

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Mr. Weiss at 6:30 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Weiss, Brewer, Greeney, Awad, Kusner
Shaffer
Seaman, Recorder

OPENING REMARKS/PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mr. Weiss announced that the date of the Four Town Meeting for the Regional School District would be Saturday, January 26, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. in the Amherst Regional Middle School auditorium.

Mr. Weiss announced that the 250th Anniversary Committee was holding a benefit at the Amherst Brewing Company on January 10, 2008.

Ms. Greeney asked that winter street parking and sidewalk clearing be put on a future agenda for discussion.

Vince O'Connor asked if the Town Manager had been directed to place an item on the draft Spring 2008 Town Meeting Warrant concerning the revolving fund for library fines. Mr. O'Connor also voiced concerns about the new Reverse 911 System that the Town had tested on Friday, January 4, 2008 and wanted to develop limitations for its use. The Board agreed to discuss the system at a later date.

Ms. Greeney stated that she and Ms. Brewer would be attending the Massachusetts Municipal Association conference on January 11, & 12, 2008 and that there was mention in the newsletter that if the Chair of the Board was not in attendance, someone needed to be given the authority to vote on the Board's behalf.

VOTED unanimously to authorize Mr. Weiss to designate Ms. Greeney as the representative of the Amherst Select Board at the Massachusetts Municipal Association business meeting on January 12, 2008.

VOTED unanimously to support the Massachusetts Municipal Association recommendation of a 40/10 revenue sharing plan of new State revenues.

SELECT BOARD'S ACTION

Special Municipal Employee Status – Agricultural Commission

No action taken.

Downtown Initiative Technical Assistance

Weiss stated that on December 5, 2007 Mr. Shaffer completed a document entitled the Downtown Initiative Technical Assistance Site Visit Program which is being supported by the Amherst Area Chamber of Commerce, the University of Massachusetts, and Promoting Downtown Amherst. Weiss read from a letter from Ms. Emmy Hahn, Coordinator of the Downtown Initiative Program. Mr. Shaffer explained the purpose of the program and the Business Improvement District, and that the amount of funding received for this program was estimated at \$17,000.00.

Kestrel Trust Agreement

Mr. Shaffer explained that after the vote at the November 5, 2007 Special Town Meeting was made, Town Counsel determined that the Select Board needed to authorize the Town Manager to execute such an agreement.

VOTED unanimously, to enter into the Agreement for the Donation of Funds to the Town of Amherst between Kestrel Trust and the Town of Amherst authorized in the vote under Article 7 of the November 5, 2007 Special Town Meeting in the amount of \$60,000 and authorizes the Town Manager to execute the Agreement.

Budget Coordinating Group Charge

Ms. Greeney spoke to the Board about concerns she had relative to the Budget Coordinating Group. The Board discussed the charge of the Budget Coordinating Group and the potential need to make changes, and what the Group had been discussing over the past four months. The Board decided to take look at the charge at a later meeting.

Special Town Meeting Discussion – CPA Surcharge

Carol Gray spoke to the Board about increasing the CPA surcharge from 1.5% to 3%, as has been done in surrounding Towns. Ms. Gray explained that such an increase would provide an additional \$300,000.00 a year from the State. Ms. Gray stated that in order to get such an increase, the Board would have to call a Special Town Meeting, and Town Meeting members would need to vote to put it on the Ballot. The Board discussed the timeline of calling a Special Town Meeting versus waiting to place the item on the Warrant for the Spring 2008 Town Meeting. The Board decided to discuss this topic at a meeting in the very near future.

The 2% Solution – Webcast Announcement

Ms. Greeney spoke to the Board about institutions that were addressing global warming and that there would be a webcast called “The 2% Solution” that would be shown on January 30, 2008. Ms. Greeney asked for the help of one Board member to help her put this event together at Town Hall. Mr. Weiss said that he would help.

VOTED unanimously, to support the 2% Solution and Webcast Announcement on January 30, 2008 that would include a showing of the film and local opinions.

Town Manager Report

Mr. Shaffer spoke to the Board about a parking study that is being done by the Pioneer Valley Parking Commission on the Central Business District. Mr. Shaffer stated that staff is getting ready to make recommendations to see how parking needs in downtown might be facilitated.

Mr. Shaffer reported that there was a draft charge sent to the Board regarding the use of Kendrick Park and forming a committee. The Board discussed the possible ways to get input from the community on the uses of Kendrick Park and how it would be regulated. Ms. Brewer asked if the Boy Scouts would have use of Kendrick Park for their Christmas Tree sales this year. Mr. Shaffer stated that he didn't think that was going to happen, but would be happy to help them find an alternate location.

Mr. Shaffer spoke to the Board about the Blue Ribbon Task Force, something that Dr. Jere Hochman had brought to his attention, and explained that the purpose of the Task Force was to appoint local

experts to look at the way the Town and Schools operated, and issue recommendations on how to make operations more efficient. Members of the Blue Ribbon Task Force are: Professor Iqbal Agha, an expert

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January 7, 2008
Town Room, Town Hall**

in Finance and Management from the University of Massachusetts; Bruce McInnis, former CFO of Continental Airlines and Peter Shea, Treasurer of Amherst College.

Downtown Graffiti Problem

The Board discussed the memo from Mr. Shaffer dated December 10, 2007 and the timeline to clean up the existing graffiti.

LICENSES AND PERMITS

Common Victualer License – True North Enterprises, LLC, d/b/a The Laundry Club

VOTED unanimously, to approve the transfer of the Common Victualer License for Sunrise Investments, Inc, d/b/a The Laundry Club, (Manager: David Larsen) to True North Enterprises, LLC, d/b/a The Laundry Club, 6 University Drive, Amherst, MA (Manager Peter Colt).

ADJOURNMENT

VOTED unanimously, to adjourn the open meeting at 9:12 p.m.