

October 5, 2015

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
OCTOBER 5, 2015**

Present: Mary Blanchard, Chairman
Priscilla Gimas
Mary Dowling
Craig Moran
Michael Suprenant
Leon Gaumont, Jr., Town Administrator

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

Public Service Announcements

M. Blanchard reminded everyone about the Open House at the Fire Department on Wednesday, October 7th from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

M. Blanchard announced that there is a Voluntary Water Ban in effect until further notice.

M. Blanchard announced that water main flushing will take place in Sturbridge between October 13th and November 20th.

M. Blanchard read a proclamation into the record congratulating Penny Dumas for receiving the Keuhn Community Preservation Award from the Community Preservation Coalition.

MOTION: That the Board sign the proclamation for Penny Dumas, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

Minutes

MOTION: To approve the minutes of September 8, 2015 as amended, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Suprenant
Vote: Four in favor; C. Moran abstained.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of September 21, 2015 as amended, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

Donna Grehl – Conservation Commission Membership

L. Gaumond announced that notification was received by staff from Donna Grehl that she has resigned from the Conservation Commission. She has taken a new job and will be unable to continue serving on the Commission.

MOTION: To accept the resignation of Donna Grehl from the Conservation Commission, effective today, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Suprenant

Vote: All in favor.

Updates to the Personnel Classification Plan

L. Gaumond informed the Board that he has been working with the Personnel Committee to piece together the personnel processes and their recent actions. From the information left for him by the previous Town Administrators and from current and past members of the Personnel Committee (including the family of Don Fairbrother). He has determined that there has been some breakdown in the process, and the actions taken by the Personnel Committee have not always made it back to the Selectmen's office for editing and were not brought before the Selectmen for final approval, as is required by the Personnel Policies. He assured the Board that this can be easily fixed. He is piecing together these revised positions to bring to the Selectmen over the next several months, rather than all at once.

M. Blanchard announced that the meeting was being recorded by a reporter from the Worcester Telegram and Gazette.

The following job descriptions have been approved by the Personnel Committee:

1. Custodian (Grade 2)
2. Administrative Assistant to the Building Department (Grade 4)
3. Finance Director (Grade 16)
4. Administrative Assistant to the Planning Department (Grade 5)
5. Town Accountant (Grade 10)

L. Gaumont said that these job descriptions have been forwarded to the departments and received positive comments from all of them.

- **Custodian**

M. Dowling noted that the Board had asked the former Town Administrator to look into replacing the current cleaning contract. L. Gaumont said that he intends to move forward with the new Custodian position.

C. Moran said that the custodian could monitor the condition of the buildings. He asked whether the heating problems had been resolved. L. Gaumont said that the heating company will be here on October 6th to switch the system from air conditioning to heat. He said that it has been a quieter year for the Center Office Building's heating system.

C. Moran asked about the status of the leak on the first floor of Town Hall. L. Gaumont said that it will be fixed soon.

M. Suprenant asked whether the Custodian position exists in the Town budget. L. Gaumont said that cleaning is funded in the budget. He noted that there will be a fall or winter Special Town Meeting, and he will request that monies be transferred at that time.

L. Gaumont informed the Board that the original version of this job description was done by Melissa Beauchemin, Council on Aging Director. He modified it to make it more generic.

MOTION: To approve the job description for Custodian as amended, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

- **Administrative Assistant to the Building Department**

MOTION: To approve the job description for the Administrative Assistant to the Building Department and the grade, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

- **Finance Director**

L. Gaumont said that the job description for the Finance Director had been vetted by the Personnel Committee before he had started working for the Town of Sturbridge.

P. Gimas said that under Education and Experience, it sounds like it is asking for either/or. She felt that education should be required. L. Gaumont said that it has become challenging to replace certain positions on the finance side. He said that this would allow for flexibility. M. Dowling asked whether the Town would be restricted by this job flexibility, and whether it would be allowed to make a stricter requirement when the job is posted. L. Gaumont said that the ad could state: "experience with a four-year degree."

MOTION: To approve the job description for the Finance Director and the grade, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

- **Administrative Assistant for the Planning Department**

MOTION: To approve the job description for the Administrative Assistant for the Planning Department and the grade, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

- **Town Accountant**

M. Suprenant noted an inconsistency in "lifting – 10 pounds/50 pounds." He asked about the pay scale compared to the comparison towns. M. Blanchard said that the grades are approved on a point system. L. Gaumont said that the Personnel Committee has balanced the steps and grades against the 10 comparison communities, and they do this on a periodic basis.

MOTION: To approve the job description and grade for the Town Accountant, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

M. Suprenant noted that it is not required that the Finance Director be a certified municipal accountant. L. Gaumont said that he could bring this message back to the Personnel Committee to review.

Presentation of Proclamation to Penny Dumas

M. Blanchard informed Penny Dumas that the Board had voted to sign a proclamation for her. She read the proclamation. The Board congratulated P. Dumas.

Discussion on Communications Tower on Leadmine Road

C. Moran recused himself from the Board at 7:14 p.m..

L. Gaumont said that the Town owns property with a tower and radio dish at 196 Leadmine Road. The property was previously voted by the Board as surplus to no avail. The Town was approached by an individual who is interested in partnering with the Town on the rehab and use of this site. There could be a benefit to the business as well as the Town (particularly DPW and the Fire Department) if this site were rehabilitated. Massachusetts General Laws require a proper procurement process be undertaken to determine long term use of any Town property.

L. Gaumont said that he could research this and go out to bid for the use of this property. He noted that Greg Morse and Chief Zinther both think that this could be worthwhile.

G. Morse said that there is a need for it, and it would be good to rehabilitate the site and improve it. Chief Zinther concurred, and said that the system operates and depends upon line of sight; with the topography, there are a lot of challenges.

P. Gimas considered it to be a great idea. M. Blanchard also felt it was a good idea, but that it needs to be researched. She added that Town Meeting vote will be necessary. M. Dowling agreed. M. Suprenant concurred that it needs to be looked into, and thanked the department heads for coming forward with it.

MOTION: To direct the Town Administrator to move forward with it, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Suprenant

Vote: Four in favor; C. Moran abstained.

C. Moran rejoined the Board at 7:20 p.m.

Town Administrator's Update

- **Notification of Free Cash Approval**

L. Gaumond reported that the Town has received its free cash certification by the state. Free cash as of July 1, 2015 equals \$3,084,629.

- **Black Friday Extended Hours for Ocean State Job Lot**

L. Gaumond noted that in the past the Board has allowed Ocean State Job Lot to have extended hours on Black Friday. This year, Black Friday is on November 27th and once again they seek the permission of the Selectmen to open from 12:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

MOTION: That the Board allow Ocean State Job Lot to have extended hours on November 27, 2015 from 12:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., by M. Suprenant.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

- **Senior Municipal Service Applications**

MOTION: To approve the Senior Municipal Service Applications for Elena Sapojnikov to work at Town Hall/Senior Center and William Bartolomei to work at the Senior Center, by P. Gimás.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

- **Appointment to the Design Review Committee**

MOTION: To appoint Nancy Bixby to the Design Review Committee, by P. Gimás.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

- **Grant Award for Recycling Initiatives**

L. Gaumond announced that the Sturbridge Board of Health is the recipient of the Sustainable Materials Recovery Program grant award of \$3,550 for work at the Sturbridge Landfill. He commended them for this award.

- **Request for Employment Approval for Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedic**

Chief Zinther said that Jennifer Ashe currently works part-time at the Monson Fire Department. He and L. Gaumond interviewed her and both recommended her for the position.

Chief Zinther noted that she is a Firefighter #1; she will be going to school part time for additional training, and the only expense will be her time and to purchase boots for her.

MOTION: To concur with the appointment of Jennifer Ashe to the position of Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedic effective October 6, 2015 at \$18.90/hour, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

- **Regional Dispatch**

L. Gaumond informed the Board that he had met with the two Chiefs to discuss the possibility of creating a regional dispatch program to include Sturbridge, Southbridge, Charlton, Oxford and Spencer. He would like to set up a workshop to discuss this matter. It was the consensus of the Board to discuss it in a work session. L. Gaumond said that he would like to do this soon, as an application needs to be sent in regarding whether or not to authorize the Town to participate in the feasibility study.

Correspondence

M. Dowling read the correspondence list into the record. M. Blanchard had received a phone call from a resident of Big Alum who wanted to express appreciation and compliment the Police Department for their fine work when there had been a tragic drowning at the end of July.

M. Blanchard commented that she liked the letters sent by L. Gaumond welcoming new businesses to the town.

Old Business

P. Gimas said that the Steering Committee at the Senior Center had sent out 1800 surveys and received 250 back. They have compiled information and will be presenting it tomorrow at 10:00 a.m.

M. Suprenant announced that on Saturday he had attended the Mass. Selectmen's Association meeting Fall Conference in Wrentham, which had been very informative, with sessions on budgeting, collective bargaining, open meeting law and public records and how to conduct public meetings. He will leave information with the Town Administrator.

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M. Blanchard reminded the Board about the need to sign the weekly warrants and payroll, as people cannot be paid unless there are at least three signatures on the warrants.

New Business

C. Moran announced that the fall Harvest Festival will take place on the Town Common on October 17th and 18th. On Sunday the 18th, chefs from local restaurants will be offering some fine food to the public.

MOTION: To adjourn, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date