

MINUTES
MONDAY, JUNE 11, 2007
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
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 7:00 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

Dick Madden and Arthur Wolfson expressed concerns about whether Bridges is putting sidewalks in on Pleasant Street where they are not supposed to go. Chairman Firenze suggested a meeting for himself and the residents with Community Development Director Glenn Clancy to review the latest drawings and review what is being done. Mr. Younger will set this up.

III. ACTION BY APPOINTMENT

Discussion of Long Term Borrowing Bond Issue
Sewer and Financial Software

Town Clerk Delores Keefe and Treasurer Floyd Carman appeared before the Board. Mr. Carman is requesting a vote for the sale of \$3.365M in bond issue for storm and sewer drain work and MUNIS software. The expenses have already been approved by Town Meeting.

The Board moved: To approve the borrowing of the stated amount for the stated purpose.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0). The Board signed the necessary documents. Mr. Younger noted that Belmont's bond rating has been recertified as AAA, something only 12 communities in Massachusetts can boast.

Former Incinerator Site Discussion

DPW Director Peter Castanino and a consultant from Camp, Dresser & McKee appeared before the Board. The Town is fulfilling its state reporting requirements to analyze possible options for closing the incinerator site and future uses. The range of uses the Town wants to consider will affect the design for capping the site. Chairman Firenze suggested that various groups and departments will have suggestions for best uses and the Board will have to make a choice. The consultant noted that a large portion of the site has been used for dumping excess fill from construction jobs; if testing can show there is no health risk associated, that area might not need to be capped, resulting in substantial savings. The Town could even agree to accept an additional 300,000 tons of fill for a fee of a few dollars per ton.

Mr. Castanino noted that the site was originally capped around 1980, but that work has been deemed environmentally insufficient.

FY08 Water and Sewer Rates

Sewer Committee Chair Ralph Jones and Water Superintendent Gerry Schultz joined Mr. Castanino to recommend new water and sewer rates for FY08. MWRA charges will be a major part of both the water and sewer budgets. MWRA is struggling with significant debt from capital projects, most of which have been mandatory.

Mr. Castanino noted the trend in Belmont and the MWRA community is a decrease in water use, for economic and environmental reasons. The Water Advisory Board has approved a recommendation to raise the water rate by 5%, using \$345,000 from water retained earnings to subsidize that rate.

Mr. Jones said the Sewer Committee recommends a 4% increase in sewer rates. This is the same level increase as last year and represents an effort to stabilize rate increases.

The Board moved: To approve the water and sewer rate increases for FY08 as requested.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

Special Police

Police Chief Richard McLaughlin appeared before the Board to discuss the special police. He has created specific guidelines for the process of appointing special police officers. The new rules would clarify the age limit of 65 for working details, and who is eligible to become a special police officer.

The Board moved: To approve the new guidelines for special police officer status.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

Budget Issues

The Board reviewed the budget as of May 30 and all of the additions and subtractions that have taken place over the past months to arrive at a balanced budget. The final total leaves a very small excess revenue of \$14,656. This includes the \$515,000 reduction in health care cost estimates recommended by the Warrant Committee. The Warrant Committee has committed to supporting a reserve fund transfer if the revised estimate proves to be insufficient. On that basis, the Board agreed to support the reduced budget.

The Board moved: To support the budget conditionally upon the understanding regarding a possible reserve fund transfer as discussed.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0). Firenze noted that this represents a consensus budget with the Warrant Committee and the School Committee.

The Board proceeded to discuss the use of free cash. After the amounts included in the operating budget, just about \$3 million remains. The Warrant Committee has recommended using \$2.1 million for roads and \$500,000 toward the Town's post-employment benefits (OPEB) liability. The remainder would stay in free cash. These recommendations are incorporated into the capital budget and main budget motions.

The Board moved: To support Article 10, the capital budget article.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

The Board moved: To support Article 4, the main budget article.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

Mr. Younger said he will be meeting at the end of June with the Town's financial team to lay out a schedule for the FY09 budget process which will allow the FY09 budget to be approved in April 2008.

IV. ACTION BY CONSENT

? Committee Appointments Information Process

Chairman Firenze noted that the only piece of info that is missing from the committee packets is how long current committee members have served. There was discussion about how to obtain this information and how to practically apply a guideline that members should serve no more than 3 consecutive terms.

Chairman Firenze suggested having a meeting with the Housing Trust to discuss the group's philosophy regarding affordable housing, and holding off on making appointments until after that meeting.

III. ACTION BY APPOINTMENT

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Younger reported on the following items:

- " The Fox25 morning broadcast from Belmont went very well and projected a positive image of the town.
- " The BHS Graduation Party Committee thanked the Town for its support of the event which was a success.
- " Tentative closing date for the Woodfall Road land swap is July 6.
- " The deed transfer for the Habitat house is complete.
- " The Historic District Commission has given its recommendation on door choice for the Town Hall. The recommended option will cost \$16,000.
- " Pleasant Street curb installation continues on the east side between Trapelo Road and Concord Avenue.
- " The deed transfer for the Sherman Street land will be signed at the Board's June 18 meeting.

The Board noted that the financial software transition is complete and went very smoothly thanks to some very hard work by our financial and IT officers.

The Board moved: To honor the appropriate personnel for the efforts in successfully implementing the transition.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

- " A volunteer effort is getting underway to clean the MBTA bridge and repaint the pedestrian tunnel under it. This will not involve any expense to the Town.
- " The Police Traffic Division is investigating a possible parking change on Marlboro Street to remove a one-side parking restriction.

There was discussion about the guidelines for retail liquor licenses. The deadline for applicants is June 15 but the Board will not be approving the guidelines until June 25 at the earliest. It was clarified that the Board can reject any and all applications, but the applicant can appeal to the state ABCC. There was discussion of the process of communicating the guidelines and whether or not to extend the deadline. The Board asked to have the guidelines document sent to them as soon as possible with hopes of voting on it by June 18 if possible.

It was clarified that the land on Lamoine Street has been auctioned and the process of trying to work out a closing date is underway.

The Harvard Lawn FS is being re-appraised in preparation for a new RFP.

Town Counsel has opined that the Underwood Pool land is under the jurisdiction of the Recreation Commission. It remains unclear whether the Commission also has the land surrounding the VFW building, which would affect the Town's options for use of the VFW building should it be turned back to the Town.

V. ACTION BY WRITING

? Town of Walpole Request for Revised 40B Legislation

The Town of Walpole is asking Belmont to support a proposal to revise the state's 40B legislation regarding affordable housing. The bill would place a moratorium on unfriendly 40B developments until such time as the issues surrounding the statute have been subject to a thorough review. There was discussion of whether to send a letter supporting the proposal to the Legislature.

The Board moved: To write a letter supporting such a moratorium with a duration of no more than two years and to notify Walpole of same.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

? Municipal Partnership Act

The Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) has sent a draft of a suggested resolution in support of the Act.

The Board moved: To rescind its earlier motion instructing the Town Administrator to write a letter of support, and instead to endorse and sign the resolution suggested by MMA.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

VI. OTHER

The Board discussed a letter received from the Belmont Center Business Association (BCBA) requesting a moratorium on the opening of the Farmer's Market. 4 BCBA members favored the market, 11 were opposed, and 6 were neutral. The BCBA is concerned about the availability of parking in the lot. They are suggesting moving the Farmer's Market to the high school parking lot. They are also objecting to the sale of flowers and chocolates and the lack of a chemical toilet for the Market which results in patrons and merchants using the TCBY bathroom.

The Board noted that the high school lot was considered originally as a site and rejected. Selectman Solomon said he frequented the market last summer and at no time was the parking lot so full that it would prevent business customers from parking, nor have the police indicated that any such problem exists. He said it is very unfortunate that this letter comes three days before the opening of the market.

Mr. Younger indicated that the Farmer's Market is looking into the possibility of having a chemical toilet for the market.

Selectman Leclerc said he does not sympathize with most of the complaints but does feel that a hearing should be held after the market's season is over to allow the businesses and any other

interested parties to present their concerns and have a dialogue. The Board agreed it is not a viable option to halt the Farmer's Market at this point.

The Board moved: To respond to the letter, stating that the Board cannot cancel the Farmer's Market after having already made a commitment, that it is unfortunate the letter came so late, and that at the conclusion of the market's season a public hearing will be held with the BCBA, the Farmer's Market, and the Board on the third Monday of November to discuss these issues.

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

Chairman Solomon reported that he met with the resident of Farnham Road who had complained about the Channing Road parking changes. The Board reiterated it is willing to review the changes in 6 months.

The Board will meet at 6:30 PM on June 18th.

Chairman Firenze noted that the Belmont baseball team is playing for the Division II North Championship tomorrow night in Lowell.

The Board adjourned at 10:48 PM.

Thomas G. Younger, Town Administrator