

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
May 14, 2007**

CALL TO ORDER: Chm. Woods called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. The following persons were present: Chair Julie Woods, Vice Chair Arthur DuBois, Clerk Dan Stack, Sel. Kevin Kuros, Sel. Jim Dwyer, Town Manager Jill Myers and BOS Assistant Tracy Leavitt.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Invitation to view wall at Crown & Eagle; job opening in the Treasure & Collector's office; retirement of Lois Tucker.

ACTION ITEM: Send letters to Lois Tucker and Jeanie Pytel.

CITIZEN'S FORUM: Mrs. Cheryl Romasco, Chm. of the Blanchard Reuse Committee, stated that it has been seven weeks since the committee and their architect, Mr. Charlie VanVoorhis of Durland VanVoorhis, presented the Feasibility Study to the BOS. Mrs. Romasco stated that they have not yet received a response from the BOS and feels this is a lack of respect. She went on to say that the Committee worked hard with little help from the Town. Mrs. Romasco stated volunteers are told one thing in public meeting and on public record only to find out deals are being made in private. Mrs. Romasco went on to say there are lots of thanks' and smiles in public but, when the lights on the cameras go off and the public is not around volunteers need to have 360 degree vision to watch their backs to make sure they do not become the scapegoats for a project. Mrs. Romasco ended by requesting that the BOS make a decision one way or another. Chm. Woods stated Mrs. Romasco accused the Board of significant accusations (private deals) and offered Mrs. Romasco the chance to elaborate. Mrs. Romasco stated she was unable to do so at this time. Sel. Kuros responded by saying he finds the accusations of backroom deals particularly troublesome, he is absolutely sure that there has been no discussion of backroom deals. Sel. Kuros stated that this Board has gone out of their way to open government up to make everything done as accessible as possible to everybody. Sel. Kuros ended by stating he is incredibly offended by the accusations. Chm. Woods responded to the comment made by Mrs. Romasco in regards to little help from the town. Chm. Woods explained that she along with the Town Manager and her assistant have had a fair amount of interaction with the Blanchard Committee. Chm. Woods stated that the fact of the matter is despite repeated claims that it would only take a small amount of money to fix the building reality is it will cost between 5-7 million dollars. Chm. Woods informed the public that the Town Manager has include the potential repairs of the Blanchard building in her budget presentation many times. Chm. Woods stated in her opinion, after seeing the budget deficit that the Town was facing, it did not make sense to address a capital project of that magnitude. Chm. Woods ended by saying she is absolutely certain that there has been no deals made in private.

Mr. Ernie Esposito thanked Sel. DuBois for his dedicated service to the Town of Uxbridge. Mr. Esposito stated that Sel. DuBois has stayed true to himself from campaigning regardless of what was going on in the Town of Uxbridge. Mr. Esposito said it will be difficult to fill his seat and hopes Sel. DuBois will run for office again. On behalf of the Board of Selectmen, Chm. Woods thanked Sel. DuBois for his service and wished him the best of luck.

Sel. DuBois graciously accepted the comments by Mr. Esposito and Chm. Woods. Sel. DuBois went on to say last Tuesday night was the hardest night he has ever experienced. He thanked the BOS and sad that over the past year this was the best functioning BOS he has ever seen. Finally, Sel. DuBois said Ms. Myers is off to a great start as the Town Manager.

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
May 14, 2007**

Chm. Woods ended by wishing Sel. Kuros the best of luck in the election. Chm. Woods agreed with Sel. DuBois that the current BOS worked well together. Finally, Chm. Woods applauded Sel. DuBois and Sel. Kuros on a job well done.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/APPOINTMENTS:

Bylaw Review Committee Appointment - James Smith: Chm. Woods reviewed the application. After discussion the Board realized there are two openings on this committee. Sel. Dwyer suggested that they appoint Mr. Smith to an ad hoc term.

MSDV by Sel. Dwyer, seconded by Sel. Kuros, to appoint Mr. James Smith ad hoc to the Bylaw Review Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEM: Send Mr. Smith a letter inviting him to be sworn in.

Election/Poll Worker Appointments - Ellen Mayo, John Morawski & Jessica Boatman: Chm. Woods reviewed the list of candidates.

MSDV by Sel. DuBois, seconded by Sel. Stack, to appoint Ellen Mayo, John Morawski and Jessica L. Boatman to serve as poll workers. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEM: Send a letter and notify the Town Clerk; add names to annual appointment list.

Resignations: Recreation Committee; Mason Seagrave ~ Library Board of Trustees; Faye McCloskey On behalf of the Board and the Town of Uxbridge, Chm. Woods expressed her thanks to both Mr. Seagrave and Ms. McCloskey for their dedicated service and her sadness in receiving their letters of resignation.

MSDV by Sel. Stack, seconded by Sel. Dwyer, to support sending out letters of thanks. The motion passed unanimously.

At 7:27 p.m. MSDV by Sel. Dwyer, seconded by Sel. Kuros, to recess the Board of Selectmen meeting and reconvene after. The motion passed unanimously

At 8:17 p.m. MSDV by Sel. Dwyer, seconded by Sel. Stack, to come out of recess and return to the May 14th agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Senior Tax Relief Programs - David Utakis: Assessor David Utakis reviewed his handouts. Mr. Utakis said the average tax bill for a single family home in 2007 was \$3427.00 which is 5% - 10% less than average across the state. Mr. Utakis stated that in 2006, Uxbridge granted 161 exemptions, many to seniors and veterans. The Town is reimbursed to some degree: in 2007 we were reimbursed \$26,000.00 for senior exemptions. Mr. Utakis stated that no matter what the Town does, the number that we are reimbursed for will not change for senior exemptions because the state capped it many years ago. In 2007, the veteran exemptions increased roughly 40% so we will see a larger veteran's reimbursement.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
May 14, 2007

Mr. Utakis stated that sometime in the near future, the BOS and he should get together to come up with a recommendation to present at a Town Meeting to update Clause 41C – senior exemption options. (Attached) Mr. Utakis said the Town also has the option to increase the Senior Work Off program from \$500 to \$750. Mr. Utakis informed the Board that right now, all the money comes out of the overlay.

Chm. Woods thanked Mr. Utakis and said his presentation was very helpful. Chm. Woods asked the Board what they feel is the most efficient way to move forward with a more thorough examination of these programs. Sel. DuBois feels they should wait to hear from the Director of the COA Marsha Petrillo before deciding on the next step. Sel. DuBois mentioned his first reaction would be for the Town Manager, Assessor, and the COA Director to get together. Sel. DuBois feels with a combination of experience and perspective, they would be able to draft up policy that might be workable. Chm. Woods invited the Director of the COA, Marsha Petrillo, to share news of what the Senior Center has accomplished this year in terms of tax relief/financial benefit. Ms. Petrillo informed the Board that between February and April, the Center has three dedicated tax preparers. This past year, the center was able to serve 103 seniors. Of those seniors, several people applied for the Circuit Breaker Tax Credit and, as a result, Uxbridge Seniors were able to put just over \$28,097.00 in their pocket. In 2007, due to the Federal Rebate for a Telephone Tax, the seniors saved \$3,100.00. Ms. Petrillo announced the Senior Center is proud to have helped put back \$32,000.00 into our senior's pockets. Ms. Petrillo stated the Circuit Breaker Tax Credit is free and encourages more seniors to come in and apply. Ms. Petrillo mentioned that the Work-Off program has changed and now it is offered as a straight abatement. The program requires 66.6 hours of time and the seniors will receive \$250.00 off of their February bill and \$250.00 off of their May bill. Ms. Petrillo stated that usually they are able to place 10 people a year. Finally, Ms. Petrillo informed the Board that the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Dan Stefanilo, herself and a few others are trying very hard to implement a "Read - A - Program" at the schools. Ms. Petrillo said if the Board approves the increased amount of the Work-Off Program, it would allow for 10 more people to be able to take part in this program. Chm. Woods said she would like to see the Town put some resources into really advocating people about Clause 41C.

Wind Energy on Hazel Street: DPW Supt. Bombara: Chm. Woods informed the Board that she read an article that a high school in Worcester was receiving a grant to install a wind turbine on a hill. Chm. Woods felt that if a hill in Worcester had enough wind to merit this, then a hill somewhere in Uxbridge probably did as well. Chm. Woods stated the Board was supportive of taking a look at the potential for wind energy, and DPW Supt. Larry Bombara was there to provide the Board with an update.

Mr. Bombara stated that originally they looked at Sutton Street for a potential location. After some research, it was determined this location does not have suitable conditions. One reason being the close proximity of the homes in the neighborhood. Mr. Bombara stated that they have begun to investigate the possible use of the Hazel St. Landfill. Mr. Bombara explained that Hazel Street provides substantial height, there is a communications tower already present, there are few residents compared to other areas, it is close to highway, and the high-tension lines are down the road. Mr. Barbara's only concern was the landfill cap. Mr. Bombara contacted some engineers and learned Hull had just installed a wind turbine on their landfill (somewhat identical to ours). Mr. Bombara stated they run their own electric company and we do not. Mr. Bombara went on to say this is a great benefit to Hull because they can produce their own electricity. Mr. Bombara said if we do something in Uxbridge, it may go to the secondary market and wholesale it back to the electric company, so therefore the payback would not be the same. Mr. Bombara feels it would be viable to look at possibly leasing a portion, if an industry would like to build something there for the same use, and we would get revenue from the lease rather than owning and operating.

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
May 14, 2007**

Mr. Bombara stated there are agencies out there that would help, at no cost to the Town, to get opinions to see if it is a viable area to use. Chm. Woods asked the Board if they would be supportive to continue investigating. The Board is supportive and Sel. Dwyer's only concern is that it is not in conflict with the zoning bylaws. Sel. Kuros asked why the Sutton Street location is not a good location. Chm. Woods said according to the mapping from Technology Collaborative, it was not a particularly conducive site. Chm. Woods feels we should continue to look at the Hazel Street site and if it has merit, the Board should invite the individuals to present a comprehensive presentation. Sel. Kuros ended by saying this is the perfect opportunity to explore private/public partnership.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT: Ms. Myers reviewed her report and the Department Head Monthly Report. (A copy of the reports are attached) Sel. Dwyer questioned the *Requests under the MA Public Records Law* part of Ms. Myers report. Sel. Dwyer asked why we do not respond by e-mail. Ms. Myers said we have not received a directive from the Secretary of State's office. Ms. Myers also stated to ensure the public receives the document; we request it to be picked up or mailed. Sel. Dwyer went on to quote M.G.L. c.66 §10b "A custodian of public records shall within ten days following the receipt of a request for inspection or a copy of a public record comply with the request." Ms. Myers responded by saying typically when a request is made, the documentation is provide within 1-2 days. However, some requests are more convoluted and in that case, we respond to whoever is requesting the information and provide them with the estimated time and cost. Chm. Woods feels this is an interesting issue in which she has heard many times the ten day deadline is the time to respond back to them and inform them the records will be provided and then you have a reasonable amount of time to execute the request. Mr. Bombara said Kopelman & Paige stated we are to respond to the request within ten days only to provide an estimate of cost and time, not to actually complete the request.

OLD BUSINESS:

Douglas Street RFP: Inspector General's Office Ruling: Chm. Woods said despite claims, no violations were found. Ms. Myers stated Atty. Whelan has it logged.

In regards to similar accusations, Sel. Kuros said earlier in citizen's forum comments were made in which he takes very strong offense. Sel. Kuros stated that absolutely no backdoor deals occurred. Chm. Woods re-iterated that there were absolutely no background deals. Chm. Woods went on to say to have had fair amount of interaction with the Blanchard Reuse Committee. Chm. Woods is shocked that the comments of lack of respect and very little help of Town Officials were even made. Chm. Woods stated if people had logged the hours they put into this project, the public could have easily seen all the help that was put forth from the Town. Chm. Woods mentioned that Ms. Myers has included this in the budget presentation as a potential issue. Chm. Woods said despite all the claims that it will only take a little bit of money to fix the building, the reality is it will cost between \$5-7 million and that is not prudent to do when facing the budget deficit that the town is facing.

FY08 Budget and Spring Annual Town Meeting (5/8/07 adjourned to 6/13/07): Ms. Myers reviewed the budget presentation from Town Meeting. Chm. Woods asked that an update of Town Meeting be put on the website informing the citizens of what articles were covered and what articles still need to be addressed at the continuation. Also, Chm. Woods would like to reserve the Town Common sign to advertise the Special Ballot election and the Town Meeting continuation. Sel. DuBois noted that the 8th grade graduation is on the same evening as the Town Meeting continuation. Sel. DuBois feels that parking may become a problem and feels it should be discussed. Sel. Dwyer asked if the ballot election fails, what is our fall back position?

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
May 14, 2007**

Ms. Myers said she is in the process of talking with Department Heads to try and reduce the overall budget by \$1.4 million. Ms. Myers said they are also working on a fixed cost issue. Sel. Dwyer asked what the main motion will be if the ballot question fails. Chm. Woods said the motion could be amended, if need be, on Town Meeting floor. Sel. Dwyer said he talked to the Moderator, Mr. Harold Klei, and they agree that the motion should have read, and could be amended to read, "Move that the \$34,872,088.00 be separately appropriated by line item in the amounts as set forth in the column headers." Chm. Woods said she appreciates the Board identifying the challenges this evening but the Board will need to have a substantive conversation post election/prior Town Meeting because there will be at least one change on the BOS after election.

ACTION ITEM: Post election meeting on next agenda.

NEW BUSINESS: (continued)

Eagle Scout Letter of Commendation - Ryan Lee Belseth: Chm. Woods informed the Board that they received an e-mail request to recognize the accomplishment of Mr. Ryan Lee Belseth as he will attend his court of honor on June 3, 2007. Chm. Woods stated she took the liberty of anticipating the Boards support and had a certificate of achievement plaque made. Chm. Woods asked the Board if they would support sending the plaque accompanied by a letter signed by the BOS to Mr. Belseth. The Board agreed.

ACTION ITEM: Write a letter to Mr. Belseth.

Affordable Housing Eligible Purchaser Certificate - 4 Jefferson Court: Ms. Myers informed the Board that the transfer of this unit came in late April and, according to the Town Planner, the process has been followed. We have also been assured that the seller worked with the State and meets the criteria for the Eligible Purchaser Certificate. Ms. Myers stated that in the next few months she needs to take a look into the Affordable Housing component. Ms. Myers stated the action is for the Chief Elected Official to sign the document. Chm. Woods mentioned the desperate need for citizens to serve on the Affordable Housing Committee. She went on to say we were very lucky in that this developer was versed in the Affordable Housing Program.

MSDV by Sel. Stack, seconded by Sel. Kuros, to authorize Chm. Woods to sign the Eligibility Purchaser Certificate. The motion passed unanimously.

Memorial Day Parade Speaker - Parade Committee: Mr. Alan Keeler of the Parade Committee thanked Chm. Woods and Sel. Stack for all their assistance. Mr. Keeler went on to say the parade will begin at 9:00 a.m. at the Whittin School and end with speakers on the common. The main speaker will be Major Peter Fiorantino. The last minute details will be confirmed on May 16th. Mr. Keeler explained the flying squadron will visit the schools on May 22nd. On May 20th at 12 p.m. at the Bomber Site, there will be a commemoration to remember the crash of May 18th. Mr. Keeler thanked the Town Manager. Chm. Woods said it was a thrill to come to the Parade Committee meeting. Chm. Woods said when she was a speaker on the Town Common, it was a memorable experience and one she will never forget. Chm. Woods announced that Mr. Letourneau asked for a BOS speaker and a parade speaker. Sel. Kuros said he would be happy to participate with the flying squadron if he is re-elected. Sel. Dwyer agreed to be the parade speaker. Sel. Kuros said Major Fiorantino is a friend of his and very honored to be chosen. Mr. Keeler encouraged citizens to show their support with their flags. Chm. Woods asked the Board if they would be willing to provide a wreath.

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
May 14, 2007**

The Board was supportive. Mr. Keeler ended by saying Sel. DuBois, Faye McCloskey and Gerald Lemire are people of integrity, honesty and are truly public servants in the best sense of the word.

Consider Policy to Release Executive Session Meeting Minutes - Draft Policy (TM Myers): Ms. Myers reviewed the policy. Sel. Dwyer stated that the Board does not actually release minutes: we release portions of the minutes. Sel. Kuros stated for future practice possibly having separate pages for individual topics, e.g., 3 topic = 3 pages. Chm. Woods said we should adopt a policy that all boards and committees could follow. After a brief discussion, the Board agreed to have Sel. Dwyer make the changes he feels are necessary and present the updated policy at the next meeting.

ACTION ITEM: e-mail Jill's version to Sel. Dwyer; add to next agenda.

MSDV by Sel. Dwyer, seconded by Sel Kuros, to release all references to the Lavallee transaction appearing in executive session minutes to the public. The motion passed 4-0-0 (Sel. DuBois stepped out of the meeting).

Consider Scheduling a Special Town Meeting (6/13/07) Within the Adjourned ATM - Open Warrant, Discuss Potential Warrant Article: Ms. Myers informed the Board that they need to have an article that addresses the end of year transfers. Ms. Myers then asked the Board to vote to allow her to sponsor Article 1. The Board discussed the confusion of voting. The BOS agreed to clear the confusion they will confirm with the Town Clerk to see who is actually eligible to vote at the STM and the ATM.

MSDV by Sel. Kuros, seconded by Sel. Stack, to call a Special Town Meeting for June 13, 2007, at 7:00 p.m., at the Uxbridge High School Gymnasium, 62 Capron Street Uxbridge, MA, 01569. The motion passed unanimously.

MSDV by Sel. DuBois, seconded by Sel. Dwyer, to open the Warrant and place this article on it and close the Warrant on the close of day on May 23, 2007. The motion passed unanimously.

Town Manager Evaluation - Chairman Woods & Vice Chairman DuBois: Chm. Woods apologized that the draft she and Sel. DuBois put together was not presented earlier than this evening. Sel. Dwyer asked to put off the evaluation until he has adequate time to review the document presented. Sel. Kuros agreed.

ACTION ITEM: add as item agenda 5/21.

CORRESPONDENCE/OTHER BUSINESS: Sel. Kuros briefed the Board on an article written in the May, 2007 issue of the Beacon provided by the MMA. In regards to the Town Liability's insurance, it is common to have property insurance with a \$1,000.00 deductible but, generally speaking a \$2,500.00 deductible might afford a 15% credit on the premium and a \$10,000.00 deductible can afford a 21% credit on the premium. Essentially, the larger risk you are willing to take as far as your deductible goes, the lower your premiums are. Under chapter 40 § 13, a town may set-up a separate account and fund it up to \$25,000.00 to pay the deductible and, if you do not use it the money, it stays in the account: it buys down the cost of insurance. Sel. Kuros asked the Board to look at this and possibly discuss this further at a subsequent meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Add Executive Session to 5/21 agenda

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
May 14, 2007**

ADJOURNMENT: With no further business before them, at 10:10 p.m.,

MSDV by Sel. Dwyer, seconded by Sel. Stack, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by,
Tracy Leavitt, Assistant to the Board of Selectmen*

Minutes approved by Board of Selectmen:

Chairman Julie A. Woods

Sel. James F. Dwyer

V. Chairman Arthur O. DuBois

Sel. Kevin J. Kuros

Clerk Daniel P. Stack

MSDV: Moved, Seconded, Discussed & Voted
RCV: Roll Call Vote