

MINUTES
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2005
SPECIAL SESSION

Call to Order

A special open session of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 7:35 AM. All members 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

*Application for Licenses and Permit – Original
Victualler’s License*

Vivian Abkarian / Katherine Collins d/b/a Café D’Or, 442 Common Street

Ms. Abkarian and Ms. Collins appeared before the Board of Selectmen. They are opening a new restaurant which will be open 7 days a week. They commented on the difficulty of the process of opening a business in Belmont. The Board of Selectmen expressed its desire to address this issue. The owners stated that they did not find the Town to be helpful in this process. The Selectmen discussed having the new Town Planner put together a checklist of all the steps in opening a new business in Belmont.

Town Administrator Younger stated that after the October Town Meeting, he wants to put together a one-stop shopping development team so that businesses can come in and know what they will need to do to open a new business in Town.

The Board moved: to approve the application for licenses and permit for Café D’Or, 442 Common Street.

The motion carried unanimously (3-0).

Discussion of Special Town Meeting Warrant

The Board of Selectmen discussed placing an article on the Town Meeting warrant to appropriate funds for the Senior Center project, subject to the passage of a debt exclusion vote in the November 14 special election. This article would require a two-thirds vote.

The Selectmen expressed unanimously their support for the Senior Center project and bringing the project before the Town for a debt exclusion vote.

The Board of Selectmen discussed the process of mitigating some of the debt with funds raised privately and/or monies from the Woodfall road land sale, and ensuring Town Meeting knows that if it approves an appropriation for the Senior Center, it will have a voice in these related aspects.

The Board of Selectmen discussed adding a statement to this effect to one of the articles or having the Selectmen appear before Town Meeting to verbally make this commitment.

The Selectmen noted the need to make clear to the voters that they are voting for the process by which these capital projects have been planned and prioritized, not voting for one project (Senior Center) versus another such as the schools or the library.

The Board of Selectmen discussed whether contracting authority should rest with a building committee or with the Board and who appoints and oversees such committees in other towns. Assistant Town Administrator Conti explained that in this case the article's wording will need to clarify where that authority rests.

Senior Center Building Committee Chair Karen Pressey appeared before the Board of Selectmen to talk about the role of the Permanent Building Committee in retaining institutional memory of projects that had gone before.

Ms. Pressey then expressed concern about going before Town Meeting to ask for the full cost of the project before the election. She stated that this vote would have a better chance of passing if a debt exclusion vote passes on Nov. 14. She also stated that privately raised funds would be sufficient to kick off the design process while awaiting a Town Meeting vote.

The Board of Selectmen noted that if a Town meeting vote fails, it will hurt the ability to fundraise as well as have a negative impact on the town-wide vote. The Selectmen also noted that in the past a Town Meeting vote has sometimes come before and sometimes after the debt exclusion election. Ms. Pressey re-iterated her preference to have it after.

The Board of Selectmen agreed to put a Senior Center appropriation article on the warrant for the October 24 Town Meeting. The Board of Selectmen also agreed not to change the contracting authority resting with the Senior Center Committee but to address changing this process after the November 14 Town election.

Town Administrator Younger reported that the alcohol licensing committee is looking into one-day liquor licenses for fundraisers. This would require a home rule

petition to the Legislature. They have proposed a Town Meeting article to do this. Mr. Younger recommended that this wait until a future Town Meeting so that all the necessary information to inform a vote can be assembled. The Board of Selectmen agreed with this recommendation.

The Board of Selectmen discussed the idea of leasing the Central Fire Station property rather than selling it. It was expressed that this might make a developer more hesitant to do all the work necessary to develop the property. No decision on this question was taken.

The Board of Selectmen noted that the security system article is being taken off the warrant because the information available to go forward at this time is not sufficient. It had been agreed previously to approach the security question comprehensively for Town buildings, not piecemeal, but not enough work has been done on such a plan. There are some complications on certain buildings regarding electric doors that need to be addressed by the Town Hall Complex Building Committee in order to go forward. A basic security system can be put in inexpensively as a temporary measure and then a more robust system can be looked at in the context of the comprehensive plan.

Discussion of FY2006 Goals

There was discussion of the current list of goals. It was agreed that there needed to be more explanation of timing, and grouping of goals. The Board discussed prioritization of these goals.

The Selectmen noted that Mr. Younger is going to be judged on his achievement of these goals and it is not fair to expect him to be able to accomplish all the things on the list. The Board will also be judging itself on these criteria.

The Board of Selectmen took a few minutes for each Selectman to come up with five goals for discussion. Some of the general areas discussed included planning and economic development, capital project management, budgeting, communications, and personnel development.

After some discussion of various ideas, the Board returned to consideration of Town Administrator Younger's original goals document.

It was proposed that Mr. Younger and Mr. Conti take the Board's ideas and rework the document for re-presentation to the Board of Selectmen, followed by a final resolution at the October 17 meeting. The Board also raised the idea of a quarterly review of progress toward meeting these goals.

The Board of Selectmen agreed to hold its next meeting, on October 5, at the Chenery School to facilitate participation in the Warrant Committee to follow.

The Board of Selectmen adjourned its special session at 9:53 AM.

Thomas G. Younger
Town Administrator