

## Minutes

### ATTENDANCE

#### Select Board

Present: Stephanie O’Keeffe, Alisa Brewer, Aaron Hayden, Diana Stein

Absent: Jim Wald

Staff: John Musante, Town Manager; Susan Waite, Recycling Coordinator

Other: Ed Gaiser and Alan Lowell, Springfield Republican Representatives; Lucy Salwen, Arnie Alper; Andy Steinberg, Finance Committee Chair

Meeting called to order by Ms. O’Keeffe at 6:30 p.m.

No Public Comment offered.

### **Liquor License: Bertucci’s Change of Manager**

Ms. O’Keeffe noted that due to this type of change not requiring a public hearing, and the change itself being so minor in nature, no representative from the corporation was requested to attend this meeting.

VOTED 3-0, 2 Absent (Wald, Brewer) to approve the change of manager as presented in the petition for change of license dated September 18, 2013 for Bertucci’s Restaurant Corporation doing business as Bertucci’s Brick Oven Ristorante, 51 East Pleasant Street, Amherst; Michael P. Alexik, Manager.

### **Renewal of Annual Licenses**

VOTED 3-0, 2 Absent (Wald, Brewer) to approve the list of renewals for alcohol and non-alcohol licenses presented, dated December 13, 2013, subject to outstanding documentation pending for the calendar year beginning January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014.

### **Special Licenses**

VOTED 3-0, 2 Absent (Wald, Brewer) to approve the Wine and Malt Special License for 2050 Legacy for a reunion with entertainment to be held December 27, 2013 in the Octagon Room, Amherst College from 3:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.; Yvonne Mendes, Manager.

VOTED 3-0, 2 Absent (Wald, Brewer) to approve a Live Entertainment License for 2050 Legacy for DJ and theater performances to be held December 27, 2013 in the Octagon Room, Amherst College from 3:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.; Yvonne Mendes, Manager.

### **Taxi Driver License**

VOTED 3-0, 2 Absent (Wald, Brewer) to approve a new 2013 taxi driver/chauffeur license for David Cavanaugh on behalf of Celebrity Cab.

VOTED 3-0, 2 Absent (Wald, Brewer) to approve a new 2013 taxi driver/chauffeur license for Holly LaBrecque on behalf of Aaron’s Paradise Taxi.

### **Committee Appointments**

VOTED 3-0, 2 Absent (Wald, Brewer) to confirm the Town Manager’s appointment of Marco Boscardin to the Board of Health for a term to begin December 17, 2013 through June 30, 2015.

Ms. Brewer entered the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

### **FY 13 Select Board Annual Report**

Ms. O’Keeffe presented the report she had written on the Board’s behalf. Mr. Hayden requested a small revision. Members expressed appreciation for the report.

VOTED 4-0, 1 Absent (Wald) to approve the FY 13 Select Board Annual Report, as amended.

### **Useful Life of Equipment for 2014 Bond Issue**

Mr. Musante reviewed a memo from Treasurer/Collector Claire McGinnis explaining the need for a vote certifying the useful life for equipment to be purchased by borrowing. Massachusetts General Law prohibits borrowing for a term that is longer than the expected useful life of the equipment to be purchased.

VOTED 4-0, 1 Absent (Wald) that the maximum useful life of the departmental equipment listed below to be financed with the proceeds of the following borrowing authorized by the vote of the Town passed as of May 15, 2013 session of the Annual Town Meeting called for May 6, 2013 (Articles 21-A and B) is hereby determined pursuant to G.L. c.44, §7(9) to be as follows:

<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Borrowing Amount</u>	<u>Maximum Useful Life</u>
Pumper Truck	\$400,000	15 Years
DPW Trucks	\$425,000	10 Years

### **Republican Newspaper Supplement**

Ed Gaiser, Circulation Manager and Alan Lowell, Distribution Manager from the Springfield Republican provided an overview of a delivery proposal to change the weekly mailing of an advertising supplement to home delivery, like a newspaper subscription. The proposal noted that if on subsequent weeks the paper remains at an address from the prior delivery, the address will be removed from delivery. Additionally, the Republican provides the ability to opt out of delivery. The plan for Amherst is to roll out by specific geographic areas, not all at once. The proposal also provides for meeting with each property manager in housing complexes prior to delivery.

Ms. O’Keeffe noted that the plan was inconsistent with Amherst’s values and priorities regarding waste, citing the recent ban on Styrofoam, which begins January 1, 2014. The idea that it is necessary to leave the litter there in order to be discontinued in future deliveries was found to be disconcerting, considering the large number of student rentals and the likelihood of all those unwanted deliveries littering neighborhoods for a long time. Much concern was expressed about the paper supplement being delivered in a plastic bag: the issues with such bags, the need to take extra steps to recycle the paper inside it and whether many would bother to do that. Consideration of a different vessel for delivery was suggested. Select Board will meet after the Recycling and Refuse Management Committee meets to review the proposal at a January meeting.

The Select Board opened the discussion up to public comment.

Lucy Salwen, an Amherst High graduate representing her family, read a letter urging the Select Board’s opposition to delivery at home, citing the concern of adding plastic bags to the waste stream.

Arnie Alper, a Town Meeting and Recycling and Refuse Management Committee member, spoke as a resident of Amherst. Mr. Alper agreed with points raised and noted the increase in bans against plastic bags in locations around the world. Additional concerns he cited included risks of the paper and bag getting buried in snow and caught in snowblowers during winter; the presence of supplements in driveways for extended times signaling that the residents are away; and the additional hassle of needing to opt out.

Susan Waite, Amherst Recycling Coordinator, spoke to the issue from a recycling standpoint, noting dual-stream community paper is highly sought after; Plastic is deemed a contaminant to paper stream reuse; Statistics show that tons of paper is still making it to the landfill; That enrobing the insert in plastic requires people to take one more step before recycling.

Ms. Stein asked about allowing “opt in” rather than “opt out.” The Republican’s response was that folks are already opted in, receiving it via mail presently. Ms. O’Keeffe suggested that was not a legitimate conclusion, as many regard the piece as purely advertising and are unaware of or unwilling to bother with opting out, and noted that the ability to sell its ad space was dependent on the large circulation numbers captured by opt-out distribution. Ms. Brewer raised concerns about apartment complexes: how such delivery would work and the hardship imposed on low-income residents if the grocery fliers and coupons in the supplements were no longer distributed. Republican representatives indicated they arrange a convenient mass drop-off location with management of complexes and assured the Board that they would find a mutually-acceptable way to continue delivery; their purpose was to get Town feedback and be assured of the Town’s blessing before proceeding with a change. They will be bringing back the concerns highlighted this evening to their superiors for consideration. They noted that the policy in winter is that the delivery is not thrown directly in driveway to avoid issues with snow blowers. The Republican confirmed delivery is one to each mailing address, not one to each resident at the address.

Mr. Musante noted appreciation to the Republican for coming before the Select Board to gauge community reaction before implementation. Ms. Brewer encouraged outreach, especially to seniors and low to moderate income people to allow their input on the issue.

### **Town-Gown Steering Committee Status Report**

Ms. O’Keeffe noted that the Committee has met again and further refined the RFP draft, and they believe it is getting stronger with each revision. The Committee has voted to support the document after that most recent meeting and the RFP should go out shortly through the University’s procurement process. All related documents are available on the committee’s webpage, hosted by UMass and linked to the Town site, including notes from each meeting.

### **Regional School District Planning Committee Status Report**

The Committee’s update was provided via a memo from chair Andy Steinberg, outlining the vote that the Committee made to amend the existing 7-12 agreement to a Pre-K-12 agreement with an option that one of the existing four towns may remain 7-12 as long as that town is not Amherst; and, that the town which remains 7-12 has the option to become a Pre-K-12 member within a specific time period. Additionally, that town may negotiate with the Regional School Committee for a shared superintendency for their K-6 school. Amending the current agreement in this way would require a Town Meeting vote at the request of the Regional School Committee. A letter to the State’s Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has been sent, seeking feedback on the organization proposed. Mr. Steinberg noted that it was a unanimous vote by the Regional School District Planning Committee, which speaks to the common belief that regionalization is right for enhancing education and creating efficient and effective schools with stable funding methods, while the body recognizes that major issues still need more consideration before further action can be taken. Mr. Musante offered his support to facilitate the process moving forward.

### **Town Manager Report**

Mr. Musante reported on the following: Preparation for the January 16<sup>th</sup> budget proposal: expecting to present a level services budget with a handful of strategic investments to include a regional dispatch solution for a three Towns of Hadley, Amherst and Pelham, reinvesting any savings in public safety; a tentative collective bargaining agreement with Firefighters Union including a staffing philosophy of eight-person minimum per shift and the addition of a drug and alcohol policy; an ambulance fee increase to support recommended staffing levels; continuation of strategic partnership agreement with UMass Amherst; and an economic development focus, long identified as a community need. CDBG application will be filed in February; awaiting recommendations from the CDBG Advisory Committee, noting that winter shelter remains a high priority. Noted such funding might appear as a separate budget line, utilizing a projected \$77,000 net recurring revenue surplus, acknowledging that this was dependent on the Governor’s forthcoming proposal.

Mr. Steinberg spoke, noting it has been the Finance Committee’s preference to have one consolidated motion for the operating budget and not to take side motions or additional articles for operating budget expenses, as it then

takes away from entire process established for setting up a comprehensive budget. Another concern he noted, speaking as Co-Chair of the Budget Coordinating Group, was if there were to be an agreement that any proposal from one of the Town entities would be more of a priority than any other proposal before the Finance Committee or if the Select Board develops a policy as such.

Mr. Musante spoke about ongoing efforts to preserve affordable housing, reporting a very constructive, substantive meeting in Boston with Mass Housing Partnership and the MA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), noting all involved are very actively exploring specific funding opportunities to preserve units at Rolling Green and Echo Village. He noted that State officials recognize and value the community's desire to preserve affordable housing units, which is not the case everywhere. The Town also intends to request \$750,000 in funding from the Community Preservation Act bonded for a ten year period, to preserve some or all of the affordable units at both locations. Additionally, DHCD encouraged the Town's CDBG application toward this effort.

Staff recognitions included a memo from Human Resources Director Deb Radway on completion of supervisory training at the University including DPW's Ellie Kurth and Alan Snow, Assistant to Comptroller Holly Bowser and Assistant Collector Jennifer LaFountain. Jen LaFountain also recently completed her Bachelor's degree in Business Administration at the Isenberg School of Management. Select Board congratulated all and noted their appreciation for the increased opportunities for professional development.

Mr. Musante reported that he and Dave Ziomek attended the Survival Center Board of Directors Strategic Planning session to identify trends, opportunities and challenges, exploring how we might collaborate to better serve the needs of the community.

Mr. Musante reported on his attendance at the PVRTA Public Hearing in Amherst on their Comprehensive Service Analysis review of every bus route in the PVRTA system. Members of the Public Transportation and Bicycle Committee were also in attendance. The current working draft is available on the PVRTA website. Mr. Musante noted this as an opportunity for Amherst to make meaningful changes in bus services/public transportation to improve service.

The Amherst Housing Authority met last week and has decided not to pursue a change in the current section 8 subsidy levels at this time due to increased confidence for additional federal funding to sustain the voucher system in Amherst.

Staff has updated the Planning Board page on the Town website, with more documents related to the Retreat proposal, including the Select Board's comments; it will continue to be updated as the process moves forward.

It was noted that the Select Board packet this evening contains an outline of what is necessary to move forward, as well as the timeline for pursuing the Mass. School Building Authority invitation for consideration of funding a renovation, expansion or even replacement of Wildwood School. While not clear at present who has appointing authority for the required local building committee, it has been expressed to the Superintendent that the Town wants input to ensure a broad-based and effective committee. The committee must be in place by a deadline of February 3, 2014; Mr. Musante pledged to keep the Select Board informed. Other key dates include a requirement by September 2, 2014 to secure funding for a feasibility study, subject to a 60% reimbursement. Mr. Musante believes it makes sense to vet this through the normal JCPC process and Annual Town Meeting for consideration.

Mr. Musante reported on negotiations for a new 3-year successor lease with representatives of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst in their newly constructed smaller parking lot, which will include a handicapped space and three other spaces for public use, one of which one will be a free fifteen-minute space for easy access to nearby businesses.

## **Member Reports**

Select Board members reported on the activities of committees to which they serve as liaisons. Ms. Stein noted her attendance at the staff holiday party, which she found delightful.

Ms. Brewer reminded the public that resignations from committee members must be received in writing to allow the opening to be filled.

## **Chair's Report**

Noting this as the last meeting of the calendar year, Ms. O'Keeffe thanked staff members for their work in assisting the Select Board, especially Assistant to the Town Manager Debra Puppel, whose work is invaluable; Administrative Assistants Jennifer Moyston and Deb Gordon who has since moved to the Fire Department; Assistant Town Manager Dave Ziomek and Finance Director Sandy Pooler, and of course, Mr. Musante. Big thanks to those that help keep the public informed, including Amherst Media and members of the press, and lastly, to the public that comes out for the meetings and offers comments and suggestions for consideration.

Brief calendar preview was offered with wishes for a Happy Holiday and New Year!

ADJOURN - The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Submitted by John P. Musante, Town Manager

## **List of Documents Presented at the Meeting - Available in the Online Packet for the Meeting Date**

2013-12-16 Final Agenda

2013-12-16 Draft Motions

2014 CDBG non-social service RFP

2014 CDBG social service RFP

Distribution Proposal – Republican Extra Supplement

Christine Lynch letter

Supervisory Leadership Development Program

MSBA Invitation to Amherst for Wildwood Elementary

MSBA Guidelines for Forming a School Building Committee

LSSE Commission feedback on Relocation to East Street School

MMA Annual Business Meeting Notice

Change in Manager Application - Bertucci's Ristorante

License Renewals 12.16.13

Useful Life of Equipment for 2014 Bond Issue

FY 2013 Select Board Annual Report

Taxi Driver Applications – H. LaBrecque, D. Cavanaugh

Special One Day License – Amherst College Reunion 12/27/2013