



**Board of Selectmen
Minutes
Tuesday, July 11, 2017 at 7:00pm
Town Hall Meeting Room**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chair Lucy Wallace in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Selectmen Stu Sklar, Kara McGuire Minar, Ken Swanton and Alice von Loesecke were in attendance as well as Town Administrator Tim Bragan and Executive Assistant Julie Doucet.

Retired Municipal Teachers (RMT)

Assistant Town Administrator/Human Resource Director Marie Sobalvarro began investigation into the RMT once the board established goals related to fiscal stability. She explained the town participates in two post-retirement insurance plans, the Minuteman Nashoba Health Group (MNHG), which provides insurance for all active employees, and retirees receiving a pension from Worcester Regional and the GIC RMT, or Retired Municipal Teachers. The RMT was created in 1972 and over time many communities have moved their teacher retirees out of it. Sobalvarro said much of the reason why is due to the parity in benefit offerings to employees and premium shares. She indicated the town has the ability to opt out of Chapter 32B allowing the town to move retired teachers to our own health plan. Sobalvarro said if the board wishes to move forward in the process a hearing must be held with a 30 day notification to all current RMT participants. Board members asked about percentage increases and impacts from the transition. On a von Loesecke/Minar motion, the board voted unanimously to hold a hearing on August 22nd to notify members of the RMT the town is considering moving them to town retirement plans.

Charter Commission discussion

Commission members Paul Cohen, Sharon McCarthy, Ron Ostberg, Rick Maiore and Laura Andrews were in attendance. Cohen described the purpose of developing a charter is to provide an outline of how the town operates. Ostberg referred to the statement of intent which describes current conditions and remedies provided by the charter. Through their research over the past fifteen months, the commission has learned many residents feel less obligation for governance over the town than in the past which explains the decrease in volunteerism. Maiore noted a great shift in how people view the town and moving forward it is imperative we organize for now and the future. The commission is working to create one document residents can clearly understand that respects the integrity and core values of the town. The commission believes a strong executive board is necessary to provide effective governance. They are recommending the Board of Selectmen, as the executive board, prepare a strategic plan which includes a definition of the town's vision.

Topics discussed included:

- overlapping authorities
- communication challenges
- change in the budget process
- appointed versus elected committees/boards
- recall option
- elimination of town caucus
- creation of a community & economic development department
- chairperson term limits
- creation of a task force to guide implementation of the charter

If the Charter is adopted modifications to the town bylaws will be necessary. The commission will complete their process in October.

State Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS)/Cadet Program

Ambulance squad member Will Stevenson reported the state is making changes to their cadet program which will mimic national programs. They have spoken with OEMS Director Mark Miller who is confident the waiver for Harvard will still be granted but promised to contact them with more information. The board expressed their support for continuation of the cadet program.

Fire/Ambulance department audit report

Bragan asked the board for guidance on how to proceed with recommendations from the department audit completed by the Collins Center. Bragan gave an update on what the Fire Department is working on which includes the hiring of full-time Firefighter/EMT. Stevenson said the Ambulance department is working to implement quarterly reporting that would include changes to the roster. The discussion included improving response times, on-call assignments and more coordination with the Fire Department. The Ambulance Department will plan their first report for the end of September early October.

Minutes

On a Sklar/Minar motion, the board voted unanimously to approve minutes of 6/6, 6/20 and 6/26, as presented.

Town Administrator report

Bragan offered dates for the fall all boards meeting. He will talk with the Finance Committee as well. He recommends early September.

Bragan said the Transfer Station attendants are enforcing the rule to not allow children out of vehicles at the Transfer Station for safety reasons. Wallace asked if members would consider amending the policy to allow if accompanied by an adult.

Bragan along with the Finance Director and Assistant Town Administrator/HR Director spoke with the state about our Information Technology (IT) needs through the community compact program. They were very receptive and will provide feedback.

Bragan is in receipt of a request about the manufacture and cultivation of marijuana in Harvard. He will consult with Town Counsel.

Bragan said a request has been received from Prospect Cider Works for a one-day liquor license the weekend of the Longboarding event. A hearing will be held at the August 1st meeting.

Bragan is seeking guidance from Town Counsel at the advisement of the Attorney General's office about article five from the Special Town Meeting. They suggest consultation with Town Counsel prior to applying sections related to single family dwellings in the new Hildreth House overlay district.

Bragan said he is working to address issues with properties on Pond Road and Warren Ave. He said the debris located on the roadway outside of 9 Warren Ave. has been removed and they are attempting to contact the owner.

Bragan said preliminary cherry sheet estimates are in and show Harvard with a net gain of \$200.

Bragan informed the board all inspectional services permitting will be electronically filed through the town website beginning on August 7th.

Bragan said we are enforcing the bylaw which prevents permits being issued to property owners who owe back taxes.

Bragan will hold an employee appreciation lunch on August 2nd.

Chapter Land – Right of First Refusal

Horowitz, Woodchuck Hill Road

On a Swanton/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to decline the towns right of first refusal on this parcel.

Board of Selectmen Goals

On a Swanton/Minar motion, the board voted unanimously to accept goals.

Selectmen policies & procedures

On a von Loesecke/Sklar motion, the board voted to accept as revised. The motion did not pass. (3-2, Swanton, Sklar, von Loesecke – Nay)

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20pm.

Documents referenced:

Review of Chapter 32B – dated 7.11.2017

Draft Charter – dated 7.6.2017

Horowitz – Notice of Intent – dated 6.21.2017

BoS Goals – dated 6.21.2017 revision 2

BoS policies & procedures – dated 6.29.2017