mr. McNamara, of Cherry Valley (Leicester), is also certified as Firefighter I/II through the part-time academy and holds a bachelor's degree in Fire Science from Anna Maria College as well as certification as a Fire Cause and Origin Investigator through the MFA. He has been a member of the Leicester Fire Dept. for ten years and works full-time as a paramedic since 2008. He will be a valued addition to the Sturbridge Fire Dept.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen ratify the Town Administrator's appointment of William White, of Douglas, to the position of full-time Firefighter EMT-Paramedic, effective August 6, 2014 at a starting hourly rate of \$20.99 and subject to satisfactory completion of the physical abilities test and a six month probationary period pursuant to the collective bargaining agreement, by C. Moran.

2nd: P. Gimas

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

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen ratify the Town Administrator's appointment of Jonathan McNamara, of Leicester, to the position of full-time Firefighter EMT-Paramedic, effective August 6, 2014 at a starting hourly rate of \$20.99 and subject to satisfactory completion of the physical abilities test and a six month probationary period pursuant to the collective bargaining agreement, by C. Moran.

2nd: P. Gimas

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

Interim Town Administrator Candidate Interview

Suzanne Kennedy appeared before the Board. She thanked the Board for the opportunity to interview for the Interim Town Administrator position. She said that she is a seasoned professional with a diverse government background, and a hands-on administrator recently retired from the town of Medway.

She said that during her time at Medway, her objective had been to reduce costs, review organizational practices, reduce insurance expenses, liability insurance and health insurance. She had reduced payroll expenses by reverting to a time sheet. A citizens committee had been formed to look at department public services. There had been a review of the Health Department including septic design reviews and food services inspections. She had worked with a newly appointed Fire Chief to review the Fire Department. There was a review of intermunicipal services. She noted that a Town Administrator position is a difficult job with high demand. She had also worked as Town and County Administrator at Nantucket.

C. Moran noted that her resume was impressive. He asked whether she would have any problem with keeping to the 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. schedule. S. Kennedy said that she would have no problem with that.

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P. Gimas asked that S. Kennedy speak to economic development. S. Kennedy said that it would be her next focus. She said that to do significant development, one must have control of the land. She would diversify the tax rate to reduce it as much as possible.

M. Dowling asked what role an Interim should play and how it would differ from a permanent Town Administrator position. S. Kennedy stressed the importance of making sure that the ship sails in the direction that the Board of Selectmen wanted, and any changes would be left for the new Town Administrator. She would not assume any significant changes.

M. Dowling asked in what ways her services provided to Sturbridge would be unique from those she provided to Medway. S. Kennedy said that Sturbridge is a smaller, family oriented community, but shares the same difficulties, including diversification of the tax base, the need to keep up public buildings, and to find new tax revenue to fund services.

M. Dowling asked if there was one highlight of S. Kennedy's career that she is particularly proud of. S. Kennedy said that in Medway she thought that she would never straighten out their financial mess. The Town Accountant had left, and there were staff people who did not have the skill set to do their jobs. S. Kennedy said that they succeeded with the help of the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee, and pointed out that they were everybody's successes, not hers alone.

M. Dowling asked S. Kennedy to describe her management style. S. Kennedy described it as inclusive, and explained that she is a collaborator who seeks the opinions of the staff who report to the Town Administrator.

M. Dowling noted that the Town Charter calls for a three month appointment for Interim Town Administrator; she asked if S. Kennedy would be able to stay for six months, if necessary. S. Kennedy said that her only constraint would be with regard to her pension.

M. Blanchard asked whether Medway had a new Charter. S. Kennedy said that it had been adopted in 2008. She noted that there are five Selectmen in Medway. M. Blanchard asked whether S. Kennedy was familiar with the Sturbridge Charter. S. Kennedy said that she had given it a cursory review. M. Blanchard asked whether she knew of ongoing projects in the Town. S. Kennedy said that she had read about the hotel project, and the STA seems to be an issue that is a conundrum.

M. Blanchard asked S. Kennedy to state her top skills for Interim Town Administrator. S. Kennedy said that cordiality, keeping projects on track and making sure that the Board's priorities are on track would be her focus.

M. Blanchard asked S. Kennedy what aspect of being an Interim Town Administrator appeals to her. S. Kennedy said that she loves the work, she wants to be active, she

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wants to leave at the top of her game, but doesn't want to retire to a rocking chair. She asked about the anticipated outcomes for the Commercial Tourist District. M. Blanchard said that infrastructure improvements, beautification, bike paths, better sidewalks and better lighting were goals. M. Dowling added that the Town is not close to having funding for that project.

S. Kennedy asked the Board about their expectations of an Interim Town Administrator. She said that the Board would expect her to know the Town, know the priorities, know the job, be familiar with Massachusetts General Laws and be a pleasant leader (but stern when necessary). M. Blanchard said that she would look for someone with past experience as an Interim Town Administrator.

M. Dowling said that the Interim Town Administrator should keep heading in the direction that the Board wants, and to further the Town Administrator's short-term goals, provide stability, and to not initiate any changes that could lead the Town into upheaval without being able to provide the leadership to follow through. She noted that the Town is not in dire straits financially, and should continue in that direction.

P. Gimás said that S. Kennedy's comment that it was "everybody's success" had resonated with her, and spoke volumes about her respect for her employees. She noted that S. Kennedy's attitude is similar to S. Suhoski's, who had always spoken accolades about his staff.

C. Moran noted that S. Kennedy's resume speaks for itself, and noted that she has experience and knowledge.

M. Blanchard suggested that the Board hold action until a full Board is present. It was the consensus of the Board to hold a brief meeting on Friday, August 8th at 9:00 a.m. to select the Interim Town Administrator and make appointments to the Town Administrator Search Committee.

Department Head Report

Fire Chief David Zinther and Lt. John Marinelli appeared before the Board. Chief Zinther presented his report to the Board. He was pleased to report that all testing and certification of equipment had been completed. He announced that the Fire Department had received a grant for the purchase of a brush vehicle. He extended thanks to MaryLou Volpe for her work in putting the grant together.

C. Moran asked about the status of enforcement issues on Main Street. Chief Zinther said that 33 Main Street had applied for a change in license, and Lt. John Marinelli had found some violations at the site. He notified the property owner as to what needed to be addressed, and the owner has made significant improvements. Lt. Marinelli added that he and the Building Inspector and Electrical Inspector had reviewed the site and found that the owner had installed fire extinguishers and smoke detectors in the building

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and had opened up egresses. He had removed a lot of the vehicles, tidied up the parking area and cleaned up the property.

Chief Zinther said that he had received a complaint about the 1738 apartment complex. Lt. Marinelli said that he had sent two letters to the owner but as yet had not received a response. He went to the site with the Wiring Inspector, who found some issues. He sent notification to the owner indicating that if he does not fix the issues to comply with the regulations, the Town will take him to Housing Court under Chapter 148, §34. C. Moran asked if the inhabitants were in any danger. Lt. Marinelli said that he would take it to the next step moving forward and would follow the procedure.

Chief Zinther informed the Board that he has received a letter of resignation from Lt. Robert Johnson, who has accepted a job in Upton. He will advertise to fill the vacancy.

MOTION: To accept the resignation of Lt. Robert Johnson as of August 17, 2014 with regret, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

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

Conservation Commission Request to Utilize Wetlands Protection Fund

S. Suhoski said that on July 10th the Conservation Commission had unanimously voted to continue utilizing the Wetlands Protection Fund to cover five hours per week of the Commission's administrative clerk. This is an annual request which requires concurrence from the Board of Selectmen. The estimated total cost for FY15 is \$4,310 and there is \$81,453 in the account. He recommended the Board's approval.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen ratify the Conservation Commission's request to utilize Wetland Protection Funds toward wages for the department's administrative clerk in the amount of \$4,310 for fiscal 2015, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

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

OLD BUSINESS: Class 2 License Request: Sturbridge Auto Sales, 33 Main Street

S. Suhoski said that Robert Cassim was seeking a Class II license under the name Sturbridge Auto Sales for the property at 33 Main Street. The Board was aware of compliance checks undertaken by both the Building Inspector and Fire Department concerning the volume of vehicles and materials stored on this site and the owner's former property at 29 Main Street (that license has been rescinded).

The Building Inspector reported to S. Suhoski that the applicant was making progress on site cleanup through Friday and that he would provide an update.

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If the applicant has made sufficient progress, and subject to the Board's satisfaction with the business plans of Mr. Cassim, S. Suhoski suggested that the Board approve the license.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen approve a Class II license in favor of Robert A. Cassim d/b/a Sturbridge Auto Sales, at 33 Main Street, for daily operations from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. subject to a maximum limitation of 10 vehicles to be stored on the property for sale or repair; subject to written code compliance review within 30 days noted by the Building Inspector, Wiring Inspector and Fire Dept. Inspector that all issues have been corrected within that timeframe, by C. Moran
2nd: M. Dowling
Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke was absent.

Senior Municipal Service Program Appointments

S. Suhoski informed the Board that the Assessor's office has qualified the first group of applicants for the FY15 Senior Municipal Service Program. H noted that there are a maximum of 30 positions available at \$500 each towards tax abatement. The following represent positions #18 through #22:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Department</u>
Allen Butts	DPW / BOH
Rita Choquet	Board of Selectmen
Jacqueline Ciance	Board of Health
Edward McCormack	To be determined
Richard Treadway	To be determined

M. Blanchard said that she would like to hold the appointments of Edward McCormack and Richard Treadway until they have been assigned to a department.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen approve Allen Butts, Rita Choquet and Jacqueline Ciance for participation in the FY15 Senior Municipal Service Program to be assigned to the indicated departments, by P. Gimás.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke was absent.

Riverlands Environmental Closeout

As detailed in a correspondence dated July 24 from Nancy Milkey of Tighe & Bond, the Town's Licensed Site Professional, who signed off on the Activity and Use Limitation for the Riverlands and submitted the final filing with MassDEP this week. This was the final submittal to MassDEP relative to the Riverlands summarized as follows:

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“Following limited remediation of site soil, and assessment of site soil, sediment and groundwater, the [Release Tracking Number] is being closed with the submittal of an [Response Action Outcome] report.”

She further states: *“The [Activity and Use Limitation] has been recorded for the site to maintain a condition of No Significant Risk. ... The AUL was recorded with the Worcester County Registry of Deeds on June 16, 2014...”*

As was stated previously, it is possible that DEP could audit the site in a year or two to make sure that the AUL portion is not being used for public purposes.

S. Suhoski said that the “Riverlands” file folder is in the Town Administrator's office for use by the next administrator.

Riverlands Future Use Considerations

S. Suhoski said that with the environmental issues closed for this site, the Town can now finalize plans to extend the trail network through the Riverlands and establish eco-tourism benefits through completing another leg of the Grand Trunk Trail and, potentially, furthering a “village to village” concept that S. Suhoski has discussed with Jim Donahue of OSV, whereby a formal linkage from OSV to the commercial tourist district – including connection over the Quinebaug – is established.

S. Suhoski went on to say that to realize the full potential of Riverlands it will be essential for the Board of Selectmen and next Town Administrator to clearly establish a policy preference that the Riverlands will be for public use and enjoyment and ensure that any conservation restrictions upon the land as a whole makes allowance for public use and enjoyment of the portions reserved for trails or other activities.

S. Suhoski stressed the importance of making sure that the language of the conservation restriction allows the Town to benefit economically and aesthetically. M. Dowling expressed concern that the area of contamination be well marked from any potential trail. She noted that the Riverlands consists of three parcels, with only two being contiguous, and the Town does not own a piece of land to make a continuous trail through all three parcels. S. Suhoski said that the parcels extend to Holland Road, and there could be a short section on the road.

Sewer Reserve List

S. Suhoski said that the Board had received a request from Ms. Barbara Murphy to add the parcels of land at 71 and 73 Whittemore Road to the sewer reserve allocation list. The DPW Director has reviewed the request and concurs with subject to requiring an advance design for the points of connection to the sewer and water systems and that the applicant will comply with any Scenic Road requirements related to street trees or stone walls.

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MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen, acting as Sewer Commissioners, approve the addition of one residential sewer unit each for 71 Whittemore Road and 73 Whittemore Road subject to the applicant providing advance designs to the DPW Director to establish any points of connection to the Town's system and that the applicant comply with any requirements of the Scenic Road Bylaw, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

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

Potential TIF Application: Meacham Energy, Picker Road

S. Suhoski said that the Board had approved a license for storage of propane for Meacham Propane, which is proposing to construct a new 16,650 square foot headquarters in the Technology Park on Picker Road. The site proposed was selected by the Town as a "priority development site" under MGL c. 43D a few years back.

Currently, the Meachams are seeking financing and finalizing design in hopes of beginning construction in the spring of 2015. The company expressed an interest in potential tax-increment financing to assist with the total development costs.

In this instance, the extraordinary cost of ledge removal (estimated at \$64,000 to \$79,000) is proving to be an obstacle.

On July 31, S. Suhoski met with Mr. and Mrs. Meacham, Town Planner Jean Bubon and Rosemary Scrivens from the Mass. Office of Business Development to further outline a timeline and potential consideration of a TIF agreement on this site.

Based upon that discussion and the information provided concerning the site development costs S. Suhoski put together illustrative scenarios of a five-year TIF based upon the likely property valuation before and after construction.

While S. Suhoski believed that this project would qualify for a shorter-term TIF, he was not asking the Board to make a decision on this at this meeting. Because of his familiarity with this project from its initial site plan reviews to present, he said that it would be helpful to establish whether the Board would consider a TIF and to have a clear "jumping off" point for the Interim Town Administrator and Town Planner.

C. Moran wondered why the obstacle could not have been foreseen before purchasing the property. S. Suhoski said that the financing is not locked down for development, and noted that it has full site plan approval.

M. Blanchard said that she was not willing to move forward with it at this time. She said that more information is needed.

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M. Dowling said that sometimes the amount of ledge at a site is not apparent. She said that it has been identified as a 43D site; if there is ledge, it will be a hindrance to the 43D. She noted that if the Selectmen are not on board with the TIF, the 43D status may just sit there. She said that \$50,000 is a lot for the Town to take on for ledge removal. P. Gimás agreed with M. Dowling.

S. Suhoski said that he was looking for assistance in talking to the state Office of Business Development. M. Blanchard said that those matters should be taken into consideration by developers.

Other Meetings / Miscellaneous

Other items include: S. Suhoski met with the Building Inspector, Library Director and Architect re: skylight replacement project; conducted impact bargaining session with DPW / SEIU; reviewed and revised Town Planner's RFP for radio frequency study (wireless communication bylaw); met with project manager for tornado recovery grant close-out; began drafting detailed transition memorandum for BOS, Interim TA and others.

One-Day Liquor License – Janet Garon

S. Suhoski informed the Board that Janet Garon had requested a one-day liquor license for a beer and wine tasting fundraiser event to be held on August 8, 2014 at her home to benefit the Big Alum Lake Association.

MOTION: To approve the application for a one-day liquor license requested by Janet Garon to benefit the Big Alum Lake Association on Friday, August 8, 2014 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at a private home on Roy Road, with the stipulation that servers at the event be TIPS certified, by P. Gimás.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

Disclosure by Special Municipal Employee Craig Moran

S. Suhoski said that Craig Moran had distributed a disclosure which had been filed with the Town Clerk relative to a financial interest associated with his firm's towing operations for the Town. S. Suhoski noted that Town Counsel had provided an opinion, and the Ethics Commission concurred.

MOTION: That the Board acknowledge receipt of a disclosure from Special Municipal Employee Craig Moran and grant an exemption under MGL c. 268A, §20(d), by M. Dowling.

2nd: P. Gimás

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

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Correspondence

P. Gimas read the correspondence list into the record.

M. Blanchard noted that Michael Suprenant had applied to the Town Administrator Search Committee after the deadline.

New Business

There was no new business.

Old Business

M. Dowling wished S. Suhoski all the best in his new position in Athol.

M. Blanchard asked about the bid opening for the Public Safety Complex floor. S. Suhoski informed the Board that there were no bids on the project, so it will be re-bid in September.

M. Blanchard asked about feedback from Town Counsel regarding Hampshire Council of Governments. S. Suhoski said that Town Counsel had recommended that if the Town chooses it can procure new energy pricing after December 31st. The Board agreed.

MOTION: To convene in executive session under MGL Chapter 30A, §18-25, Paragraph #2: To conduct strategy session in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel and to conduct collective bargaining session or contract negotiations with non-union personnel; and Paragraph #3: To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation; not to reconvene in open session, by M. Dowling.

2nd: P. Gimas

Roll Call Vote: C. Moran in favor; P. Gimas in favor; M. Dowling in favor; M. Blanchard in favor; M. Redetzke was absent.

The Board convened in executive session at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date