

**MINUTES  
SELECTMEN'S MEETING  
JANUARY 21, 2014**

Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Members present were Sandra Wilson, Douglas Belanger and Matthew Dennison. Also present was Town Administrator Kevin Mizikar. Selectwoman Provencher and Selectman Buckley were absent.

Chair noted that we will have a short meeting in order to facilitate some hearings, as the snowstorm outside will make this quicker than planned.

**Senior Work Program**

TA noted that the \$7500 allowed under law to be included with Overlay was adopted per a town meeting vote. No other action is required each year. The program is available for us to utilize should we choose. Seniors must meet eligibility requirements and can earn up to \$750 tax abatement for services rendered as working volunteers. They assist departments in various tasks during the calendar year. The Board agreed that this is a worthwhile program they would like to participate in again this year. TA will instruct Principal Assessor in this regard.

**Hillcrest Country Club – RFP process**

TA stated he has prepared the request for proposals for the lease of the Town-owned Hillcrest Country club. The RFP is structured to solicit proposals for the lease and management of the golf course and clubhouse which includes the restaurant, bar, and banquet room. Proposals will be judged based off the qualitative criteria in the RFP as well as the financial benefits to the Town of Leicester over a multi-year agreement term. Financial benefits are to include capital investments in the property and monthly lease payments.

TA will ask that proposers identify how they will work to broaden the desirability and use of the facility by Leicester residents and the general public. This can be accomplished through (listing not all inclusive):

- a. Improved conditions of the facility and course
- b. The use of modern payment acceptance systems including credit and debit cards
- c. Packages, discounts, and incentives offered to promote return customers

Proposals will be due in late March. He stated that he may be able to advertise for the proposals sooner than original date of February 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Reserve Fund Transfer requests**

**Veterans Services Dept**

TA reported that the Veterans' Service Department is experiencing an unanticipated demand for Chapter 115 benefits for eligible residents who are Veterans. To provide benefits at the current rate through the end of the year, the Department will need supplemental appropriation. If you recall we adjusted this budget at the October Special Town Meeting (added \$27,000) bringing the current appropriation for benefits to \$65,000. I am requesting \$25,000 at this time to get this budget through May 2014. If the current expenditure rate continues, additional funds will be needed to transfer to this Department at the STM in May. I prefer this stepped approach in order to retain funds in the Reserve Account for any other unforeseen matters.

MOTION: Mr. Belanger moved to approve \$25,000 RFT request as submitted, to be forwarded to Advisory Board for their consideration. Mr. Dennison seconded. UNANIMOUS

**Treasurer/Collector's Office**

Due to long term medical leave required to be taken by the T/C this department will need supplemental funds to offset additional staff costs during the period of leave. TA is requesting \$1,610 be transferred to this Department for salaries.

Additionally, the Town was able to auction off property foreclosed upon for non-payment of taxes. There was a cost for an auction house to manage the sale of this property and no appropriation was established for this expense. TA is requesting \$4,750 for this expense.

MOTION: Mr. Dennison moved to approve RFT request as submitted totaling \$6,360 for consideration by Advisory. Mr. Belanger seconded. UNANIMOUS

### **FY'15 Budget**

The Board agreed per TA's request to hold this item until full Board is present for discussion.

### **Open Annual & Special Town Meeting Warrants**

MOTION: Mr. Belanger moved to open Special Town Meeting Warrant for receipt of article requests, to be closed April 7, 2014. Mr. Dennison seconded. UNANIMOUS

MOTION: Mr. Dennison moved to open Annual Town Meeting Warrant, to be closed on April 7, 2014. Mr. Belanger seconded. UNANIMOUS

Town Meeting date is May 6, 2014 the first Tuesday in May. A calendar guideline of dates for town meeting and budget preparation was provided and will be kept in Agenda books along with budget calendar. Ms. Wilson will post calendar guidelines on website.

### **Pole Hearing – Mill Street**

Tom Blaczar, consultant for Verizon, was present on petition to relocate pole on Mill Street to allow for vehicular traffic at a local mill building. They will coordinate the work with Ngrid along with removal of old pole. An easement for a guy wire will be required; the abutter is approving that request.

MOTION: Mr. Belanger moved to approve pole relocation as requested, subject to easement approved by the abutter as mentioned. Mr. Dennison. UNANIMOUS

### **Correspondence**

1. Letter to Worcester Health Department designating Kevin Mizikar as Leicester's primary representative to attend regional meeting and act on behalf of the Town. Board of Health will determine their representative at meeting on January 28th. Ms. Wilson will sign letter upon completion. FILE

2. Now that our Treasurer/Collector is back on part-time status, we can remove Temporary Tax Collector designation for Assistant Tax Collector Colleen Cooney, per MGL Chapter 41, Section 40.

MOTION: Mr. Belanger moved to remove the Temporary Tax Collector status for Colleen Cooney. Mr. Dennison seconded. UNANIMOUS

The Board asked that a letter of appreciation be sent to Ms. Cooney for stepping up and helping the Town out for this extended period of time.

3. Copy of environmental notification form from MassPort to Exec Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs regarding Worcester Regional Airport improvements and their requesting a 30-day extension to end on 2/21/14. TA reported upgrades will be made to landing system and parallel taxi lane. FILE

### **Agenda format**

According to Attorney General's regulations and recent DOR Report, TA reviewed proposed changes to the Town's processes related to open meetings and executive sessions of the Board of Selectmen, aiming to provide additional transparency and memorialize existing practices, including but not limited to:

- Establishment of an Executive Session Minutes policy
- Refine posting content of Executive Session items
- Refine process Board utilizes to enter into Executive Sessions
- Refine practice Board uses to adjourn Regular Sessions

Mr. Belanger felt this will help us all by clarifying our own procedures. Under Item 4, he suggested another statement indicating “chair reconvenes open meeting” upon completion of Executive Session. TA will work to include this type of language in the 2nd draft. The Board agreed with these improvements.

(Discussion continues later on in the evening.)

### **CDBG Hearing – FY’14 DHCD application**

MOTION: Mr. Belanger moved to open public hearing.  
Mr. Dennison seconded. UNANIMOUS

Chair Wilson read aloud the legal notice from the January 3, 2014 edition of the Spencer New Leader publication on the “Proposed FY2014 Joint CDBG Application” with the Town of Charlton.

Andrew Loew, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC), was present to discuss FY2014 application process for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. He thanked those present for attending, including chair of the Commission on Disabilities (COD), Jim Reinke, and Chair of the Town’s Community Development Block Grant committee, Harry Brooks, who has been involved for several years now. He asked those present to list their name etc on the sign-up sheet being circulated. A member of the Charlton CDBG group, Stefan Sage, had planned to be present but the snowstorm prevented his attendance.

The intent of the hearing is to discuss the FY2014 application. Upon completion of discussion, he will ask the Board of Selectmen (BOS) to authorize final application by PVPC on the Town’s behalf. We will be applying for the same projects as we did in our FY2013 application, which was not awarded to Leicester and Charlton.

Mr. Loew noted the following:

- Applications are due at DHCD by February 14, 2014 – awards anticipated in July or August
- Leicester will be lead community on this joint application with Town of Charlton
- Projects must serve low-to-moderate income beneficiaries or eliminate blight
- Leicester & Charlton housing rehabilitation loan programs totaling \$196,000
- Leicester & Charlton Housing Authorities: Leicester Housing Authority emergency generator installation and Charlton Housing Authority roof replacement, totaling \$178,870 estimate
- Charlton Town Hall/Senior Center architectural barrier removal project construction phase to serve disabled and elderly persons approximately \$390,396
- Leicester Town Hall architectural barrier removal project design phase to serve disabled and elderly persons approximately \$37,179
- Grant administration approximately \$97,555
- Total grant application \$900,000

Mr. Loew further noted that DHCD regulations were amended recently and we no longer have to revisit our “community development strategy” but can use the same document we had previously adopted for FY2013 grant round. The Community Development advisory groups in both towns elected to retain their existing strategies for this application. He noted other public outreach that has led to this application:

- Community Development Block Grant committees provide guidance in both towns through monthly meetings
- Publicly advertised forums were held in both towns to discuss Community Development Strategy and target areas (occurred as part of FY13 application process)
- Town meeting information booths presence in both towns geared toward residents
- Informational surveys, presence during special community events, housing authority and senior center info sessions, media coverage and advertisements, and marketing through newspapers, online websites, cable television programing and information flyers

Jim Reinke, COD Chair, stated that his Commission has forwarded letter of support for this FY2014 CDBG grant application, as they feel the funding would help to overcome some remaining barriers. Design and installation of an elevator in our Town Hall will allow other departments to relocate in this facility, which may help improve administration thereof and reduce maintenance related costs.

Mr. Dennison thanked PVPC and Mr. Loew for all their work on these grant applications. He asked why we were not able to gain funding when our FY2013 application resulted in a tie with another community. He felt former TA Robert Reed was working toward some remedy. Mr. Loew reported that we did receive the most points we could have earned given the projects with the FY13 application. It so happened that another pair of communities scored one point higher due to having only shared projects. There is nothing we can do at this point since the State rejected Mr. Reed's request for reserve funds. Mr. Reed had an issue with the "needs score" which was used as the tie-breaker, as it does not actually reflect the needs of this community. He stated that DHCD will continue to use this scoring system through the FY2014 grant round, the last in a five year cycle; they plan to make a change thereafter.

MOTION: Mr. Dennison moved authorize the Chair's signature of the joint FY2014 CDBG application to DHCD as prepared by PVPC on the Town's behalf.  
Mr. Belanger seconded. UNANIMOUS

Mr. Loew will prepare copies of documents for the Board's files.

MOTION: Mr. Belanger moved to close public hearing.  
Mr. Dennison seconded. UNANIMOUS

### **Policies**

Chair Wilson noted that she and TA have been reviewing the all policies and procedures of the Town in order to reformat compilation thereof. In particular, there are a few policies that refer by name to the former town administrator. She is asking for the Board's approval to amend those few policies with Mr. Mizikar's information, namely: Discriminatory Harassment Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy, and Protected Individuals' Harassment Policy.

MOTION: Mr. Belanger moved to amend various BOS policies by changing contact info from Robert Reed to Kevin Mizikar, as noted. Mr. Dennison seconded. UNANIMOUS

### **Agenda format (continued)**

Chair noted that our procedures for release or approval of Executive Session minutes will need to be reviewed with parameters set for how it should proceed going forward. For instance, Mr. Mizikar noted, we should not be approving Executive Session minutes in open session. TA will work with Chair in this regard and report back to the Board accordingly.

### **Town Administrators Report/New Business (on file)**

- Intermunicipal Agreement with Worcester for regional public safety dispatching services is currently undergoing final adjustments. All areas have been agreed to by Town Administrator and Worcester reps. He will have final Agreement for presentation to the Board at our February 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.
- Continues to work on FY2014 goals.
- Contract has been signed with new Inspector of Animals, who has been provided with Town-issued photo ID.

### **Board Reports/New Business**

#### **Selectman Dennison:**

- Bitter cold snap, please check on elderly or shut-in neighbors. Also, young people at home alone using portable heaters should take extra caution.

#### **Selectman Belanger:**

- Economic development meetings will begin again, with Mr. Mizikar as our guest on January 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Congressman Jim McGovern was in Town recently to say hello to his new district constituents. He will be reaching out to TA on pending economic development matters, such as fire station replacement.

#### **Selectman Wilson:**

- Community Reading Day announcement sent to each member. March 4<sup>th</sup> at Primary School and March 6<sup>th</sup> at Memorial School if anyone is interested in participating. Mr. Dennison noted this is the most fun thing to do, the children are great.

- Girl Scout Cookie sales time is here; now you can get your cookies when you pay and not have to wait for orders to arrive.

**Minutes**

MOTION: Mr. Belanger moved to approve 3/27/13 and 11/21/13 Regular Session minutes, as amended.  
Mr. Dennison seconded. UNANIMOUS

MOTION: Mr. Belanger moved to adjourn. Mr. Dennison seconded. UNANIMOUS

The meeting was adjourned at 7:28pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan LeChasseur, Administrative Assistant