



**Board of Selectmen
Minutes
Tuesday, December 19, 2017 at 6:30pm
Town Hall Meeting Room**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm by Chair Lucy Wallace in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Selectmen Ken Swanton, Stu Sklar, Alice von Loesecke and Kara McGuire Minar were in attendance as well as Town Administrator Tim Bragan and Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro. Executive Assistant Julie Doucet entered at 7:00pm.

Minutes

On a Swanton/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to approve minutes from 11/7, 11/14 and 12/5, as presented.

Annual License renewals

Bragan informed the board all establishments are in good standing to be renewed for the coming year. He noted Sorrentos had not filed their renewal paperwork and safety certificates are pending for the Harvard General Store and Siam Pepper.

On a Sklar/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to approve annual license checklist as written subject to Sorrento's, Harvard General Store and Siam Pepper submitting the required documents.

Town Administrator report

Bragan attended a Montachusett Area Regional Transit (MART) meeting today. He informed the board that MART is trying to reduce their reimbursement to the towns for the dispatchers from 100% to 33%. He explained the hardship this places on smaller communities. Another meeting will be held in January to try and resolve this issue.

Bragan attended a regional town administrators meeting where Secretary Jay Ashe was present. Ashe did not have any updated information with respect to the news on the state's budget.

Bragan reported the Capital Planning & Investment Committee (CPIC) did not vote to support the purchase of the pickup truck for the Fire Department or an additional vehicle for the DPW. They discussed repurposing the Crown Victoria from the Police Department to the Fire Department and when the Police Chief's vehicle that was approved comes in they will transfer his old vehicle to the DPW Department. He explained this would add vehicles to our fleet which is a board decision.

Bragan reminded the board Town Hall will close at 12:45pm on Thursday, December 21st and reopen for normal business hours on Tuesday, December 26th.

Bare Hill Rowing Agreement

Pam Erdos from the Bare Hill Rowing Association explained they replaced the dock referenced in the agreement with a sturdier one. Bragan has spoken with the Harbormaster who has approved the dock changes; however, Bragan explained at this time the only revisions being acted on are the extension of the agreement to three years and the addition of a reopening clause. Erdos explained the summer agreement was done separate from the spring and fall agreement due to issues with noise on the pond. She told the board they have been utilizing wireless capabilities to communicate which has improved the quiet aspect even further. On a Sklar/Minar motion, the board voted unanimously to approve the Bare Hill Rowing Summer Season Agreement between Harvard and BHRA.

Ambulance appointment

On a von Loesecke/Minar motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint Kush Das to the Harvard Ambulance Squad.

Harvard Devens Jurisdiction Committee

Wallace and Minar drafted a committee charge in response to the ballot question on Devens from the 2017 Town Election. The question directed the Board of Selectmen to begin planning for and initiate discussion with appropriate parties with the goal of presenting a plan to the Town of Harvard voters to resume jurisdiction of the Town of Harvard. Swanton and von Loesecke were in agreement the entire board ought to have participation in drafting the charge and the Request for Qualification for consulting services. Swanton would also prefer advertising the need for volunteers instead of choosing those recommended by Wallace and Minar. He also felt the committee should be larger, similar to that for the Charter Commission. Wallace explained with the Master Plan Committee they had a core group of 5 which was augmented by liaisons from other town boards and that this had worked very well. Minar encouraged her fellow board members to review the Devens Impact Evaluation & Recommendations prepared by Burns McDonnell in 2015. She said it is a great resource and was completed with the Master Plan.

The board will revisit this topic at their second meeting in January, as von Loesecke will be absent from the January 9th meeting.

Police Chief Contract

On a Sklar/Minar motion, the board voted unanimously to approve contact as written.

Capital Planning & Investment Committee update

Bragan reported CPIC voted to move the Hildreth House study to FY19 (for \$40,000) and an additional \$20,000 for the Fire Station study, for a total of \$60,000 in additional CPIC funding.

FY19 Budget review prior to submittal to the Finance Committee

Bragan distributed the recap sheet, omnibus budget and a list of small warrant articles. He admitted until we receive budget amounts from the state and final figures on health insurance it is difficult to provide a balanced budget. He reviewed revenue numbers and offered areas where cuts can be made to close the deficit. The cuts included the following:

- \$5,000 – Selectmen professional services
- \$5,000 – Technology
- \$2,000 – printing of the charter
- \$500 – Land Use purchase of services
- \$24,000 – Public Building energy
- \$25,000 – Public Building repairs
- \$7,361 – Fire Department personnel
- \$3,600 – Fire Department software purchase
- \$8,000 – Tree Warden
- \$100,000 – School Department
- \$6,000 – Park & Rec commons and school ground expense

Bragan explained the rationale behind his suggestions. In addition, he suggested freezing small warrant articles at \$161,000, the amount of presently known small warrant articles. . Bragan said if the charter passes at the annual town meeting and this budget process continues he recommends it begin with the Board of Selectmen in January and February, move to the Finance Committee in March with an Annual Town Meeting in May. He admitted working on the budget this early is problematic.

Members expressed concern about freezing the small warrant articles at this time, given boards had until mid-January to submit their requests. Sklar was unhappy with the \$100,000 cut from the school budget considering the recent teacher contract negotiated and changes to retiree's health insurance. He asked to have funds restored to this budget if possible. Bragan reminded the board they always have the option to go for an override. Bragan will provide regular updates to the board as the budget process moves ahead with the Finance Committee. On a von Loesecke/Swanton, the board voted unanimously to submit to Finance Committee the budget as outlined with reductions by Tim B. resulting in a \$17,000 deficit for the Finance Committee to continue working on.

Selectmen reports

Von Loesecke has been seeking input for other boards/committees on how to improve communication. One suggestion she heard were having motions and votes readily available on the town website instead of reading news in the local paper or having to wait for official minutes to be posted online. She also heard knowledge ahead of time on what the Board of Selectmen will discuss at upcoming meetings would be beneficial. Von Loesecke is working on a general communications plan which will include guidelines with respect to the neighborhood social network Next Door Harvard. Wallace has also spoken with the Cable Committee's Station Manager Anya Zulawnik about ways to utilize public programming.

Sklar reported the War Monument Restoration Committee is moving forward with restoration of the monument and flag pole on the common. They are seeking final approval from the Historical Commission. They plan a dedication for Memorial Day 2018.

Sklar has been discussing the state's Save Money and Reduce Trash (SMART) Program with the Board of Health and DPW liaison Ken Swanton. Sklar has spoken with DPW Director Tim Kilhart who suggested starting the program by offering both stickers and bags gradually moving solely to bags.

Wallace reported the Old Library Accessibility Committee received two proposals from architects. They expect to have a recommendation for the Board of Selectmen by their first meeting in January.

Minar gave an update on the HEAT Smart Program she is working on with the Energy Advisory Committee. More detailed information will be upcoming. She reported Community Choice Aggregation is also moving forward with steps being taken to secure a broker. Minar said the group working on Ayer Road traffic calming met with Planner Bill Scanlan to review proposal from Bristol Engineering.

Von Loesecke reported the School Building Committee has approved the design to be sent for cost estimating with plans expected by the end of January.

Sklar suggested his fellow board members review the revised plans submitted to the ZBA for the Craftsman Village project on Ayer Road. He was surprised to see some of the changes. A hearing will be held on January 10th.

Wallace said the Housing @ Hildreth House Committee will meet again in January

**** On a Swanton motion, the Board voted unanimously by a roll call vote: (Sklar – Aye, Wallace – Aye, Swanton – Aye, Minar – Aye, von Loesecke – Aye) to enter into executive session at 9:50pm, as authorized by Chapter 30A, Section 21. 2, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel. Following the executive session, the Board will reconvene only to adjourn. ****

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05pm.

Documents referenced:

Annual license renewals – for calendar year 2018

Bare Hill Rowing Agreement – dated 12.19.2017

Appointment request – dated 12.6.2017

Harvard Devens Jurisdiction Committee – draft dated 12.13.2017