

## BOARD OF SELECTMEN



***The Board of Selectmen convenes in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at Town Hall.  
From left: William N. Brownsberger; Paul Solomon, Chairman; Angelo Firenze, Vice-Chairman***

The year 2004 will probably be best remembered for its variety of change. At the annual town election in April, William N. Brownsberger was re-elected to the Board. Anne Marie S. Mahoney took over as Chairman and Paul Solomon was elected Vice-Chairman. However, this was not to remain for long. Late in the summer, Ms. Mahoney announced that she would be resigning from the Board. A special election was held on November 15, 2004 to fill her position. From this, Angelo Firenze was elected as a new Selectman.

There were some significant affects on Town staffing throughout the year, as several key town employees resigned or retired during the year.. Letters of resignation came from Thomas Gatzunis, Director of Community Development; Susan Kendall Freiner, elected Town Treasurer; Melvin A. Kleckner, Town Administrator and Joyce Munro, Assistant Town Administrator. The Town's Fire Chief, William Osterhaus retired. Glenn Clancy was hired as the new Director of Community Development, Daniela Boccia took on the role of Acting Town Treasurer, and Rebecca Vose was hired as an Acting Assistant Town Administrator to temporarily assist the Selectmen. The new Fire Chief is David Frizzell.

While work moved along steadily on the historic renovation of the Town Hall Annex and School Administration Building, other capital project needs in town were addressed. Selectmen heard from groups advocating for a new Library, a new Wellington School, high school renovations, a new Underwood Pool, a Highway Department, work on the Police Station, the Hockey Rink, and the White Field House. Through all of this, the Selectmen hewed to the priorities that they had defined through broad public process over the past few years. With the closing of Our Lady of Mercy Church, whose parish hall currently houses the Senior Center, plans for a new Senior Center are more within reach and become more urgent.. Following feasibility studies on the town's existing fire stations, it became clear that the Waverley Fire Station would close and the town would seek a qualified buyer for the historic property. In April, the town's voters approved a debt exclusion for two new Fire Stations on Trapelo Road and Alexander Avenue in Belmont Center. At the beginning of the year, an oil spill from the Burbank School, which occurred in December, 2003 and which was leaking into the Clay Pit Pond, caused much time to be devoted to the cleanup and mitigation.

Town committee activity continued at a steady pace with over 1,000 committee meetings taking place in 2004. In order to address a variety of town issues, new temporary and permanent committees were appointed. They are a Community Media Center Board of Conveners (temporary, appointed by Selectmen), a Facilities Energy Management Project Committee (temporary, appointed by Town Moderator), a Human Rights Commission (permanent, appointed by Selectmen), a Purecoat Planning Committee (temporary, appointed by Selectmen), a Setback Lines Study Committee (temporary, appointed by Selectmen), an Uplands Advisory Committee

(temporary, appointed by Selectmen), and a Waverley Fire Station Re-Use Steering Committee (temporary, appointed by Selectmen).

Proposed large scale development project plans continue to require the attention of the Selectmen. The owner of the Belmont Uplands project filed for a "site assignment" from MassDevelopment for a 300 unit rental 40B housing project. At the McLean's property, town staff worked with McLean's to facilitate land conveyances. Land for the new telecommunications tower was conveyed to the town and the ground work was set for the new development.

The Board of Selectmen has been active with town business. The Town was successful in securing property on Trapelo Road in order to build a new Fire Station. A moratorium was placed on "tear-downs" of single family houses in order to construct multi-family units. Town Moderator's changes to the Town Meeting process, involving the requirement that amendments to warrant articles be submitted in advance, were implemented. Also, final motions for each article are now included with the publication and distribution of the Annual Town Meeting Warrant Booklet sent to Town Meeting members. Selectmen continued to gather information about proposed road reconstruction, and rezoning, and air rights developments for Trapelo Road/Belmont Street/S. and S. Pleasant Street.

The town's website ([www.town.belmont.ma.us](http://www.town.belmont.ma.us)) continues to be enhanced. Some new items in 2004 included a Lost and Found Pets webpage, more efficient meeting calendar, online payment for recreation programs, and a quick link to services.

While not everyone in town is into sports, we must congratulate the New England Patriots for winning the Super Bowl once again. However, it was the October World Series win by the Boston Red Sox, the first in 86 years, which was certainly a topic around town. If the "Curse of the Bambino" can be broken, can a brighter future for the Town of Belmont be far behind?

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