

MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MONDAY, MAY 14, 2007
REGULAR SESSION
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM, TOWN HALL
7:00PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Board was called to order in open session at 7:02 PM in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at Town Hall. All members were present. Town Administrator Tom Younger and Assistant Town Administrator Jeff Conti were also present.

II. QUESTIONS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS

There were no questions.

III. ACTION BY APPOINTMENT

One-Day Liquor License Application

Patricia Mihelich appeared before the Board on behalf of Belmont 150, the Town's Sesquicentennial Committee. The license is for the Committee's fundraiser on May 19th at St. Joseph's.

The Board moved: To approve the license.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

Mr. Conti pointed out that because the Committee is a Town body, the Town is paying the cost of the liquor liability insurance for this event. Given the significant cost, he recommended that in the future, Town committees refrain from serving alcohol at functions.

Snow Clearing Policy Discussion

DPW Director Peter Castanino appeared before the Board. The Board discussed a suggestion from a resident to require residents to clear the snow from sidewalks in front of their property. Such a by-law has been proposed twice in the past and defeated by Town Meeting each time. There is concern that this would place a burden on seniors and that enforcement would be difficult. The Board reviewed a summary of what other localities in the area do. Most of the communities that have such a requirement are cities rather than towns.

Mr. Castanino explained that there are between 10 and 15 miles of sidewalk in Belmont. The Town does use sidewalk plows to clear sidewalks on some of the major roads and in front of the schools. DPW does not have enough staff to clear these sidewalks until after the streets have been plowed. The Town does have a requirement for businesses to clear the snow in front of their properties. The Highway Division is considering a joint purchase with Parks and Recreation of a multi-purpose vehicle that could be used for plowing sidewalks. DPW has a snow information brochure for residents and businesses which explains how the Town handles a snowstorm - this is also available on the Town's web site.

The Selectmen agreed that it would not be particularly useful to put a residential snow clearing by-law before Town Meeting again - it would require a two-thirds vote and this seems very unlikely to pass given the previous defeats.

Metropolitan Planning Organization - Vote

The Board discussed how to cast the Town's vote for town and city representatives on the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

The Board moved: To support the sole candidate for the town seat, the Chairman of the Framingham Board of Selectmen.

Motion passed unanimously (3-0).

There are two candidates for the city seat - the incumbent, the Mayor of Somerville, and the challenger, the Mayor of Everett.

The Board moved: To support the Mayor of Somerville for the city seat on the MPO.

Motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Budget Issues

There was a brief discussion of the budget. Chairman Firenze briefed the Board on the Warrant Committee's discussion of the school budget. It was understood that the School Committee will be finalizing a revised budget proposal at its meeting tomorrow night and it will be presented to the Warrant Committee on Wednesday.

The Board went on to discuss the recommendations of the Capital Budget Committee (CBC), which include \$150,000 in debt service for a proposed bond to fund the high school HVAC units. Mr. Conti noted that state law only allows a 5 year amortization for such a bond unless the Board states that the useful life of the equipment is longer than that. The Board also reviewed a list of items submitted to the CBC but rejected as maintenance items, to the tune of some \$468,000. Chairman Firenze said he felt that \$280,000 of these items should be funded in FY08. Given these items and the revised deficit of \$1.5 million, he said he is willing to support a revised free cash figure of \$1.8 million including the maintenance items.

The Board will consider these issues in greater detail next week with the benefit of corrected, revised, and updated information.

There was discussion of the presentation of the Blueprint Committee's report at Town Meeting and whether this can be done in a way that allows discussion and feedback from Town Meeting Members.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Younger is working on a new report which will give the status of all items discussed by the Board. This will eliminate the long discussions under "Other" because all items will either be on the report or be recommended for addition to the report.

In response to an earlier inquiry from the Board, Mr. Younger said the Town can provide town e-mail addresses for the Selectmen. However, off-site access would be complicated, although possible. The e-mail buffer for these accounts would be limited in how many unanswered e-mails it could hold.

At the recent Open Meeting Law seminars for Town committees and staff, it was clarified that the door to an "open meeting" may be closed if desired. It is recommended, though not required, to put a notice on the door indicating that the public may enter.

The ribbon cutting to open the 2007 Belmont Farmers' Market will be Thursday, June 14 at 1:50 PM. The Selectmen have been invited to attend.

The Town has received a grant of 30 recycling carts from the state DEP worth \$2,000.

There was a brief discussion of progress on overhauling the Town's web site.

IV. ACTION BY CONSENT

- ? Approval of April 4, 2007 Board of Selectmen Organization Minutes
- ? Approval of April 9, 2007 Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
- ? Approval of April 23, 2007 Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
- ? Approval of April 30, 2007 Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes

The Board moved: To approve the minutes.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

V. ACTION BY WRITING

- ? Disclosure of Representation regarding Petroleum Traders Litigation

The Board moved: To acknowledge the information concerning potential conflict of interest and approve the representation.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

- ? Cushing Square Parking Sign Change

This item will be held until the first meeting in June.

- ? Approval of Habitat Housing Deed Rider

The Board moved: To sign the rider document.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

- ? Our Lady of Mercy Taxes - Reserve Fund Request

The current Senior Center lease exempts the property from taxation. However, the property is still assessed and billed, so the Town is actually going to reimburse the Archdiocese to pay the taxes back to the Town. This will require a reserve fund transfer.

The Board moved: To recommend the Warrant Committee approve the transfer to pay the Senior Center taxes.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

- ? Approval of Sandrick Road Block Party

The Board moved: To approve the block party.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

- ? Approval of Gregorian Brothers Used Car Dealer's License - Class II

The Board moved: To approve the license.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

? Approval of Taxi, Laundromat and Antique Licenses

The Board moved: To approve the licenses.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

? BMLD's Annual Report to the Department of Public Utilities

The Board moved: To accept and sign the report.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

VI. OTHER

? Appointment to Belmont Center Planning Group(BCPG)

The BCPG has requested some input from the Capital Projects Overview Committee (CPOC). Allan Vanderley of the CPOC was recommended to sit on the BCPG which has been looking for new members.

The Board moved: To appoint Allan Vanderley to the Belmont Center Planning Group.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

It was noted the Board will consider committee appointments in mid-June. The Board would like to purge its volunteer database of any submissions more than 3 years old or those who have been appointed to other committees. The Board will be reviewing the work of each committee as well as attendance records of members seeking reappointment. There was discussion of the process for making the appointments.

Selectman Leclerc asked about the status of the Municipal Light Advisory Board (MLAB)'s desire to become the Light Board. The MLAB will be coming to the Board again with a recommendation for how to move forward on this issue. Mr. Conti suggested Selectman Leclerc can review the Light Board minutes when this was discussed in order to get up to speed on this issue. The Board will meet with the Permanent Audit Committee and the MLAB on June 11 to review that committee's report on the Light Department.

The Board has received a request to consider removing the one-side-only parking restriction on Marlboro Street. The Parking Group will look at this in the context of the Pavement Management Committee's general recommendations regarding one side parking.

The Human Rights Commission will come before the Board at its first meeting in June. The Board would like to discuss with the Commission a string of resignations and allow a recently resigned member to participate. Also, the Town is receiving a designation as a No Place for Hate community from the Anti-Defamation League.

There is a new Chair and Vice Chair of the Board of Health. The Board thanked Dr. Alper for his service as the outgoing chairman.

The Board adjourned at 9:48 PM.

Thomas G. Younger, Town Administrator
