

**MINUTES
TOWN OF BELMONT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
Monday, March 2, 2009
7:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Board was called to order in open session at 7:06 PM by Chairman Firenze in the Selectmen's meeting room. Both Selectmen were present. Town Administrator Tom Younger and Assistant Town Administrator Jeff Conti were also present.

QUESTIONS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS

There were none.

ACTION BY APPOINTMENT

CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) Policy

Human Resources Director Ms. Crimmins appeared before the Board to discuss updating the town's CORI policy. Positions that require a CORI check are those dealing with the elderly, children, and those positions where it is necessary to access the inside of people's homes. The Library Board will begin CORI checks for positions there, and down the road, financial positions that require a high level of confidentiality will have a CORI check as well. Ms. Crimmins is requesting the Board to adopt the updated CORI policy, which now requires periodic training for those who do CORI checks, the inclusion of an appeals process, a new state form, and a new non-disclosure form.

The Board moved: To adopt the updated CORI policy.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Water Bond

Treasurer Carman appeared before the Board to discuss a water bond to repair water pipes. This bond was previously approved by Town Meeting in October of 2006. This second installment of the water bond is for \$872,000. The third installment will be signed in 2010 and the fourth and final installment will be in 2011.

The Board moved: To sign the water bond bill for \$872,000 to fix the pipes.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The Board signed the bond bill.

Wellington Debt Exclusion

The Board discussed the Wellington debt exclusion with Treasurer Carman. This is expected to be a \$40M project, of which the town would likely fund \$26M through a debt exclusion, assuming the state funds \$14M. The tax increase for this would be about \$375.00 per year for the average household for 20 years. If the bond was moved to 25 years, it may reduce the cost for tax payers by about \$75.00 per year.

Appointment of Constable

The Board discussed that there have been a number of requests to appoint Mr. James Tortola as a Constable, which would make Constable number eight. This would be a three-year appointment. Mr. Conti noted that the more Constables appointed by the Board results in less work for each Constable. Following this appointment, he advised, the Board may want to vote to put a moratorium on new appointments. Mr. Younger said that Constables are not used very often, and that we need no more than eight. Chair Firenze suggested that Mr. Tortola should be appointed, but that the Board would appoint no new Constables until the number drops off to six. Six is probably the ideal number, he said.

The Board moved: To appoint Mr. James Tortola as Belmont Constable.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The Board moved: That the ideal number of Constables for the town is six and, through attrition, the Board will get back to that number.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

OPEB – Water and Sewer

Town Accountant Hagg appeared before the Board to discuss the OPEB budget item in Water and Sewer Enterprises for FY10. Selectman Jones began by saying that the Light Department wanted to pay their entire annual OPEB obligation (Annual Required Contribution, or ARC), which results in shifting the cost off toward rate payers and away from tax payers. Chair Firenze noted that the largest ratepayers are tax-exempt organizations and he is okay with shifting the burden to the tax exempt entities. Ms. Hagg noted that, from an accounting standpoint, the town is not shifting the cost to rate payers – the businesses of Water, Sewer and Light are three separate enterprises and should be treated as such, paying for their own obligations.

The Board discussed this issue of the enterprise entities funding their OPEB liability from several angles (cost shifting, rate setting, funding the ARC) and ultimately agreed that they were comfortable leaving this the way it has been.

ACTION BY CONSENT

Town Meeting Warrant – Opening and Closing Dates

The Board moved: To open the Town Meeting Warrant on March 9, 2009 at 9:00 am and close it on March 27, 2009 at 12:00 noon.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The Board discussed who places articles on the Warrant, e.g., a citizen's petition. Mr. Younger noted that Town Meeting member emails will be requested this year when the Warrant is sent out.

ACTION BY WRITING

Acceptance of Fuel/Oil Bids

Mr. Younger reviewed the gasoline, diesel, and fuel oil bids. The Board discussed the low number of bidders and the fact that the town of Belmont has used the same bidder for several years. Chair Firenze asked about the current "spot price". Mr. Younger said that if we didn't accept this bid – it would be very risky for Belmont. It would take 4-6 weeks to get new bids out, and the bids could come back at a higher price. Chair Firenze said he is uncomfortable accepting these bid(s) at these particular prices. Mr. Younger said he can review the process for FY11. Chair Firenze suggested we accept these bids and do a comparison to help get a sense of what is more cost effective for the next contract.

The Board moved: To accept the bids this year and at the same time conduct a parallel process to compare the prices, and make no consortium commitments for FY11 until the comparison has been analyzed.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Will Brownsberger – Legislative Update

Representative Brownsberger appeared before the Board to give his legislative update and examine federal and state priorities. The federal stimulus money was discussed. Representative Brownsberger said in the next two months the pieces on that will fall into place. Mr. Younger said a "priorities list" has been sent to the state. Representative Brownsberger stated that the Trapelo Road project needs to be absolutely "shovel ready" to receive stimulus funds. He noted two areas that may hold the project up: the Waltham section of Trapelo Road (Beaver Brook park conduit) and the reverse angle parking in Cushing Square. District four may have a problem with the reverse angle parking and may not sign off. Chair Firenze said we should get approval (e.g., omit reverse angle parking) and then tweak the project later on. The Board agreed that the project should move forward.

Representative Brownsberger and the Board discussed the Wellington School project.

Chair Firenze asked about school aid. Representative Brownberger replied that regarding Chapter 70, there will be no increases. The hope now is to hold ground on the existing

formula. Selectman Leclerc asked about the stimulus money safe-guarding positions, e.g. teacher, police, fire. Mr. Younger said after that after three years, the town is still obligated to keep those positions (without federal funding).

Regionalization in health care was discussed, e.g. a new regional Board of Health. Chair Firenze said that the question of how to increase services with the same cost is the challenge. Regionalization is the direction we should be moving toward, he added, with regard to many areas, e.g., snow removal, fire vehicles, education, etc. Representative Brownsberger and the Board agreed that regionalization was clearly the appropriate direction to move toward.

Annual Town Election Warrant

Mr. Conti noted that the VFW liquor license request is on the Warrant. It was noted that Precinct 6 will continue voting at the Our Lady site (former Senior Center) for the April election.

The Board moved: To sign the Town Election Warrant.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Mr. Younger discussed the consolidation of voting areas to save money. Chair Firenze concurred that this was a worthy idea. He suggested doing it during a town election (as opposed to a state and federal election) as a trial run.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Younger reported on the following items:

- Senior Center – Occupancy will probably be in early June. The food pantry will have space for their overflow. Chair Firenze suggested that the new Senior Center house the food storage for the food pantry.
- VFW Hall – Mr. Younger's office is reviewing licensing fees of this type. Chair Firenze requested that the town's costs be covered.
- Woodfall Road – Mr. Younger will update the value of that property with Dick Simmons.
- Pavement Management – Mr. Clancy is updating the bids (School Street).
- Audit Report – Scheduled for June 1, 2009.
- CPA – Matching grant amounts from the state are dropping.
- Waverley Square Parking Lot – Mr. Clancy is looking into the pricing of the project.
- The Planning Board will meet with the Church leaders regarding the parking lot issue.

Other (Chair Firenze comments)

- Chair Firenze requested a union salary negotiation status update – Mr. Younger said that meetings are underway and are going well.
- Benton Library appointments – Chair Firenze had the names of two people he is recommending for the Benton committee. Chair Firenze requested that Selectmen Leclere and Jones come up with some potential names. He also requested that a “charge” be drafted up for the Benton committee.
- Affordable Housing Coalition – Chair Firenze attended the meeting. Selectman Leclerc said that he would like to discuss the issue of affordable housing further.

Executive Session

The Board moved to enter in executive session at 9:17 PM to discuss litigation and value of real property. The Board will not return to open session.

(During executive session, no substantive motions were made. The Board adjourned the meeting at 9:58 pm.)

Thomas G. Younger, Town Administrator