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MINUTES
TOWN OF BELMONT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
Monday, January 25, 2016
7:00 PM

APPROVED
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
DATE: 4-11-2016

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Board was called to order in open session at 7:04 p.m. by Chair Sami Baghdady in the Selectmen's Meeting Room. Selectmen Mark Paolillo (arrived at 7:11 p.m.) and Jim Williams were present. Town Administrator David Kale and Assistant Town Administrator Phyllis Marshall were also present.

Chair Baghdady began by turning to first item on the agenda.

QUESTIONS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS

[There were none.]

WAVERLEY STATION UPDATE

Chair Baghdady announced that the MBTA will not pursue a new train station along South Pleasant Street. They are looking to upgrade the Waverley station; that station will remain open. He thanked the residents of Belmont, Watertown, and Waltham as well as key attendees of the public hearings. He also thanked the Belmont staff for their hard work in support of keeping the Waverley station open.

Chair Baghdady then reviewed the evening's agenda.

ACTION BY CONSENT

Sign MWRA Water Bond Documents

Mr. Floyd Carman, Town Treasurer, appeared before the Board to discuss the MWRA Water Bond for water piping. It is a \$500,000 interest free bond with a 10-year amortization. He explained that this is a part of the 2011 TM-approved-funding water bond projects. The bond will be used for water pipes to go along with road improvements, under the Pavement Management Plan.

The Board moved: To approve the interest-free MWRA loan for \$500,000.
The motion passed unanimously (2-0).

Board members signed the appropriate paper work.

Vacant School Committee (SC) Seat: Discussion and Vote

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Chair Baghdady noted that SC Member Laurie Graham has resigned her SC seat effective this month. Usually, the BOS and SC meet to appoint a new member. However, since the April election is nearby, the SC has decided not to hold the Special Election.

The Board agreed that this plan made sense.

The Board moved: To leave the SC position vacant until the April election.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Housing Court with Safe Housing Task Force – Impact on Town Departments

Ms. Angela Braun, Health Director, Fire Chief Frizzell, Dr. David Alper, Chair of the Board of Health, Officer Kristin Daly of the Police Department, and Ms. Nava Niv Vogel, Director of the COA/Beech Street Center, appeared before the Board to discuss the Housing Court with Safe Housing Task Force and its impact on town departments.

Chief Frizzell noted that Belmont is not currently included under the jurisdiction of the state's housing court system. He stated that there is currently a bill before the Massachusetts' congress that will address this issue and allow Belmont to be included. Both legislatures support this bill.

Dr. Alper noted that, because Belmont does not have a dedicated housing court, a lot of time is taken up dealing with nuisance cases. Too many Belmont resources are currently being utilized by too many staff members in an attempt to settle disputes. If the bill were to pass, Belmont would receive some administrative support (both in terms of time and expertise) under the jurisdiction of the housing court.

The Board discussed the types of cases that are involved as well as the process that would occur under the new bills. The Board agreed that passage of these bills will better serve the public.

The Board moved: To approve the letter which will be sent to the state legislature to support expanding the Safe Housing Court to include Belmont.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Acceptance of an Anonymous Gift of \$7,500 for Town Hall Landscaping

Chair Baghdady stated that Belmont has received a donation of an anonymous gift of \$7,500 to be used for Town Hall landscaping. Mr. Kale explained the specifics of the landscaping plan.

The Board moved: To accept the anonymous gift of \$7,500 to be used exclusively for Town Hall Landscaping (using shade-loving tough plants).
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Acceptance of a Donation of \$1,506.20 from the "Vote No on Ballot Question 1 Committee" to be used for the Annual Employee Holiday Luncheon

Chair Baghdady stated that there is funding left from the *Vote No Committee* and they would like it to be used for the Annual Employee Holiday Luncheon. Chair Baghdady thanked the *Vote No Committee* for this donation.

The Board moved: To accept the Donation of \$1,506.20 from the “*Vote No on Ballot Question 1 Committee*” to be used for the Annual Employee Holiday Luncheon. The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Vote to Open and Close the Annual Town Meeting Warrant (2/1/16 – 2/29/16)

Chair Baghdady noted when the warrant will be open (2/1/16 at 9:00 a.m.) and will close (2/29/16 at 3:00 p.m.). He explained that this is for the Annual Town Meeting, scheduled for Monday, May 2, 2016 (i.e., this is not related to the upcoming Special Town Meeting on February 8). He further explained that residents can submit articles to the Town Clerk’s Office. The process by which articles can be submitted was briefly explored.

The Board moved: To Open and Close the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Specifically, to open the Warrant on February 1, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. and to close the Warrant on February 29, 2016 at 3:00 p.m. The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Public Ascertainment Hearing – Verizon

Members of the Cable Advisory Committee – Mr. Mark Carthy, Chair; Mr. Jeff Hansell, Executive Director of the Belmont Media Center (BMC); Mr. Chet Messer, BMC Chair; and Mr. Jonathan Green, former BMC Chair and current Cable Advisory Committee member – appeared before the Board to discuss the Public Ascertainment Hearing.

Ms. Marshall explained why a second Ascertainment Hearing is being held tonight. She explained how the Request for Proposal (RFP) will work.

Chair Baghdady formally opened the Public Ascertainment Hearing. He read an official statement concerning the ascertainment process.

Mr. Messer provided a brief overview of the survey conducted last fall. He noted that 93 responses were received – all from the online survey. He summarized the survey’s results.

Mr. Hansell provided an updated 10-year plan to the Board as well as to Ms. Marshall.

Chair Baghdady invited members of the public to make comments. No comments were put forth. Ms. Marshall noted that Verizon representatives could not be in attendance.

Chair Baghdady stated that the public hearing will remain open until January 28, 2016. He invited the public to offer comments and provided information on how to do so.

The Board then asked clarifying questions. The topic of the localized program guide was raised.

It has been requested that local programming from other communities be reduced. Selectman Williams raised issues concerning local programming, Direct TV, and streaming services. He raised the issue of reduced rates for low-income residents and senior citizens.

Mr. Hansell raised the topic of a bill before Congress concerning program guidelines.

Chair Baghdady thanked the Cable Television Advisory Committee for their efforts.

Update on Solid Waste Collection Contract Extension

Mr. Jay Marcotte, DPW Director, appeared before the Board to discuss the Solid Waste Collection contract extension.

Chair Baghdady noted that the current contract, with Russell, expires on June 30, 2016. The town is currently in negotiation with Russell. This market, he said, is undergoing many changes. As a result, an extension with Russell was requested in order to provide staff with time to explore all options concerning solid waste and recycling collection. A two-year contract extension was successfully negotiated.

Mr. Kale said that the two-year extension will be helpful in exploring where the industry is heading with regard to trash collection and recycling trends. The extension will also provide time to help determine what the length of the new contract should be, e.g., five-year, ten-year, etc. Mr. Kale then reviewed several components of the contract – concerning school pick-ups, recycling events throughout the year, the frequency of public trash pick up, a pilot program for an off-cycle resident drop off in between the curbside pick up dates, etc. An automated recycling program (dual or single stream) will also be explored as well as a mandated recycling program. Data gathering and outreach will occur during this extension.

Chair Baghdady raised the issue of cost increases, as noted in the contract. Mr. Kale confirmed that as of July 1, the solid waste collection costs will increase. Chair Baghdady noted that lower fuel prices could lessen the cost increases.

Mr. Marcotte added that the town may need to pay more for recycling in the future. (Paying for the tipping fee.) Belmont's current recycling rate is about 20% (based on volume of trash, not participating households).

Board members asked clarifying questions. The Board agreed that the two-year extension is positive. The data gathering and outreach over the next two years will help inform the bid process. Selectman Paolillo asked that this topic be made public via town websites.

Mr. Jack Weis, from the audience, asked if the yard-waste collection period in the fall (i.e., the time when there is weekly collection of yard waste) could be extended and/or started one week later, so that the collection period overall ends later in the year.

Chair Baghdady thanked Mr. Marcotte for his efforts. The contract extension will be voted on at the next Board meeting.

Vote and Discuss: Special Town Meeting (STM) Warrant Articles

Article 3: *Authorizing the Town Moderator to Create a Belmont High School (BHS) Building Committee*

Chair Baghdady began with Article 3, which concerns the formulation of a BHS Building Committee. He suggested that the vote be held off until the MSBA votes on February 27. Selectmen Williams and Paolillo requested that the Board go ahead and vote this evening.

The Board moved: To recommend favorable action on Article 3, within the STM Warrant, subject to the MSBA's approval of the high school's Statement of Interest. The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Article 1: *Minuteman*

Mr. Jack Weis appeared before the Board to discuss the article pertaining to Minuteman, which concerns a proposal to revise the Minuteman regional agreement (i.e., it is not a vote on the new building proposal for Minuteman).

Selectman Paolillo began by discussing the revised regional agreement. He supports the revised agreement and he stated his reasons for supporting it.

However, he noted, he will recommend that Belmont vote no on the proposed new building (this is not the subject of TM Article 1). The new building is too large and allows for too many non-member town students to attend the new building while paying nothing toward capital expenses. If Belmont votes no on the debt vote for the new building, the debt vote as a whole will not pass, as it has to be unanimous across the 16 member towns. This will lead to a district-wide popular vote, which is a concern. It would be best if the building project fails, he said, and then the district can be reconstituted.

The Board discussed issues relating to Minuteman – both the vote on the revised regional agreement (Article 1), and the vote on the new building debt.

Mr. Weis offered his input. He spoke to the “no cram down” on the debt issue and the timeline for DESE’s approval. Under the new agreement under consideration, member-towns have an escape from the district. But, it may not make sense for Belmont to leave since it sends 30 students there.

Regarding Article 1, Chair Baghdady stated that he has read the revised agreement several times and it is not a clear document. It is a collection of compromises geared toward getting the new school passed. He said he would very much like the new facility to be right-sized and he will support a right-sized school. Supporting the revised agreement may not get the school to be right-sized. He said he is not comfortable supporting the revised agreement.

The Board continued discussing. Selectman Williams raised several questions pertaining to

several scenarios. He suggested that Belmont recommend the kind of district it would like to be in and that it use a "term sheet" as a reference point.

Mr. Weis suggested that Belmont vote yes to the revised agreement, as a way to get to a reconstituted district. Chair Baghdady stated again that the revised agreement – and what it means for Belmont – is unclear. Selectman Paolillo remained in support of the revised agreement, although he acknowledged the risk.

The Board will meet jointly with the Warrant Committee on Wednesday (1/27/16) and both the WC and the Board will likely vote that evening.

The Board thanked Mr. Weis for his tremendous effort and energy concerning Minuteman.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Kale reported on the following items:

- **MBTA:** As Chair Baghdady noted at the outset of the meeting, the South Pleasant street plan has been taken off the table and the MBTA will work to upgrade the Waverley station to make it handicapped accessible. The Board discussed this topic briefly.
- **OPEB Working Committee:** They are in the process of completing their interim report.
- **Free Cash:** The DOR will (any day now) officially certify free cash as of 7/1/2015 (roughly \$7M) and Town Meeting will be notified.
- **FY17 Budget Process:** Meeting with Department Heads. State aid will likely be increased. **Pension Bonds/OPEB:** A draft proposal has been received (from Segal Company) as part of the next steps. Mr. Kale provided a summary of a potential work plan. Selectman Williams spoke to the next steps on managing OPEB and the pension obligation going forward. He suggested that the Board act now in issuing a Request for Proposal Chair Baghdady suggested that Selectman Williams send the Board his recommendations For the scope of services for a RFP to solicit assistance.
- **Police Disclosure Form:** The Chief of Police has submitted this form because the Chief's son is on the list of potential applicants for a vacant staff position. The Assistant Police Chief will make this selection and the Chief will recuse himself from the hiring process, but will retain the appointing authority, once a decision has been made.

The Board moved: To accept the disclosure statement submitted by Police Chief McLaughlin and to support the hiring process as outlined above.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Approval of Meeting Minutes

- December 14, 2015 7:00 PM
- December 21, 2015
- December 28, 2015
- December 28, 2015 Executive Session

Chair Baghdady said he has some adjustments to various sets of minutes, as there is legal language in the minutes, which will require a bit of fine-tuning. Selectman Williams offered several comments on the October 27 minutes, where he made a Pension presentation. Selectman Williams noted that he would like to see his presentation and the notation of the "Stifle Letter" included in the Minutes. {??}

The Board moved: To approve the meeting minutes noted above, with the Executive Session on 12/28/15.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The following sets of Minutes will be approved, after adjustments are made:

- October 27, 2015 Executive Session
- October 27, 2015
- November 16, 2015
- December 14, 2015 8:00 AM
- December 14, 2015 Executive Session
- December 21, 2015 Executive Session

Committee Liaison Reports/Other

Selectman Williams suggested that Mr. Jim Sloman, BOS appointment to the Retirement Board meet with the Board. He also noted that the Energy Committee needs a liaison. Selectman Paolillo requested to be the liaison. He then asked for an update on the Financial Task Force's "projection model".

NEXT MEETINGS

Monday, February 8, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. Chenery Middle School (i.e., before Special Town Meeting).

The Board moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:36 p.m.



Mr. David Kale, Town Administrator

