

Members Present – October 20, 2014: Gary Wells, Chair, Sharon Kaiser, Lisa Blazejewski, Ed Behn, Peter Allen, Tara Howard, Beth Blumberg, Hank Rauch. Absent: Jim Tepper.

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At 6:34 p.m. on October 20, 2014 Mr. Wells called the meeting to order in the Westborough High School Auditorium.

Meeting No. 6, October 6, 2014

Approval of minutes deferred to next meeting.

AFC Preparations for Special Town Meeting

Discussion, deliberation, voting of any recommendations to Town Meeting

Article 38, Easement Funding – Open Space Reserve Account (Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee).

There was discussion from Committee members about the additional information recently provided by Bruce Tretter. Ms. Blazejewski appreciated the Power Point presentation he emailed but regretted not being able to discuss with the proponent in more detail. Ms. Blazejewski, Ms. Blumberg, and Ms. Howard felt there still wasn't enough information. Mr. Wells thought there wasn't a complete and comprehensive list of easement holders on the main trail, so he felt asking for money for surveying the spurs was premature. Mr. Wells also mentioned that if he were a landowner who was approached for an easement for this trail that he'd expect the Town to pay the legal costs. Mr. Rauch commented that he felt the main trail should be completed first, before surveying for the spurs and Ms. Blumberg agreed. In conclusion the AFC felt that nothing had changed from their original vote so a new vote on this article wasn't necessary.

Article 6, Restoring Historic Frames for Re-Use (Library Director/Board of Library Trustees). Mr. Wells noted that the Committee did not receive any new information related to this article and he felt there were still a lot of unanswered questions. Mr. Behn thought that, since there was no specific place that these frames and prints were going to be hung, there wasn't a rush to get them refurbished. Mr. Allen mentioned that the AFC's questions got back to the Library Director, Maureen Ambrosino, so her presentation tonight may provide more information. Ms. Howard felt that this could wait until Annual Town Meeting (ATM) in March. Ms. Blumberg said that if the presentation tonight answered her questions that she may vote for it. Mr. Wells pointed out that the AFC could leave it alone and let the Town decide. Mr. Allen mentioned that if the AFC was asked to provide their comments that we could point out people weren't stepping forward for these frames and prints, so we felt it could wait until the ATM. Ms. Blazejewski mentioned that if different information was received tonight then votes could change.

Article 18, Mill Pond Test Drilling and Well Installation (School Committee). Mr. Wells informed the Committee that they have all of the information that has come to him. Mr. Behn wanted to know what the savings would be from using well water in order to recoup the \$50,000 cost for digging and installing the well. Mr. Allen pointed out that the Selectmen decided to defeat this article, along with Articles 19 and 20, and felt all three of these articles (18, 19, and 20) should be brought back at Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Blazejewski wondered why these three articles were accepted by the Selectmen in the first place. Mr. Behn was concerned about the cost of digging the well and felt that \$50,000 was a lot – he wondered if they were missing something. Ms. Blazejewski thought that the cost included purchasing the pipe and installing. Mr. Behn felt the cost was still high. Mr. Wells mentioned that the well was deferred 10 years ago during school construction – he wondered who's been watering the field for all of these years, how has that been paid for, and who's water have they been using. Ms. Blazejewski felt that the justification for the School Committee bringing it up now was because a new Buildings and Grounds Manager has been hired in the School Department and he is bringing forward issues that may have been previously ignored. Ms. Blumberg felt that this issue should have been brought up 6 years ago. Mr. Wells said he was going to wait and see if the School Committee had additional information that they may present tonight. Selectmen Chair, George Barrette, stopped by and heard the AFC's thoughts on Article 18. He added that the irrigation system was on the capital expenditures list for 2016 but that

the schools had a little extra money in their budget at year end so they used it for that instead of waiting. The Committee agreed that they needed to hear more information before taking a re-vote.

Article 37, Home Rule Petition – Selectmen Emery Retirement (Board of Selectmen). Mr. Allen asked Mr. Barrette if the motion on Article 37 was going to be a “pass over” and if Selectmen Emery had definitely resigned. Mr. Barrette confirmed that Ms. Emery had resigned and that the motion would be to pass over. Mr. Allen made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to pass over this article. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Town Meeting was called to order. Mr. Wells provided some opening comments from the Advisory Finance Committee. Voting on the articles began with Article 1.

Article 6, Restoring Historic Frames for Re-Use – Mr. Wells asked Library Director, Maureen Ambrosino, how many frames were worth saving and if the prints were useful for being restored. He added that the AFC felt there could have been more investigation and planning. Mr. Wells said that the general consensus of the AFC was that this article could have waited until ATM in March.

Article 18, Mill Pond Drilling and Well Installation – School Committee member, Nicole Sullivan, made the presentation regarding the drilling and well installation for the Mill Pond School. When asked about the payback period, she said it would be approximately 2.5 years. Ms. Blumberg asked what the 2.5 years was based on and she was told it is the cost difference between using treated water and untreated water. Gordon Richardson, Director of Buildings and Grounds for the schools said that he met with a hydrologist and they have an idea as to where the water is located. It was asked if a Town property could install an irrigation system and use Town water. DPW Manager, John Walden said that they generally don’t allow it. Mr. Behn had a question on the payback period and how they arrived at 2.5 years. School Committee Chair, Stephen Doret said that the payback calculation he used was based on the amount of water used in the past during watering season of approximately 1.8 million gallons. He then took the number of gallons and multiplied that by the cost of a gallon of treated water and arrived at a cost of \$20,100/year. Mr. Doret pointed out that there would be additional savings on labor costs since the irrigation system would be used instead of manually watering the field with hoses. Mr. Richardson added that the cost of \$50,000 included 40 feet of casing and 800 feet of drilling. Mr. Richardson was asked if Mill Pond could be used for irrigating the field and he said it was too far. Mr. Allen wanted to vote on the article since the AFC indicated that they would do that on Town Meeting floor. He made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand (\$50,000) for the purpose of this article as printed in the warrant Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present. Mr. Wells wanted to mention that he concurs with the Selectmen and doesn’t agree with the manner in which this article was brought forth.

Article 22, Amend Classification Plan and Article 23, Council on Aging Staffing – Mr. Wells provided thoughts and comments on why the AFC’s vote was split on Article 22, and their recommendation was to defeat Article 23. Mr. Wells pointed out that Article 22 could be approved to create the position for an additional driver and that Article 23 could be defeated which wouldn’t supply the funding for this position until a possible later date. He mentioned that the AFC would like to support the Council on Aging (COA) and that the money being requested for this position in Article 23 wasn’t the issue. Mr. Wells pointed out that the AFC had asked the COA for a long range plan for their needs going forward last March during preparations for Annual Town Meeting. He said he applauds the Selectmen for their requirement within the article that they receive a strategic plan before funding is released for this position. Mr. Wells said it still wasn’t clear as to what the COA’s needs were. Mr. Wells asked if there were other alternatives such as smaller vans that could be used for transporting seniors, using off duty Town employees as drivers, and using the services of the Metro West Regional Transit Authority (MWRA). He pointed out that the AFC was unable to meet with the COA prior to the STM due to timing, so these suggestions couldn’t be discussed. Mr. Wells reiterated that the AFC fully supports the seniors of Westborough. He said that the Town spends \$15,000 per student and only \$100 per senior, but that is because the schools provide a plan. Selectmen Dodd added that they would like to see if there are any grants available which is why the requirement for a strategic plan was placed in the article. Alma Demanche, Council on Aging Director, explained that a plan is being formulated and that they’d like to add this fourth part time driver so they can expand the hours for the buses. Town resident, Dexter Blois, wanted to amend the article and strike the word “contingent” so that the article either moves forward or not. Mr. Behn wanted the AFC to defeat Mr. Blois’ motion

Westborough Advisory Finance Committee minutes
October 20 & 21, 2014 – Special Town Meeting

since both the Selectmen and AFC are looking for a strategic plan before spending any money. Mr. Blois' motion failed but the main motion passed.

Mr. Rauch made a motion to recess the AFC's meeting at 11:03 p.m. on October 20, 2014 until tomorrow night at 7 p.m. and Ms. Blazejewski seconded. The vote to recess the meeting was 8-0-0 in favor, with 8 being present.

On Tuesday, October 21, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. Special Town Meeting resumed. There was some question as to whether the AFC's meeting could be called to order due to the lack of a quorum.

Article 24, Acceptance of MGL Ch. 32B, Subsection 20 – Mr. Wells asked if the trust fund being proposed was revocable or irrevocable. Mr. Malloy said the fund would be revocable after 3 years.

Article 38, Easement Funding – Open Space Reserve Account (Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee) – Mr. Wells provided comments from the AFC on Town Meeting floor. He explained that the general consensus of the AFC was that the main trail should be completed before beginning work on the spurs. Mr. Wells also said that the warrant for STM was extensive and there was a lot to muddle through – unfortunately Article 38 was last. Mr. Wells mentioned that the AFC supports the bike trail but didn't think the plan was sound. The AFC also had questions on liability issues and legal fees. Mr. Wells said that the recommendation by the AFC is that this article should be defeated and that opinion stands. Don Burn, a member of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, pointed out that they have all but 3 easements of the 14 needed and that they are mostly dealing with businesses with four easements belonging to homeowners. He said that the article has to do with surveying and deeds for the spurs and that is being handled by Town Counsel. Town Planner, Jim Robbins, said that the Planning Board supports this article. The Open Space Preservation Committee also supports this article. Mr. Burn said that they have spent \$18,000 of the \$22,000 that they requested a year ago. Mr. Burn pointed out that grant season extends from January to April for bike trails, which is why they are bringing this request to STM and not waiting until March. Mr. Wells reminded residents that the AFC was not opposed to the bike trail, but were more concerned with the main trail being addressed first.

Adjournment

Special Town Meeting came to a conclusion at 9 p.m. on Tuesday, October 21, 2014. There was some discussion as to whether the AFC could make a motion to adjourn since there wasn't a quorum. Mr. Wells said he would check with Town Moderator, John E. Arnold, as to the proper procedure for reconvening and adjourning the AFC's meeting this evening.

Town Moderator, John E. Arnold, confirmed to Mr. Wells that since the AFC meeting was scheduled and called to order so as to run concurrently with the Special Town Meeting, adjournment of Special Town Meeting effectively adjourns the AFC meeting. This position was supported by former Town Moderator Joe Harrington.

Document List

Final STM AFC Report and Recommendations Book

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Thomas
AFC Administrative Assistant