

MINUTES

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2008 TOWN OF BELMONT BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM 7:00PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Board was called to order in open session at 7:04 PM by Vice-Chair Solomon in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at Town Hall. Selectman Leclerc was also present. Chairman Firenze was not present. Town Administrator Tom Younger and Assistant Town Administrator Jeff Conti were present.

II. QUESTIONS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS

There were no questions.

III. ACTION BY APPOINTMENT

MWRA Loan Program - Water Pipe Repairs

Town Treasurer Floyd Carman and Town Clerk Delores Keefe appeared before the Board to request that the Board sign off on the loan request from the MWRA to replace water pipes. The loan for \$1,200,000 was approved by Town Meeting in October 2007.

The Board moved: To sign the loan request from the MWRA.  
Motion carried unanimously (2-0).

The appropriate papers were signed by Board members Solomon and Leclerc. New Livery License Application - Belmont Green Limousine Dan Champley and Jeff Lesnick appeared before the Board to request a license for their new business - "Belmont Green Limousine" - which will be operated out of their residence. The business will utilize one vehicle, a Ford Escape hybrid, which will provide transportation for clients primarily to and from the airport. The issue of the vehicle's signage has been appropriately vetted.

The Board moved: That Belmont Green Limousine be granted a livery license.  
Motion carried unanimously (2-0).

Chairman Firenze joined the meeting.

Approval of Funds to Repair Homer Building Stairs Pat Bruschi of the Permanent Building Committee appeared before the Board along with architect Robert Vogel and special counsel David Hawkins to request that the Selectmen send a recommendation for a Reserve Fund Transfer to the Warrant Committee. The transfer is for the sum of money (\$79,000) needed to remediate the issues with the Homer Building steps.

The Board moved: To recommend the reserve fund transfer for \$79,000 for the Homer Building stairs to the Warrant Committee.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0). Pho & Thai Liquor License Hearing The new owner of Pho and Thai restaurant appeared before the Board. A license transfer occurred in November 2007 as a result of a change of ownership from Ling Garden to Pho and Thai restaurant which opened on January 11, 2008. Since this opening, Pho and Thai has new owners and therefore needs to have the liquor license request processed again.

The Board moved: To transfer the license as requested.  
Motion carried unanimously (3-0). Group Insurance Commission [GIC] Discussion - Cook & Co. Diane Crimmins (Director of Human Resources) and Sue Shillue (Cook & Co. Health Care consultant) appeared before the Board to discuss if Belmont should pursue the option of joining the GIC. Ms. Shillue explained that the GIC is a State entity which provides insurance to State employees. Legislation has been passed that creates a local option for municipalities to join the GIC. In doing so, the GIC sets benefit packages and plan design. Unions and retirees agree to act as one bargaining group, known as the Public Employee Committee (PEC). Notice to join the GIC must be made by October 1, for a start-up date of the following July 1. Initially there is a three-year commitment to the GIC, after which the Town and PEC jointly can opt out.

The potential exists to reduce the town's cost by \$1.6M (less what administrative costs are incurred by joining the GIC). The downside for employees is that certain co-payments and deductibles are higher (thus increasing out of pocket costs), but overall payroll deductions go down, as the risk is spread-out over a larger population throughout the State.

More data will be available in March which will help the Board assess the risks and benefits to both the town and individual families. The Board noted some concern in the loss of control over how the numbers will change and potential unintended consequences. Ms. Crimmins noted that joining the GIC would mean significantly more work for the Human Resources Department in terms of increased paper work and documentation pertaining to birth and marriage certificates, etc.

The Board requested to meet again with Ms. Shillue and Ms. Crimmins when the additional data is available, at the end of March.

Chris Starr - Cushing Square Overlay Update This agenda item is postponed, and has been rescheduled for next Monday's Selectmen's meeting, March 3, at 8:00 PM. Roads Stabilization Fund Override Discussion Glenn Clancy, Director of Community Development, appeared before the Board to present three 5-year plan scenarios for road reconstruction. The plans take into account the Pavement Management Committee's recommendations, which have been endorsed by both the Board of Selectmen as well as the Warrant Committee:

1. No Override Funds - Under this scenario, there is \$750,000 available to address 0.71 miles per year of major roads only. No local roads are addressed under this scenario. The worst condition roads are not necessarily addressed because some roads can be saved by a less expensive mill and overlay option, often obviating full depth reconstruction at a later date. Once a road has a Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of 59 or below, it becomes necessary to do full depth reconstruction.
2. Override Passes \$2.5M - Pavement Management recommendations that total \$1.2 million for major roads, \$1.75 million for local roads, and \$100,000 for sidewalks.
3. Split Funding - Same as plan #2, but funding structure is tweaked toward major roads: 2/3 or \$2 million of the funding for major roads and \$500,000 for local roads.

The Board agreed that voters need to know what will happen if a roads override passes as well as what will happen if the town does not pass an override. The Board also agreed that if the town continues to spend at its current spending, roads will only get worse and become more expensive to repair. If an override passes, in 25 years the Town will have excellent roads, and will have the money to maintain them. Selectman Solomon offered that he is not prepared to support a roads override in April, until the operating budget is at level service. The Board agreed that since Mr. Clancy has the necessary expertise, that he should have the flexibility to make good, reasonable decisions regarding the split in the funding allocation for local versus major roads.

Mr. Younger pointed out that Saturday, March 1 is the deadline for voting to put a road's override on the April ballot, unless a special election is held. Budget Discussions The Board reviewed the budget issues as they presently stand: The Warrant Committee looked at level service budgets for the town and schools and came up with a deficit number of \$1.6M. The budget shortfall now stands at \$1.4M as a result of an electricity rate adjustment of \$215,000. To address the Town's portion of this shortfall, Mr. Younger proposes to cut \$645,000 from the town budget, which includes the elimination of some street lighting, the elimination of the Youth Director position, and the elimination of school crossing guards. The school department will report on Tuesday night what it will need to eliminate.

Chairman Firenze noted that two areas exist where revenue numbers could be changed. 1) The Board of Assessors could release more money from the overlay account. 2) There may be more

money than expected from health care savings. There is still a budget gap, even if these additional funds are utilized, and decreases will be necessary.

The Board discussed the impact of supporting a roads override in light of the budget eliminations the town and schools are facing. Selectman Leclerc fears that deep cuts in services may erode voters' support for a roads override.

The Board will address this and other budget issues when it meets again on Saturday, March 1. Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Younger reported on the following items:

o There will be a Senior Center ceremonial groundbreaking event on Tuesday, March 25, at 1:00 PM at the Beech Street site. o The Town will close on the Harvard Lawn sale the first week in March.

#### IV. ACTION BY CONSENT

Approval of Board of Selectmen Minutes - January 7, 2008

The Board moved: To approve the minutes of January 7, 2008.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

#### V. ACTION BY WRITING

Police Patrolmen's Association Contract and Superior Officer's Contract The Board moved: To approve the negotiated settlement of the Patrolmen and Superior Officer's contract. The motion passed unanimously (3-0). Acceptance of \$500 SAFE Donation to Fire Department Chairman Firenze acknowledged the donation and read an excerpt from Fire Chief Frizzell's letter which requested that the Board of Selectmen accept the donation from the Simon W. Robinson Lodge in Lexington for the SAFE (Student Awareness Fire Education) Program.

The Board moved: To accept the donation and to send a letter of thanks to the Simon W. Robinson Lodge.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0). Acceptance of \$500 DARE Donation to Police Department Police Chief McLaughlin sent a letter to the Board requesting that they accept a \$500 DARE donation from the Simon W. Robinson Lodge.

The Board moved: To accept the donation and to send a letter of thanks to the Simon W. Robinson Lodge.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

Acceptance of \$300 Library Compact Disc State Settlement

The library received a settlement from the State for the purchase of CDs as a result of antitrust litigation.

The Board moved: To accept the \$300 from the state.

Motion passed unanimously (3-0). (The required signatures were provided.)

2008 License Renewal - Common Victualler

Derby Dessert (TCBY) requests a license renewal.

The Board moved: To renew the Victualler's license for TCBY.

Motion passed unanimously (3-0).

#### VI. OTHER

Sustainable Belmont Celebrates Third Anniversary

The Board congratulates Sustainable Belmont (an offshoot of the Vision 21 Committee) for its 3 years of existence. Board member Solomon acknowledged that this is a group of non-appointed volunteers who are interested in environmental issues and are working on a climate action plan. He suggests that the Board send a letter acknowledging their achievements.

The Board moved: To send a letter to the members of Sustainable Belmont.

Motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Conservation Commission Resignation

Joseph Curro submitted a letter of resignation from his position on the Conservation Commission. Faustino Lichauco has been recommended to fill this vacancy.

The Board moved: To appoint Faustino Lichauco to the Conservation Commission as a full member to fill the unexpired term until June 30, 2008.

The Board moved: To adjourn the meeting (10:40 PM).

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Administrator

Thomas G. Younger, Town