

**MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order by Ms. Awad at 4:05 p.m.

**ATTENDANCE**

present: Awad (AA), Hubley (RH), Kusner (RK)

absent: Weiss, Greeney

also: Del Castilho (BDC), Musante (JM)

**SELECT BOARD'S ACTION**

**Minutes**

VOTED unanimously to approve the Select Board minutes of July 11, 2005.

**Order of Taking**

VOTED unanimously to approve and sign the Order of Taking for the Meadow Street Bridge for permanent and temporary easements BA-1, BA-2, TE-1 and TE-2, with no award of damages.

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

**Ad Hoc Committee on North Amherst Land**

RK: Both Alan Seewald and he were calling the State Ethics Commission to determine if he had any conflict of interest in his involvement in the Ad Hoc Committee on North Amherst Land (Committee). Mr. Kusner knows of no issue for him in regard to participating in the activities.

Regarding neighbors to the North Amherst Land, MGL Ch. 268 §19(B)(1) indicates that the Select Board can release people from Conflict of Interest status so they can be appointed to the Committee, similar to the process of Special Municipal Employee appointments. University people need to declare their involvement; proximity is no problem under MGL S. 19(B)(1).

AA: The Committee will need to factor in political circumstances, taking a whole-Town perspective.

Ms. Awad requested that Mr. Kusner take the lead as coordinator, receiving Citizen Action Forms and compiling the list of potential Committee members. Mr. Kusner accepted the assignment. After consultation with Town Counsel, Mr. Kusner will recommend appointees for this committee on July 25.

**Community Preservation Act Funds**

No action taken.

JM presented details of the Amherst CPA funds appropriated or authorized to date, as accounted for on a CAP handout, especially in regard to the Potwine Lane soccer fields project.

AA: Is it possible [for the state] to withdraw [funding support] after 5 years? If so, that raises the question of the reliability of the planned 10 year CPA funding commitment.

RK: Amherst only committed to a 1% tax override, not the higher authorized rate of 3%, so we are not eligible for higher state funding.

Ms. Awad stated that she had assumed that state support was on a dollar-by-dollar basis. Mr. Kusner stated that the amount of state matching is more complicated than that. As new municipalities join the program, the funding is dedicated more to those communities with higher override levels.

AA: We need to get up to speed on the state formula. Were earlier expenses for the soccer field design findable as recreation, or was the design paid for from other funds?

BDC: The CPA funding tables presented today did not show design or previous expenditures. He stated that there were uncertainties in the overall economics of the project.

#### **FY 07 Budget Process**

No action taken.

RK: The executive should designate the budget. If that has changed, we need to get it back. We need to work with the Joint Capital Planning Committee and the Finance Committee, but still it is the [responsibility] of the Select Board (SB), [especially to] optimize Town resources. The Town budget might need more than small adjustments [to get through the coming difficult years]. We need to do a better job of using our resources. We need to develop a zero based budget.

AA: The Town Manager originates the budget. We need a team effort to develop the budget. The Finance Committee is appointed by the Town Meeting (TM) Moderator, to do a detailed study in order to advise Town Meeting.

BDC: The Town Manager originates a budget, then there are department hearings with the SB and finance Committee. The Finance Committee wants direction from the SB, the Library Trustees, and the School Committee & Department.

JM: Budget priorities are set in September with the School Committee, the Library Trustees and the Select Board.

We need to work on a better forecasting model.

#### **Sidewalks**

BDC: Mr. Mooring and the TCRC are collaborating on a work schedule that would allow sidewalk construction to continue after Labor Day. DPW has to work on the traffic signals at Kellogg Avenue and North Pleasant Street, because the controller was permanently damaged by the storm. Street lights in that area will also be completed. The next step will be for the bricks laid by the State contractor at Main and North Pleasant Streets to be replaced with concrete.

Mr. Pacunas discussed an opportunity to accept a payment of \$30,000 in lieu of Comcast providing an I-Net drop on the Town common. The Select Board voted to accept the payment however they decided to refer discussions on endorsing specific uses of the money to a future meeting.

#### **Summer Agenda**

No action taken.

#### **Town Manager Process**

No action taken.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

VOTED unanimously to adjourn at 5:57 p.m.