

**MINUTES  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
OCTOBER 21, 2002  
REGULAR SESSION**

**Call to Order**

The Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Monday, October 21, 2002 at 7:30 PM in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at the Belmont Town Hall. All members were in attendance.

**Questions from Town Residents**

There were none.

**Action by Appointment**

*Approval of State Election Warrant*

The Board reviewed and signed the State Election Warrant as submitted by Town Clerk.

The Board moved: to approve the State Election Warrant.

The motion passed unanimously, (3-0).

The Town Clerk announced the League of Women Voters' recent gift to the Town of two public bulletin boards to replace two that are currently in disrepair.

*Traffic Advisory Committee re: White Street Reconstruction and Committee Charge*

Ms. Frisoli, Chairman of the Traffic Advisory Committee, reviewed with the Board its proposed revisions to the charge of the Traffic Advisory Committee.

The members of the Board expressed their support for the charge as developed by the committee and requested that the Traffic Advisory Committee articulate a timeline for the achievement of short-term goals by January 2003.

The Board discussed how traffic or parking issues can be directed to appropriate departments or committees instead of coming through the Board of Selectmen. The Board requested the Traffic Advisory Committee work with the Office of Community Development and the Police Department to determine broad guidelines for the referral of the wide variety of issues, concerns and complaints that arise related to traffic that arise.

The Board also requested a more detailed strategy including timetables associated with the Committee's long term plans and projects.

The Board moved: to approve the Traffic Advisory Committee's charge, as proposed.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Mr. Gatzunis, Director of Community Development, provided an overview of a meeting of the Traffic Advisory Committee with residents in the vicinity of White Street regarding traffic safety measures to be

implemented in the reconstruction of White Street as part of the Town's Pavement Management program.

Mr. Gatzunis advised the Board of Selectmen of the results of the bid process for the Town's Pavement Management program. He informed them that the bids came in much higher than expected and, as a result, it is likely that a number of roads are likely to need to be delayed until next fiscal year. He indicated that White Street will remain on the list and would be undertaken as soon as weather allows. Mr. Gatzunis reviewed his intent to conduct an analysis to determine the eligibility for a "four-way" stop intersection at White and Beech Streets.

#### *Discussion of Pleasant Street Reconstruction*

Mr. Brownsberger reported of the Town's success in restoring the Pleasant Street project on the state's transportation improvement program.

The Board discussed the Pleasant Street reconstruction plan. The Town's consultant from the BSC Group outlined the timeline for the likely commencement of the Pleasant Street reconstruction project.

The Board addressed the matter of the design of sidewalks on Pleasant Street in the vicinity of Snake Hill Road.

Some residents of Pleasant Street in the vicinity of Snake Hill Road were present to request that a sidewalk not be installed on the west side of Pleasant Street between Concord Avenue and Snake Hill Road.

Mr. Gatzunis reviewed his analysis of the legal question of whether the Town is required to install a sidewalk along this stretch of Pleasant Street under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). He indicated that both he and Town Counsel have determined that the Town is not legally required to install a sidewalk as part of this reconstruction project.

Mr. Wolfson, a resident of Pleasant Street, argued in a lengthy prepared statement against installation of a sidewalk along this portion of Pleasant Street.

Mr. Madden, a resident of Pleasant Street, argued at length against installation of a sidewalk along this portion of Pleasant Street.

Dr. Solomon inquired whether any type of curbing would allow for parking along Pleasant Street. Mr. Gatzunis responded that, regardless the curbing, there is not sufficient roadway width to allow parking along the roadway and that it was unlikely that Mass Highway would allow any type of curbing other than vertical granite curbing along Pleasant Street because of the significant drainage issues.

Mrs. Mahoney mentioned her sensitivity to historic preservation, but also acknowledged the tradeoffs in this decision relative to traffic calming and pedestrian safety. She supported installing a sidewalk along this length of Pleasant Street.

Dr. Solomon summarized the issue as a choice between installing a sidewalk along Pleasant Street between Concord Avenue and Snake Hill Road and not installing a sidewalk, but only granite curbing. He inquired about pedestrian safety as currently constructed.

The Town's consultant commented that if a sidewalk is not installed along this length, then a crosswalk cannot be installed between Snake Hill Road and the sidewalk on the east side of Pleasant Street. Mr. Gatzunis commented that the installation of the sidewalk would allow residents in the vicinity of the

sidewalk to walk along the roadway and to be able to cross Pleasant Street at a pedestrian-actuated stoplight.

Mr. Brownsberger expressed the complexity of this issue and the numerous trade-offs involved in this decision. He expressed respect for the resident's desires, but stated that on balance of all the competing interests, he supports the installation of a sidewalk along Pleasant Street to ensure the safety of pedestrian who may choose to traverse this section of Pleasant Street.

Dr. Solomon reiterated the difficulty of this decision, but considered the installation of a sidewalk along this length as in the best interest of the greatest number of people.

The Board moved: to approve the Pleasant Street plans as currently articulated including the installation of a sidewalk along the west side of Pleasant Street between Concord Avenue and Snake Hill Road.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

*Town Accountant re: Five-Year Financial Projection*

The Board met with Barbara Hagg, Town Accountant, and Robie White, member of the Warrant Committee, to discuss recent analysis of a five-year financial projection for the Town. Ms. Hagg summarized the projected FY04 budget shortfall as being approximately \$1.8 million at this time. The Town Administrator highlighted some major components that contribute to this shortfall.

Mr. Brownsberger stated a desire to examine how budgets might be cut this year in order to better position the Town for the projected revenue shortfall in FY04. He proposed the Board discuss mid-year cost cutting options at their meeting on November 4 and continue to discuss the FY04 projections with the Warrant Committee over the next few weeks.

*Management Information and Communications Committee re: Committee Charge*

The Board reviewed the proposed charge of the Committee's activities including a name change to the Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC).

Dr. Solomon stated his desire that the committee be proactive in identifying, advocating, and pushing forward technologies that would provide residents with high speed Internet access.

It was felt that the language in the charge was sufficiently broad and encompassing.

The Board moved: to approve the proposed charge of the Information Technology Advisory Committee.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

John Bowe, Chairman of the Information Technology Advisory Committee, outlined a plan of approach for the committee to meet its charge.

*Discussion of Board Meeting Schedule*

The Board reviewed a memorandum from the Assistant Town Administrator regarding the Board's Meeting Schedule.

Mr. Brownsberger suggested that a meeting be held on October 28 to discuss the fire station project.

The Board also discussed their schedule of budget hearings with Department heads. The Board agreed to the meetings as scheduled.

*Discussion of Appointment of Acting Chief of Police*

The Board discussed the recommendation of the Town Administrator to appoint Captain Andrew O'Malley as Acting Chief of Police.

The Board moved: to appoint Captain Andrew O'Malley, Acting Chief of Police, pursuant to applicable civil service law.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The Town Administrator expressed his desire to seek exemption of the Police Chief position from the Civil Service system.

The Board expressed its unanimous intent to seek removal of the position of Chief of Police from state civil service law.

**Action by Writing**

*Memorandum from Town Administrator re: 53-Week Payroll in FY03*

The Board reviewed a memorandum from the Town Administrator regarding the 53-Week Payroll in FY03.

The Board supported the intent of departments to absorb the 53-week payroll costs within FY03 budget levels. The Board also supported the Town Administrator's recommendation to not adjust the weekly compensation rate for management employees in light of the 53<sup>rd</sup> week.

The Board moved: to approve the Town Administrator's recommendations to resolved the issue of an unbudgeted 53<sup>rd</sup> payroll week in the FY03 budget.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

*Letter from Resident re: Request for Waiver from Plot Plan Requirement for Driveway at 48-50 Creeley Road*

The Board reviewed a letter from a resident requesting a waiver from the plot plan requirement for a driveway at 48-50 Creeley Road. The Board inquired of Mr. Gatzunis the importance of the requirement to submit a plot plan in order to receive approval to install a driveway at 48-50 Creeley Road.

The Board moved: to deny the request for a waiver from the plot plan requirement to install a driveway at 48-50 Creeley Road.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

*Letter form Resident re: Request to Place Streetlight at 595 Concord Avenue*

The Board reviewed a letter from a resident regarding a request to place a streetlight at 595 Concord Avenue.

The Board moved: to approve the recommendation of the Light Department Manager to install a street light at 595 Concord Avenue.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

*Memorandum from Police Department re: Request to Fill Part-Time Secretary Vacancy*

The Board reviewed a memorandum from the Police Department regarding approval to fill a part-time secretary vacancy.

Dr. Solomon expressed his reluctance to approve this position, without additional information from the Acting Police Chief about how the Police Department can balance their FY03 budget in light of the 53-week payroll and filling this vacancy.

Mrs. Mahoney asked for additional information from the Police Department on what work is not being accomplished as a result of this position vacancy.

Mr. Brownsberger stated that police officers should not be concerned about layoffs in the Police Department in the near future, because he believes the current level of staffing reflects significant reductions over the past year.

Mrs. Mahoney reserved the right to consider restoring vacant police officer positions in the Police Department.

The Board moved: to deny the request to fill the part-time secretary vacancy in the Police Department.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The Board agreed to revisit this request should the Police Department continue to identify this position as a priority in light of their need to fund an additional payroll week in FY03 from within their existing budget.

*Copy of Letter to Town Administrator from Belmont Employee Union Presidents re: Adoption of Coalition Bargaining Provision*

The Board reviewed a letter from the Presidents of all of the Town's and School's collective bargaining units requesting the Board of Selectmen adopt the provisions of state law that would implement coalition bargaining for health insurance. The Town Administrator remarked of his pleasure that the unions are interested in working collaboratively, but respectfully recommended against adopting this provision because he did not feel that it is in the best interest of the Town. He indicated that he is entirely supportive of working collaboratively with all unions on the health insurance negotiations.

The Board moved: to respectfully deny the request of the employee unions to adopt Section 19 of Chapter 32B related to coalition bargaining.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

*Letter from Resident re: Traffic Safety at Belmont High School*

The Board reviewed a letter from a resident regarding traffic safety at Belmont High School.

The Board moved: to refer this matter to the Police Department for their review and recommendation

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

*Report from the Police Department re: Traffic Safety at Intersection on Davis Street*

The Board reviewed a follow-up report from the Police Department regarding traffic safety at the intersection on Davis Street.

The Board moved: to approve the recommendations of the Police Department relative to enhancing traffic safety in the vicinity of Davis Street.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

*Selectmen's Issues List*

The Board reviewed an updated Selectmen's issues list.

Mrs. Mahoney provided the Board an update of the Warrant Subcommittee on labor contracts.

Mr. Brownsberger reiterated his desire for the Board to grapple with the scheduling of the Wellington School project.

*Approval of Minutes*

The Board reviewed draft minutes of the Board's meetings of October 7 and 9, 2002.

The Board moved: to approve the minutes as submitted, with the exception of striking the word "more publicly" from the second page of the minutes of the regular session of the Board's regular meeting of October 7.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

**Other**

Mrs. Mahoney recommended the appointment of Mr. Mark McVey of 109 Brookside Avenue to the Town's Sewer and Stormwater Committee.

The Board moved: to appoint Mark McVey to the special committee on sewer and stormwater issues.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Mr. Brownsberger raised the issue of certain Hull Street residents who have expressed displeasure with the institution of resident parking along one block of Hull Street. Mr. Brownsberger requested an update

on how this program has been implemented.

The Board moved: to enter executive session to discuss the value of land related to the location of a fire station headquarters along Trapelo Road. The Board will not return to regular session.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The regular meeting adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

---

Melvin A. Kleckner, Town Administrator  
Clerk, Board of Selectmen