

MINUTES
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN
OCTOBER 5, 2005
SPECIAL SESSION

Call to order

A special open session of the Board was called to order at 5:30 PM. All members were present. Also present were Town Administrator Younger and Assistant Town Administrator Conti.

Questions From Town Residents

There were none.

Action By Appointment

Discussion of Special Town Meeting.

The Board of Selectmen discussed the Historic Preservation By-Law article and noted that the text of this article will likely be changed by amendments during Town Meeting to make legally required clarifications to certain wording.

Town Administrator Younger stated that Town Counsel has approved the warrant in its current form.

The Board moved: to close the warrant as submitted.

The motion was carried unanimously (3-0).

The Board moved: to approve the warrant as drafted.

The motion was carried unanimously (3-0).

The Board of Selectmen reviewed the articles in order. There was no discussion of Articles 1 and 2.

Regarding Article 3, the Board of Selectmen discussed a few remaining issues to be negotiated with the Belmont Country Club, including the maintenance of a fence and the question of liability if golf balls cause damage or injury on the property. A Memorandum of Agreement is being written subject to the approval of Town Meeting. If the negotiations were for some reason to fail, a positive vote by Town Meeting does not commit the Town to any action. The Board of Selectmen noted

that a portion of one lot might possibly have a Conservation Commission restriction which will be resolved at the next Conservation Commission meeting.

Regarding Article 4, the Board noted that while Town Meeting had previously authorized the disposition of the Woodfall Road property, that authorization was for the original configuration of the property. Because the land swap with the country club changes this configuration, a new authorization is necessary.

Regarding Article 5, Mr. Younger reported that the RFP is being drafted by himself and Planning Coordinator Jeffrey Wheeler with input from Belmont Center Planning Group (BCPG) members. A draft will hopefully be ready for the Selectmen to see by this coming weekend. The Board of Selectmen indicated that the Planning Board should also receive a draft and have an opportunity to weigh in on this. The Board of Selectmen agreed to discuss this at its next meeting on October 17.

Mr. Younger stated he plans to make Powerpoint presentations to Town Meeting on the Woodfall Road and fire station articles.

There was no further discussion of Article 6.

Regarding Article 7, the Board of Selectmen requested that Mr. Younger get in touch with the Senior Center Building Committee to see what materials they have prepared for presentation to Town Meeting. The Board of Selectmen agreed that it is appropriate for Town Meeting to have the opportunity to weigh in on this question before the public votes on November 14.

The Board of Selectmen discussed the public perception of whether the proposals for capital projects are all top-of-the-line rather than being scaled down to reflect budget concerns. The Board of Selectmen noted that it is a constant mission for the Town to communicate to residents what we are doing and why.

The Board of Selectmen discussed the impact of a debt exclusion on the property tax bill of the average Belmont resident. The Board of Selectmen agreed that residents should receive the information that they need to make an informed decision.

The Board of Selectmen discussed how to present to Town Meeting the “queue” of capital projects being considered by the Town to form the background of this question. The Board of Selectmen noted that the Senior Center is the smallest of these projects in terms of cost and it is important for Town residents to understand that. The Board of Selectmen noted that an effective communication to Town Meeting will also get out to the Town residents before the election. The Board of Selectmen agreed to discuss its presentation to Town Meeting further at the next meeting on October 17th.

The Board moved: to express its approval of articles 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7.

The motion was carried unanimously (3-0).

The Board indicated its expectation to consider its position on Article 6 at its next meeting on October 17.

Signing of Special Town Meeting Warrant

The Board signed the Special Town Meeting warrant.

Signing of Special Election Warrant

The Board of Selectmen read aloud the text of the warrant for the Nov. 14 Special Election. Mr. Younger noted that the question includes land acquisition language just in case the Town should need to obtain an easement for any reason, not because any significant land acquisition is planned.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Younger reported on an RFP being worked on by the Housing Trust to sell a parcel of Town-owned land at Waverly Oaks to a developer, in order to expand the development by adding 25 units of rental housing. This would also result in more parking spaces for the current and new tenants.

Mr. Younger reported on a meeting with Cambridge officials about re-zoning of the "Quadrangle" area of West Cambridge. The project is currently being re-submitted. The issues that Belmont is concerned with are in the areas of traffic and stormwater handling.

Mr. Younger reported on the status of an RFP for a financial software consultant and hoped to bring this before the Board on October 24th. He also noted that the number of candidates for the Planning and Economic Development Director position is down to 6 from a pool of 30. The last interview is October 14 and at least two candidates from this group will be presented to the Board of Selectmen as early as October 17. The Board asked Mr. Younger to ask BCPG Chair Vickie Alani to recommend a member of the BCPG to participate in these interviews.

Other

The Board of Selectmen noted that the Waverley fire station redevelopment process is on track with the possibility that construction could begin before the winter.

The Board of Selectmen discussed progress in identifying candidates for the Recreation Board and the Human Rights Commission and expressed its intention to act in this area at its October 17th meeting.

Mr. Younger noted that he and Assistant Town Administrator Jeff Conti are working on the Board's goals document and will have a revision ready for the Selectmen on Friday.

The Board of Selectmen adjourned its special session at 6:54 pm.

Thomas G. Younger
Town Administrator