

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
12/7/10**

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The Board of Selectmen met in the Joseph F. Bilotta Meeting Room, Town Hall as scheduled with Paula Bertram, Steven M. deBettencourt, Tom Alonzo, Carl "Ernie" Sund, David Matthews and Town Manager Kerry Speidel present. Regular Meeting opened at 7:00 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Bertram informed the public that due to illness the Eagle House Senior Center will not be open for business until Thursday morning at 8 a.m. All programs including meals on wheels, transportation and pancake breakfast have been cancelled.

Ms. Bertram said that Unitil is planning tree trimming activities in the areas of West Townsend Rd., Northfield Rd. and Chestnut St.

Mr. Matthews thanked all of the voters who attended town meeting last week. He also thanked Mr. Sund and everyone involved with the tree lighting ceremony.

Mr. Sund reminded all that today is Pearl Harbor Day and he thanked all of the veteran's that were active during that period for their service.

Gerry Hyde, 912 Mass Avenue, thanked Kathy Herrick, Pat Slattery and the Historical Commission for getting a grant from Emerald Place which will be used towards the reproduction of the early records of Lunenburg. He also thanked Emerald Place for the grant, for this project.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

APPOINTMENTS

7:15 p.m. Continuation of Public Hearing: CDBG Application/Senior Center Parking Lot & Housing Rehabilitation – Ann Carabba, representing MRPC, introduced herself and read an overview about the grant. She said that revisions have been made to the Community Development Strategy and that the BOS need to vote to adopt the revised strategy. She also had several other forms that needed to be signed by the BOS, that will be used to apply for a Community Block Grant for a parking lot at the Eagle House Senior Center and housing rehab.

Ms. Bertram stated that before the forms are signed, she would like to open up discussion to the public and the board on this matter.

Mr. Matthews said that they have asked in the past for a better cost break down, specifically to the removal of the septic soil and also for input from the Board of Health.

Ms Speidel explained that the people who serve on the parking lot committee are out ill this evening and she did not expect to be making a presentation. She said that the Council on Aging Director met with the BOH to identify issues when removing the septic tank and the BOH has provided a letter of support for this project. All estimates specify that the contractor assume responsibility of removing the septic tank and leach field.

Ms. Bertram is concerned with the leach field itself and is it considered hazardous waste which would necessitate the high cost of removal. She said that the engineer estimated the removal of the leach field and mounded system to cost upwards

of \$160,000. Ms Bertram is in support of the parking lot but is concerned of how the project was bid and the high cost of removal. She would like to be able to do the work "in house" at a lower cost.

Mr. Alonzo spoke and said that the BOS had asked for this information two months ago and that there was a deadline to submit it. He is upset about the lack of response to the BOS by MRPC about the issue of soil contamination. He does not like the "lump sum" bid process and wonders if the contractor is expecting a windfall. The deadline for the grant submission is 12/10/10 and they still do not have answers to their questions.

The BOS were in agreement that this is not the way to do a project.

Mr. Alonzo questioned what the response was to the housing rehab. Ms. Carabba said there was not a great response and there were approximately 10 applicants.

Chris Lattanzi, Lancaster Ave. asked if this is a grant application, then why is it being taken apart in little pieces. Ms. Bertram replied that as elected officials they have a responsibility to ensure that regardless of what the funding source is, that the money that is being spent, is being spent wisely.

Mr. Alonzo moved that the board approve this grant application and approve that the Chair sign the requisite forms for submittal by December 10, 2010. Mr. Matthews seconded. On vote, motion carried, 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

Ms. Bertram informed the BOS that they must vote to accept the recommendation of Hudson Design Group and MRPC that the BOS hires Boucher Construction Corporation as the company to construct the new parking lot at the Eagle House Senior Center. Ms. Bertram then read the vote for the BOS into record. Mr. Alonzo moved to approve the recommendation. Mr. Sund seconded. On vote, motion passed, 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

Ms. Bertram requested that Ms. Carabba relay a message to MRPC that in the future, the BOS would like information that needs to be voted on, be given to them prior to the meeting so that the BOS has a chance to review.

Mr. Alonzo moved to adopt the Lunenburg Community Development Strategy dated December 2010. Mr. Matthews seconded. On vote, motion carried, 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

Ms. Bertram asked for an outline of the role of the Environmental Certifying Officer. Ms. Speidel said that in her experience working with the CDBG program it has always been a staff person that serves in this role. Ms. Bertram requested that Ms. Speidel act as the Environmental Officer. Mr. deBettencourt moved to appoint Ms. Speidel as the Environmental Officer. Mr. Matthews seconded. On vote, motion carried, 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

Ms. Bertram questioned the administration portion of this grant and asked if those fees would be paid to MRPC. Ms. Carabba responded yes and that there was also administration added into the parking lot portion of the grant also. Discussion and questions ensued regarding the percentage of the added administration fees. Ms. Carabba did not have answers for those questions.

The BOS voiced their dissatisfaction with MRPC's communication and handling of this project.

Ms. Speidel believes there may have been a typo in the administration fees and will check with Shelly Hatch from MRPC tomorrow to find out exactly what the grant application includes. Mr. Sund requested that she also ask for the total number of applicants that are being approved for the housing rehab program and also would like to know the expenditures per unit.

Mr. Alonzo moved to close the public hearing. Mr. deBettencourt seconded. On vote, motion carried, 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

Ms. Carabba returned to speak to the BOS at 8:23 p.m. to inform them that she had spoken to Shelly Hatch from MRPC via telephone and Ms. Hatch informed her that there is an OMNIBUS letter that needs to be submitted with the grant application that the Chair needs to sign.

Ms. Carabba also added that there were 11 applicants on the waiting list for the Housing Rehab program and they will be able to handle 10 cases.

CURRENT BUSINESS

1. Temporary Sign Regulations – Mike Sauvageu, Building Official spoke of the temporary signs that are placed on the lawn of the Ritter Building and at the intersection in the center of town. He said that the town by-law allows for temporary signs during the election period, construction sites, and sandwich signs. He feels that temporary signs can be a nuisance in town by being too close to the intersections where they cause traffic problems. He also removes illegal signs through out the town on a daily basis. Mr. Sauvageu would like to work with the Planning Board Director to adjust the by-law so that the signs are regulated and in uniform.

Mr. Sund spoke and said that he agreed with Mr. Sauvageu that something needed to be done about the sign situation.

Ms. Bertram also agreed and thinks that standardizing would be the best thing to do.

Mr. Alonzo stated that the by-law unfairly limits businesses to address special events that are not on the main roads.

This matter will be given to the Planning Board for their review and the BOS thanked Mr. Sauvageu for his input.

2.. Minutes/Warrants/Action File Issues –

Minutes: None

Warrants – W31-11, 12/7/10, \$138,995.40
12P11, 12/9/10, \$717,195.17
12MB11, 12/9/10, \$1,693.13
12M11, 12/3/10, \$2,991.36

Action File Issues – None

3. Committee Report – Mr. Matthews reported that the School Committee met last Wednesday and that they are still reviewing budgets. The Superintendent's budget will be released on December 15th and the first budget hearing will be held on January 5th. He also mentioned that the new side walks have been installed at the High School by the Monty Tech students. The sidewalks look great and the town was able to save money by using the students to do the work.

Mr. Matthews said that the School Committee is in the process of getting together the MSBA letters of intent which they have to resubmit for Turkey Hill Middle School and T.C. Passios Elementary School. The BOS will need to sign them. He also added that Regionalization Committee had met but they are not making any progress due to delays in information on comparative costs of other high schools coming back from MSBA. He said that the repairs for the High School roof have been put off for a very long time because of the regionalization discussions which started a couple of years ago. He fears that the town may have to step in to replace them, only to have them taken down again.

Letters from the school committee have been to sent to MSBA to request that the matter be dealt with swiftly. The BOS Chair said that she would have no problem sending a letter from the board to help speed the process along.

Mr. Alonzo informed the BOS that the Finance Committee will meet this Thursday at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall.

Mr. Sund reported that the Cable Committee had met and put together a "bulletin board policy" for items that are submitted to the cable access channel for viewing.

Mr. deBettencourt reported that the DPW Building Committee met yesterday where they finalized some of the design which will be used for the new DPW building. They are looking at the budget and are making sure that the numbers all work.

4. Department Reports - None

5. Town Manager Reports – Ms. Speidel reviewed the list of outstanding items beginning with next Tuesdays meeting where the main issue will be with the Sewer Commission to talk about their progress renegotiating the sewer IMA.

Ms. Speidel said that she has a conflict with the December 21st meeting date and probably will not be able to attend. Mr. Sund added that he would not be attending that meeting as well. The Chair recommended that there be no meeting on December 21st.

The December 14th meeting was discussed which resulted in a number of conflicts with appointment times along with the walk through of the Jones House and an Executive Session meeting which were both scheduled for 6:00 p.m. that evening. The meeting times were readjusted to accommodate all of the items.

OLD BUSINESS –

- 1. Status Hearing: Truax Dog Complaint** – Ms. Bertram reviewed the original complaint which the BOS had taken action on at the May 18, 2010 BOS meeting. At that meeting they ordered the dog to be under restraint at all times, and would come back for review in 6 months. The Animal Control Officer compiled a report that said that the dog had been loose a couple of times but the owners had restrained the dog each time. The original complainant was contacted and has not had any more problems with the dog within this time frame. Ms. Speidel recommended that this matter be closed, based upon the action taken by the dog owner. Mr. deBettencourt moved to close this matter. Mr. Sund seconded. On vote, motion carried, 5 in favor, 0 opposed.
- 2. Town Website – Contract with Qscend Technologies** – Mr. Alonzo motioned to recommend that the Town Manager move forward with this contract. Mr. Sund seconded. On vote, motion carried, 5 in favor, 0 opposed.
- 3. FY12 Budget/Financial Forecast Assumptions** – Ms. Speidel discussed the five year forecast with the BOS. She projected a \$2.5M deficit in FY12 and would like the BOS input and will be bringing this to the Finance Committee for their input as well. (See Attached)

Discussion:

Mr. deBettencourt asked what could be eliminated to lower the \$2.5M deficit. Ms. Speidel said that under Special Expenditure Assumptions, #23 & #24, if eliminated, would amount to half of the \$2.5M. She does not advocate for pulling either out but they are the biggest expenditures that we haven't regularly seen before.

Ms. Bertram requested to review each of the assumptions and discuss them to see whether or not the BOS agree on what should be included.

Ms. Speidel explained that there was not much in new growth this current fiscal year at Emerald Place, she assumes that new growth at Emerald Place will happen in FY13 & FY14.

There are approximately 66 units which will be coming online at Tri Town Landing at the beginning of the year and she sees 50% of this showing up in new growth and 50% showing up in the supplemental property tax which is keyed off of the issuing of the certificate of occupancy that is issued at the completion of the project.

Ms. Speidel has spoken with Representative Benson along with MMA and other Town Managers, and has estimated a 10% reduction in state aide. She also said that there will be no federal stimulus money available in 2012. She does not anticipate that the state will move quickly in setting their budget for 2012 due to it not being an election year, although the Governor and the Legislature are working on a consensus revenue number which hopefully will be available by the end of this month.

Mr. Alonzo indicated to the public that a 10% cut means \$600,000, which is not inconsequential.

Mr. Matthews said that it is concerning when the Governor's big concern is finding money to fund health insurance for immigrants, legal, but still not ahead of us finding money to fund health insurance for our employees.

Ms. Bertram feels that a 10% decrease will be difficult and the state needs to look long and hard at how funds are being expended and where the cuts are being made.

Mr. Sund suggested drafting a letter to Representative Benson, which she could relay to the Governor, voicing concern over taking money away from the Towns and putting it in other programs.

Ms. Bertram will draft a letter on this matter to be sent to Representative Benson and Senator Flanagan.

Under General Expenditure Assumption Ms. Speidel said that generally she is looking at a 5% increase in utilities except for telephone which she expects 2.5% for expenses. She is using a general 2% increase for other expenses. She has reinstated into the budget funding for dues, membership, training and mileage reimbursement.

With Special Expenditure Assumptions Ms. Speidel stated that she has included a part time Human Resource position in 2012 and then will transition that position to full time in 2015.

Under General Government she would like to increase the Towns legal expenses by 3% per year.

She would like to increase the Town Clerks salary by 10% in 2012 and then by 2.5% through the life of the forecast. She explained that the 10% came from the fact that her salary has not increased since 2009 and she feels that the office should be open full time, five days a week. She also pointed out that with a 10% increase in salary, the position would still not equal what a full time Town Clerk should be making.

Ms. Speidel would also like to see all of the offices at Town Hall open for business at the same hours during the week.

Ms. Bertram questioned a job share with the town and the schools with a part time Human Resources Coordinator. Ms. Speidel said that the School Superintendent along with herself and staff have researched this idea and in the end the School Superintendent did not want to move forward with this proposal based on the work load that would be involved.

Ms. Speidel stressed the fact to the BOS that the town needs a Human Resource person. She feels the position could more than pay for itself by uncovering grant money and auditing existing policies such as Worker's Comp. Mr. Matthews remarked that it didn't make sense to him to have two separate tracks doing the same thing and that we need to be more efficient. Board members along with the Town Manager were all in agreement on this issue.

Ms. Speidel would like to add 1 patrol officer to the Police Dept. per year in 2012 & 2013 and add 1 Sergeant in 2015.

Mr. Alonzo requested that for the Special Expenditure Assumptions alone, he would like to see how much each of these assumptions would cost the town over time. The BOS would also like to know the cost of how much it would be to completely equip a new patrol officer each year.

Ms. Speidel would like to phase in a second shift at the Fire Dept. for additional coverage. This would be a non-benefit position. Her reasoning for this is that on weekends if an ambulance call comes in, someone has to be called in to get the ambulance which can take a significant amount of time.

Mr. Matthews stated that he knows how hard the Fire Dept. works but feels that all aspects should be looked at concerning finances before doing this.

Restoring additional hours for a part-time Building Inspector was discussed. The part-time inspector would be used to cover for the Building Inspector during vacation or training time at an average of 10 hours per week.

Ms. Speidel would like to increase the stipend to Emergency Management Director due to the volume of work that is done.

For the School Department Assumption Ms. Speidel said she used the Superintendents projections which were for level service. She had received copies of the presentation that the Superintendent gave to the School Committee and she will circulate those to the BOS.

Ms. Speidel said that the Monty Tech assessment is assumed on how many students they have attending.

Discussion concerning the DPW Assumptions ensued. The BOS would like to know more about why the work force will be doubling in five years. They feel that the town needs to know what tasks are not being accomplished now, that need to be accomplished.

Ms. Speidel would like to see an additional maintenance worker added to DPW. She said that through our insurance company there are certain proactive measures that we could take that could save money on the insurance premium but it's difficult to do because of the staffing right now.

Mr. deBettencourt brought up the fact that he would like to see a person that would be used by both schools and the town for a position like this. Ms. Speidel agreed and feels that consolidating a maintenance department would save the town money.

Ms Speidel spoke of the solid waste assumption and explained that this is the cost of the solid waste disposal and recycling program. She said that she will have a better number on this because they are going out to bid before the end of this fiscal year.

Ms Speidel would like to add another non-benefit person to do Outreach at the senior center. She stated that the Outreach worker serves somewhat in the capacity of a Social Worker to help people qualify for food stamps, fuel assistance and other benefit programs and that there is usually a line of people waiting to see her on a daily basis. Ms. Bertram suggested checking with Nashoba Board of Health to see if they have some sort of Outreach Program that our residents could take advantage of.

There was confusion about the library hours being cut and Ms. Speidel will double check those facts. Ms. Speidel is looking to have the CWMARS membership being paid out of the town operating budget rather than rely on State funds.

The 10% increase in the retirement assessment enables the town to meet the annual assessment which includes the unfunded contribution towards the unfunded liability. Ms. Speidel would like to invite the Executive Director of the Worcester Regional Retirement System to come out and make a presentation to the BOS and Finance Committee about the retirement system.

Ms. Speidel said that they are in the process of doing a detailed audit on the Workers Compensation and may be able to reduce the assumed increase of 5% to 2% based on the audits results.

The contribution to the stabilization fund assumption of 5% increase is due to the fact when operating expenses increase, so does the stabilization fund.

The \$750K towards the Pavement Management Plan is for making road improvements in accordance with the Pavement Management System. This would be in addition to the approximate \$300K that is received on an annual basis from Chapter 70.

Mr. Matthews asked about the Health Insurance which was not included as a line item on the Forecast. Ms. Speidel told him that the Assumption on the Health Insurance is 10%.

Mr. Matthews said he would like to see a change in the Health Insurance offered to town employees so as the town and the employees could save more money.

Ms. Bertram feels that there is a lot more in depth discussion that is needed about the forecast. She would like to meet with all the departments to understand what it is that we gain from this personnel, what services are we not currently doing that we are going to be able to do, and she feels that the sooner we do that the better.

Mr. Alonzo thanked the Town Manager for putting the Assumptions together.

Ms. Bertram also thanked the Town Manager and mentioned that she did a phenomenal job at Town Meeting and thanked her for that too. She said that Ms. Speidel's thoroughness is a real asset to the community.

- 4. Review RFP for Sale of Jones House** – Ms. Speidel requested that the BOS review the RFP for the sale of the Jones Houses to identify any additional information that might be needed in order to keep the project moving. She said that the tenants have vacated the property and if any members of the Historical Commission or the BOS would like to walk through the property she would be able to arrange that. The property is being winterized and there has been some minor repairs to the roof all done by the DPW.

Representatives from the Historical Commission were present to speak about the Jones House. They said that the outside of the house has the historic values and the Historical Commission is not that involved with the interior of

the house. That part will be up to the architects and designers who will be working on it. The original shutters from the house are in the barn and need to be put back onto the house after the work is complete.

Mr. Alonzo was concerned about the condition of the house and the ability of who ever purchases it to be able to follow through with the guidelines set by the Historical Commission. He questioned a "no demolition" clause and would like to ensure that if the buyers do not follow through with the guidelines that the town will be able to buy it back through a "reverter clause".

Pat Slattery, member of the Historical Commission spoke and said that he had copies of the revised RFP that he will give to the Town Manager and the Chair. He explained the format used for developing the RFP is the standard format which includes the reverter clause.

After a short discussion the board was satisfied with the RFP but would like to look at the price of the property again in Executive Session. There will also be a walk through scheduled of the property for next Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. and the RFP will be forwarded to Town Counsel.

APPOINTMENTS/RE-APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS - None

EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

Being no further business, Mr. deBettencourt motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Sund seconded. On vote, motion carried, 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

Meeting ended at 10:12 p.m.

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

December 14, 2010

December 21, 2010

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