

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Ms. Awad at 6:30 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Anne Awad, Diana Stein, Stephanie O’Keeffe

Absent: Gerry Weiss, Alisa Brewer

Town Manager Larry Shaffer

Information Technology Director Kris Pacunas

Vincent O’Connor, Mark Tassanari, Vladimir Morales, En Fuh Wu

OPENING REMARKS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Awad announced the postponement of the scheduled Town Manager’s report on litigation status.

Ms. Stein announced that the August 18, 2008 meeting would be Ms. Awad’s last, and said it would be preceded by a reception honoring her service. It will be at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Room, and the public is cordially invited.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Vince O’Connor presented information regarding the lack of an agreement for Town use of the Middle School pool, the potential for losing fall aquatics programs, and his assessment that the Schools’ determination of cost for Town use is too high. Ms. Awad said that the topic was too complex for Public Comment and should be put on an upcoming agenda for Mr. Shaffer to address. Mr. Shaffer said that discussion with the Schools is ongoing, and that \$30,000 is available to fund pool use, the same amount that was negotiated last year.

SELECT BOARD’S ACTION

Approval of Minutes

VOTED 2 in favor (Awad, O’Keeffe,) 1 abstaining (Stein,) and 2 absent (Weiss, Brewer) to approve the minutes of the July 7, 2008 Select Board meeting without amendment. Ms. Stein said her abstention was due to her absence from that meeting.

VOTED 3 in favor (Awad, Stein, O’Keeffe) and 2 absent (Weiss, Brewer) to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2008 Select Board meeting as amended.

Installation of Conduits Under a Public Way – Amherst College

Opened public hearing at 6:47 p.m.; closed public hearing at 6:55 p.m.

Mark Tassanari of Amherst College explained the request to install plastic conduit under Snell Street to provide new electrical and telecommunications wiring to the Ponty Poole House. Mr. Shaffer noted that the DPW had reviewed the request and recommended approval. Per Amherst College's plans to repave the excavated area to Town standards, Mr. Shaffer praised the college's consistently excellent work in such matters. Vladimir Morales asked if there is a provision for hiring local workers for the project. Mr. Tassanari said five local general contractors are bidding on the job, and the general contractor will subcontract out to other firms. Mr. Shaffer said that Amherst College is one of the town's largest employers and a significant factor in the local economy.

VOTED 3 in favor (Awad, Stein, O'Keeffe) and 2 absent (Weiss, Brewer) that the Trustees of Amherst College be and it is hereby granted permission to install plastic conduits under the public way across Snell Street. All construction under this order shall be in accordance with the following conditions: Work will be in conformance with the Town of Amherst Department of Public Works specifications for conduits under roadways, construction substantially as per the locations indicated upon the plans marked "Amherst College-Ponty Poole House-Placement of Conduits Under Public Way" dated the 17th day of July 2008 filed with and made a part of said petition.

Committee Appointments

VOTED 3 in favor (Awad, Stein, O'Keeffe) and 2 absent (Weiss, Brewer) to approve the Town Manager appointment of Dr. David Kaufman to the Board of Health for a term to begin August 11, 2008 and to expire June 30, 2011.

VOTED 3 in favor (Awad, Stein, O'Keeffe) and 2 absent (Weiss, Brewer) in a single vote to appoint the following:

- Kathryn Grandonico, Design Review Board, for a term to expire June 30, 2011.
- Jonathan Salvon, Design Review Board, for a term to expire June 30, 2011.
- Joan Golowich, Facilitation of the Community Choices Committee, for a term to expire December 31, 2008.

It was noted before the vote that Ms. Grandonico was voted by the Planning Board as its representative. Ms. Grandonico is manager of a business downtown, satisfying the Design Review Board membership criteria outlined in the Zoning Bylaw that a member operate a business downtown, and Mr. Salvon is an architect, satisfying the criteria that one member be an architect. Also noted was that Ms. Golowich was among the original applicants to the Community Choices Committee, and that she fills a vacancy left by Janet Lansberry, who resigned due to a family emergency.

Mr. Morales expressed concern about committee meetings occurring at times not convenient for attendance or participation by all community members, and asked for more details about the appointment process. It was explained that most committee meeting times are determined by the availability of members, that Citizen Activity Forms are submitted by those seeking appointments to committees, and that he could get more information by e-mailing the Select Board or calling the Select Board office.

Ms. Stein said that volunteers are needed for the 250th Celebration parade subcommittees.

Vote Special Town Meeting Calendar

There was discussion of the proposed fall Town Meeting calendar, with Mr. Shaffer noting that the Town Clerk's office supported the proposal and would not be unduly burdened by it starting the day after the election. For the benefit of viewers, Ms. Awad announced that deadlines for submitting warrant articles were noon on August 29 for citizen zoning petitions and noon on September 15 for

citizen miscellaneous petitions. Mr. Shaffer said he would check to see if the Thursday, November 20th meeting date was intentional, or had been intended to be the day before, and said the change could be made if necessary.

VOTED 3 in favor (Awad, Stein, O’Keeffe) and 2 absent (Weiss, Brewer) to approve the Special Town Meeting Calendar of 7/23/08 for the November 5, 2008 Special Town Meeting. The dates are November 5, 10, 12, 17, 20, 24 and December 1 & 3, 2008.

Committee Management System

It was explained that this topic was to address the success of overlapping appointment clerk terms, but would be postponed to a meeting with more members present.

No action taken.

Liaison and Representative Reports

Ms. Stein said that the Board of Health is nearing completion on well regulations.

Ms. O’Keeffe described the purpose and progress of the Community Choices Facilitation Committee, and said that the Select Board and the public would be hearing much more about its work and community engagement process in the near future.

Ms. O’Keeffe alerted the Select Board to three recommendations that would be brought forth by the Public Works Committee: a request to assess the adequacy of bicycle parking at public facilities and to take action to where it is found to be inadequate; a crosswalk request for Pelham Road by the Amethyst Brook conservation area; and a request for a public hearing regarding changes to on-street parking on streets near the Middle School to improve public safety access.

Ms. O’Keeffe asked if she could notify the Public Transportation and Bicycle Committee of the request to assess bicycle parking at public facilities, and suggest that the committee assess and make recommendations on the adequacy of bicycle parking in the downtown area in general. Without a vote, the Select Board agreed to both requests. Ms. Awad noted that Boulder, Colorado had innovative bicycle parking at an intermodal transportation hub, and suggested that grants might be available to create such parking options in small niches around town.

Ms. Awad asked for interested citizens to apply for membership on the Nyeri Sister City Committee. She said that counterparts in Nyeri want to be in contact with an Amherst group, and that she would like to have the committee take shape in the fall.

No action taken.

LICENSES AND PERMITS

Change of Manager – Panda East

En Fuh Wu explained that he is an original partner in Panda East and would be taking over as manager. Mr. Shaffer said that Acting Police Chief Michael Kent had reviewed the license application and recommended its approval.

VOTED 3 in favor (Awad, Stein, O’Keeffe) and 2 absent (Weiss, Brewer) to approve the Change of Manager for Panda East to En Fuh Wu of 10 Norwottuck Circle, Amherst, MA 01002.

Special Wine & Malt Liquor License – R & P Liquors

VOTED 3 in favor (Awad, Stein, O’Keeffe) and 2 absent (Weiss, Brewer) to approve the Special Wine & Malt Liquor License for R & P Liquors for August 25, 2008 from 4:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at Atkins Fruit Bowl for Cruise Night.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Web Site Update

Mr. Shaffer said that the scheduled update on Town litigation would be postponed until a meeting at which Town Counsel could be present. Mr. Shaffer arranged for Kris Pacunas to give a presentation on the launch of the new Town Web Site instead.

Mr. Pacunas projected the web site on the wall and gave a demonstration of its new layout and features. He said that a key reason for redesigning the site was to make it ADA compliant through its support for screen reader technology, use of color standards, and other elements to assist the visually-impaired, which are technical specialties of the company chosen to create the site. He said the new site would also have increased functionality, information would be easier to find, and the ability to update content would be distributed among those needing such access, rather than having all requests handled by the I.T. Department. New features include equal compatibility among all browsers and operating systems, the ability to sign up for subscription feeds for specific information, and a blog written by the Town Manager. The complaint and request tracking system will be functional with a basic set of categories and more will be added. Streaming meeting video is part of ongoing discussions and planning between the Town and ACTV. Mr. Pacunas said the site would go live at noon on Friday, August 15, and that it will continue to be refined based on user feedback. The Select Board and Town Manager praised Mr. Pacunas and the I.T. Department for their work and for the new site.

No action taken.

Police Union Collective Bargaining Agreement

Mr. Shaffer said that the Police Union had ratified a contract with the Town, consistent with the Teachers Union, the SEIU and the DPW Union. He said the contract called for increases of 1% in FY08, 2% in FY09, and 3.5% in FY10 and FY11; and a 75/25 split for PPO health insurance option, and an 80/20 split for the HMO option.

No action taken.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Approved at the August 18, 2008 Select Board meeting