

SELECT BOARD AGENDA

Monday December 1, 2008 – 6:30 p.m.

Town Room, Town Hall

CALL TO ORDER

Opening Remarks, Announcements, and Agenda Review by Chairman Weiss

TIME SCHEDULED ITEMS

6:30	Question Period/Public Comment	Mr. Weiss
6:40	Select Board Reorganization – Election of Officers	Mr. Weiss
6:50	New Taxi Driver/Chauffeur’s License – Mary Lou Ferro	Mr. Shaffer
6:55	Human Rights Proclamation	Mr. Shaffer
7:00	Holiday Parking	Mr. Maroulis
7:10	Town Manager Evaluation Presentation	Mr. Weiss
7:40	Report by the Facilitation of the Community Choices Committee	Mr. Saul/Ms. Hanner
8:40	FY 2010 Budget Priorities Discussion	Mr. Weiss

UNTIMED ITEMS

Consent Calendar – Special Liquor Licenses	(none)	Mr. Shaffer
Approve Minutes		Mr. Weiss
Committee Appointments		Ms. Stein
Executive Session	(none)	Mr. Weiss
Liaison & Representative Reports		Mr. Weiss
Chair’s Report		Mr. Weiss
Town Manager’s Report		Mr. Shaffer
SME Status/Process Revision		Ms. Brewer
Liaison Assignments		Mr. Weiss

MOTIONS

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Mr. Weiss at _____ p.m.

SELECT BOARD'S ACTION

Select Board Reorganization – Election of Officers

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ O'Keeffe, ____ Hayden, ____ Stein to...

Human Rights Proclamation

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ O'Keeffe, ____ Hayden, ____ Stein to proclaim December 10, 2008 as Human Rights Day.

Holiday Parking

Street Closing and Parking Enforcement – Merry Maple Event

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ O'Keeffe, ____ Hayden, ____ Stein to approve the Amherst Area Chamber of Commerce request to close the following streets on Friday December 5, 2008 for the annual Merry Maple event:

- Close the Main Street parking lot in front of Town Hall from 12:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
- Close Boltwood Avenue, between Spring Street and Main Street, from 12:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
- Prohibit parking in the Spring Street parking lot, north side only, from 2:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. for the horse drawn hay wagon.

Parking Enforcement - Greeting Card Day

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ O'Keeffe, ____ Hayden, ____ Stein to approve the Amherst Area Chamber of Commerce request for free parking at all meters and in all "Pay and Display" lots on the annual Greeting Card Day, Saturday December 6, 2008.

Pay and Display Lots Parking Enforcement - December Holiday Season

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ O'Keeffe, ____ Hayden, ____ Stein to approve the Amherst Area Chamber of Commerce request for 12 days of free parking in the "Pay and Display" lots, but not the meters, from Saturday December 13 – Wednesday December 24, 2008.

Town Manager Evaluation Presentation

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ O'Keeffe, ____ Hayden, ____ Stein to...

Report by the Facilitation of the Community Choices Committee

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ O'Keeffe, ____ Hayden, ____ Stein to...

FY 2010 Budget Priorities Discussion

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ O'Keeffe, ____ Hayden, ____ Stein to...

Chair's Report

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ O'Keeffe, ____ Hayden, ____ Stein to...

Town Manager's Report

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ O'Keeffe, ____ Hayden, ____ Stein to...

SME Process Revision

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ O’Keeffe, ____ Hayden, ____ Stein to...

Liaison Assignments

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ O’Keeffe, ____ Hayden, ____ Stein to...

LICENSES AND PERMITS

New Taxi Driver/Chauffeur License – Mary L. Ferro

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ Weiss, ____ Brewer, ____ O’Keeffe, ____ Hayden, ____ Stein to approve the new Taxi Driver/Chauffeur License for Mary L. Ferro, 105 Wendell Road, Shutesbury, MA 01072 to expire December 31, 2009.

ADJOURNMENT

VOTED unanimously, OR ____ Weiss, ____ Awad, ____ Brewer, ____ O’Keeffe, ____ Stein to adjourn the open meeting at _____ p.m.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

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

ATTENDANCE

Present: Gerry Weiss, Diana Stein, Alisa Brewer (6:35,) Aaron Hayden, Stephanie O'Keeffe

Absent: (none)

Present: Town Manger Larry Shaffer, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director John Musante

Members of the public: Mary Lou Ferro, Tony Maroulis, Bob Saul, Martha Hanner, Stan Gawle

OPENING REMARKS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Weiss expressed praise and appreciation for the DPW's work on the downtown sidewalks. He noted that some people have concerns about that spending, and noted that the money for the project was set aside long ago. Mr. Shaffer said that labor and materials for the project are charged to the capital budget instead of the general fund where possible.

Ms. O'Keeffe asked that discussion of upcoming meeting dates be added to the agenda, time permitting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

SELECT BOARD'S ACTION

Liaison Report

Ms. O'Keeffe reported that the Amherst Housing Authority had recently celebrated the opening of the new apartments on Main Street, and noted that many organizations, committees and individuals had made that project possible. She said that another topic from a recent AHA meeting was delay in renovations of some of the AHA housing units due to inability to secure timely building permits. She said such delays resulted in change orders with the contractors and prolonged vacancies, which affect the AHA's annual vacancy audits.

Action: No action taken.

Select Board Election of Officers - Chair

Ms. Brewer nominated Ms. O'Keeffe for Chair. Ms. O'Keeffe praised Mr. Weiss' work as Chair. Mr. Weiss spoke of his enjoyment of the position and the responsibilities it entails. He said that not being Chair would allow him to spend more time with liaison assignments and other Board work. He expressed praise and appreciation for the experience of working with the Town Manager, and for the assistance of Kate Seaman and Judith Arcamo. He said the position had also taken its toll on aspects of his work and life, and said there were reasons why stepping down at this time made sense. Ms. Brewer praised Mr. Weiss' work as Chair, and gave him a coffee mug and chocolate bars. Mr. Shaffer expressed his appreciation and gratitude for working with Mr. Weiss.

VOTED unanimously to elect Ms. O'Keeffe as Chair.

Select Board Election of Officers - Clerk

Ms. O'Keeffe noted that the only official duty of the Clerk is to sign certain documents. She said that she had also been doing the minutes as Clerk, but that the body could decide if it wanted that duty to continue with the

position. General agreement was that it should continue. Ms. Brewer nominated Mr. Hayden for Clerk, and noted that he had done minutes for the Comprehensive Planning Committee.

VOTED unanimously to elect Mr. Hayden as Clerk.

Taxi license approval (6:50 p.m.) - Mary Ferro, the applicant, appeared before the Board. There was a brief discussion on Mary's local knowledge of Amherst.

Decision: Gerry Weiss moved to approve the license, Stephanie O'Keeffe 2nd. Unanimously accepted

Human Rights Day Proclamation (6:55 p.m.) - Gerry Weiss presented proclamation.

Decision: Diana Stein moved to accept the proclamation to make Dec 10 Amherst Human Rights Day, Aaron Hayden seconded. Unanimously accepted.

Holiday Parking (7:00 p.m.) - Tony Maroulis (President of the Amherst Area Chamber of Commerce) presented requests:

- December 5, 2008 for the Merry Maple celebration, Main Street parking lot and Boltwood Ave between 12 and 6:30 and the north side of the Spring Street parking lot from 2 to 6:30

Decision: Alisa Brewer moved to accept the street closings for Merry Maples, Diana Stein 2nd. Unanimously accepted.

- December 6th, for Greeting Card Day, to waive all parking fees in town, at meters and "pay and display lots".

Decision: Alisa Brewer moved to accept the waivers, Diana Stein 2nd. Unanimously accepted.

- December 13 through Dec 24 to waive all parking fees in the "Pay & Display" lots only.

Decision: Alisa Brewer moved to accept the waiver, Gerry Weiss 2nd. Accepted unanimously.

7:10 Evaluation of Town Manager (7:10 p.m.) - Gerry Weiss presented packet with evaluation materials.

Discussion: Last year only composited data of the Select Board's evaluations was released to the public. This year the Select Board decided to release their complete evaluation. Also this year anonymous staff evaluations will be placed into the Town Manager's personnel file, (anonymous except for those that were signed). This seemed an improvement over last year's process. There will be further discussions between the Town Manager and the Select Board regarding the evaluations including the Town Manager's response on future goals and strategies. The Select Board will review the material for the December 15, 2008 meeting when the evaluation is on the meeting agenda. (Written comments for the Friday packet due December 11, 2008.)

Discussion: On making the documents available to the public, what should be put on the website? Each separate evaluation has important information and the website is a handy place to get it.

Too much on the website may make it hard to see everything but the composited numerical data gives a good access. All the primary documents are at Town Hall

The original plan from the beginning of this year's process was to put everything up on the web.

Decision: Alisa Brewer moved that all the information but put into one document that gets mounted on website as "Town Manager Evaluation" Diana Stein 2nd. Unanimously accepted.

Town Manager's Report:

Special thanks to Nancy Pagano for the Thanksgiving celebration at the Bangs Center. In the end 75 Thanksgiving dinners were sent out to seniors and elderly.

Town Hall hours during the holidays: There has been a press release and announcements of the Town Hall schedule during the holiday weeks - Town hall will be open for extended hours on December 22, 2008 and December 23, 2008 from 8:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m., to help citizens get their year end business done in this shortened week. Town Hall will be closed December 24, 25 & 26, 2008 which will allow some savings in utilities costs. Town Hall will be open regular hours December 29, 30 & 31, 2008 and closed January 1 & 2, 2008.

Special Thanks to our friends at Hadley Garden Center for a significant donation of trees and shrubs. Half are slated to go to Kendrick Park and rest for the Public Way as public shade trees.

Discussion: All pools in Town be closed pending the pending mandated safety upgrade that must be in place December 19, 2008. Right now the ARMS pool will not be able to open since the upgrade very expensive and will take some time to put in place. (Ironically LSSE had just completed an agreement to use pool for season.)

Discussion: Town Council's has written an opinion that a recent case in Land Court, against Newton, will not affect the CPA funding of Plum Brook. Town council's opinion forwarded to departments in Town and will be put up on the CPA Committee's web page. The Town Manager is developing a system to identify CPA fund requests that are not allowed by statute to help avoid costly mistakes later.

Committee Appointment:

Nate Malloy (Planning Department Liaison to Historical Commission) announced the Historical Commission unanimously Nominated Jim Wald to be its representative to DRB.

Decision: Diana Stein Moved to appoint Jim Wald to fill the Historical Commission's seat on the Design Review Board, Aaron Hayden 2nd, unanimously accepted.

FCCC Report (7:40 p.m.) - Gerry Weiss recapped process: late Apr 08 SB created FCCC to do the "impossible" task of understanding the whole Town budget and its likely future and to get public opinion on service cuts and taxes. Today Chapter 1 of report "Summary Recommendation and Findings" is complete and on the Town website.

Discussion: The Select Board appreciates that the report is from the FCC Committee as a whole. The FCCC was inspired by the understanding that its report would play an important role in shaping the Town budget considerations in the near future.

Bob Saul and Martha Hanner introduced the 10 members of the committee (most of whom were present) and recapped Chapter 1 "Summary Recommendation and Findings":

Discussion: What is the "Core Budget", the FCCC report offers no details but there are many suggestions in the appendices and quotes from individuals as to what is at the core of running the Town.

Discussion: Specific recommendations are not given in the report just findings.

Distribution of the final draft of the report should happen by next week as the final copy editing is underway.

Questions and comments can be e-mailed to the FCCC until December 31, 2008 otherwise the FCCC charge is complete and they are not meeting again before then.

Budget Discussion or SB Recommendations (8:40 p.m.)

John Musante was present to answer questions.

Discussion: Today interest rates are very low, Amherst has few bonds outstanding, and construction costs are low so it may be a good time to get ahead of capital projects. Bonding done on a project by project basis and some projects are good candidates; a new fire station (or two), renovations to schools (especially Fort River and Wildwood), renovating the trolley barn that houses DPW all of which are not in the current capital plan. We should have schematic 10 year plan for major (bondable) projects to meet funding as it becomes available.

Discussion: Debt exclusion override could be used to pay off bond debt. Since bonds are for larger projects we may choose to bundle many small projects together for any debt exclusion override we consider, projects like the backlog of road improvements. In any event it is important that we consider carefully any borrowing to be sure it is paid for by the people whom it benefits.

Next meetings:

Discussion: Select Board meets on Mondays so we can reasonably plan a whole quarter year:

Decision: Aaron Hayden moved the following list of dates, Gerry Weiss 2nd The calendar leading up to Spring Town Meeting was unanimously accepted;

December 8 & 15, 2008

January 5, 12 & 21, (Wed to consider budget) 26, 2009

February 2, 9 & 23, 2009

March 2, 9, 16 & 23, 2009

April 6, 13, 20 & 27, 2009

The Select Board also has posted meetings this Wednesday at the Planning Board's forum on the Master Plan and Saturday at the Four Towns School Budget meeting.

Adjourned 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, *Aaron Hayden*