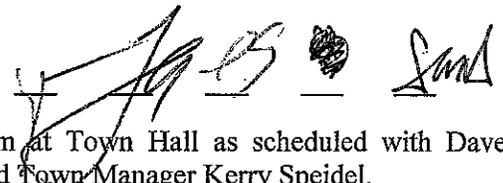


**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
3/26/13**



The Board of Selectmen met in the Joseph F. Bilotta meeting room at Town Hall as scheduled with Dave Matthews, Tom Alonzo, Carl (Ernie) Sund, Steven M. deBettencourt and Town Manager Kerry Speidel. Absent was Paula Bertram. Regular Meeting opened at 7:00 PM

7:00PM PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Matthews began by thanking the Sewer Commission for allowing the BOS to use their allotted television spot to hold the makeup BOS meeting meant for the previous week.

Mr. Alonzo reminded the BOS and audience that the "Are You Smarter Than a Fifth Grader" show performed at the High School will be shown on Lunenburg Access Television throughout the weekend and at various times in the coming weeks.

Michelle Belleza, Director of the Boys and Girls Club of Lunenburg, thanked the BOS for their support for the group and reported that this year has been the clubs most successful ever with the average daily attendance doubling and a record number of members. Ms. Belleza stated that the benefits of the Boys and Girls Club and of the Teen Center can not be measured in a snapshot but are measured over time in the accomplishments and productivity of their current and former members as they grow older. Ms. Belleza asked that the BOS and the Town as a whole honor the commitment the Teen Center and the Boys and Girls Club has made to their members and to the Town's youth by celebrating National Boys and Girls Club Week whose theme is "Open the Door, Take the Tour". Events include an art show, a talent show and community service projects. Ms. Belleza asked the BOS to officially proclaim the week of April 8-12 Boys and Girls Club Week in Lunenburg.

Mr. Matthews has a Proclamation in hand which will be officially made the week of April 8-12.

APPOINTMENTS/RE-APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS – (Taken out of order)

1. Whitney Lacka to Council on Aging

2. Connie Odea to Council on Aging

Representatives from the COA Board, Mary Lynn Conrad and Peter Lincoln presented Ms. Whitney Lacka of Reservoir Road and Ms. Connie Odea of Pratt Street as the recommend members to be appointed by the BOS to the COA.

Ms. Odea introduced herself as a citizen of the Town of Lunenburg for 41 years and stated that Mr. Lincoln contacted her to see if she would be interested in joining the Council and she said she would be.

Ms. Lacka stated her recruitment to the Council was similar and that she also was interested in working on the Council.

Mr. Lincoln noted that as of the last census there were 2,150 residents of Lunenburg who are considered senior citizens and soon that number will be close to 25% of the Towns population.

Mr. Alonzo motioned to approve the nomination of Ms. Lacka and Ms. Odea to the Council on Aging. Mr. Sund seconded the motion. On vote motion carried, 4 in favor, 0 opposed.

3. Jonathan J. Broc to the position of Patrol Officer

Police Chief Marino introduced Mr. Broc to the BOS and stated that since the retirement of officer Stan Barney there has been a vacancy and that he would like to fill it with officer John Broc. Mr. Broc is a reserve officer in the Town and has fulfilled all the necessary qualifications for the position. Mr. Marino also noted that Mr. Broc has served in the United States Marine Corps.

Mr. Matthews welcomed Mr. Broc to the Police staff and thanked him for his service to the town and the country.

Mr. Alonzo motioned to approve the nomination of Mr. Jonathan J. Broc to the position of Patrol Officer. Mr. Sund seconded the motion. On vote motion carried, 4 in favor, 0 opposed.

APPOINTMENTS

7:00 p.m. – Open Space Committee, Right-to-Farm Bylaw. Marion Benson, Planning Director for the Town of Lunenburg, spoke to the BOS and stated that this was a part of the Town's Master Plan as an Open Space Element. This has been discussed and developed by the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission and was approved by the State. Ms. Benson and Ms. Jan Carrier from the Conservation Committee held a meeting, with their board's approval, with the farmers in Town to discuss their needs, and there was a large turnout of participants. Ms. Benson stated that she is in support of all of the farmer's requests.

Jim Lattanzi, Hollis Hills Farm, spoke on behalf of the farmers in Town. Mr. Lattanzi stated that the agricultural community in Lunenburg was invited to a meeting to discuss their needs and desires a little over one year ago by the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission. Mr. Lattanzi said that he has been fortunate enough as a first generation farmer to work with enough community, State and non-profit groups to realize that Lunenburg is an agricultural gem. Part of what farmers in the town want is some form of official representation to help promote agriculture and agricultural business in the town. Mr. Lattanzi stated that many towns have an Agricultural Commission made up of a majority of members who are involved with the agricultural industry but also containing members who may have an interest in agriculture but are not directly involved in the industry. Mr. Lattanzi stated that Lunenburg is the largest and most agriculturally diverse community in Worcester County. Mr. Lattanzi told the BOS that what the farmers have done is submitted to Article 4 of the Town Warrant to officially form an Agricultural Commission and gathered the necessary signatures to do so. Mr. Lattanzi stated that the commission has the backing of the Planning Board and that the farmers were seeking official support from the BOS.

Mr. Alonzo asked Mr. Lattanzi to describe what an Agricultural Commission would do.

Mr. Lattanzi said the mission of an Agricultural Commission revolves around education, protecting and preserving the land, promoting agricultural business and to work with the community. Mr. Lattanzi outlined some of the Commission's responsibilities as educating the community about what is available to them as well as what the mechanics are behind running and operating an agricultural business, acting as an avenue for mediation and reconciliation for issues or concerns that arise in the agricultural community, promoting farmers markets and advocating to protect the agricultural land that the Town has. Mr. Lattanzi stated that there were a number of APR Farms in town, farms that the State has purchased the development rights on to permanently restrict the land to agriculture use alone. There are other properties in the town that wish to be APR properties and the Agricultural Commission would advocate on behalf of these properties. Furthermore, Mr. Lattanzi stated that if the Town were looking for funding or special grants to help with the agricultural industry in town, the State would recognize Lunenburg above other communities if it were to have an Agricultural Commission.

Mr. Alonzo mentioned that a prior member of the BOS had advocated on behalf of an Agricultural Commission but that support for the idea never caught on. Mr. Alonzo thanked Mr. Lattanzi and the farmers for pushing for an Agricultural Commission and stated his support for the commission.

Mr. Lattanzi stated he would be speaking to this Article at Town Meeting.

Ms. Speidel stated that she talked to Mr. Lattanzi earlier about fixing some of the language in the Warrant to make the Commission part of the Town ByLaws. Ms. Speidel stated that the issue was a technicality but since it was a Petition Article she could not personally change the language without the permission of the Farmer's.

Mr. Lattanzi said he would fix the language.

Mr. Matthews stated that Mr. Lattanzi and the Farmer's had the support of the BOS.

CURRENT BUSINESS

1. Order Warrant for 2013 Annual Town Meeting - Ms. Speidel stated that there were 22 articles submitted with an additional 6 consent calendar articles for the Town Meeting. Ms. Speidel reviewed the Articles with the BOS (See attached)

Ms. Speidel mentioned in past years they have held a Special Town Meeting within the Annual Town Meeting which in effect takes care of any Articles that will effect the current year. She proposed that this not be done at the

upcoming Annual Town Meeting in May. An opportunity remains to open a STM if necessary but she does not think that it will be needed.

Mr. Matthews stated that he wished that anything that would impact the budget come before the budget discussion.

Mr. deBettencourt asked that before they proceeded with anything for FY14 we finish business on FY13.

Articles after the Consent Calender were re-ordered as follows:

Article 18 re-ordered to #1
Article 12 re-ordered to #2
Article 14 re-ordered to #3
Article 15 re-ordered to #4
Article 16 re-ordered to #5
Article 17 re-ordered to #6
Article 13 re-ordered to #7

Discussion on Article 13/7 ensued as follows:

Mr. Alonzo stated that Article 13 was listed as the last article of the STM in December 2009 and in his opinion the Article was largely approved because people were ready to leave the meeting rather than spend more time considering another Article. Mr. Alonzo said that if you are going to tax someone you should have a good reason to do so and a firm understanding of why you are taxing them, and it seemed to Mr. Alonzo that adding a local meals tax on top of a State Sales Tax was nothing more than a money grab to help local budgets. Mr. Alonzo continued by stating that the reasons for passing the tax originally included the fact that the Town needed more money and that the tax was so minuscule no one would notice. Mr. Alonzo stated that he would like the issue brought before the Town again to see what support the issue to repeal the tax has.

Mr. Matthews said the BOS's response at the time was not to support the tax by a vote of 4-1, but that it is not the BOS's choice to guess on the state of mind of the town's people voting on the issue. Mr. Matthews also noted that the restaurants in town have not only thrived but expanded despite the tax and that the Town could really use the small amount of revenue the tax brought in. Mr. Matthews stated that personally, he supports the tax.

Mr. Alonzo said he found out that according to State Law you have to wait three years to repeal a law which is why he is bringing this issue up three years later. Mr. Alonzo said that he did not think it would damage the restaurant business, but the fact that Mr. Matthews originally opposed the tax but now supports it to help fill holes in the budget was the exact reason why Mr. Alonzo rejected the idea. Mr. Alonzo did not want the BOS to get comfortable using tax money that was never supposed to be there because then the tax could never be repealed.

Mr. Sund stated he could see both sides of the argument. He stated that there are not many Communities surrounding Lunenburg that have implemented the meals tax. Mr. Sund stated that he did not see the harm in putting the Article in front of Town Meeting, but that the tax brings in \$66,000-\$67,000 per year and that if the tax is repealed that money would have to be found somewhere else.

Mr. deBettencourt stated that he was for the repeal of the tax.

Mr. Matthews said that he was all for bringing this issue to the voters but please come ready to discuss where the money that is generated through this Article for the Town, that will be lost, will come from if it is repealed.

BOS continued re-ordering as follows:

Article 11 re-ordered to #8
Article 7 re-ordered to #9
Article 8 re-ordered to #10
Article 9 re-ordered to #11

Mr. Sund asked if the Town became a Green Energy community the town should received \$100,000.00 in grants.

Ms. Speidel said that that money is earmarked for specific issues and isn't just granted to us to spend as the Town pleases.

BOS continued re-ordering as follows:

Article 5 re-ordered to #12
Article 10 re-ordered to #13
Article 1 re-ordered to #14
Article 2 re-ordered to #15
Article 3 re-ordered to #16
Article 4 re-ordered to #17
Article 19 re-ordered to #18
Article 20 re-ordered to #19

*Article 6 was not discussed for re-ordering.

2. Declaration of Support for FY2014 Mosquito Control Budget – Ms. Speidel explained that the town receives an assessment on an annual basis from the Central Massachusetts Mosquito Control Project for the work that they do in the town of Lunenburg. Ms. Speidel noted that this agency has received some criticism for not having much input from member communities. The agency does have an open public hearing for members to attend, but because of the criticism they have received the agency is asking each of their member communities to take a vote in support of the budget that they agency has suggested. Ms. Speidel specifically stated this was more of a symbolic vote as the town does not have the option not to pay the bill given by the agency, but that the assessment issued by the agency to the town of in the amount of \$59,934.00 was a slight increase from previous years but by and large reflected past assessments.

Mr. Matthews questioned how the agency comes to the percentage that drives the assessment.

Ms. Speidel stated she believes it's based off of land area but that she would have to check for an official answer.

Mr. Sund asked if there was any input from the Board of Health on the issue.

Ms. Speidel said that the issue was brought to the BOS by the Board of Health but that they did not have a specific position on the matter.

Mr. Alonzo stated that the Agency wasn't being any more transparent then before and that although he was neither inclined to vote for or against the budget he has no guidance as to which way to vote.

Ms. Speidel asked the BOS if specific answers were given to their questions would they be inclined to vote on this issue.

Mr. deBettencourt stated that he has no issue with being involved with the mosquito activity at all but he would like to see documentation.

Mr. Matthews stated the BOS would like to hear more detail about the activity before voting.

Ms. Speidel said they had time to get the information and vote on the issue.

3. FY2014 Budget: Ms. Speidel noted that the Finance Committee will be holding their public hearing on Thursday, March 27th at 7:00pm and will continue with voting on the budget that night. She also noted that whatever votes need to be taken by the BOS for warrants to end up on town meeting need to be done by April 11th so that the correct information can go to the printer.

Ms. Speidel stated she would be able to amend her Chapter 70 estimate to the school committee if needed.

4. Minutes/Warrants/Action File Issues

Minutes: 3/12/2013

Warrants: 3/19 W#50-13 \$274,871.23

3/25	W#20-P13	\$593,357.86
3/26	W#51-14	\$355,699.89
3/27	W#52-13	\$249,407.49

Action File Issues: None

5. Committee Reports- Mr. ALonzo noted that he attended the Planning Board meeting on Saturday where they discussed the Saw Mill on 35 Leominster Road and the Aro Farm Property. The continuation date for discussion on the Saw Mill is April 8th at Town Hall and the continuation date for the Aro Farm property is April 3rd at the Ritter Building.

Mr. Matthews noted that the School Building Committee is getting very busy and that the Town should start paying close attention if they want input on the matter. Mr. Matthews noted that they would be coming to terms quickly with a design plan and reviewed the options on the table for a new school or renovate and adding on to the current option. If the Committee decides to build a grade 6-12 school the Town will need to decide what to do with TC Passios Elementary School and the BOS should start thinking about an Ad Hoc committee to discuss the matter.

6. Town Manager Report- Ms. Speidel discussed Health Insurance and the potential to make some adjustments if they Town is able to negotiate with the Public Employee Committee. Ms. Speidel is awaiting a meeting with all the necessary parties before going forward but has provided them with the options available. Ms. Speidel noted that she told the School Committee that even though May 4th is the Town Meeting, the Town has up until about June 1st to work on negotiating health insurance.

Ms. Speidel also noted that the two solar projects in town are moving forward. EPG has submitted to and accepted by the Department of Public Utilities and is guaranteed through the end of this calendar year. The Chase Road project is moving slower due to a new property owner. Once completed the Chase Road and EPG project will bring savings to the budget.

Ms. Speidel also stated that she has been in contact with Unitil about issues to due with street lights that are out. She stated that Unitil bills the town a flat fee based on the size of the light and the bill is based on the assumption that all of the 323 street lights in town are working. Unitil has no idea that a light isn't working unless the Town, a citizen or one of the Unitil workers reports that a light is out. Ms. Speidel stated that Unitil told her that they don't know when lights are out because they work during the day and not during the night. Unitil divides up their lights into 5 separate groups and every year 1/5 of the lights they own are up for maintenance. The bulbs Unitil uses have a life expectancy is between 5-7 years. Ms. Speidel noted that Unitil's maintenance plan seems to be inadequate. The town pays \$56,000.00 per year for street lights. There are 75 communities in the Commonwealth that have purchased the street lights from the utility company and they hire an independent contractor to maintenance the lights. The average savings for a Municipality purchasing their own lights and hiring a contractor to maintain the lights equals a savings between 40-75%. Ms. Speidel spoke to a consultant who said he would provide a free preliminary analysis of whether or not the Town should purchase their own street lights.

Mr. Sund asked Ms. Speidel asked if the solar panels on the MART building are included in the net metering number.

Ms. Speidel stated that the solar panels were included in the number provided.

Mr. Matthews asked if the consultant looks at the light fixtures to see if new fixtures will be needed.

Ms. Speidel stated that the consultant said that Unitil is very difficult to work with, but that the town will have to ask Unitil how much they are willing to sell the street lights for and that street lights have been purchased in the Commonwealth for as low as \$1 per fixture and as much as about \$100 per fixture.

Mr. Alonzo stated he was in support of the plan to purchase the street lights based off of the information Ms. Speidel provided.

OLD BUSINESS - None

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

Being no further business Mr. deBettencourt moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Sund seconded.
On vote motion carried, 4 in favor, 0 opposed.
Meeting ended at 8: 25 pm.

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

April 2, 2013
April 9, 2013
April 16, 2013
April 23, 2016

*Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Doherty, Recording Secretary
Board of Selectmen*

RECEIVED & FILED

APR 03 2013

**LUNENBURG TOWN
CLERK OFFICE**