

**MINUTES  
SELECTMEN'S MEETING  
APRIL 28, 2008**

Chairman Belanger called the meeting to order at 6:02pm. Members present were Douglas Belanger, Thomas Brennan, Dianna Provencher, Richard Antanavica and Stanley Zagorski.

**Executive Session**

MOTION: Mr. Antanavica moved to go into Executive Session for the purpose of contract negotiations and land acquisition, with public announcement possible, Board to reconvene in Open Session. Ms. Provencher seconded. The Board was polled: ALL AYES

The Board went into Executive Session at 6:03pm.  
The Board came out of Executive Session at 6:27pm.

**Pole Hearing – Verizon & Mass Electric petitions**

MOTION: Mr. Brennan moved to open Public Hearing.  
Mr. Zagorski seconded. UNANIMOUS

Representatives Kelly Ann Condon and Paula Ogle from the utility companies were present, noting that there is an aerial trespass in this Woodland Road vicinity, the reason for the request. Robert Perry, abutter, was present and stated that he contacted Verizon asking them to reconsider the location, as the plan shows a pole where he intends to place a driveway. Ms. Condon stated that the engineer has agreed to move the proposed location. Chairman Belanger asked that the other abutters be notified of the change, as they were only made aware of the original location.

MOTION: Mr. Brennan moved to approve pole placement to amended location, subject to abutters being notified of change. Ms. Provencher seconded. UNANIMOUS

MOTION: Mr. Brennan moved to close Public Hearing.  
Mr. Zagorski seconded. UNANIMOUS

**Taxi Cab Licensing Procedure**

Chairman Belanger noted advisory from Town Counsel regarding procedure to issue taxi cab licenses, and procedures the Board may implement in this regard. He explained that we will conduct survey of like communities which will be distributed as soon as possible. Upon review of the survey results, we will schedule and conduct a public hearing.

**Olde Rock Pub**

Information from Police Department and Board of Health concerning several violations at the Olde Rock Pub were distributed to the Selectmen. Mr. Brennan suggested a sub-committee be formed to see how to proceed. Mr. Antanavica noted that there has been a conviction on one of the incidents in the Police report. Mr. Zagorski noted there is another issue in Correspondence tonight from the Board of Health where a fine has been levied for a smoking violation at this establishment; he asked what the purpose of a sub-committee would be. Mr. Belanger felt there were overlapping issues that need to be sorted out, while a public hearing would be wide open. He agreed that we should get a plan in place, noting that members of the Selectmen, the Police Chief, and Board of Health should be involved. Mr. Antanavica offered to serve as the Selectmen's rep and recommended the Police Chief be in charge of the group. Mr. Belanger asked that a date-certain be indicated when report will be made to the Selectmen.

MOTION: Mr. Brennan moved to set up ad-hoc working group to review charges against Olde Rock Pub, to consist of himself, Selectman Antanavica, Health Director, and Police Chief as leader. Ms. Provencher seconded. UNANIMOUS

### **Selectmen Brennan – Mass Turnpike on/off ramp**

Mr. Brennan read aloud a letter he has prepared to send to Governor Patrick and other legislators regarding an article in the April 24<sup>th</sup> edition of the Worcester Telegram relative to economic development in the region. He felt the iron was hot to bring forward the Route 56 Mass Pike on/off ramp development potential he has raised, noting the positive response from Alan LeBovidge, Executive Director of Mass Turnpike Authority, for further study. The Board felt it was a good step forward. Mr. Belanger suggested a round table meeting be held and inviting surrounding towns and others to discuss proposal.

### **FY'09 Budget Recommendation**

Mr. Belanger noted the highlights from TA's projections in a memo to the Board dated 4/24/08 (on file) pertaining to funding of Town's operation budget for FY'09. He thanked the Town Administrator and the Advisory Board for the discipline put into this procedure, noting other towns having to deal with Proposition 2½ Override issues while we have managed without and show a 2% increase across the board to provide for level services. Savings in the health insurance line item have led to our success. With recent increase in Special Education costs of \$157,000 it has been agreed to split the additional revenues needed to cover this cost; the School will provide for about half the cost and the Town will come up with the other portion.

Mr. Belanger agreed with Mr. Reed that we do indeed need to lead the charge with policies relative to financial planning being established. In the meantime, he agreed with Mr. Reed's recommendation to fund the current \$141,000+ shortfall from the Balance Sheet with Free Cash and \$100,000 from the Stabilization Account. He thought to look at it as a loan from Stabilization, which we can pay back in the Fall. He did note, however, that it takes a 9/10 vote to remove funds from the Stabilization Account, so we need to be in agreement on this funding proposal. Mr. Zagorski asked how we would take a loan against the Stabilization Account. Mr. Belanger stated it would be done in theory, not in actuality. Mr. Brennan noted that DOR has recommended in the past that interest earned from Stab. Account can be used for non-recurring expenses. A financial plan must be in place, however. Mr. Zagorski asked what the excess, if any, is in Stabilization above the 5% of operating budget. Mr. Reed estimated there is a \$1.3 million balance. Mr. Zagorski suggested we transfer any excess above the 5% to the Capital Stabilization Account, which can then be utilized more readily. Mr. Zagorski asked how the \$141k shortfall would be funded otherwise. Mr. Reed stated it could be funded through transfers of article balances, but that would put any planned Free Cash in jeopardy for FY'09. Mr. Antanavica agreed with Mr. Reed's plan; who knows, we could have our Local Aid cut and then really be in trouble, with no way to access funds in an emergency. Mr. Reed explained that as of June 30<sup>th</sup> we will be slightly higher than our goal to keep 5% of operating budget in the Stabilization Fund, and if we took out \$100,000 at this time it would leave us shy by about \$50,000. Mr. Brennan wondered if we should consider putting off all money articles until June.

Ms. Provencher commended Mr. Reed for his budget projection reports. Her question was, what if we can't repay the Stabilization Account. Mr. Brennan felt we will do so at the Fall STM. Mr. Belanger felt we should not be leaving the Free Cash depleted. He felt, just as we do at home, we should pay the Town of Leicester first. He felt the budget process had been a positive experience this year, and we should not punish parties involved because an unforeseen SPED cost was brought forward at this time. He felt we should be prepared to take the \$100,000 from the Stabilization Account; if we don't need it in the end we will return it to the fund. He recommended the \$75/\$25,000 split between School/General Government. Mr. Zagorski again urged that any excess Stabilization Funds be put in another account that does not require 9/10 vote to access.

Mr. Brennan stated that he has been asking for the impact of a 0% FY'09 budget increase and he still does not have that info. Mr. Belanger reminded him that a 2% increase will not even allow for absolute

level funded services; a 0% budget increase will mean people's job will be cut. With the increase in fuel costs, he felt it pretty basic to figure out. Mr. Zagorski thought the Department Heads had already provided for a 0% budget impact; could that info not be consolidated into a report. Mr. Reed noted that a 0% budget proposal was spoken of, and some departments did submit an outline, but most simply couldn't. We were fortunate this year to have excess in health insurance budget, but FY'10 will be much worse. Again he urged the formation within sub-committee work to address policies and plans for the future. The Selectmen and the Town must determine what an acceptable service level will be.

Ed Cote, Advisory Board, reported that they did not ask specifics on each budget; the increases were so tight added to escalating costs, they felt the budget process went very well. He did see where the budget was still out of balance, which they will look at during their meeting this evening. Mr. Belanger noted that the final operating budget numbers will not change; some articles may be funded from FY'08 budget or older article balances.

- Mr. Zagorski agreed to support the TA's numbers with \$100,000 being used from Stabilization Account.
- Mr. Antanavica agreed, and commended Mr. Reed on his budget proposal.
- Ms. Provencher agreed and thanked TA for his report.
- Mr. Brennan felt we should use a 0% budget increase and look to balance the Budget at the Fall STM.
- Mr. Belanger supported Mr. Reed's numbers. All agreed that the TA did a good job on the projections.

MOTION: Mr. Antanavica moved to support the TA's FY'09 Budget recommendations as presented. Ms. Provencher seconded. 4-1, Mr. Brennan opposed.

The Board recessed at 7:38pm  
The Board reconvened at 7:45pm.

### Correspondence

1. (see Olde Rock Pub discussion above) Mr. Brennan moved to refer memo to sub-group. Ms. Provencher seconded. UNANIMOUS

2. Memo from Town Clerk requesting disposal of obsolete equipment.

MOTION: Mr. Brennan moved to approve. Ms. Provencher seconded. UNANIMOUS

3. Memo from Town Planner regarding public meeting April 30<sup>th</sup> at 7pm on Master Plan Update. FILE

4. Memo from Town Accountant noting that Highway Revolving Account will exceed its limits this fiscal year. Mr. Reed noted that the Hillcrest Revolving Account needs to be increased as well, to accept transfer at town meeting to pay for sewer hookup and to anticipate increased leasing costs.

MOTION: Mr. Brennan moved to amend Highway gasoline revolving account to a not to exceed \$25,000 limit. Ms. Provencher seconded. UNANIMOUS

MOTION: Mr. Antanavica moved to amend Hillcrest Country Club revolving account to a not to exceed \$80,000 limit. Ms. Provencher. 4-0, Mr. Brennan abstained.

5. Notice from Mass. Highway Dept. regarding upcoming Route 56 reconstruction project. The Board asked that road cut moratorium be implemented and local builders notified, that the rumble strip be provided and an area marked for pedestrians to be included in improvements. Mr. Reed stated that he will attend this preliminary meeting with Interim Supt. Wood. FILE

6. Memo from CMRPC regarding upcoming transportation hearings. The Board congratulated Ms. Provencher on her new position with the Regional Planning Commission. FILE

7. Notice from DCR regarding annual inspection of Moose Hill Reservoir. TA and MHWC rep will attend. FILE

8. Memo from Worcester County Retirement System regarding presentation to be held May 15<sup>th</sup> in Millbury. TA stated that he has previous commitment, but the Town Treasurer should attend. FILE

9. Letter from Office of the Attorney General regarding new municipal representative. FILE

### **Town Meeting Warrants – Recommendations and Funding Sources**

The Board took action on the following articles:

Special Town Meeting – UNANIMOUS vote to approve both articles as submitted

Annual Town Meeting:

- #15 – Elected Officials Pay – amend to reflect 3% wage increase for Town Clerk
- #19 – Abolish Town Hall Bldg Comm. – UNANIMOUS vote to approve and transfer current revolving funds – the Board agreed to set under Selectmen but account will be maintained by Building Dept. under BOS authority.
- #14 – Transfer \$15,000 from Health Board revolving fund to Hillcrest CC revolving fund to pay for sewer hookup of HCC approved 4-0, Mr. Brennan abstained
- #20 – Town Gov't Study Comm. – UNANIMOUS vote to pass over consolidation article
- #21 – Operating Budget – UNANIMOUS vote to approve at \$26,002,492
- #25 – Land acquisition/Fire Station – UNANIMOUS vote to hold recommendation to town meeting floor
- #27 – Primary School roof – UNANIMOUS vote to hold recommendation to town meeting floor
- #32 – Traffic Control Bylaw – UNANIMOUS vote to recommend approval
- #33 – Hours of Construction Bylaw – UNANIMOUS vote to recommend approval
- #34 – Wetlands Bylaw – 4-1 vote to approve, Mr. Brennan opposed, awaiting further information from ConCom
- #40 – Wind Turbines – 4-1 vote to approve bylaw proposal as amended, Mr. Zagorski opposed
- #42 – “CB” zoning 1041 Main – UNANIMOUS vote to approve

### **Minutes**

MOTION: Ms. Provencher moved to approve 4/14/08 Executive Session minutes  
Mr. Zagorski seconded. 4-0, Mr. Antanavica abstained.

### **Board Reports/Other Business**

Mr. Zagorski reported on Senior Volunteer reception, congratulating COA Director Janice Nowicki and commenting on what a great facility we have there.

Mr. Antanavica:

- YMCA in Worcester will be donating fencing to the Town; Highway Dept. will provide manpower
- Ann Emond of Leicester won the School Teacher of the Year award from Country Bank
- Graffiti has been removed from Burncoat Park area, thanking the Chief and Ms. Provencher for their involvement
- Recommending summer hours again this year to conserve energy and give public one night of office hours; he will work out details with Mr. Reed and bring final proposal forward

Ms. Provencher:

- New fire engine, dive team, C.E.R.T.S team and softball game will be held at Rochdale Station and Park on May 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Master Plan Update is near completion, commending all those who worked on the project
- Burncoat Park vandalism was noticed quickly by our Police Dept, thanking all those involved

Mr. Brennan:

- Newspaper article on Hanna Joseph's 42 years at Leicester Drive In Theatre; congratulations
- Hillcrest Sewer District discussion to be held at later date, per Mr. Belanger's request
- Annual Town Meeting held May 5<sup>th</sup>, please attend

Mr. Belanger:

- Official announcement that he will run for the Mass Senate seat being vacated by Sen. Augustus; the Board and many others have been supportive and encouraging
- Little League parade and opening day ceremonies ; thanked Parks & Rec and others involved in improvements to fields

Advisory Board members presented themselves with several questions regarding town meeting. Some were answered, while Mr. Reed agreed to attend their meeting down the hall.

MOTION: Ms. Provencher moved to adjourn.  
Mr. Antanavica seconded. UNANIMOUS

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan LeChasseur,  
Administrative Assistant