

Members present: Allen R. Phillips Christopher A. Rucho
Valmore H. Pruneau Kevin M. McCormick
Members absent: John B. DiPietro, Sr.

Mr. Phillips convened the goal setting retreat meeting at 5:30 p.m. in MEMA Headquarters, Framingham. Mr. Gaumond thanked Mr. Phillips for hosting the meeting. Last year the Board held its first retreat for goal setting in Sturbridge.

Goal Setting Discussion

The Board agreed on the following goals.

1. Increase revenue enhancement for the town without adverse impact on the way we operate.
2. Actively pursue any and all possible grants for the town. We will also document all grants the town applies noting whether we were successful or not to better our process.
3. Pursue a Tivnan Drive Project
4. Continue to develop strong fiscal policies
5. Continue the activity of the Shared Services Committee at a faster pace and have the Town Administrator attend the meetings.
6. Actively recruit citizens to serve on town boards who have not yet been involved. Use town census as a reference for citizen area of expertise.
7. Have town departments revisit their scheduling procedures
8. Develop and implement a Building Maintenance Plan for town facilities.
9. Continue with the work of the Municipal Buildings Committee
10. Review our fleet of vehicles to determine whether all need to be on our insurance for the entire year or just a season and in addition, increase the number of auctions we have to dispose of surplus. At the next meeting of the Board declare the Bicentennial Trolley surplus and include the various portable signed used during the celebration year.

Wachusett Earthday Project

Motion Mr. Pruneau to contact Senator Chandler and Representative O'Day to let them know that the Board would agree to the facility being open one day per month for recycling, two days per year for collection of household hazardous waste, with no facilities being erected, West Boylston participating at no cost, all town bylaws and building codes being followed, with DCR being responsible for trash clean up and at the end of one year they will come before the Selectmen at which time we will review how the project has gone and how it will proceed, seconded by Mr. McCormick. Vote on the motion – Messrs. Phillips, Pruneau and McCormick yes; Mr. Rucho no. A letter will also be sent to the legislators outlining the town's position. If this is approved, the Board will make a formal announcement at its next meeting.

DCR Field Usage

DCR is proposing a trade of a 12.2 acre parcel of their property on Lee Street for River Road and the portion of the rail trail, which belongs to the town. They have offered their experts to assist us in building the Lee Street property fields and Community Preservation Funds can also be used for this project. The property would be transferred to the town through the legislative process. The Board requested Mr. Gaumond look into whether this would be deed restricted.

The Board would like to proceed with the transfer of River Road and the town-owned portion of the rail trail for the 212.2 acres of property on Lee Street provided DCR has a 21E done on the site.

They would also like to inquire as to whether the Fire Department uses the training facility at the rail trail.

Motion Mr. McCormick for Mr. Gaumond to have a conversation with the Fire Chief and speak with DCR about a 21E for the site, seconded by Mr. Rucho, all in favor.

Mr. DiPietro's Comments

Mr. DiPietro provided the following goals and comments for the Board's consideration. The first is reduce the Library costs by reducing the number of part-time employees at the Library and making them full-time to reduce the totally number of employees. He also recommends reducing office hours in the Board of Health and Board of Assessors. With regard to trash, he does not like the SWAT proposal and recommends we look at the Everett system. Mr. DiPietro suggests a casino night to support the schools and Council on Aging and having residents donate their unwanted used cars to be auctioned off for the town. He is in favor of the Earthday proposal.

Pay-as-you-Throw

Mr. McCormick recommends removing trash all together from the budget and not bringing forth an override. Mr. Phillips would support and override.

Budget

The Board reviewed steps they could take now to minimize the budget deficit next year. The first is a spending freeze with all expenses being approved in advance by the Town Administrator. The second is a hiring free.

Motion Mr. McCormick to implement a spending, hiring and wage freeze, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor. It was agreed to include this on the Board's agenda for next Wednesday and include it on the agenda for next Thursday.

Motion Mr. Rucho to look at layoffs, seconded by Mr. McCormick, all in favor.

Discussion as to whether to suspend stipends for elected and appointed boards. It was agreed to do nothing at this time.

With regard to municipal buildings, it was agreed to think carefully about the options.

The town has an educational incentive program which is being used at this time by a couple of employees.

Motion Mr. McCormick to suspend the educational incentive program for one year at the end of this semester, and the School Department will be asked to do the same, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor.

It was agreed to cut the town's portion of the funding provided to the Board of Health and the Planning Board in half.

With regard to the parks and field usage, the Board discussed eliminating field lining and to continue mowing only. Mr. Gaumond will ask the Parks Commission to research how Princeton handles their fields.

With regard to budget cuts, it was agreed to take an amount equivalent of a 10% cut across the board for all departments.

At next Wednesday's meet there will be a presentation on steps we will take to address the budget deficit for next year and things we will do this year for a town-wide approach.

With regard to cost of living adjustments, Mr. Gaumond would like non-union employees to be given the same percentage as union employees.

MEETING

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

DECEMBER 10 , 2008

With no further business to come before the Board, motion Mr. McCormick at 9:00 p.m. to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved: January 7, 2009

Nancy E. Lucier

Allen R. Phillips, Chairman

Valmore H. Pruneau, Vice Chairman

Christopher A. Rucho, Selectman

Kevin M. McCormick, Selectman