

MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MARCH 8, 2004
REGULAR SESSION

Page 1 of 7

Call to Order

The Board convened in open session at 7:30 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room of the Town Hall. All members were present.

Questions from Town Residents

There were none.

Action by Appointment

Cable Ascertainment Hearing (Continued from 02/03/04)

The Board of Selectmen convened a continuance of the February 3, 2004 public ascertainment hearing relative to the renewal of Comcast's cable license with the Town.

Selectmen Brownsberger noted the absence of representatives of Comcast and their stenographer. The Town Administrator noted that they are aware of the continuance of the hearing from February 3.

The Board agreed that the cable broadcast can serve as an official record of the hearing.

Todd Bloniarz, chairman of the Media Center Task Force, appeared before the Board to discuss work that was completed by the Task Force and its consultant to collect public input about the Town's needs relative to PEG access and the negotiation of a new license agreement between the Town and Comcast cable. Mr. Bloniarz read a letter from the School Department regarding the need for a community media center. He requested this letter be placed as part of this hearing record.

Rika Welsh, the Town's cable consultant, provided an overview of her work with community focus groups to identify Town cable technology needs. She provided the Board with a brief summary of the process and her findings, which she asked be placed as part of the official record.

Robin Conti, a resident of Belmont, inquired about Belmont being a "one cable" town. Mr. Brownsberger explained that the Town is open to having other companies come into the community, but that none has recently expressed interest. Ms. Conti expressed concern that consumers are not able to self-select channels at a minimal cost above the basic service.

Mr. Norris, Chairman of the Cable Advisory Committee, stated that federal law bars the community from having any say in programming, channel selection and rates that a cable company offers.

MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MARCH 8, 2004
REGULAR SESSION

Page 2 of 7

Selectmen Brownsberger requested a letter be sent to Congressman Markey regarding this concern and requesting that attention be paid to this matter.

The Board moved: to authorize the Town Administrator to transmit this concern to Congressman Markey with the Board's support.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The Board moved: to close the cable ascertainment hearing.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Solid Waste and Recycling Advisory Committee Update

The Board met with members of the Solid Waste and Recycling Advisory Committee to hear an update on their work to consider various pay as you throw "PAYT" opportunities for the Town.

Dr. Solomon noted his belief that this is an idea whose time has come, given the Town's budget problems and the positive environmental impacts. However, he noted recent analysis which suggested the program likely would be cost neutral, because of the need to hire a recycling coordinator. He indicated his impressions regarding this program have changed because of this.

Mr. Brownsberger also noted his impressions that the recycling program is working well and that he generally agrees with individuals who consider this an additional tax.

Dr. Solomon noted that the school department has established fees for specific programs and services. He disagrees with the concept of PAYT as a tax, but considers it a fee for service.

The Board moved: to table discussion of a pay as you throw program for the Town.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Mr. Siskind, chair of the Solid Waste and Recycling Advisory Committee, suggested charging a \$20 fee for the Town to pick-up white goods and \$15 for items containing a cathode ray tube.

The Board of Selectmen requested that, prior to taking any action, the Town Administrator inquire of the Town Counsel of any legal obstacles that may need to be overcome prior to instituting these fees.

Town Treasurer and Sgt. Hamilton, Police Department re: Parking Control Issues

Ms. Kendall Freiner appeared before the Board to recommend the Board approve the awarding of a parking control contract to Complus Data Innovations. She noted that even though their cost

MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MARCH 8, 2004
REGULAR SESSION

Page 3 of 7

proposal was 2% more than the low bidder, they have significantly more experience and offer better equipment than the lowest bidder. She noted that her FY05 budget only includes \$25,000 for this service, and would require an additional \$11,000 to cover this cost.

The Board moved: to award the bid to Complus Data Innovations, Inc

The motion passed unanimously (3-0)

Sergeant Hamilton also presented to the Board a proposal for an increase in a number of the Town's parking fines to be comparable with surrounding communities

The Board moved: to approve an increase in parking rates as proposed by Sgt. Hamilton to make these fines comparable to neighboring communities.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The Board moved: to award the bid to Complus Data Innovations, Inc.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Discussion of Fiscal Year 2005 Budget

The Town Administrator outlined his recommendation relative to the potential distribution of additional state aid for FY05 between the Town and School budgets.

He recommended the Selectmen allocate \$79,000 in insurance and EAP costs to the school, but recommended they allocate the first \$79,000 of additional state aid to the school department in order to hold the school department harmless. He also recommended allocating the remaining \$249,000 in state aid 52% to the Town and 48% to the School Department. He also supported the allocation of Capital Endowment Fund amounts of \$100,000 (52%/48%) between the Town and Schools.

Mr. Brownsberger thanked the Town Administrator for his advocacy for the Town's needs.

The Board discussed the FY05 budget.

Mr. Brownsberger suggested that the Police Department budget remain at the current proposed level, but to authorize the Chief of Police to choose to either replace the patrol officer or use it to enhance either training or overtime patrol coverage.

The Board moved: to add \$10,000 in police department training.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

**MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MARCH 8, 2004
REGULAR SESSION**

Page 4 of 7

Mrs. Mahoney noted her support for 48 sworn officers in the Police Department.

The Board discussed restoring the following items to the Town's FY05 budget:

- \$50,000 legal services
- \$ 2,000 accounting professional services
- \$ 3,000 accounting intern hours
- \$10,000 police department training
- \$ 5,000 parks/facilities water
- \$ 5,000 nursing hours
- \$ 5,000 Payson Park sponsorship

The Board agreed to resolve budget issues at their next meeting

Action by Consent

Memorandum from Town Administrator re: Appointments to Local Emergency Planning Committee

The Board reviewed the following appointment recommendations from the Town Administrator:

The Board moved: to appoint the aforementioned candidates to the Local Emergency Planning Committee:

- Public Works
- Peter Castanino, Primary
- Michael Santoro, Alternate

- School Department
- Bob Martin, Primary
- Gerry Missal, Alternate

- Purecoat North, LLC
- Douglas Markey, Primary
- Thomas Mahoney, Alternate

- McLean Hospital
- Andrew Healy, Primary

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Correspondence from Health Director re: Approval of Vegetation Management Plan

MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MARCH 8, 2004
REGULAR SESSION

Page 5 of 7

The Board reviewed the yearly and the five-year vegetation management plan issued by the Health Department Director.

The Board moved: to approve the annual and five-year vegetation management plan.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Action By Writing

Letter from DPW/OCD re Butler School Sidewalk

The Board of Selectmen reviewed and discussed a recommendation from the Director of Community development to not consider the installation of curbing and sidewalks on Sycamore Street at this time, based on a decision formerly made by the Board to focus on the upkeep of "major" Town roads only (Sycamore Street being classified as a minor street).

The Board agreed to defer this matter until they are able to meet with Mr. Gatzunis regarding the Town's FY05 Pavement Management Program.

Response from Belmont Housing Trust re: Donald Mercier Recommendation

The Board reviewed and discussed a memorandum from the Chairman of the Belmont Housing Trust relative to proposals made by Don Mercier regarding the development of affordable housing. The Board acknowledged receipt of this letter and generally agreed with its content.

Letter from William Engstrom re: System for Recording Town Meeting Member's Votes

The Board reviewed and discussed a request from a Town resident relative to the purchase and implementation of a device which would keep track of all individual votes for each Town Meeting Member.

The Board moved: to refer the matter to the Town Moderator relative to the legal ability to implement such a system under the current local and state laws.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Correspondence re: Resident Request for Crosswalk on Lexington Street

The Board reviewed a recommendation from the Director of Community Development relative to approve a resident's request for a crosswalk on Lexington Street.

The Board moved: to approve the request for the installation of a crosswalk on Lexington Street.

MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MARCH 8, 2004
REGULAR SESSION

Page 6 of 7

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Correspondence re: Goals and Objectives Session

The Board reviewed a request to postpone the discussion of the Selectmen's Goals and Objectives (initially scheduled for March 16) until March 23.

The Board moved: to reschedule their meeting to discuss its goals and objectives until March 23.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Other

Fred Paulsen appeared before the Board to propose an idea to substitute the former MDC skating rink land for development instead of on the O'Neill Properties' Upland site.

Mrs. Mahoney inquired why he believes this idea may work when the Town tried to, but failed to, develop the MDC land for a soccer field because of serious concerns about water retention. She also inquired who is to be the proponent before the Planning Board.

Mr. Brownsberger suggested that Mr. O'Neill should be asked whether he could envision any scenarios in which this proposal might work. He also recommended the Board refer this proposal to the Planning Board for their consideration.

Dr. Solomon noted his belief that the current O'Neill proposal isn't likely to get the required 2/3 approval of the Town Meeting. He also believes that this proposal warrants referral to the Planning Board.

The Board moved: to refer this proposal to the Planning Board for their consideration.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The Board agreed to invite the Fire Station Building Committee to their meeting on March 23, 2004 to receive a presentation of their design work to date.

The Board moved: to acknowledge their support for the debt exclusion ballot question regarding the construction of a new fire station headquarters and fire substation.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MARCH 8, 2004
REGULAR SESSION

Page 7 of 7

The Board agreed to develop an editorial for the local newspaper regarding the fire station buildings debt exclusion question.

The Town Administrator sought the Town's signature on a previously authorized letter to members of the Watertown Town Council seeking their support to partner with the Town in its application for TIP funds for the reconstruction of the Trapelo Road/Belmont Street corridor.

The Board moved: to authorize the Chairman to sign the document to receive the state Ready Resource Grant funds.

The motion passed unanimously.

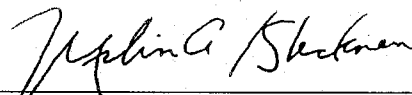
The Town Administrator advised the Board that the League of Women voters wishes to hold a League Discussion night in concert with the Warrant Committee on April 22, 2004 at the Belmont Hill School.

The Board concurred with that date.

The Board moved: to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing litigation; and further that the Board shall not return to open session.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0), by roll call vote.

The regular session adjourned at approximately 11:15 p.m.



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