

SELECT BOARD MEETING
Minutes
Monday, September 27, 2010 – 6:30 p.m.
Town Room, Town hall

Attendance:

Present: Stephanie O'Keeffe (Chair), Aaron Hayden (Clerk pro-tem), Diana Stein, Jim Wald, Larry Shaffer (Town Manager)

Others presenting:

Public Comment

Parking Request Movable Feast Art/Food Project

Stephanie O'Keeffe presented the request on the behalf of Ms. Karakashian:

Diana Stein moved to approve the request from Food for Thought Books Collective to bag 2-4 parking spaces directly in front of 106 N. Pleasant Street on Tuesday, October 2, 2010 from 3:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Aaron Hayden seconded and the motion carried unanimously

Town Manager Performance Goals Finalize FY11 Town Manager's goals

Stephanie O'Keeffe compared Mr. Ely's suggestion for the "Green Goal" with Diana Stein's original and hers. She felt the idea was good but it is too early to require the new Town Manager to complete it when there is so much else for him to do during the transition.

Jim Wald appreciated Mr. Ely and Mr. Randalls' ideas but would like the language to more closely resemble the other goals especially the most similar goal on Economic Development.

Aaron Hayden also appreciated the ideas but noted the type of plan Mr. Ely seems to be suggesting would be more effective if it was created by a public process. The role of the Town Manager should be to implement report and promote the progress of the Town's plan.

Stephanie O'Keeffe suggested we consider this proposal next week after we have had a chance to review the existing goals and possible redraft it.

October Plans

There are 17 articles currently on the Warrant for the Fall Town Meeting, the Select Board will get the draft next meeting. We will convene on October 8th solely for signing the Warrant – the special meeting is to get the Warrant signed as early as possible to let the process of getting Town Meeting members familiarized with the issues begin as early as possible.

October 12th deadline for first Town Meeting packet
October 21st Warrant review
October 24th TMCC bus tour
November 8th Special Town Meeting starts

Fall Town Meeting Preparations

Four Boards Meeting –

The 4 Boards are meeting October 14th at 7:00 pm to get an early sense of the FY 12 budget situation.

John Musante noted that this was the first gathering of the group to recap the situation and update the fiscal trends. They will discuss the November ballot initiatives especially since Proposals 1 & 3 will certainly effect the Towns' budgets if they pass.. The meeting will review details of the FY 12 budget and look ahead 3 years in broader terms.

The meeting will hear a report from an actuarial consultant on the Towns' long term liabilities and their effect on the towns.

FY12 Budget Policy Guidelines, Process for creating the guidelines:

The draft guidelines are in this week's packet with copies of the older versions. We will discuss guidelines at the October 18th meeting (after the 4 Boards meeting). We will have a public hearing to get public comments the guidelines on October 25th ahead of the November 2nd elections. If the roll backs succeed then there would need to be a dramatic change – we'll hold off finalizing the guidelines until then. The Guidelines will also be put on the web and should be distributed to the Staff (in part so they can understand the tough decisions were taken by the Select Board and are not being foisted on them by the Town Manager).

Diana Stein pointed out that the Select Board can make recommendations on the ballot initiatives though we can't spend public resources to advocate one way or the other. She recommended that citizens vote no since cutting the State budget by the amounts proposed would cost Amherst \$8 million, \$4million for local school aid and another \$4 million to the region.

John Musante said that the Massachusetts Taxpayer Foundation issued their analysis and they estimated that impact to funding for State services would be \$2.5 Billion which would be on top of the current \$2 Billion estimated gap. He noted that the fixed obligations are about half the budget so only discretionary funding (of schools for example) would be cut 30%.

Alisa Brewer noted that a poll showed about 45% of the electorate support these initiatives and we should reach out to other communities to advocate defeating these proposals. She also told us that our homework for the next meeting is to read the Policy Guidelines from previous years and think about what is new for this year. She wants us to be clear to the Town Manager so there are no surprises in January when the budgets are presented. The Select Board needs to support the budget that is brought to Town Meeting in the Spring.

She wanted to be sure the flow of the budget is straight forward from the Public to the Town Manager to Town Meeting.

Town Manager's Report

Larry Shaffer gave an update on the status of the Gateway project and let John Musante recount the ARA trip to Storres CT. In particular Mr. Musante noted that UConn received large grants to support building the infrastructure require for the development of their "Husky Village."

Larry Shaffer recounted a meeting on creating BID for Downtown Amherst that would supply supplemental services. Many local business owners were represented at the meeting and they discussed the next critical steps in organizing the structure and budget. They have spent their initial grant for outreach and noted that the BID will be responsible for managing their own funds: The Town will only be responsible for collecting the fees.

Alisa Brewer said the BID will do their work not th Town's Planning Department. She also noted that as the Town can do less because of economic constraints, businesses in Town are stepping in .

Mark's Meadow Building Status: Mr. Shaffer signed the letter of agreement returning Marks Meadow to UMass with appreciation. Mr. Bohonowicz and crew did a good job of preparing the facilities for the turn over. When the School declares the portable classrooms as excess property the Town can work to dispose of them probably by working out an agreement with the University to spare us the expense of moving them.

Art Updates: The painting donated by the Thursday Club has been very firmly hung in Munson Library. Kendrick Park will be getting an installation of a bronze sculpture that will be on display in the park as part of the Amherst Biennial art festival is underway.

Summer/Fall Project Plans: Update

Master Plan Implementation Committee

"Safe Routes to School:" Diana Stein has been in correspondence with the Safe Routes administrators and the Public Wors Commission will consider ideas and make a recommendation for the October 18th Select Board meeting.

Committee Handbook Update: Diana Stein is accepting comments to be considered in the next edition of the Handbook. Aaron Hayden sent in edits that better described a committee chair's role as a facilitator to assure that the full range of ideas come forward in a meeting.

Other Business

Approve Immanuel Lutheran Church as Warrant Posting Location

Alisa Brewer moved to approve that Immanuel Lutheran Church, at 863 North Pleasant Street, replace Marks Meadow Elementary, at 813 North Pleasant Street, for the "posting of warrants" in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 39, Section 10.

Diana Stein seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

Annual Street Closure Request for High Point Hill Block Party

Dian Stein moved to approve the request to close eastern end of Overlook Drive on Sunday, October 3, 2010 from 11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. for the annual neighborhood block party.

Aaron Hayden seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Consider State's Request to Reduce Notification Period for Property Acquisition

Mr. Shaffer explained that University was looking for the Select Board to reduce from 120 days to 30 days the time the State is required to allow comment on purchasing property. He recommended against reducing the time so that we would have a full opportunity to work out details for the mutual benefit of both the Town and the University by giving the public process its full time.

Alisa Brewer noted that the University has asked for this waiver before and it was granted because it did make sense at that time. She was a little surprised by this request because it came without any explanation. She felt we need to let the University know we are not approving the waiver in case they don't realize that we don't do this automatically.

Jim Wald thought that DCAM displayed a cavalier attitude toward local authority in this case and others.

Diana Stein moved to deny the State's Request to Reduce Notification Period for Property Acquisition.

Jim Wald seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

New Taxi Driver/Chauffeur Licenses

Diana Stein moved to approve the new Taxi Driver/Chauffeur License for James O. Walton, 445 South Gulf Road Belchertown, MA.

Aaron Hayden seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Diana Stein moved to approve the new Taxi Driver/Chauffeur License for Dylan Hawghton, 67 McClellon Street Amherst, MA.

Aaron Hayden seconded and the motion passed unanimously

Diana Stein moved to approve the new Taxi Driver/Chauffeur License for Norma Rae Abney, 495 Main Street, Apt #1 Ashfield, MA.

Aaron Hayden seconded and the motion passed unanimously

Approve Minutes

Diana Stein moved to approve the minutes of the *September 10, 2010* Select Board meeting. Aaron Hayden seconded and the motion carried unanimously with 2 abstentions (Wald and Brewer).

Special Liquor Licenses

Diana Stein moved to approve the Special All Alcoholic Liquor License for University of Massachusetts for October 19, 2010 from 6:30 p.m. – 11:00 p.m. at the Fine Arts Center, UMASS Amherst, for concessions.

Aaron Hayden seconded and the motion passed unanimously

Diana Stein moved to approve the Special Wine & Malt Liquor License for the University of Massachusetts on Tuesday, November 2, 2010 from 6:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. at the Fine Arts Center, UMASS Amherst for concessions.

Aaron Hayden seconded and the motion passed unanimously

Diana Stein moved to approve the Special All Alcoholic Liquor License for the University of Massachusetts for October 19, 2010 from 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. at Bernie Dallas Room, Goodell Library, UMASS for a reception.

Aaron Hayden seconded and the motion passed unanimously

Committee Appointments

Diana Stein moved to appoint Helen MacMellon, Kanegasaki Sister City Committee, for a term to expire June 30, 2013. Aaron Hayden seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Diana Stein moved to appoint Sandra Mullin, Amherst Cultural Council, for a term to expire June 30, 2013. Aaron Hayden seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

BCG Update (included in packet): Stephanie O’Keeffe reported that there are representatives from the School Committee, Library Committee and Select Board as well as the Regional School Superintendant meeting to work together on the creation of their budgets for next spring. Stephanie O’Keeffe said it was re-emphasized that the home boards of the representatives be kept up to date on the BCG work and she describe the summary points of the most recent BCG memo.

Alisa Brewer suggested that the BCG add an FY 12 page to their web pages so people can follow along. She also would like the draft calendar to be reviewed by the Select Board in preparation of the 4 Boards meeting.

Liaison and Representative Reports

Diana Stein reported that the Agriculture Commission is working on a warrant article that requires all government bodies to buy local fruits and vegetables.

Ms. Stein also reported that the Energy Task Force is sponsoring a number of activities for Energy Awareness month, October.

She also reported on the Community Preservation Act Committee will be meeting about properties on the warrant and asked who ordered the demolition of the Hawthorne House?

Jim Wald replied that the Communities Preservation Act Committee recommended to Town Meeting that the Town should buy the property and needed to determine how much of the CPA funding will be allocated to housing and open space. It was the Town the applied for the demolition permit.

At the public hearing on the requested permit there was a great deal of comment and the Historical Commission postponed making a decision until their next meeting, October 5th.

Mr. Shaffer noted that the Town had the property assessed for rehabilitation and found it was less expensive to build a new building for housing.

Jim Wald thought that the CPA Committee did understand what really was voted on when Town Meeting voted last spring and so didn't accept the estimate for the cost to rehab: Moving the house to make room for new housing counts as demolition.

Alisa Brewer wondered if there was any decision that Fall Town Meeting needed to take on the property maybe to be able to use CDBG funding for the demolition. (There is none.)

Diana Stein reported there were no designs for the Town Flag as yet and extended the deadline for submissions to October 30th.

Aaron Hayden reported that the TMCC has two new subcommittees one working on improving the sound in the auditorium during Town Meeting and another working on electronic voting.

Mr. Hayden also reported that the Kanagesaki Sister City Committee is preparing a reception for Mayor Takahashi during his visit here in November to speak to Town Meeting and Town officials.

Jim Wald reported the Historic District Committee is still shooting for Spring Town meeting for action and are working to educate the public on the values of the district and how they are good for economic development and getting grants.

Alisa Brewer reported that the LSSE is working on getting an estimate for opening the War Memorial Pool. They also met with the Friends of Cherry Hill.

She also reported that the CDC and Housing Partnership/Fair Housing Committee have put information on the web about the Olympia Drive project.

Ms. Brewer also reported that the CDBG is holding a public hearing tomorrow night to discuss their FY 2010 strategy which needs to be updated. She noted that the CDC's Strategy uses the Master Plan extensively. Applications for CDBG funding have been sent to a long list of providers and partners – there hasn't been a form before and it should help tracking project and how to partner ideas with groups that can execute them. The application deadline is October 29th and there will be a public hearing on the applications November 1st that will include presentations by the applicants.

Stephanie O’Keeffe reported that the Campus Community Coalition visited Burlington VT to see how they cope with their students. The visit inspired the “Have a Heart” campaign grew from the visit. The University of Vermont found that table tents was an effective tool for communicating with students and that using local children to express concerns further helped.

Stephanie O’Keeffe reported that the Conservation Commission is working on a Policy Guideline on land use, leases for agriculture etc.

Open Meeting Law Update: Alisa Brewer is working with the Attorney General to get answers about remote participation.

Diana Stein reported that the Attorney General is very quick in answering specific questions.

Chair’s Report:

There will be a reception for UMass administration and Student Government leaders at 5:00 on Monday before the regular Select Board meeting.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:07 pm was unanimously accepted.

Respectfully submitted
Aaron Hayden