

**MINUTES
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
GRIFFIN ROOM, TOWN HALL
MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2015
6:30 P.M.**

APPROVED

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Brown, Cebula, Hughes, MacAskill

OTHERS PRESENT: Town Administrator Christopher Clark, Paula Champagne, David Spitz, James Atkinson, Vickie Goldsmith, Frank Boyle, Mayla Secola, Mary Jane Watson, and others.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman Hughes.

WEEKLY BRIEFING

Ms. Champagne reported that there will be no public flu clinic this year. She noted that attendance has been dwindling in recent years and there are a plethora of places accepting walk-ins for flu shots including the local markets and Fontaine Medical Center. She added that the Massachusetts Department of Health is no longer providing free vaccines to local health departments.

Ms. Goldsmith thanked Mr. Hughes for coming to the dedication of the recent Habitat Humanity Blitz Build and commented that it meant a lot to the home builders who contributed so much. She noted that there were over 200 participants and 75 companies involved in the project.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approve Minutes –
 - 1. September 8, 2015 Executive Session
 - 2. September 14, 2015 Regular Session
 - 3. September 21, 2015 Executive Session
 - 4. September 21, 2015 Regular Session
- B. Approve application for Hawkers & Peddlers License by Pilgrim Lodge
- C. Approve application for Lodging House License for Gingerbread House
- D. Accept the resignation of Eileen Brady from the Historic District/Historical Commission effective September 24, 2015
- E. Accept various gift donations to be deposited into the Saquatucket Harbor Demolition/Beautification Account
- F. Confirm the appointment of Alexandra Olsen to the position of part-time Community Center Clerical Aide (PT-3 Step 5) at the rate of \$14.85/hour

Ms. Brown moved approval of the Consent Agenda. Mr. MacAskill seconded the motion and the motion carried by a unanimous vote.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/PRESENTATIONS *(Not earlier than 6:30 P.M.)*

- A. Annual Meetings:

1. Planning Board – Jim Atkinson, Chair

Mr. Atkinson provided the annual report of the Planning Board. He agreed to come back to discuss the Cumberland Farms project.

2. Board of Health – Mary Jane Watson, Vice Chair/Acting Chair

Ms. Watson provided the annual report of the Board of Health. Chairman Hughes asked Ms. Champagne to come back to do a presentation on Accela.

3. Housing Committee – Mayla Secola, Chair

Ms. Secola provided the annual report of the Housing Committee. She and Mr. Spitz took questions regarding the Willow Street property. Chairman Hughes suggested placing this item on the agenda. Ms. Cebula noted that there is a CPC article from three years ago for \$50,000 for tax title work and there seems to be issues as to how to spend it. She asked that this be brought up at the same time.

B. Board of Selectmen FY 2017 Budget Message

Chairman Hughes read the budget message as follows:

The Harwich Town Charter, section 9-2-2, requires that the Board of Selectmen provide a budget message on or before the first Tuesday in October to guide the Town Administrator in the development of the budget for the fiscal year ahead. The lack of projected and planned savings associated with regionalizing our school system and the challenges of employee's health care benefits have put significant pressure on the municipal budget in recent years.

In an effort to continue to provide high quality municipal services and improve our equipment and facilities we have increasingly relied on capital and debt exclusions, which the voters have on many occasions supported. Although this approach has allowed us to technically stay within the confines of Prop 2-1/2 our taxpayers continue to pay more. We have also enjoyed reasonable growth, which has generated new revenues to support our expenditures.

Consistent with the most recent Town Administrator goals & objectives the FY 2017 budget needs to stay within the limits of Prop 2-1/2 plus forecasted growth. The use of capital / debt exclusions to satisfy items typically supported via the budget shall be minimized. Any and all items proposed outside of 2-1/2 / growth shall be rank ordered with priority justification.

Specifically any and all additions to personnel (hours and/or people) must be within the limits of Prop 2-1/2 and not detract from building maintenance.

To help to effectively manage our department budgets we suggest the allocation of indirect costs to each department. This will provide us with a better understanding of the total costs to operate each of our departments as we continue to match fees with services. It is necessary to review total department costs including those that are carried by another department (DPW for instance) when determining fees. If planned expenses are not covered through fees, an article

should be developed for town meeting so that the taxpayers can determine if they are willing to use property taxes to fund these expenses.

Significant improvements to the water and land sides of Saquatucket Harbor are actively being pursued. Harbor income surplus funds should be used to offset the payments associated with repayment of these funds over time. We recommend the development of a payment / cash flow schedule spread over the life of the debt repayment to guide the consideration of user fees once the facilities have been improved. In this manner the users will pay for the improvements which they enjoy, not the taxpayer. Therefore, beginning with the FY2017 budget, any excess of waterways revenue in excess of appropriate costs should be placed in a waterways capital fund rather than free cash.

As we prepare to move forward with our Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan covering a 40 year span, the taxpayers will shoulder a \$200+ million burden. Wastewater will be funded through a combination of real estate taxes, infrastructure funding, enterprise funding and user fees. In reality these are taxes to be paid by taxpayers in addition to existing real estate taxes and fees.

As discussed on several occasions the Board of Selectmen has a keen and active interest in providing for the proper maintenance of our existing facilities. For too long we have used building / facility maintenance as the buffer to balance the budget. This segment of the budget needs to be adequately funded so as to preserve our municipal assets and improve their operational efficiency wherever feasible. In the process of developing the FY2017 budget we believe it is appropriate to manage building maintenance by consolidating all department maintenance into a single building maintenance account under the control of Sean Libby.

We encourage you to manage expectations in the process of soliciting and integrating individual department requests for FY 2017. As a Board we are prepared to assist you in this process. We look forward to better understanding the priorities and working through the difficult yet necessary task of saying “no”.

Ms. Cebula proposed changing “any excess of waterways revenue” to “any existing excess of waterways revenue.” She asked Mr. Clark to run through FY 6/30/14 ending for the revenues that came in, actual v. budget, what would be the pilot payment, allocation of benefits, insurance etc. so we know what we are talking about. With regard to the language “Specifically any and all additions to personnel (hours and/or people) must be within the limits of Prop 2-1/2 and not detract from building maintenance,” Mr. Clark stated that if we are going to add any personnel then Building Maintenance would be the priority followed by Police and the Fire Department would be perpetual. He expressed concern for matching fees to services noting that the Recreation Department was able to offset their direct costs but the indirect are as just as substantial. He stated that it would be a substantial change to have it all fee driven. Chairman Hughes stated that there are certain things in government for which you are never going to cover the cost. Ms. Cebula stressed that it is time to start allocating the costs directly into Munis. It was agreed that she would meet with Mr. Clark and Mr. Gould to go through the indirect costs. Mr. MacAskill asked to be sent the indirect costs.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Request by Habitat for Humanity for Selectmen to accept the deed to the road (Lot 8) and approve the covenant, passbook agreement, and indemnification agreement for the Oak Street development – *discussion and possible vote*

Ms. Cebula recused herself on this item. Mr. Clark stated that the documents allow for the acceptance of the roadway with the understanding that there is also a conveyance and this allows Habitat to start selling homes as well allows the Town to accept the improvements that will be coming. He noted that if the improvements don't happen we have protections in place to finish the section of the roadway that the Town anticipated that it would receive. Ms. Goldsmith reported that the project should be completed and all sold in April. She stated that the Town had already agreed to take back Lot 8 and Habitat would have it top coated before the first sale but now that one house was selected for a blitz build and is ready for sale, it is not reasonable to put the top coat on before the rest of the project is finished so this allows them to sell the home that is finished rather than leaving it vacant. She stated that they will top coat it before they sell the rest of the houses and there is a \$12,000 security payment for that. Mr. MacAskill moved to approve the request by Habitat for Humanity for the Selectmen to accept the deed to the road, Lot 8, and approve the covenant, passbook agreement, and indemnification agreement for the Oak Street development. Ms. Brown seconded the motion and the motion carried by a 3-0 vote.

- B. Wastewater Educational Moment – Preliminary Construction Schedule for the Muddy Creek Project – *discussion*

Mr. Clark provided an update on the construction schedule for Muddy Creek and noted that it is a draft work plan and he hopes to have a more finalized plan in November/December with road closure starting in December or January. He noted that he will be bringing forward for the Board's signature a covenant document agreed upon with a homeowner who would have a flooding impact from the project.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

- A. DEP affirmation of the Harwich Conservation Commission's order of Conditions approving the proposed relocation of the Bay View Road public access path

Mr. Clark outlined the letter from DEP approving the proposed relocation of the Bay View Road public access path. He described two options to construct the path, one using AmeriCorps volunteers under the direction of Amy Usowski or to use Wilkinson Environmental. He said he would present a plan in the next week or so to let the Board know what direction we are headed in.

He reported that we have resolved some issues related to the Golf reorganization and the Board Secretary coverage at the Community Development departments. He noted there is a new workflow plan for the 2nd floor, he will be putting together an implementation plan for the plastic bag ban, he is currently in active negotiations with four unions, and is in the process of assembling the capital outlay requests and hopes to have a summary for the next meeting.

Mr. Clark reported that there was a fire on Pleasant Lake Avenue for which we had to have the house demolished because it presented an imminent hazard. He noted that the initial demo cost

was \$1,000 and we obtained 3 quotes to have the building demoed and taken away for which the total cost is \$14,600 and we will ask for a reserve fund transfer from the Finance Committee.

Mr. Clark further reported that the Town Engineer has gotten quotes for the columns at the library, and solid wood is cheaper than plastic. He said he will send the information to the trustees to see if they want wood or plastic and will seek a reserve fund transfer for that as he sees this as a potential hazard. In answer to a question from Ms. Cebula about recouping money on the demolition of the fire damaged home, Mr. Clark noted that we have placed a demolition lien on the property and the property owner signed off and gave us consent to do the work.

SELECTMEN'S REPORT

Ms. Cebula stated to Mr. Clark that she had not received the Excel backup package on the 5 year plan yet. Mr. Clark responded that after the meeting the next day, the Accountant advised him that there was a mistake in one of the spreadsheets and we went from about \$13,000 in shortfall to \$180,000. He said he was expecting to work through it with the Accountant today to get a sense of what happened unfortunately the accountant was out sick today.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Steidel
Recording Secretary

Related Documents - October 5, 2015 BOS Meeting

- 01 Agenda.pdf
- 02 Minutes - Sep 14.pdf
- 03 Minutes - Sep 21.pdf
- 04 Pilgrim Lodge Hawkers Peddlers Lic.pdf
- 05 Gingerbread House Lodging Lic.pdf
- 06 HDHC Resignation.pdf
- 07 PT Clerical Aide - Community Ctr.pdf
- 08 Annual Meeting - Planning Bd.pdf
- 09 Annual Meeting - Housing.pdf
- 10 FY 17 BOS Budget Message.pdf
- 11 Habitat - Oak Street.pdf
- 12 Muddy Creek Schedule #1.pdf
- 13 Muddy Creek Schedule #2.pdf
- 14 TA - DEP Affirmation Bay View Path.pdf