

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

Mr. McCormick convened the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Read and acceptance of Minutes From Previous Meeting:

Motion Mr. Pruneau to approve the meeting minutes of February 20, 2008 as submitted, seconded by Mr. DiPietro, all in favor.

Motion Mr. Phillips to approve the meeting minutes of February 25, 2008, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor.

Gregory Zakarian, Request For Appointment To The Finance Committee

Mr. Zakarian joined the Board. Mr. Phillips asked Mr. Zakarian if he had an opportunity to meet with the members of the Finance Committee. Mr. Zakarian indicated that he had not. Mr. Gaumond noted that he sent Mr. Zakarian's information to the Chairman of the Finance Committee, and he is thrilled to welcome Mr. Zakarian aboard.

Motion Mr. Pruneau to appoint Mr. Zakarian to the Finance Committee, seconded by Mr. Phillips, all in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Concurrence on the appointment of Jared Piche as a Special Police Officer for the period covering March 6, 2008 through June 30, 2008 for detail assignments only

Motion Mr. Pruneau to concur with the appointment, seconded by Mr. Phillips, all in favor

2. Review request from Bicentennial Bell Committee to accept the Bicentennial Bell to be located in a garden on the Gazebo Common

The Bicentennial Bell Committee is requesting the Board's acceptance of the bell, which will be placed in a garden on the Gazebo Common.

Motion Mr. Phillips to accept the Bicentennial Bell, seconded by Mr. Rucho, all in favor.

3. Consider adopting a Sidewalk Maintenance Policy

During the Board's retreat last fall, there was discussion about adopting a Sidewalk Maintenance Policy. After reviewing several sample policies, Mr. Gaumond provided the Board with a draft document for discussion purposes. Should the Board wish to adopt the policy, a public hearing would be required.

Mr. Phillips would like to include a provision for the elderly or handicapped who could not shovel snow. Mr. Pruneau wants to look out what would happen if the sidewalk had been shoveled and the DPW comes back out and widens the road. He also agrees that there needs to be a provision for seniors and handicapped. Mr. Phillips suggested giving people the opportunity to seek a waiver and set standards. Mr. Gaumond feels this policy could be under either the DPW, Police Department or the Building Department. His recommendation would be the Building Inspector who could issue \$25.00 tickets. Mr. DiPietro would like to clear all the snow off of the streets in the center of town as those streets are used by the children who walk to school and we have the machinery and the men to do it. Mr. Pruneau advised that Sterling has an attachment that can blow the snow into the dump trucks. Mr.

Rucho asked if the Board is talking about a policy for the town or for the residents. Mr. DiPietro thinks it should be for any streets that are considered important for the children to walk on. Mr. Rucho feels that every sidewalk that children walk on is important.

Mr. McCormick feels it might be too complicated as the town would have to differentiate between the streets it is responsible for and those the residents are responsible for. Mr. Phillips feels we are talking about two different things, one is a policy for the town and the other is for the DPW to revisit its policy on emergency snow removal. Mr. DiPietro pointed out that students need to live a certain distance from the school in order to ride the school bus without paying a fee. He would also like to cover removal of snow from catch basins and fire hydrants. Mr. Rucho pointed out that on his street, the residents clear their fire hydrants. Mr. Phillips feels the residents need to be responsible for some of the snow removal. Mr. Rucho suggested getting sample bylaws from other communities on how they deal with seniors and disabled.

Mr. Gaumond explained that on an annual basis the Selectmen review the Emergency Snow Removal Procedures of the DPW for the upcoming year. Mr. Phillips would like to see criteria for exemptions and a time frame, and noted that some elderly may want to clear their own snow. Mr. McCormick feels an exemption would be even more confusing for the DPW in trying to determine who gets plowed and who doesn't.

Mr. DiPietro requested a list of those streets we currently clear the sidewalks on.

4. Concurrence on the appointment of Matthew Saunders as Permanent Sergeant effective March 30, 2008 until June 30, 2010

Officer Saunders joined the Board with Police Chief Dennis Minnich. Chief Minnich begin the process to hire a new Sergeant back in September of 2007. He posted the vacancy and agreed to prolong the process to save funds in his budget. This appointment will not be effective until March 30. Chief Minnich used Commonwealth Police Services, as it out of the department and keeps the process fair. Six applicants applied for the written exam, four passed the exam, which was followed by an oral interview phase. The top two candidates were presented to a psychologist. Chief Minnich noted that to become a Sergeant or command staff we look at a different type of psychological assessment. Officer Saunders' end score was 93%. He has also interviewed with Mr. Gaumond. Officer Saunders began in West Boylston in April of 2001, previously working with the Princeton police department. Over the last couple of weeks while working the 11-7 shift Officer Saunders arrested a suspect who broke into a pizza store in Sterling and arrested a person who broke into ten to eleven cars and two businesses.

Motion Mr. Phillips to concur with the appointment, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor.

5. Consider requesting the Water District mark Dig Safe (JD)

Mr. DiPietro would like to have the Board's permission to allow him to speak with the Water District Commissioners to have them mark dig safe for sewer lines and drainage structures.

Motion Mr. Phillips to grant Mr. DiPietro permission to allow him to speak with the Water District Commissioners to have them mark dig safe for sewer lines and drainage structures, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Consider adopting A Resolution in Support of the Mass Recycles Paper campaign

Mr. Gaumond explained that more than 150 communities have adopted this provision, and noted that he is very proud of our efforts to recycle paper in our municipal offices.

Motion Mr. Pruneau to adopt A Resolution in Support of the Mass Recycles Paper campaign, seconded by Mr. DiPietro, all in favor.

NEW BUSINESS (cont.)**6. Review correspondence from Senator Chandler regarding Governor Patrick's FY09 Budget**

The agenda package contains correspondence from Senator Chandler regarding the FY09 budget. She is including West Boylston as one of her FY09 budget priorities and included the following requests. Included is a one-time appropriation of \$180,000 for a biofilter at the Woodland Street Pump Station, a one-time appropriation of \$35,000 to help defray the cost of a year long calendar of events in celebration of West Boylston's 200th anniversary and a request to have Paul X. Tivnan Drive immediately returned to the authority of the state and Mass Highway Department.

Motion Mr. Pruneau to authorize the Town Administrator to send a letter of concurrence and appreciation to Senator Chandler, seconded by Mr. DiPietro. Mr. Phillips asked whether it would be appropriate to seek funds for mitigation. Mr. Gaumond advised that mitigation funds are a separate legislation currently scheduled for debate. He will get the hearing date as Mr. Phillips would like to have town officials in attendance. Vote on the motion – all in favor

Town Administrator Leon Gaumond, Jr., Budget Presentation For FY09 Revenues

Mr. Gaumond explained that this evening he will be reviewing the revenue side of the budget as he is still taking public testimony on the budget. The second session will be on March 13th at the Library from 5:30 to 7:00. Once that has concluded he will draft the expenditure side which will be discussed on March 26 with the School and Finance Committees. The information on the revenue budget is also posted on the web site.

Revenues of the town include property taxes, which may not exceed 2-1/2% of their full and fair cash value which is known as the levy ceiling. The levy increase may not exceed 2.5% more than the previous year's levy plus the taxes added from any new properties added to the tax rolls. As the town's primary revenue source, the property tax levy limit is expected to increase in FY09 by \$456,805 to \$11,960,927. This amount includes the allowable 1.5% increase plus New Growth of \$157,000. This figure does not include any additional funds from the National Grid project which per our New Growth Policy, would go to the Stabilization and Capital Investment Funds.

State aid is our second largest revenue source which is expected to be level funded. The figure we are using is \$4,600,000 when you back out the assessment charges. We also receive \$700,000 in school building assistance money. Miscellaneous Local Receipts are revenues consisting of fees, permits, fines and license related monies the town received as well as interest earned on investments or paid by late taxpayers. The largest source of funds in this category are motor vehicle excise taxes, which have been slightly off from the previous year. Mr. Gaumond estimates \$2,100,000 in Miscellaneous Local Receipts, which he will be monitoring on a monthly basis.

This year we certified \$736,000 in Free Cash, double what we had last year, derived from aggressive tax collections, revenues in excess of initial projects and budgetary surpluses, particularly in health insurance. Other sources of available funds are our Stabilization Fund, Capital Fund, transfers from ambulance receipts and transfers from the Wachusett Fund, and overlay surpluses. Our estimated receipts, without looking at Capital or Stabilization are at \$941,000, and our total available funds are at \$19,600.

Mr. DiPietro asked about what the town is losing in delinquent property taxes. Mr. Gaumond noted that this is revenue anticipated for this year. He is very happy to report that our tax collection rate is at 99.6%, and he feels we do an outstanding job on collections. Mr. DiPietro will be given a

copy of the most current memo on tax collections. Mr. DiPietro reported that Governor Patrick would like to see any senior citizen making \$60,000 or less paying taxes not having to pay any override taxes. Mr. Gaumond noted that there are referendums on the ballot that would eliminate the state income tax and should they pass, they would impact the FY009 budget.

Mr. Rucho inquired as to the New Growth figure and the National Grid project. Mr. Gaumond explained that he has received the statement of values, which is being reviewed by the Board of Assessors and per our New Growth Policy, those funds will help build our Stabilization and Capital Investment Funds for the new year. Currently we have a balance of \$150,627 in Capital Investment and \$905,998 in Stabilization. Mr. Gaumond encouraged everyone to attend his budget hearing on the 13th of March at the Library.

MEETINGS, INVITATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. March 8, 2008, – Grand Ball at the Wachusett Country Club – tickets at Pruneau’s Barber Shop or West Boylston Insurance Agency
2. March 9th, - Brunch at the Manor sponsored by the West Boylston Bicentennial Committee; two seatings 10 and 11:30; children ages 4-12 \$10.00; under age four free; adults \$16.00 – you need to call and reserve your seating. Tickets at Pruneau’s Barber Shop, West Boylston Insurance Agency or town hall
3. March 9, there will be a band concern at the High School
4. March 11, 2008, 8:00-10:00 a.m. – Coalition for Affordable Health Care Community Forum, Small Business Service Bureau, Inc., 554 Main Street, Worcester
5. March 12, 2008, 7:30 p.m. – Planning Board Public hearing on the application for Site Plan Review and Special Permit of MetroPCS/Crown Castle for the collocation of an antenna on an existing wireless communication tower on Lawrence Street/Davidson Road
6. March 12, 2008, 7:00 p.m. – Municipal Buildings Committee
7. March 13, 2008, 5:30-7:00 p.m. – Town Administrator’s Budget meeting at the Beaman Library
8. March 20, 2008, 5-7:30 p.m. – Sustainable Watersheds Workshop at TTOR’s Doyle Conservation Center, Leominster
9. March 26, 2008, 5:00 p.m. – Wachusett Chamber of Commerce 93rd Annual Meeting & Business Awards Ceremony at The Manor

SELECTMEN’S REQUESTS

Mr. Pruneau has nothing this evening.

Mr. DiPietro asked whether the town received a copy of the Mass Municipal Personnel Association FFY08 Salary Survey. Mr. Gaumond noted that we had. Mr. DiPietro would like Mr. Gaumond to give some thought to forming an Energy Committee. He would also like the Solid Waste Advisory Committee to look into Recycling Bank, a company from Pennsylvania that takes a different look at recycling and set up a program whereby homeowners obtain credits for recycling and they can use the credits towards gift certificates to places like Home Depot. He would also like to contact the Board of Health in Southbridge for information on their recycling program.

Messrs. Phillips, Rucho and McCormick have nothing this evening.

Mr. Gaumond announced that today marked a very important day in the town’s history as the Bicentennial Committee, the Historical Commission went to the State House in Boston with the students who won the essay awards. While at the State House, Governor Deval Patrick presented the town with a Proclamation that reads as follows:

- Whereas Incorporated in 1808, West Boylston was created from parts of Shrewsbury, Boylston, Lancaster, Sterling and Holden; and
- Whereas Ezra Beaman, known as the “Father of West Boylston,” unwilling to travel to the Congregational Church in Boylston for church services and town meetings, led thirty families to construct a church three miles west of Boylston on the site of the present common in West Boylston; and
- Whereas Throughout the 19th century, West Boylston prospered. By 1890 it contained 3,000 residents, five churches, ten schools and many mills and factories which included Warfield Saw Mill, L.M. Harris Cotton Mill, West Boylston Manufacturing Company of Thread & Wire, the Cowee Grist Mill, the Claredon Mill and Holbrook Mill, where Erastus Bigelow learned about looms and invented the technique to improve carpet manufacturing; and
- Whereas Due to the availability of waterpower, West Boylston was selected as the site for the Wachusett Reservoir. From 1896 through 1905, West Boylston endured the building of the reservoir and the destruction of its mills and farms, including the Beaman Farm and its famous Beaman Oak, four churches and eight schools as well as acres of fruit trees; and
- Whereas We congratulate the Town of West Boylston and its citizens upon the 100th anniversary of its incorporation and extend greetings as they gather to celebrate this important milestone in their history,

Now, Therefore, I, Deval L. Patrick, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby proclaim March 5, 2008 to be

WEST BOYLSTON DAY

And urge all citizens of the Commonwealth to take cognizance of this evening and particular fittingly in its observance

Given at the Executive Chamber in Boston, this fifth day of March, in the year two thousand and eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and thirty-first. Signed by the Governor and Secretary of the Commonwealth, William Francis Galvin.

Mr. Gaumond presented the Board with the Proclamation for display at town hall.

Mr. Phillips, who attended the event, complimented Rep. O’Day and Senator Chandler for their hard work in putting everything together.

NEW BUSINESS (cont.)

Mr. Gaumond reported that he went out to bid to rent permanent space for town hall. He received three quotes, has reviewed all the information and recommends the town enter into a lease with D&S Realty, 127 Hartwell Street.

Motion Mr. Phillips to authorize the Town Administrator to enter into a three-year lease with D&S Realty, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor.

Motion Mr. Phillips at 8:07 p.m. to entering into executive session under the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 39, Section 23b, Part 3 to discuss strategy with respect to contract negotiations, and the Board may be returning to open session seconded by Mr. Pruneau. Roll call vote: Mr. DiPietro yes, Mr. Pruneau yes, Mr. McCormick yes; Mr. Phillips yes, Mr. Rucho yes.

Motion Mr. Phillips at 8:30 p.m. to come out of executive session, seconded by Mr. Pruneau. Roll call vote: Mr. DiPietro yes, Mr. McCormick yes, Mr. Phillips yes, Mr. Pruneau yes, Mr. Rucho yes.

With no further business to come before the Board, motion Mr. Phillips at 8:40 to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved: March 19, 2008

Nancy E. Lucier

Kevin M. McCormick, Chairman

Allen R. Phillips, Vice Chairman

Valmore H. Pruneau, Clerk

Christopher A. Rucho, Selectman

John B. DiPietro, Sr., Selectman