

MINUTES
Page 1 of 5
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2005
REGULAR SESSION
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM, TOWN HALL

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Board was called to order in open session at 7:01 PM in the Selectmen's Meeting Room of Town Hall. All members were present. Town Administrator Tom Younger and Assistant Town Administrator Jeff Conti were also present.

Questions from Town Residents

There were no questions.

Action by Appointment

Discussion of Solid Waste / Recycling Contract

Public Works Director Peter Castanino appeared before the Board of Selectmen with a report.

The Town's current provider, Russell Disposal, is offering a three-year contract with two one-year renewal options. The offer would decrease the Town's cost in the first year and increase it slightly in the following years. This would be better than what other towns are getting from both Russell and their competitors. They are also willing to include a clause allowing renegotiation if the Town decides to go with pay-as-you-throw.

Mr. Castanino noted that there is a gray legal area on whether the Town can do a contract with features extending beyond three years without Town Meeting approval, though it has been done before. Town Counsel is recommending that Town Meeting be asked to authorize a contract of up to five years, to be on the safe side. Mr. Castanino stated that Russell Disposal has worked with the Town for 8 years and has provided good service. He recommended the Board of Selectmen accept the offer.

A Russell representative stated that the company has made a profit on paper over the last two years and the one-year rate reduction represents Russell sharing some of that profit with the Town in this form. Mr. Castanino stated that these contracts

do include a provision for the town to get revenues if the paper price goes over a certain level, so this is in addition to that.

The Board noted that the Recycling Committee has not met in some time and could not be consulted on this. Mr. Castanino said that the Recycling Committee really wanted to move to pay-as-you-throw and wanted cardboard recycling, and nothing in this contract would preclude those things.

The Board asked if there could be another escape clause if the Town wanted to go with a transfer station. The Russell representative explained that this would take at least five years to get through the state Department of Environmental Protection approval process, so it shouldn't really be an issue.

The Board noted that the Town Administrator will plan to put a motion before Town Meeting on the length of contracts as mentioned above.

The Board moved: to approve the new contract as proposed by Russell.

The motion was carried unanimously (3-0).

Public Hearing for Special Sign Permits

CVS Representative Joe Barrier appeared before the Board to request permission to move signage from the back of the building to the side in order to be visible to eastbound traffic on Trapelo Road.

Resident Jim Tricomi of Bartlett Avenue stated that he had come to oppose the request because he believed it was going to be an additional sign. Upon being shown where the sign was being moved from, he stated he had no objection.

The Board moved: to approve the petition as presented to the Board.

The motion was carried unanimously (3-0).

Dr. David Salibian appeared before the Board to request permission to install a lighted sign advertising his dental practice on his front lawn.

The Board moved: to approve the petition.

The motion was carried unanimously (3-0).

Discussion of Building Committee Issue

Town Moderator Henry Hall and members of the Permanent Building Committee (PBC) led by Chair Pat Bruschi appeared before the Board to discuss the building committee process.

Chairman Solomon thanked the PBC members for appearing and for all their hard work in overseeing these projects.

Selectman Firenze went over a flowchart that he shared with the Board and the members of the PBC with a suggestion for how the process might be structured. He noted that the Town does not have any approved standards of construction which leaves the Committees without guidelines to follow. He also raised the issue of contract negotiations. Mr. Hall and Ms. Bruschi noted that the PBC has created a template contract for the building committees (BCs) to use with architects, project managers, and contractors. Ms. Bruschi also noted that in most cases a PBC member is elected chair of the BCs.

There was discussion of whether the project design starts with a “wish list” or a practical assessment of needs. Selectman Firenze noted that a significant number of people in town do not understand how this process works and the Board needs to understand it in order to answer those questions. It was noted that there are some 11 projects currently before the PBC or the various BCs in various stages of development.

The Board reviewed the appointment process. The Moderator appoints the PBC under the Town’s by-law except for one member who is appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Traditionally, Town Meeting has also granted the Moderator the authority to appoint the members of the BCs except for one member who is appointed by the Board of Selectmen~and~including one non-voting member (usually a department head) who represents the Board’s interests. It was noted that many other towns just have one building committee which handles all the projects.

Selectman Brownsberger noted that hypothetically, if there was a fiasco with a BC, the Board of Selectmen has the ability to go to Town Meeting and request that the committee be de-funded.

There was some agreement among the Board of Selectmen and the PBC that the departments that will use the buildings have not always been as involved as they should be, especially for buildings that have multiple uses that might conflict. There was discussion of how to improve this. Generally for school buildings, the BCs have looked to the school principal to be a liaison for these opinions and for town buildings, to the Town Administrator. It was noted that turnover among department personnel is an issue because by the time the building is being built there are often different personnel than the ones who gave their opinions on the design. Selectman Firenze noted that some buildings like the Light Department Building were designed with flexibility (modular furniture for example) to account for this.

There was discussion of a change that was made to the Chenery School after construction had begun as an example of the question of accountability for the increased cost.

The Board then inquired about when in the process the Fire Department and the Building Department are consulted about code issues. Ms. Brusch explained that this is done early in the schematic design process and then a few more times throughout the process. There is also a liaison to each BC from the Disability Access Committee.

There was discussion of the role of a project manager. It was noted that going forward, each project will be required by state law to have a project manager at 4% of the total construction cost, but the Board talked about whether a single project manager to oversee all the projects would generate substantial savings.

Ms. Brusch described how the PBC members on each committee work with the architects to make design decisions.

The Board raised the issue of communication and noted that the minutes of the BCs are published on the web site. The Board discussed whether it would be helpful to have the BCs issue a quarterly report to the Board of Selectmen or the School Committee as appropriate. PBC members did not object to this but pointed out that the Board's liaisons can fill this role by sharing any concerns they have with the Town Administrator.

There was discussion of questions that have been or might be asked by the public about specific design features and how best to communicate between the BCs and the public on the reasons behind these decisions. It was pointed out that people want and need to understand why they are asked to pay higher taxes to pay for these projects. Selectman Brownsberger noted that these projects account for less than 10% of the budget as a whole.

The Board asked about procedures for closing out BCs that have remained open when a project has been essentially complete for some time and asked the PBC to make some recommendations on a more formal process for doing this.

The Board of Selectmen thanked everyone for coming.

Town Administrator's Report

Traffic study for Beech & White – The intersection did not meet warrant for a 4-way stop sign except from 8 am to 9 am. The Police Department will look at other options because the state currently will not allow this.

The Town is ready to close on the sale of the Waverley Fire Station tomorrow. The Board needs to sign a quitclaim deed.

The Board moved: to sign a quitclaim deed for the Waverly Fire Station.

The motion was carried unanimously (3-0).

The Board signed the deed and it was notarized by Town Treasurer Floyd Carman.

Other

There was discussion of coverage in the Citizen-Herald about the budget process and whether it encouraged an emotional reaction by citizens to numbers that are so preliminary as to be essentially unreliable. There was a feeling that the coverage did not reflect the increased cooperation that has prevailed so far between the Town and the schools.

There was a brief discussion of the concern expressed by Linn Hobbs of the Historic District Commission regarding the appearance of the stone wall that has been put up as part of the Pleasant Street project. There was also brief discussion of communication from a resident regarding the traffic tie-up from the holiday lighting ceremony and whether to have this ceremony on a Saturday.

There was discussion of the employee holiday party and how to fund it. Mr. Conti reported that the previous plan had been scrapped because the employees had already begun planning a party. The Board agreed to fund and sponsor this event, but stressed that all Town employees should be invited. Chairman Solomon will speak with Town Administrator Younger to figure out the exact funding mechanism.

The Board adjourned its regular session at 9:41 PM.

Thomas G. Younger
Town Administrator