

SELECTMEN'S MINUTES
AUGUST 26, 2002
Town Hall, Selectmen's Meeting Room
7:00 PM

Call to Order

The Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Monday, August 26, 2002 at 7:00 PM in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at the Belmont Town Hall. All members were in attendance.

Questions from Town Residents

There were none.

Action by Appointment

Recognition of Donation from Belmont Savings Bank

This appointment was rescheduled to September 9, 2002.

Discussion of FY 2003 Revenue Estimates

The Board met with the Town Accountant to discuss revised FY 2003 revenue estimates, which resulted in excess revenue capacity over what is projected for the budget. It was understood this revenue capacity would result in excess tax levy capacity thereby reducing the authorized tax override in FY03.

It was agreed Ms. Hagg would develop a revised five-year financial projection for presentation to the Board of Selectmen in early October or as soon as possible.

Discussion of Pleasant Street Reconstruction

Selectmen Brownsberger addressed the overall concern with funding of the Pleasant Street reconstruction project which the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has proposed be moved from the priority list for funding, potentially delaying the project for several years.

Ms. Wolfson of Pleasant Street expressed concern about the overall funding of the project, but voiced her strong opposition to the construction of a sidewalk for the project in the vicinity of Snake Hill Road.

The Board requested a formal opinion on whether the installation of a sidewalk is a legal requirement of the ADA or other regulations.

Senator Tolman addressed the Board with his efforts to ensure that the project was returned to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) list.

The Board discussed its strategy to lobby the regional MPO to restore funding for this project.

A number of residents spoke in support of the project.

The Board committed to work hard to have the project funded and to meet with the residents of the Snake Hill Road area and other concerned residents or businesses regarding the construction plan in the fall.

Linda Nickens, Richard Madden, and Mary Ann Johnson and Guy Parsons indicated their desire to serve as contact points for further issues related to the reconstruction of Pleasant Street.

Public Hearing on Utility Petitions

Keyspan Utility Petition - Bright Road

The Board reviewed a petition by Keyspan to open Bright Road to install conduit. Mr. MacNeil of the company was present to support the petition.

The Board moved: to approve Keyspan's petition to open the street to install conduit along Bright Road.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Verizon Utility Petition - Radcliffe Road

The Board reviewed a petition by Verizon to install cable along Radcliffe Road. Mr. Fitzgibbons of Verizon was present to support the petition. Mrs. Triener of 150 Radcliffe Road appeared before the Board to express concerns that Verizon has not been a good neighbor relative to prior work they have done in the area and the lack of service.

The Board moved: to approve Verizon's petition to open the street to install cable along Radcliffe Road, subject to Verizon providing information about their construction plans and providing emergency phone service for residents who may be without phone service for an extended period of time.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Report from Capital Projects Cluster Planning Task Force

Members of the Cluster Planning Task Force reported on the results of their work and provided two proposals for the Board's consideration. Both of these proposals require the removal and replacement of the White Field House, the acquisition of the property at 301/303 Concord Avenue, incorporate underutilized land in front of the Underwood Pool, and create egress traffic control at a single focus point.

Mr. Speidel highlighted ideas that were discussed by the group, but discarded. These included:

- Consolidation of the main library with the high school library;
- Changing the location of the Underwood pool house; and
- Moving the Vigliolo skating rink

Mr. Speidel presented a site plan for each of the two proposals.

Option 1 would:

- Place a Senior Center in the current main library
- Move the main library across the street on the North side Concord Avenue, west of Cottage
- Build a two-story locker room addition to the Vigliolo Rink
 - Relocate the softball field with an overlay practice field

- Create either 153 or 236 additional parking spaces
- Require any Town equipment currently in the field house or the rink to be accommodated in any expanded Highway Department garage

Option 2 would:

- Place a Senior Center in the current main library
- Move the main library across the street on the North side Concord Avenue east of Cottage
- Build a two-story locker room addition to the Vigliolo Rink
- Retain a softball field and practice soccer field in its current location
- Create an additional 155 parking spaces
- Require any Town equipment currently in the field house or the rink to be accommodated in any expanded Highway Department garage

Mrs. Miranda, provided an overview of the feasibility of adaptively reusing the main library for a Senior Center.

The Board wholeheartedly thanked the Task Force for its very hard and diligent effort over the summer.

The Board inquired of the phasing of the project. Mr. Speidel provided an example of how these projects might be phased.

Mrs. Mahoney stated a strong desire that aesthetics be considered in these proposals.

Dr. Solomon stressed the importance of making a commitment with respect to each of these projects so that proponents can have a better sense of progress being made.

A resident inquired about the cost difference the between a Senior Center in a renovated library and the construction of a new Senior Center on the Kendall School Site.

Mrs. Brusch stated that the cost to renovate space for the Senior Center is less than new construction of the Senior Center on the Kendall site.

Dr. Holland iterated the School Department's concern that the high school retains its field space.

The Board discussed its next steps in the process. Mrs. Mahoney suggested reconvening the Capital Planning "Mega-Group" in the near future to discuss new information gained from this process and the recent decisions relative to the relocation of the Town's fire stations. The Board agreed to convene this group on Thursday, September 19, 2002.

Mr. Brownsberger expressed his concern that the Senior Center project not be pushed too far into the future and also stated that a new library is not a high priority for him in the near future.

Dr. Solomon stated his appreciation for the planning process that has been undertaken. However, he reiterated the importance of establishing a timeline for all of these projects to create a positive momentum.

Discussion of Infrastructure Planning Issues -- Sewer and Roads

Selectmen Brownsberger addressed his proposal to develop a formal planning effort on the Town's infrastructure, including pavement management and water/sewer/stormwater systems. He reviewed an

outline of two ad-hoc committees (pavement management and sewer/drainage).

Mr. Brownsberger proposed establishing a temporary committee on road infrastructure that would report back to the Selectmen by March 1, 2003.

The Board discussed generally this proposal, including some concern over the use of committees to substitute policy direction of the Board of Selectmen with appropriate technical advice of Town staff or consultants.

Ms. Mahoney suggested that Mr. Gatzunis had the information and expertise to do the work without a committee. She is reluctant to set up any new committees.

Dr. Solomon expressed concern that creation of new committees will burden Town staff.

At this point, the Board agreed to defer a committee on pavement management issues.

The Board requested Mr. Gatzunis to provide a list of the Town's road based on traffic volumes for the Board's review.

Mr. Brownsberger strongly advocated a committee focused on the Town's sewer and stormwater drainage issues, given the long term needs and policy direction required in this area.

The Board expressed general support for a committee-driven planning process. The Board discussed the proposed membership for this committee and agreed to discuss this further at their meeting on September 23.

Discussion of Fire Stations and Parking Process

The Board discussed a proposed charge for a temporary Belmont Center Parking Study Committee. The Board agreed to amend the composition of the committee - to be: 1 member of the Traffic Advisory Committee, 2 commercial property owners, 3 business owners, and 4 residents.

The Board moved: to adopt the proposed charge, amended to include 4 residents and limited to one existing Town committee member, with the understanding that the committee should deliver its preliminary report and recommendation by March, 2003.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The Board moved: to appoint Kevin Foley of Locatelli Properties, to the Belmont Center Parking Study Committee as a commercial property owner representative.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The Board moved: to invite Filene's to appoint a representative to participate on the Committee.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Dr. Solomon agreed to recommend two residents and one business owner. Mr. Brownsberger agreed to recommend one commercial property owner and one resident. Mrs. Mahoney agreed to recommend one business owner and one resident.

Discussion of AT&T Broadband/Comcast Cable TV License Transfer Application

The Board reviewed a proposed settlement agreement with AT&T/Comcast to resolve issues related to the transfer of the cable television license.

Ms. Sullivan representing AT&T was present.

Mr. Brownsberger was supportive of the agreement.

The Board moved: to approve the settlement agreement in principle and authorize the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen to execute this settlement agreement following appropriate approvals of the respective parties and advice of the Town's special counsel.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Action by Writing*Report from Director of Community Development re: Request for Private Way Sign on Thomas Street*

The Board reviewed a report from the Office of Community Development regarding a request for a Private Way sign on Thomas Street.

The Board moved: to accept the recommendation of the Director of Community Development and take no action on the request to erect a sign at this location.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Copy of Memorandum from Director of Community Development re: Light Department Petition to Relocate Pole #87

The Board reviewed a memorandum from the Director of Community Development regarding a Light Department petition to relocate pole #87.

The Board moved: to approve the relocation of pole #87 on Concord Avenue.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Report from Police Department re: Traffic Controls at Lexington and Sycamore Streets

The Board reviewed a report from the Police Department regarding traffic controls at Lexington and Sycamore Streets.

The Board moved: to direct that the required traffic engineering study be completed for possible petition for an automatic control signal.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Dr. Solomon expressed concern that the Town be more proactive about addressing traffic safety.

Mr. Gatzunis and Linda Nickens of the Traffic Advisory Committee advised that the Town has plans to

evaluate this intersection this fall. They noted that accidents at the intersection have been the result of drivers running the existing STOP sign and red light.

Report from Police Department re: "Do Not Enter" Sign at Park Street

The Board reviewed a report from the Police Department regarding a "Do Not Enter" sign at Park Street.

The Board moved: to accept the recommendation of the Police Department and take no action on this request at this time.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Copy of Letter to Police Chief from Traffic Division re: Resident Parking Sticker Program Hull Street between Trapelo Road and Maple Street

The Board reviewed a report to the Police Chief from the Traffic Division regarding resident parking sticker program on Hull Street between Trapelo Road and Maple Street.

The Board moved: to approve the recommendation of the Police Department with the conditions: that fees be set at \$10 per resident sticker; each household receives two free, undated guest passes; that the parking restriction applies only from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday; and that additional daily guest passes be made available to residential parking permit holders at a cost of \$5 per day per pass.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Memorandum from Town Administrator re: Personnel Director Position

The Board reviewed a memorandum from the Town Administrator regarding the Personnel Director's position.

Mr. Brownsberger was concerned that the outsourcing opportunities have not been properly addressed, particularly given the vacant payroll technician position. Dr. Solomon was concerned that further exploration of the potential of School/Town consolidation be pursued.

Mrs. Mahoney expressed her support for this proposal, given the significant collective bargaining and grievance activities within the Town.

The Board requested additional information be provided for the Board's September 9 meeting relative to the responsibilities that the Personnel Director will assume, whether there are opportunities to consolidate this function with the School Department, and the identification of those human resource functions that are possible candidates for outsourcing.

Memorandum from Town Administrator re: Public Safety Communications Tower RFP

The Board reviewed a memorandum from the Town Administrator regarding the proposed Public Safety Communications Tower RFP and had a number of questions. The issue of transfer of site control from McLean was addressed.

The Board has no major concerns with the RFP at this time.

Letter from Resident re: Sidewalk on Corner of Sycamore and Davis Street

The Board reviewed a letter from a resident regarding the condition of the sidewalk on the corner of Sycamore and Davis Streets.

The Board moved: to refer the request to the Highway Department for review and recommendation.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Letter from Resident re: Request for Crosswalk on Cross Street at Lake Street

The Board reviewed a letter from a resident regarding a request for a crosswalk on Cross Street at Lake Street

The Board moved: to refer the recommendation to the Traffic Division of the Police Department for its review and recommendation.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Correspondence re: McLean Hospital Development

The Board reviewed and discussed various correspondences regarding McLean Hospital.

The Board suggested the Town Administrator contact a member of the ARC management team regarding the issue of affordable housing within the senior housing development.

Request to Fill Vacancies:

The Board reviewed two requests to fill a full time payroll technician and part time staff accountant vacancy.

The Board moved: to approve the request to fill the part-time staff accountant position.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The Board requested further documentation relative to the possible outsourcing of the payroll function prior to making a decision. They requested this issue be placed on the Board's agenda for it September 9 meeting.

Memorandum from Assistant to the Town Administrator re: September 11 Memorial Events

The Board reviewed the community's planned events to memorialize the events of September 11, 2001.

Selectmen's Issues List

The Board agreed to review a revised issue list at its next regular meeting on September 9.

Approval of Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes of Selectmen's meeting of August 6, 2002.

The Board moved: to approve the minutes of the Board of Selectmen meeting of August 6, 2002.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Other

Mrs. Mahoney inquired about the relocation of the School Department during the Town Hall Complex renovation process. She explained that two RFPs have been sent out, one for the rental of office space in an existing building and the other the rental of modular office space to be located beside the high school. She indicated her strong desire that cost of relocation be minimized.

Mrs. Miller explained that the building committee issued two RFPs expressly to compare the costs for each of these options as well as any ancillary costs.

The Board discussed a proposal by Mr. Brownsberger to develop a temporary citizens' advisory committee to draft a proposed by-law for the regulation of kennels and excessive dog barking in the Town for consideration by the Town Meeting in April 2003.

The Board agreed that the membership would be comprised of: 1 resident dog owner, 1 resident non-dog owner, a resident attorney, a town meeting member, a representative of the Health Department, and a resident with expertise in noise control.

Mr. Brownsberger recommended the appointment of Judith Ananian Sarno to this committee.

The Board agreed to discuss appointments to this committee at their September 9 regular meeting.

Mrs. Mahoney recommended the appointment of Donna Griswold to the Youth Commission.

The Board moved: to appoint Donna Griswold to the Youth Commission.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Mrs. Mahoney noted a former Belmont resident, Lt. Cal Loria, who will be flying on a NASA space shuttle mission and will be carrying a badge from the Town's Fire Department into space.

Mr. Brownsberger requested that a state procurement disposition on Stony Brook Road be distributed to neighbors of that area.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 p.m.

Melvin A. Kleckner, Town Administrator
Clerk, Board of Selectmen