

April 13, 2016

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
APRIL 13, 2016**

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

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. following the Pledge of Allegiance.

Reorganization of the Board of Selectmen

L. Gaumond requested nominations for Chairman.

MOTION: To nominate Mary Blanchard as Chairman, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Dowling

MOTION: To close the nominations, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Suprenant
Vote: All in favor

Vote: All in favor.

L. Gaumond requested nominations for Vice-Chairman.

MOTION: To nominate Priscilla Gimas as Vice-Chairman, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: M. Dowling

MOTION: To close the nominations, by M. Suprenant.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.

Vote: All in favor.

L. Gaumond requested nominations for Clerk.

MOTION: To nominate Mary Dowling as Clerk, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Blanchard

MOTION: To close the nominations, by M. Dowling.

April 13, 2016

2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: That the Board convene in Executive Session under MGL Ch. 30A, §21a, #3: Collective Bargaining – DPW Negotiations; to reconvene in open session, by M. Dowling.

2nd: M. Suprenant

Roll call vote: C. Moran in favor; P. Gimas in favor; M. Suprenant in favor; M. Dowling in favor; M. Blanchard in favor.

The Board convened in executive session at 6:06 p.m.

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

Public Service Announcements

M. Dowling thanked all of the residents who voted in the Town Election on Monday. She considers it an honor to serve the Town as a Selectman for another three years. M. Blanchard congratulated her on being re-elected.

M. Blanchard announced that there is still a vacancy on the Finance Committee; any resident who is interested on serving should submit a letter of interest to the Town Moderator.

M. Blanchard announced the upcoming Riverlands Clean Up on Earth Day, Saturday, April 23rd 8:00 a.m. to Noon at the Riverlands trail head at 52 Stallion Hill Road.

M. Blanchard announced Restaurant Week in Sturbridge, April 12 -17, with local participating restaurants (The Duck, The Oxhead Tavern, The Publick House and Zorba's) offering 3-course meals for a fixed price of \$15 for lunch and \$25 for dinner. The event is sponsored by the Sturbridge Tourist Association. Details can be found on the website of the Chamber of Commerce.

M. Blanchard announced that the Recreation Committee is inviting all interested parties to an informational meeting regarding the Town Barn Recreational Field Project on April 19th at 5:30 p.m. at Town Hall.

M. Blanchard announced that there will be an informational meeting with Liberty Utilities on April 27th at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall.

William Haggerty: Presentation on the Regional School Agreement

William Haggerty, Dr. Erin Nosek and Deb Boyd appeared before the Board to present their recommendations for changes to the regional agreement, which must be approved by Town Meeting.

W. Haggerty thanked the Board for the opportunity to present the recommendations, and extended his appreciation to the Tantasqua Regional School Committee for their work on this agreement.

W. Haggerty provided the Board with the RAAC Language Comparison Table, including Sections with Proposed Changes. He said that all five member towns must approve the changes to the agreement. He noted that the proposed amendments are not substantive, and reviewed them with the Board.

L. Gaumond said that the Board will have to finalize the Town Meeting warrant shortly. He noted that the Finance Committee creates text boxes to explain each of the warrant articles. He asked W. Haggerty and Deb Boyd if they have thought about the presentation to be made at Town Meeting. W. Haggerty said that he will ask the RAAC to take the lead. He said that Section #3 Apportionment of Cost is the only part that could be controversial. A general overview will be provided.

Deb Boyd said that Brimfield, Holland and Wales will hold their Town Meetings in May. Brookfield's Town Meeting is scheduled for June 3rd, so all four towns will have held their Town Meetings before Sturbridge.

Review Request from the Trails Committee regarding the Rte. 20 Improvement Project

Tom Chamberland, Tree Warden, appeared before the Board to represent the Trails Committee. The Board had received a letter from Brandon Goodwin of the Trails Committee seeking the Selectmen's concurrence on their recommendations as part of the Rte. 20 improvement project to be done by MassDOT.

L. Gaumond read Brandon Goodwin's letter into the record. The Sturbridge Trail Committee had met with the Brimfield Trail Committee recently to discuss the proposed work to be done on Route 20 between Sturbridge and Brimfield. When Route 20 is narrowed down to two lanes, there will be wide breakdown lanes on each side of the road, which may be painted as bike lanes and may have rumble strips separating the bike lanes from the vehicle lanes. The Trails Committees requested that when the lines are repainted on the south side of Route 20, that between Riverview Lane and East Brimfield Holland Road they should add an extra line to make it a bi-directional bike lane. The Trails Committees would also like them to add plastic barrier posts which create the feel of a guardrail.

The Brimfield Trails Committee has already asked Rep. Todd Smola and Senator Ann Gobi to support this, which they do. Rep. Smola asked them for a letter making the request, which the Brimfield Board of Selectmen is in the process of writing. Rep. Smola also asked for a letter from Sturbridge, if the Board is in support of the project. Rep. Smola's position is that it will be easier for him to push for changes with the state transportation group running the project if the local towns are in support.

L. Gaumond expressed concern about plowing snow during winter months if a plastic barrier is installed.

T. Chamberland said that the Grand Trunk Trail is a rail trail that is part of the larger 66 mile trail known as the Titanic Rail Trail which runs from Palmer to Franklin, Massachusetts. The proposed work from Riverview Avenue to East Brimfield Road is in the Route 20 corridor. He noted that bicycle riders must follow vehicle laws and ride with the traffic. Going east, they would have to cross Route 20, then cross back over at East Brimfield Holland Road, which would be hazardous for bicyclists. He said that removable orange markers will be installed to provide a level of safety in the breakdown lane, which will be removed in the fall and reinstalled in the spring. He noted that Mass. Highway has the money budgeted to do this project.

C. Moran said that over the years, there has been heavy traffic during the Brimfield Flea Market weeks, sometimes backing up all the way to the Mass. Pike. If Route 20 is reduced to only one lane going in each direction, traffic will be jammed solid. P. Gimás agreed, and expressed concern about the impact this will have on people who want to visit Sturbridge.

M. Dowling said that in the interest of safety, if the state elects to make a bike lane, she would be in favor of a bike lane going both ways on one side of Route 20, as crossing the road would be extremely dangerous; however, she continues to believe that Route 20 is not an optimal road for biking.

M. Suprenant said that Route 20 is a primary route. The Federal Highway Administration requires ten feet of separation between any bike ways and a traffic lane. He noted that the project has not received a design waiver for the ten feet of separation.

T. Chamberland said that the breakdown lanes will be designated as bike lanes on Route 20.

L. Gaumond pointed out that the Board had previously voted to send a letter of opposition to the change. P. Gimás said that she was opposed to the proposed change on Route 20 and would not support the bike trail. She stressed the importance of having an evacuation route. T. Chamberland said that it would be possible to reverse traffic in an emergency, and use the breakdown lane for evacuation. P. Gimás said that someone will use the breakdown lane as a passing lane.

T. Chamberland said that the layout of Route 20 will be similar to the layout of Route 49.

MOTION: That the Board not send a letter of support, and stay with our original stand opposing the proposed changes on Route 20 from Sturbridge to Brimfield, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Suprenant

Vote: Four in favor; M. Dowling opposed.

Northern Bass Alliance: Bass Tournament

L. Gaumond informed the Board that the Northern Bass Alliance is having another bass tournament on May 7, 2016 at Big Alum, and they requested authorization from the Town of Sturbridge.

MOTION: To approve the Special Use Permit for the Northern Bass Alliance on May 7, 2016 from 6:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Big Alum Lake, and that participants respect the private property of lake residents, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Suprenant

Vote: All in favor.

Budget for FY17

It was the consensus of the Board to hold on lines 8, 23, 24, 71, 83, 85, 86, 104, 118, 120, 121, 130, 141, 155, 163, 164, 165, 170, 171 and 172.

MOTION: To approve all line items not on hold, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Line 8: Merit Based Incentive

L. Gaumond proposed a new number of \$21,981 as there had been an error in calculation.

MOTION: To approve the new number of \$21,981, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

Line 23: Board of Assessors – Salaries/Wages

L. Gaumond proposed a new number of \$27,765. He explained that the Data Collector position has been changed to Consultant, instead of an employee.

MOTION: To approve the new number of \$27,765, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

Line 24: Board of Assessors – Purchase of Services

MOTION: To approve the new number of \$30,995, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Line 71: Senior Center Purchase of Services

L. Gaumond proposed a new number of \$33,340.

MOTION: To approve the new number of \$33,340, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Suprenant

Vote: All in favor.

Line 83: Police Dept. Purchase of Services

L. Gaumond proposed a new number of \$80,873.

MOTION: To approve the new number of \$80,873, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

Line 85: Police Dept. Other Charges

L. Gaumond proposed a new number of \$6,674.

MOTION: To approve the new number of \$6,674, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

Line 86: Police Dept. Capital Outlay

M. Suprenant did not think it was a good budgeting policy. L. Gaumond said that it is consistent with how he has done things in the past. M. Suprenant said that he has not seen a written policy saying that a cruiser should be funded the way that it is. B. Barry said that there is rotation of certain equipment, and there is a limited amount of money from free cash for capital items. M. Suprenant suggested removing the hold on Line 86.

MOTION: To approve Line 86 at \$89,108, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Suprenant

Vote: All in favor.

Line 104: Tree Warden Purchase of Services

L. Gaumond said that Tom Chamberland recommended moving forward with the number as it is, although it is likely to be reduced.

MOTION: To approve Line 104 at \$15,200, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Suprenant
Vote: All in favor.

Line 118: Town Road Maintenance – Repairs and Maintenance

B. Barry said that it is in an article now. P. Gimas suggested removing the hold on Line 118.

MOTION: To approve Line 118 at \$0, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Suprenant
Vote: All in favor.

Line 120: Town Road Maintenance – Road Construction

MOTION: To approve Line 120 at \$0, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

Line 121: Snow and Ice Control – Overtime

L. Gaumond proposed a new number of \$45,000.

MOTION: To approve the new number of \$45,000, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

Line 130: Board of Health – Salaries/Wages

L. Gaumond proposed a new number of \$23,666.

MOTION: To approve the new number of \$23,666, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Suprenant
Vote: All in favor.

Line 141: Council on Aging – Transportation

B. Barry explained that this line item covers the people who provide rides to seniors for medical appointments. M. Suprenant suggested lifting the hold on Line 141.

MOTION: To approve Line 141 at \$3,200, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Suprenant
Vote: All in favor.

Line 155: Recreation – Department Head Salary

L. Gaumond explained that there had been an error in the number.

MOTION: To approve the new number of \$33,916, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

Line 163: Historical Commission – Purchase of Services

L. Gaumond explained that there is a new Historical Commission this year, and there are training programs for the new Commission members. P. Gimas noted that it is not their purview to hire a consultant.

MOTION: To approve Line 163 at \$300, by M. Suprenant.
2nd: M. Blanchard
Vote: Four in favor; P. Gimas opposed.

Line 164: Historical Commission – Supplies

MOTION: To approve Line 164 at \$200, by M. Suprenant.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

Line 165: Historical Commission – Other Charges

MOTION: To approve Line 165 at \$100, by M. Suprenant.
2nd: M. Blanchard
Vote: Four in favor; P. Gimas opposed.

Line 170: Debt Service Principal – Self Contained Breathing Apparatus

MOTION: To approve Line 170 at \$28,000, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Blanchard
Vote: All in favor.

Line 171: Debt Service Principal – Street Sweeper

MOTION: To approve Line 171 at \$0, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

Line 172: Debt Service Interest – Short-Term Interest

L. Gaumond proposed a new number of \$10,000.

MOTION: To approve Line 172 at \$10,000, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Suprenant
Vote: All in favor.

Special Town Meeting Warrant

Article 43: Unpaid Bills of a Previous Fiscal Year
MOTION: To place and support Article 43, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

Article 44: Transfer of Free Cash – Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus and Street Sweeper
MOTION: To place and support Article 44, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Suprenant
Vote: All in favor.

Article 45: Rescind Prior Borrowing Authority
MOTION: To place and support Article 45, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Dowling
Vote: All in favor.

Article 46: Amend FY16 School Budget
MOTION: To place and support Article 46, by M. Dowling.
2nd: M. Suprenant
Vote: All in favor.

Article 47: Water Reserve Fund Request
MOTION: To place and support Article 47, by M. Suprenant.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.

Article 48: Water Reserve Fund Request
It was the consensus of the Board to hold action pending further information.

Article 49: Permitting Software Upgrade
MOTION: To place and support Article 49, by M. Suprenant.
2nd: M. Blanchard
Vote: All in favor.

Article 50: Private Road Project
It was the consensus of the Board to hold action pending further information.

P. Gimas suggested that the Board hold a special meeting to review the Annual Town Meeting warrant. It was the consensus of the Board to meeting on April 21st at 8:30 a.m.

Health Insurance Changes

L. Gaumond submitted to the Board a request to accept the recommendation of the Insurance Advisory Committee on the Health Insurance renewal for FY17. He provided the Board with minutes and a memo detailing the recommendation.

At their last meeting, the Insurance Advisory Committee voted to recommend the following plan design changes for the FY17 renewal:

Vote: To change the Specialist visit copay to \$40; change the ER visit copay to \$150; and change the current Rx copay to \$15/\$30/\$50 Retail and \$30/\$60/\$100 Mail.

Upon acceptance of this recommendation, L. Gaumond will notify the employee groups in Town as well as the insurance carrier. As the Town Administrator, L. Gaumond recommended the proposed changes. The effect of this change would reduce the planned budget request from \$1,545,480 to \$1,505,000.

L. Gaumond was also asked to mention the IAC's request for the Selectmen to consider a previously shelved plan to increase the employee contribution rate on health insurance from 60% to 65%. This had been under consideration a decade or so ago, and has not been brought forward in all this time. He was not prepared to recommend that the Selectmen accept this request. He is researching previous discussions about this topic, and will let the Board know what he finds.

MOTION: To authorize the Town Administrator to sign the document with changes recommended by the Insurance Advisory Committee on the Health Insurance renewal for FY17, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Suprenant

Vote: All in favor.

Town Administrator's Evaluation

M. Blanchard said that after review of the Selectmen's responses, the Town Administrator received a rating of 4.3 out of a possible 5, which was a highly favorable rating. The categories included Budgetary/Financial Administration, Personnel Administration, Supervision/Leadership, Staff Development, Public Relations, Employee and Labor Relations, Policy Execution, Interaction with the Board, Intergovernmental, Effectiveness/Productivity and Goal/Performance Attainment.

L. Gaumond thought that the evaluation was fair, and thanked the Board for their comments. M. Dowling stated that she spoke to the vast majority of department heads as part of the evaluation process, and stressed that the Town employees all had high

praise for L. Gaumond. Morale is high among employees, which means more energy and productivity.

MOTION: To approve Merit Based Pay for the Town Administrator for 2% of his salary, in the amount of \$2,640, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

Town Administrator's Update

- **Resignation of Cathy Grady, Ambulance Billing Clerk**

MOTION: To accept the resignation of Cathy Grady from the position of Ambulance Billing Clerk, by M. Dowling.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

- **Appointment of New Ambulance Billing Clerk**

MOTION: To approve the appointment of Dale Meechan McNeil as Ambulance Billing Clerk, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

- **Appointment of Leon Gaumond as Representative to WRTA**

MOTION: To appoint Leon Gaumond, Jr. as the Town's representative to the WRTA, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

- **Request from UMass for Permission to Survey a Wetland**

L. Gaumond informed the Board that the Town had received a request from UMass Amherst to allow their Jackson Aquatic Connectivity Team to come onto Town property for a research project. They are looking to do a vegetation survey around 70 Cedar Street. It was reviewed and approved by Conservation, and L. Gaumond recommended that the Board approve it.

MOTION: To authorize the Town Administrator to sign a letter of permission to UMass, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

- **Agreement with Southbridge Tire Co. Inc.**

L. Gaumond asked the Board to approve and sign the agreement with Southbridge Tire Company for the Boiler Replacement at the Senior Center for \$25,971.00. It was reviewed and approved by the Town Accountant and Town Counsel.

MOTION: To approve and sign the agreement with Southbridge Tire Company for the Boiler Replacement at the Senior Center for \$25,971.00, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

- **Agreement with P&P General Contractors Inc.**

L. Gaumond asked the Selectmen to approve and sign the agreement with P & P General Contractors for the Town Building Roof Project for \$281,330.00. It was reviewed and approved by the Town Accountant and Town Counsel.

MOTION: To approve and sign the agreement with P & P General Contractors for the Town Building Roof Project for \$281,330.00, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

- **FY 2016 Mass. Downtown Initiative Technical Assistance (MDI) Program Award**

L. Gaumond announced that the Town has been awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development for consulting services to study parking and possible trolley service in our Commercial Tourist District.

- **Review of the Town's Human Resources Practices**

The Town received a grant for a Human Resources Study from MIIA (our insurance company) to review the Town's policies and practices. We have received the final report which L. Gaumond will review with the Board at the next Selectmen's meeting.

- **Announcement of Two Committees: Senior Center Study Committee and Website Review Committee**

L. Gaumond announced two temporary advisory committees to the Town Administrator. The first is the Website Review Committee. He is assigning some town employees to work on the redesign of the Town Website and will welcome the participation of board members and the general public as well. Christopher Geraghty, Town Accountant, will be the coordinator for this project.

Secondly, L. Gaumond is planning on creating a Senior Center Advisory Committee to work with the consultant on the planning for the feasibility study for the Senior Center. He will welcome the participation of board members and the general public as well. M. Blanchard expressed interest in serving on the Senior Center Advisory Committee.

- **Logging Permit Bylaw Changes**

L. Gaumond provided the Selectmen with a DRAFT bylaw change concerning logging permits. He said that if the Selectmen agree with the draft, they may vote to include it on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

M. Blanchard commented that under Hearing, the Conservation Commission had pointed out to her that the requirement for the notification of abutters by certified mail, return receipt requested had been removed from the Wetlands Protection Act.

M. Blanchard suggested that the wording be clarified for 3.32 #3 regarding commencement of work.

- **Senior Center Feasibility Study**

L. Gaumond asked the Selectmen to approve an agreement with CME for the Senior Center Feasibility Study for \$29,720.00. It was reviewed and approved by the Town Accountant. Town Counsel objected to CME's terms and conditions and L. Gaumond sent revised terms & conditions to CME for their ratification. He submitted the revised terms & conditions for the Board's review.

MOTION: To sign the agreement with CME for the Senior Center Feasibility Study for \$29,720.00 and authorize the Town Administrator to accept the terms and conditions, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

- **Appropriation for the Tighe & Bond Agreement for Sewer Expansion Study**

L. Gaumond asked the Selectmen to approve an agreement with Tighe & Bond for the Sewer Expansion Study for \$21,000.00. It was reviewed and approved by the Town Accountant. Town Counsel objected to Tighe & Bond's terms and conditions and Greg has sent revised terms & conditions to Tighe & Bond. L. Gaumond submitted to the Board the revised terms & conditions for review.

MOTION: So moved, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

Minutes

MOTION: To approve the minutes of February 16, 2016 as written, by C. Moran.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: Three in favor; P. Gimas and M. Suprenant abstained.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of March 7, 2016 as amended, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Suprenant

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of March 21, 2016 as amended, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Suprenant

Vote: Four in favor; M. Blanchard abstained.

Correspondence

M. Dowling read the correspondence list into the record.

Resignation

MOTION: To accept the resignation of Emily Vinyard Murphy from the position of Part-Time Dispatcher, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

Old Business

M. Dowling had read in a local newspaper that a cleanup has been scheduled at the Riverlands property and volunteers are being sought, which she feels is premature as the signs regarding the contaminated area are not yet installed, and it is inappropriate to invite people to do this. She said that the Trails Committee needs to be responsible for the volunteers, and tell them about the contaminated area. She noted that the Riverlands is not open yet. She said that children should not be allowed to participate in the cleanup. L. Gaumond agreed to relay the message.

MOTION: That the cleanup be restricted to adults only; the Trails Committee shall inform all participants that there is an area of contamination and that they should not go beyond the area of cleanup and stay away from the dumping area, by M. Dowling.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Four in favor; M. Suprenant opposed.

M. Blanchard expressed concern about the vote being too restrictive. She said that the Trails Committee could caution the people.

C. Moran asked about the status of Blue Wave. L. Gaumond said that he will have an update for the Board on April 14th, and will forward it to the Board. M. Blanchard said that Blue Wave put a lot of work into the project and it is not their fault what happened with SunEdison. M. Dowling said that she holds them responsible. M. Suprenant suggested asking Beth Greenblatt to meet with the Board. He would like to see what the options are. L. Gaumond said that Beth Greenblatt is prepared to meet with the Board.

New Business

P. Gimas asked for an update regarding lead and copper content at Tantasqua Junior High School.

MOTION: To adjourn, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Blanchard

Vote: All in favor

April 13, 2016

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date