

Members present: Kevin M. McCormick Christopher A. Rucho
John W. Hadley Siobhan M. Bohnson

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

Read and Acceptance of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Motion Mr. Hadley to approve the regular session meeting minutes from February 4, 2015, seconded by Ms. Bohnson, all in favor.

West Boylston Municipal Minute

Mr. Gaumond explained that this is the time of the year when municipalities struggle with their snow and ice costs. He displayed a chart of the last 6 years of snow and ice expenditures with the left side being the number budgeted and the right side being the actual expenditure. He will continue to provide interesting tidbits to the Board and this chart will be posted on the town's website.

Scott McIntire & Alan Goodwin, Melanson Heath Auditors

Scott McIntire, Vice President of Melanson Health Auditors and Alan Goodwin, the auditor who supervised the day to day audit procedures for the town, joined the Board. Mr. McIntire reports that the audit went very well. When they came in they found the books and records to be in good order, everything was reconciled timely and on a regular basis. He provided the Board with the audit report of the annual Financial Statements, which are two-sided. The longer term is on pages 11 and 12 and the current perspective begins on page 13. Their opinion is on pages 1 and 2. In their opinion our financial statements are totally in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Page 13 focuses on the General Fund. The third number up from the bottom is the unassigned fund balance of \$2,033,411. It is unchanged from the prior year and indicates a stable balance sheet. It represents about 8.3% of the General Fund expenditures. Page 17 is the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures. The last column is the variance. The total variance is \$388,000 and the total expenditures came in under budget. The combination is positive results of operation. We did use Free Cash to balance the operating budget. Long term is pages 11 and 12. Mr. McIntire understands that the Board met with actuary Dan Sherman to discuss the OPEB (other post employment benefits) obligation. One of the liabilities is that obligation. It has been going up \$1.4 million a year and there is a lot of focus on OPEB. In 2015 the town's pension liability will come on. As a participating member of the county retirement system we will need to take 3% of the counties pension liability. Next year it will need to be listed on the report.

Mr. McIntire reviewed the Management Letter noting that previous recommendations, which still need to be addressed, include the Student Activity Fund with respect to accounting and transfer of funds. They recommended the school implement Department of Elementary and Secondary Education audit guidelines. They also recommended the school improve controls of school disbursements. They could be improved by having people sign off on the vouchers. Page 4 lists current year recommendations. Annually when they come out they do a departmental receipt testing. This year they tested the Department of Public Works and Recreation Department. They listed things that could be improved. The other area is to improve controls over School Department Encumbrances as the school had encumbered \$77,000 for tuitions and didn't report open purchase orders at year end. They recommend we tighten controls over encumbrances. The letter also contains the town's responses to the recommendations. It tells you about what you did and what you didn't do and defines the nature of the recommendations. They did not identify any material weakness.

Mr. Hadley asked in the future when we do a bond rating because of the pension liability, it will always be a negative, is it like a balance sheet? Mr. McIntire explained that it is like a balance sheet and the rating agencies have known for many years that those liabilities are out there. The numbers are known, put on the balance sheet, and he thinks they were factored into the ratings. Ms. Bohnson asked about the new line number increase. Mr. McIntire advised that West Boylston is about a 2.1% contribution member, probably a \$12 million liability. The long term balance sheet, after everything else being equal, will go down \$12 million.

Mr. Gaumond thanked Melanson Heath and Town Accountant Leslie Guertin and Treasurer/Collector Bonnie Yasick for all the work they did on the audit. He added that we have made the school aware of the deficiencies in the audit letter. Mr. McCormick asked if it would be prudent for the town to get the OPEB liability down. Mr. McIntire believes it would be prudent, however, in terms of borrowing for it, that would be a long discussion to have and look at some of the communities who have done that. In the last couple of years rating agencies are asking about OPEB and he has seen where token amounts are viewed favorably.

Anthony Sylvia, Discussion of Snowstorm Response

Mr. Sylvia reports that it has been an expensive winter. We have had a couple of blizzards, his employees have been working extremely hard and he extends his thanks and appreciation to all of his employees. It is obvious how much pride they have in taking care of the town. He thanks the Police Department who have been very helpful on traffic control issues, and the Fire Department who took care of a number of our buildings and grounds. He feels it has been a group effort and a challenge to maintain an inventory of material and fleet of trucks and other equipment.

Mr. Hadley asked Mr. Sylvia how we ran out of diesel fuel. Mr. Sylvia advised that the fuel system is slated for replacement. The communication between the pumps is a paper tape and we manually measure the tank. We didn't run out we got down to a couple hundred gallons. He filled the tanks prior to the blizzard. Later in the blizzard week we would measure it. However, the mechanic is in charge of that and he was out sick. We had a follow up storm and found it was dangerously low. Realizing that with a 20 hour snow storm coming up he arranged for public works vehicles to purchase fuel at the BP gas station in West Boylston. In the long run we did spend a couple hundred dollars more. He needed to come up with a solution. We received a fill up two days later from our normal vendor. They refused to deliver on the first day of the storm because of the weather conditions they pulled their trucks off the road. Mr. Hadley asked about running out of sand and salt. Mr. Sylvia stated that this is the second year in a row that salt deliveries have been squeezed. It is a delivery problem. Our vendor cannot delivery as fast as we use it. We used 3-4,000 tons per year. The orders have been ahead of the delivery and we had to use some sand to stretch the salt.

Ms. Bohnson asked if you know that the system is old and you have to physically measure the diesel, would be better to be on automatic delivery? Ms. Sylvia noted that using the fuel is sporadic and overall it is simple enough to measure the fuel. Ms. Bohnson asked if he is able to share sand. Mr. Sylvia advised that the school custodians take care of their sidewalks and come to the public works yard to take what they need. The DPW takes care of the parking lots. They also take care of the library. Ms. Bohnson voiced her concern over the high piles of snow, which make it difficult when pulling out of the school parking lot. Mr. Sylvia will take another look as it is a concern to take care of those blind spots. It has been a priority to knock down and remove the piles. Mr. Rucho suggested a log for fuel usage. Then you can at any time look at the log. Mr. Sylvia stated that we could set up a log, there are 80 vehicles using the fuel, and he thinks a better goal will be to get a new system installed. Mr. Rucho does not think the answer should be to spent money for a bigger tank if it has only happened once in

ten years. Mr. Sylvia advised that it is only a 2,000 gallon tank and we are using up to 1,200 gallons per storm. He would like something in the 3,000 range. He has a card pumping system and the pumps send a signal to a paper tape. They know what departments have used and bill them for the amount of fuel.

Mr. Rucho asked Mr. Sylvia if he is out during the storm and if he had been out during the last two or three storms. Mr. Sylvia stated that he has been pretty much at all the storms, however, he did miss one. When he is not available in town he continues to stay in communication with the foreman and stay in touch. Mr. Rucho noticed that the sidewalks have not been done yet. Mr. Sylvia advised that the sidewalk machine is down right now and he hopes to have it up tomorrow. They have been able to take care of those sidewalks in the 24-hour category. Mr. Rucho noted in a letter written by Mr. Sylvia that he helps other groups out such as the Housing Authority, which he has no problem with, however, why would we work for the Red Cross. Mr. Sylvia explained that they did help widen the roads at the Housing Authority. He received a call from one of the managers at the Red Cross stating that their contractor buried a few of their emergency response mobile vehicles. They were worried if they needed to get their vehicles out that they couldn't. We did go up and help them out for one hour with a backhoe and it will probably be a one-time thing. Mr. Rucho voiced concern about the liability. With regard to running out of fuel, Mr. McCormick doesn't ever remember that happening before, however, we never had two blizzards in a week either. He suggested that a second person should learn how to measure the tank as a backup.

Mr. Hadley noticed that the streets are not scraped as much as they have been in the past and questioned if there is a different strategy or have they changed something. Mr. Sylvia explained that hard pack occurs because of the amount of snow they have falling and people driving on it, the amount of salt, and traffic continues in-between the snow storms. Ms. Bohnson asked if after they plow the men go back out to try to scrape at night when traffic is lighter. Mr. Sylvia replied very selectively. If hard packed and traversed, they tend to leave it alone. They try not to scrape as the snow ends up back in people's driveways. It is a balancing act. Ms. Bohnson feels people would rather have safer roads and it is something that needs to be looked at. People need to put up with driveways getting plugged up. She asked if Mr. Sylvia drove around town after the storm to see what it looks like. He replied absolutely, he does his best to get out and see what is going on. Mr. Rucho commented on the condition of the sidewalks as even after they are plowed there is still snow on them. Mr. Sylvia noted that it is difficult. Mr. Rucho asked if he goes out and looks at them and if it is impossible to walk on them do you send the truck back out. Mr. Sylvia advised that if he notices them being passable, it is not the best but good under the circumstances. Mr. Rucho asked about a Sunday storm. It stopped snowing from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 or 6:00 p.m. and the weathermen said that is how it was going to work he noticed several trucks at the DPW and driving around. Is it a contract issue that you could not send the guys home? Mr. Sylvia advised that it is an operations issue. It didn't make sense to send them home. We were working with our tier one team, just our group of five drivers. They were out scraping what needed to be scraped. Mr. Rucho stated that on that day the snow did stop and that was what was predicted. He is sure the guys were tired and it seemed like a possibility to send people home. Mr. Sylvia stated that overall he uses the employees very selectively. Mr. Rucho commented that he is looking at whether it was time that they could get home. He understands it is a balancing act.

Mr. McCormick noted that the streets, lots of times, cannot be cleared because they are not level. He also thinks that clearing the sidewalks, except for those around the school, is a waste of time. People do not use the sidewalks and they do not even use them in the summer. Mr. Rucho asked if we approved funds for the work on the fuel tank. Mr. Sylvia advised that we did last year for a computer

system. He has not had the time to implement that project. Mr. Hadley asked overall, how would you rate how the DPW did during the storm. Mr. Sylvia replied that he thinks we have been doing a very good job and he appreciates the compliments being sent their way. The town has been very understanding and patient on keeping the roads passable. He will also be preparing a proposal to increase the size of the salt shed as we need something large. We have been using two different types of salt. Treated salt went from \$63 a ton last year to \$90 this year and plain went from \$49 last year to \$63 this year. We use both and he doesn't know of any town that uses two different materials. Each work under different circumstances, treated below 10-15 degrees. Through December they were able to use plain rock salt and by using two different materials we have been able to save money. He thinks we could pay for the cost of a salt shed with three years of savings.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Review and approve Eagle Scout Project request from Matthew George

The agenda package contains a letter from Matthew George a boy scout from Troop 151 who is looking to do an Eagle Scout project. He read the article about the piece of the World Trade Center that the town received and he would like to ask permission from the Board to take that piece and work with it to create a monument or memorial for his Eagle Scout project. He would like somebody from the Board designated to be his counselor for the project. Mr. Hadley thinks it would be a great idea and offered to work with him. The Board is in favor of the project and will give the final approval on the project. Mr. Gaumond advised that one of the ideas was to work with the Assabet metal shop for the project. Ms. Bohnson asked if this was something he is thinking of completing in 2015. Mr. Gaumond thinks he will have it completed within months.

2. Concurrence on the appointment of Douglas Horka to the position of Veterans' Service Officer effective February 18, 2015 for a term to expire on June 30, 2105 at a rate of \$141.91 per month

Motion Mr. Rucho to concur with the appointment, seconded by Ms. Bohnson, all in favor. Mr. Rucho read the email in the agenda package and is pleased that Mr. Horka is coming back to help us out. Mr. Horka was also responsible for getting file cabinets donated to the town and he helped us save a lot of money.

3. Consider signing application to the Department of Housing & Community Development for affordable housing project

The Affordable Housing Task Force has been working with the Board and the Housing Authority for the last year. The Board had a goal to increase the number of affordable houses for seniors and we would use the 87 Maple Street property for that project. In the agenda package is a letter to Paul McPartland of DHCD to begin the process to allow for the transfer of land. There will probably be requirements that go along with the transfer. This allows us to put the application before the Commonwealth. Mr. Hadley added that this is not only for senior housing, but also for veterans' housing as well.

Motion Mr. Hadley for the Board to sign the letter, seconded by Ms. Bohnson, all in favor.

4. Goals are welcomed for the Police Chief for the upcoming year

Should the Board have any goals they would like to suggest, they need to forward them to Mr. Gaumond.

5. Update on Reservoir Motor Lodge

The Board requested an update on the Reservoir Motor Lodge. The agenda contains a two page email from Town Counsel and from Counsel for Reservoir Motor Lodge. According to their counsel, there is one resident and his wife who the court is allowing to live there until the end of February. There are also other people staying at the property as caretakers and repair folks. Mr. Gaumond expressed his displeasure with that as it appears to be in violation of what the Board ordered. We will have an inspection of the property by the Building Inspector and Board of Health within the next seven days. Mr. McCormick doesn't see how he can have anybody in the building. Mr. Gaumond believes the only person who should be allowed on the property is the one party the court is allowing to remain. Mr. McCormick stated that the owner never follows any rules and asked if we could arrest him. Ms. Bohnson asked what recourse does the town have. Mr. Gaumond will work with town counsel on a strategy and noted that at the end of the day he has to come before the Board to get a motel operator's license. Mr. Hadley asked what the inspection we are doing is for. Mr. Gaumond stated that it is for the town's benefit. Mr. Hadley asked if the manager would be there. Mr. Gaumond noted that we are arranging to have complete access to the property and will look for problems. Mr. Rucho asked if he was up to date on his bills. Mr. Gaumond advised that the last time he checked he was. He doesn't have evidence of renting of rooms, however, the people there certainly are tenants.

6. Review & Approve Goal Planning Document and vote to approve Goals & Action Steps

Mr. Gaumond prepared the Goal Planning Document, which he is looking for the Board's guidance and counsel on. They are in no particular order of prioritization and were presented to the department heads yesterday at their meeting.

Goal #1. Make amendments to the site plan review process. The Selectmen believe reforms are needed to the site plan review process and will seek to initiate amendments to the current process. Action steps include Selectmen discuss the need at a public meeting, develop a proposal and present amendments to the fall town meeting.

Goal #2. Seek creation of a Facilities Manager-type position. Selectmen believe the time is right to bring discussion with the Library Trustees and School Committee on the creation of a new position to oversee building maintenance and capital improvements in the town buildings. Action steps include the Town Administrator getting models of similar agreements. The School Committee, Library Trustees and the Board of Selectmen will do a Memorandum of Understanding that we all agree on the structure to, discuss it at public meetings and bring something forward in the fall of 2016. It would require new funds and a lot would be taking funds already in the budget and putting them in a new line item. Money to complete the project is to be determined. There are a lot of floating pieces depending on the number of buildings. Mr. McCormick would like to include the Council on Aging building and the Housing Authority Building. Mr. Gaumond would not include the Housing Authority as they have federal statutory responsibility.

Goal #3. Work with the FISP on building projects. The Selectmen desire to continue the positive work of the FISP by bringing forward solutions for a police station and a senior/community center. Mr. Gaumond added that we are kind of in the middle of that project. FISP is meeting with the Council on Aging and Police. The Selectmen negotiated a Purchase and Sales Agreement with the Bethlehem Baptist Church and preliminary architectural funds will be sought at the May town meeting for the police station. FISP will also promote the building strategies to the entire community. Mr. Gaumond stressed that this is going to be a lot of work by the FISP and the stake holders involved. The cost figure will also need to be refined as time goes on this year.

Goal #4. Improve the Department of Public Works. The Selectmen seek models of improvement to the West Boylston Department of Public Works. There are expressed concerns about the amount of funding dedicated to this service as well as task management and implementation. Options to improve the DPW are presented and debated, input gathered from stakeholders and strategies presented publicly. Funds to complete the project are estimated to be \$10,000 to engage a consultant to review the DPW and make recommendations.

Goal #5. Examine the current elected officials for possibility of appointment with an eye towards the Future. The Board of Selectmen would like to begin a public discussion on the merits of reducing the number of elected officials in Town in favor of appointing these officials. The Board would discuss this issue at a public meeting, discuss it with elected officials and bring a proposal forth in May of 2016. We need legislative approval for this and it would need to be sent to the Attorney General's office for their approval before it becomes law.

Goal #6. Improve the public access opportunities in Town. Now that we have the new equipment we have an opportunity to televise more of our board/committee meetings. The Board wishes to work with the public access board to increase the number of trained individuals to record public meetings. We will start with the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals. Mr. Rucho would like to advertise the new public access channels. Mr. Gaumond suggested including that information on the town meeting mailer. A gentleman in the audience asked if the town would be able to make meetings into videos and have them accessible online. Mr. Gaumond advised that we do not yet have that technology. We are working towards that and it does require storage space.

Goal #7. Increase the amount of affordable senior housing. The Board is working with the Affordable Housing Trust and the Housing Authority to develop new affordable housing on the current Maple Street property presented owned by the Housing Authority. The Selectmen will need to discuss the issue at a public meeting and bring a proposal forward to the May 2016 town meeting to acquire the Maple Street property for future development. It is estimated to be about \$5,000 in costs by the Community Housing Specialist to complete the project in addition to legal review.

Goal #8. Advocate for the release of state bond funds. The funds include \$5 million for the Goodale Park improvement project and funding for technology improvements at the library. Mr. Gaumond credited the Parks Facilities Committee for their work on the Goodale Parks Master Plan. Mr. Rucho noted that the Committee met last week and they will be sending a request to the Board of Selectmen to send a letter of support for the project. This will be included on the agenda for next week as we have invited our legislative delegation into that meeting. Mr. Gaumond offered to post a sample letter on the website, which people could copy. The Bond Bill includes \$40,000 for technology at the library, \$205,000 for the Worcester Street guardrail, and \$5 million for the Goodale Park Improvement Project. Mr. McCormick suggested inviting Lieutenant Governor Karen Polito in for the meeting and she has been very good to this area. Mr. Gaumond will draft a letter inviting her into meet with the Board at an upcoming meeting to introduce herself and talk about these issues.

Goal #9. Seek development opportunities for the landfill land. The Municipal Light Plant has an interest in using the capped landfill for a solar project. Selectmen will discuss the issue at a public meeting, discuss it with stakeholders and bring a proposal to town meeting.

Goal #10. Promote positive aspects of the community and its governance. In a world filled with immediate and often negative perspectives, the Selectmen would like to share more positive aspects of the community with its citizens. The Town administrator and the Board will present positive data and stories of the town at the first Selectmen's meeting of each month. We started this off this evening with the Municipal Minutes. Things we can relate to the public so people have an understanding of some of the challenges we deal with so they are informed about the town. We will talk about the average tax bills and how we are doing with special education. We will try to put out facts and figures and post it on our website. Mr. Rucho noted that he started this out by trying to lower taxes and Mr. Gaumond mentioned that we are not one of the highest communities as we are 153 out of 351.

Goal #11. The Selectmen would like to conduct a survey for citizens and employees to receive feedback. The Town Administrator will work with the Board and other stakeholders on developing question and will conduct the survey in the spring/summer of 2015. We did this five years ago. Mr. Rucho has some ideas in regards to the survey.

7. Affordable Housing Trust Review of Oakdale 40B Sewers

Mr. Hadley reports that at the last meeting he asked to hire special counsel to give us an opinion on where we are with the Oakdale project. The Affordable Housing Trust would like to get a second opinion about sewer capacity and the costs of the upgrades. No action is needed by the Board of Selectmen as the Affordable Housing Task Force will pay for the cost involved. By doing that, the town will know we are trying to do something about it. Linda Isgro, in the audience this evening, asked about the sewer charges being talking about, and would it be just for the infrastructure, or would it include the sewer betterments. It was left that the sewer betterment fees would be assessed to the developer and we insisted on that. They would hate to lose those benefits they negotiated. Mr. Rucho added that it is just to review, we would not lose anything. Mr. Hadley noted that they just want to review everything that happened ten years ago. Mr. Gaumond advised that the betterment charges are included in that decision and it is upon application of the building permit that they have to pay those in full. He explained that the Board is not looking to have the agreement thrown out and start from scratch. The sewer infrastructure upgrades is what they want a second opinion on. Ms. Isgro stated that it is on appeal right now. We have been waiting one year to see if the permit is still even on the table and we are pretty close to getting an answer on that from the ZBA. Mr. Hadley stated that they want to do what they can to protect the town and that is what they are trying to do.

MEETINGS, INVITATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. 2015 Spring Legislative Breakfast Meetings 8-10:00 a.m.: March 6th, Shelburne, Webster, Georgetown; March 13th, New Marlborough, Mattapoisett, Melrose; and March 20th, West Boylston, Lexington, Canton
2. March 18th, 2:00 p.m., Council on Aging – The Virtual Dementia Tour

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Rucho noted that the location for the new electronic sign is buried under eight-feet of snow and questioned whether it is ready to go in. Mr. Gaumond advised that it is ready to go as soon as we have access to the site. Mr. Rucho remembers them saying even if it is under snow the sign company could install it. Mr. Sylvia reports that there is two-feet of frost.

Mr. Rucho requested a status from the change from Charter to Comcast as when the cable people met with the Board they indicated it would have occurred by now. Mr. Gaumond will look into

that.

Ms. Bohnson would like an update on the Reservoir Motor Lodge after their tour.

Motion Mr. Hadley at 9:10 p.m. to enter into executive session under the provisions of MGL, Ch. 30a, Section 21(A), Part 3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if the chairman declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body, seconded by Mr. Rucho. The Chairman declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body. Roll call vote: Mr. Hadley yes, Mr. McCormick yes. Ms. Bohnson yes, Mr. Rucho yes. The Board will not reconvene in open session. Nicholas Anastasopoulos, Labor Counsel, Mirick O'Connell will join the Board for the session.

Motion Mr. Rucho to come out of executive session at 9:45 p.m., seconded by Ms. Bohnson. Roll call vote: Ms. Bohnson yes, Mr. McCormick yes, Mr. Rucho yes, Mr. Hadley yes.

With no further business to come before the Board, motion Mr. Rucho at 9:45 p.m. to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Bohnson, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved: March 4, 2015

Nancy E. Lucier, Municipal Assistant

Kevin M. McCormick, Chairman

John W. Hadley, Vice Chairman

Christopher A. Rucho, Clerk

Siobhan M. Bohnson, Selectman