

Members present: Kevin McCormick, Christopher Rucho and Steven Quist

Members absent: Valmore H. Pruneau and Allen R. Phillips

Mr. McCormick convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**John Scannell, Wachusett Earthday Update**

In accordance with our agreement with DCR and Wachusett Earthday, John Scannell is in to meet with the Board to provide them with an update on the facility, the operation and answer any questions they may have. He reported that they held their second collection last Saturday. The first collection was in November and they had 168 cars, 32 of which were from West Boylston. Last Saturday they collected appliances, electronics, tires, batteries and propane tanks. Over 300 people came through the center. It went very smoothly with a steady crowd. They filled one and a half 18-foot box trucks with electronics. The next collection will be late March or early April. The next household hazardous waste collection will be the first Saturday in May, and it will be followed by three more.

Mr. Scannell expressed his appreciation to the Board for allowing the location of a second trailer on the site, and that will happen as weather permits. They have an approved septic design for the site and Wachusett Earthday has applied for a DCR Partnership Grant to fund the septic system and an expanded pavement and building plan. They should hear soon on the grant, which is a matching grant. If approved, they will get \$48,000 from DCR and Wachusett Earthday is committed to raising the additional \$24,000 for the match. If they are successful we will start talking about building plans and come back to the Selectmen for approval. As the agreement indicates, once the site is constructed we would meet with the Selectmen and the neighbors to look at landscaping and springtime will be an appropriate time to arrange that meeting.

Mr. Quist asked how many staff worked on Saturday. According to Mr. Scannell in November we had three DCR staff and the remainder were volunteers with seven or eight contracted workers to deal with the hazardous waste. This past Saturday there were 15 or 16 volunteers on site and three staff from the electronics vendor. Wachusett Earthday volunteers who have worked in the past at such events helped out.

Mr. Rucho asked about security lights. Mr. Scannell reported that there is no electricity on site. Once that happens the one light pole at the gate will be lit. Mr. Rucho questioned how they ensure residency. Mr. Scannell explained that users of the facility show their license. Mr. Rucho asked if anybody from outside towns showed up. Mr. Scannell noted that there were no issues in the first two collections. One gentleman showed up with his father's items and had his father, who resides in Holden, with him in the vehicle. Mr. Scannell noted that there were very few negative comments.

Mr. Quist asked about advertising for the collections. Mr. Scannell advertised the first two in the newspapers and on town websites. Mr. Gaumond also includes a notice in his blog and under the Announcement portion of the Selectmen's meeting agenda. Mr. Scannell believes the towns did a great job with advertising.

Mr. McCormick asked when they plan to be open every Saturday. Mr. Scannell thinks the regular schedule will begin in the spring. Mr. McCormick stated that he is glad it is working well.

The next report from Mr. Scannell will be some time in the spring and will include entrance landscaping and ensuring the neighbors are invited.

**Bicentennial Committee Presentation**

This item will be tabled until next week.

**Barbara Laughlin, Sovereign Consulting**

This item will be tabled until the first meeting in March.

**OLD BUSINESS****1. Report back on Live Broadcasting for Selectmen's Meetings**

Last month Mr. Gaumond prepared a warrant article for town meeting to cover the costs of hardware, software and installation to connect our facility on Hartwell Street to the closest Charter communications I-net drop. An I-net is different from other cable TV drops as the I-net enables us to cablecast TV signals from Hartwell Street to Charter and then back to homes in West Boylston. Due to the distance, which is in excess of 4,000 feet, the cost would be \$21,000. In addition it would cost \$5,000 to run this as a fiber optic option which will provide great clarity and better audio. The total cost for the project would be approximately \$30,000. When the Board seemed dissatisfied with that response, they suggested using the funds provided to the PEG group.

The PEG group has two pools of funds. The first is a revolving fund with a balance of \$1,600 and that fund is established at town meeting. It is used to purchase expendable materials such as videotape, batteries, gaffer's tape and lights. The second fund in the WBPA Grant Fund with a balance of \$31,000. These monies come from Charter Communication and annually we received a check based on number of users. These funds need to last until the end of the contract in 2012. There is also a Friend's Account where donations are deposited and that balance is \$1,000.

The WBPA grant and the revolving fund are administered by the PEG Board which oversees the public access in West Boylston. That is different than the Cable Advisory Committee who is charged with overseeing the contract renewal of the cable license. The Town Administrator appoints the PEG Coordinator who is currently Charles Greenough. Other members include Dale and Susan Kierstead, Steve Howland, Ann Marie Richardson and Steve Pello. There are three vacancies on this committee. The PEG Board has balked at the idea of using their grant funds for this purpose as it would completely exhaust the funds the volunteers need to keep their programming running. We try to keep \$10,000 to \$15,000 in the fund for equipment repair or replacement as a lot of equipment is old.

Options available for the Board to move forward are move our meetings to the school where we could go live, putting forth a warrant article to cover the costs, have the Board direct the Town Administrator to instruct the PEG Board to use their funds to cover the costs, or continue with status quo and record and rebroadcast the meetings.

The fifth option Mr. Gaumond discussed with member of PEG is we just authorized the Cable TV Advisory Committee to begin negotiations for our new contract, and that could be part of the negotiations. The first four options all have a downside. Members of the PEG Board are willing to come in and discuss this with the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Rucho noted that this is for the entire building to be able to broadcast live. When Mr. Gaumond first began in West Boylston, the Town-wide Planning Committee meetings were televised when we were working on the Master Plan.

Mr. Rucho asked Mr. Gaumond to comment on changing cable providers. Mr. Gaumond explained that the town does have the ability to change, however, state law has strict parameters for change. He recommends this be included in the re-negotiations with Charter. Mr. Rucho wants to insure that the public is aware of the fact that the town cannot just go with another cable provider. Mr. Gaumond offered to have someone come in and make a presentation on how you can renegotiate the contract.

Mr. Rucho pointed out the fact that when we negotiate the contract it does not impact the price residents pay. Mr. Gaumond explained that a lot of cable companies purchase packages from cable providers and they have groups of channels you get all or nothing. Mr. Rucho asked if the Municipal

Light Plant could get involved and perhaps we would save money. Mr. Gaumond noted that as a lot is fiber optic, we did submit a project request under the Stimulus funds. We could ask the Municipal Light Plant, however, there is a lot of equipment you have to purchase. The price of \$21,000 came from Charter.

Mr. McCormick agrees with the recommendation. He initially thought that PEG received \$30,000 a year and that is why he suggested looking at those funds. Mr. Gaumond noted that in ten years we will no longer be using cable and everything will more than likely be accessed on the internet. Mr. Rucho has had people comment to him about Selectmen's meetings they have watched on television and they had no idea of the date of the meeting. Mr. Gaumond will communicate with them to see if they could possibly run a banner with the date of the meeting. Mr. Rucho would also like to have more meetings of town boards and committees televised. He suggested leaving a camera in some of the meeting rooms. Mr. Gaumond reminded the Board that we have an on-going issue of trying to find people who are willing to be taught how to operate the equipment.

## 2. Recommendation for on-call engineering services

Mr. Gaumond believes the two Selectmen designated to participate in the selection, both Mr. Pruneau and Mr. Quist, are recommending going with LEI. He does not know if they are still negotiating. This agenda item will be tabled until the February 17<sup>th</sup> meeting as Mr. Pruneau is unavailable this evening. Mr. Rucho requested back up information on those firms who submitted proposals.

## **Announcement of meeting on Rutland-Holden Sewer**

The meeting will be held on February 25<sup>th</sup> at 10:00. Mr. McCormick will attend along with Mr. Gaumond.

Motion Mr. Quist at 7:40 p.m. for the Board to enter executive session under the provisions of MGL Chapter 39, Section 23b, Part 3 and to discuss strategy with respect to union negotiations and the Board will be going back into open session, seconded by Mr. Rucho. Roll call vote: Mr. Quist yes, Mr. McCormick yes, and Mr. Rucho yes.

Motion Mr. Rucho at 8:00 p.m. for the Board to come out of executive session and return to open session, seconded by Mr. Quist. Roll call vote: Mr. Quist yes, Mr. McCormick yes, and Mr. Rucho yes.

## **OTHER OLD BUSINESS**

### 1. Health Insurance Questions

The last agenda item is health insurance provider for the next fiscal year. The Board, through the Town Administrator, appointed an Insurance Advisory Committee, whose charge is to review and make recommendations to the town on health insurance. The Committee has made a formal request to the Board of Selectmen to renegotiate our contract with our current health care provider and to authorize the Town Administrator to begin negotiations.

Motion Mr. Rucho to concur with the recommendation of the Insurance Advisory Committee and to advise the Town Administrator to begin renegotiations with our current health care carrier, seconded by Mr. Quist. Mr. Gaumond thanked the Insurance Advisory Committee for their diligent work on this Committee which consists of various union employees, a retiree and general government designee. Vote on the motion – all in favor.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEM**

Mr. McCormick spoke with Municipal Light Plant Manager Brad White about meeting to come up with a plan to bring back the holiday season spirit. In the past the Light Plant put up holiday wreaths and lit the holiday tree. He would like a couple of Selectmen to meet with the Manager to come up with a plan very soon. They intend to form a group or a committee to carry out the plan of attack. Mr. McCormick offered to coordinate the meeting and any Selectmen interested in serving, need to contact him.

With no further business to come before the Board, motion Mr. Rucho at 8:05 p.m. to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Quist, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved: February 17, 2010

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Nancy E. Lucier

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Kevin M. McCormick, Chairman

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Christopher A. Rucho, Selectman

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Steven Quist, Selectman