

Selectmen's Minutes 03/09/2016

Minutes of Meeting – March 9, 2016; meeting called to order at 6:30pm. Present: Ed Lane; Channing Gibson; Dave Roche; Ken Fowler. Absent: Warren Archey. Present for the Planning Board: Kameron Spaulding, Kate McNaulty-Vaughan, Mark Smith and Tom Delasco.

The Board met jointly with members of the Planning Board to make an appointment to fill the unexpired term of Linda Messana. MOTION by CG, seconded by DR to appoint Kameron Spaulding Chair of the joint meeting. 8/0 vote.

Members of both boards questioned Mr. Tansey regarding his time availability, why he would be a good candidate to serve on this board and his thoughts on different issues currently before the Planning Board. MOTION by DR, seconded by KF to appoint John Tansey to the Planning Board to fill the unexpired term of Linda Messana until the May 2016 election. By a roll call vote (7/1 with KMV opposed), John Tansey was appointed to fill the seat until the election on May 9. Should he wish to continue to serve beyond May 9, he will need to run for election for the term expiring in 2019. At 7:00pm, MOTION by CG, seconded by KF to adjourn this joint meeting with the Planning Board. 8/0 vote.

At 7:00pm, the Board began their regular meeting agenda.

MOTION by CG, seconded by DR to accept the Minutes of February 24 and March 4. 4/0 vote.

Citizen's Open Forum: None.

Consent Agenda: MOTION by CG, seconded by DR to approve the Consent Agenda as follows: to accept monetary donations to the Fire Department; to execute an Easement to MA Electric Co. granting them access to land located on Pumping Station Road as part of the Brunell Avenue Pump Station upgrades, as approved at the May 7, 2015 Annual Town Meeting. 4/0 vote. DR stated that the Lenox VFW is recommending that the Town proclaim August 7 as Purple Heart Day. MOTION by DR, seconded by KF to proclaim August 7 annually as Purple Heart Day. 4/0 vote.

Downtown Wireless Access Discussion: Kameron Spaulding appeared before the Board to discuss this issue. For an initial cost of approximately \$7400, the downtown area would be able to offer free WiFi. It would cover approximately the 2.5 downtown blocks, Lilac and Triangle Parks and possibly Orebed Park. He is continuing to research this issue, and will be obtaining a cost utilizing fiber. Once obtained, he will bring this information before the Board for a vote.

Follow-up FY2017 Budget Discussion: The TM stated that there should be an approximate \$15,000 savings in the natural gas line items within the various budgets due to a new 3-year contract; the Governor's budget suggests higher state aid levels for towns and schools than anticipated. On the negative side, local assessments to charter schools is up, as are increases to the Tri-Town Health budget. Also, the School Committee is looking into restoring the third section of kindergarten, but this may be covered with the savings in natural gas costs, and possibly retiree medical costs.

ATM Warrant Articles: The TM presented the Board members with a listing of proposed warrant articles for the May Annual Town Meeting. He stated that he is interested in removing the Ambulance Operations from the enterprise system. EL questioned the article seeking to increase the number of signatures required (10 to 100) to place an article on the ATM warrant. Most communities are ten so why change? The TM explained that it requires 100 signatures to place an article on a STM warrant, so it should stand to reason that it should be 100 signatures for an ATM also.

Librarian Amy Lafave appeared before the Board to give them an update on activities, including the golf tournament, clean-out days in April and a Lego event. She also mentioned that the light fixtures in the dome room have now been changed and the lighting looks great.

Kim Graham, Sue Holmes and Jenny Lemberg appeared before the Board to give an update on current activities at the Community Center. Kim stated that she is working on her summer hires and having renovations done to the upstairs bathroom. Sue is reaching out to the 55-75 year old group by mail to introduce the available offerings. Jenny stated that there are currently 140 children enrolled in the afterschool programs; she then briefly went through the upcoming programs/events.

Housatonic Valley Association Membership: Dennis Regan from the HVA came before the Board to discuss a membership in the HVA. He gave a quick overview of their group, and explained that they are concerned with the watershed areas/Housatonic River located in MA, CT and NY areas. CG and EL stated that they believe that this is a great idea, with a vote to come at a future meeting.

Undermountain Farm Conservation Restriction: Norian Schroeder from the Berkshire Natural Resources Council came before the Board to describe both the provisions of the CR and the process for approval. He explained that it covers 83 acres, with ten acres surrounding the housing and barn on the farm side excluded. He went on to explain that trails will exist, but no dogs or bicycles will be allowed. This is very similar to the CR brought before the voters at the Special Town Meeting, but there are no Town funds involved now. It was understood that no vote would be taken at this meeting since the CR is still in draft form. However, once a final document is available, the Board will be asked to take a formal vote.

Tax Increment Financing/Special Tax Agreement Policy/Procedures: The Board continued their discussion on the TIF/STA policy. An updated draft was provided to the Board, incorporating changes made at their March 4 meeting. Gwen Miller went through the various changes made to the draft policy. One change would be to include the Assessors in the process. In addition, she put together criteria showing year-round vs. seasonal jobs, what percentage of jobs will be paid over minimum wage, will they receive benefits, what are the added tax benefits. There was some discussion as to when the request should be received by the Town – before or after permitting has been approved. EL feels that this should be brought up during the zoning board process; CG disagreed, and feels that this would place the zoning board in a situation to make tax decisions. GM stated that she feels that the decision as to whether or not to grant a tax incentive should occur prior to a building permit being issued. She mentioned that points could be given to businesses that are green buildings and/or utilizing site practices. DR stated he liked the idea of five year agreements. CG stated that the bottom line is that we might not be getting in as many tax dollars as we could over a 5-year period. The TM stated that he feels that the assessors should be included in this process.

Tennessee Pipeline: No public update.

Rest of River: No public update.

Solar Project: The TM participated in a conference call today with the Town of Lee, Special Counsel Jeff Grandchamp and consultant Beth Greenblatt regarding progress on the joint Willow Hill Road solar project. The Lee/Lenox project is moving forward, documents are being reviewed by Special Counsel, and he will keep the Board updated.

BOS Reports: CG stated that the CPC appointed Tony Patella as chair; they are working on a new master plan; they approved the CPC warrant articles for the May ATM warrant. He also brought up a 1997 MHC preservation restriction on the library building that needs to be reviewed. KF stated that the Planning Board is working on cleaning up zoning by-law language for the ATM warrant; the film Bag It will be shown at the Duffin Theatre; excise taxes are due 4/1. EL stated that the CIC met this week, and is pretty much done with the capital budget items. This committee is supportive of the Permanent Building Committee by-law change. The Administrative Review Committee continues to meet, and is working out as anticipated. DOR will be sending personnel to Lenox to assist with the proposal to have one TM/TA for Lenox, Lee and Stockbridge.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.

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| Minutes Taken By: _____ | Minutes Accepted By: _____ |
| Mary Ellen Deming | Clerk |
| Director of Administrative Services | Board of Selectmen |