

January 27, 2018

**Board of Selectmen
Minutes
January 27, 2018**

Present: Mary Blanchard, Chairman
Mary Dowling, Clerk
Priscilla Gimás, Vice-Chair
Craig Moran
Michael Suprenant
Leon Gaumond, Jr., Town Administrator
Colleen King, Administrative Assistant

Absent: None

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. in the Pineapple Room at the Public House for the Selectmen's Annual Retreat.

Town Administrator Updates

L. Gaumond provided the Selectmen with several updates. They were:

The Governor has announced a 3.5% increase in unrestricted local aid for FY19. School aid appears to be an increase as well however he expects the legislature to look to add to those accounts in the upcoming legislative session which is also an election year.

The preliminary work from Tantasqua is another large proposed increase in their budget request. L. Gaumond will forward the information from them once it is received from the school.

The betterment & capital process is underway in Sturbridge. The Betterment process turned out well given there was as many requests as we had money. Capital was not that way. One of the big items being considered is the communications upgrades needed for public safety & dispatch.

L. Gaumond informed the Board on the recent discussions he had regarding the strong fire chief and the petitioned article at the Special Town Meeting. He expects this issue to be passed over at the Special Town Meeting and be reintroduced in some form at the Annual.

His final update was concerning recreational marijuana. He expects that the Selectmen will need to formulate a plan on recreational marijuana in town. M. Dowling mentioned that Joel Bard told her, after the January 2nd Executive Session had concluded, that it was his opinion that Heal could not open without an active host agreement and asked L. Gaumond to speak with Counsel regarding several issues facing recreational marijuana including: What if we do not sign the host agreement allowing retail? Can we say no to a retail agreement at the end of their 5 year prohibition? Can we use this to seek a serious increase in the amount of mitigation monies in the agreement? All questions are implying satisfaction of good faith. L. Gaumond agreed to speak with Town Counsel about these matters and report back to the Board.

Discussion on Town Goals for 2018

After a brief lunch the Selectmen began to discuss proposed goals for the upcoming year. L. Gaumond presented a list of items which have come up during the year or from the Selectmen during preparation for this discussion. The items which made the list are as follows:

- Offering night hours to the public
- Promote a Farmers Market in Sturbridge
- Implementation of the Accella permitting software
- Term limits for Boards
- Future of the Design Review Committee
- Training program for town staff

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- Blight bylaws
- Increasing our IT capacity
- Establish a Citizens Leadership Academy: M. Suprenant and L. Gaumond attended a MMA meeting on the previous weekend.
- Create a welcome packet for new residents/businesses
- Establish a comprehensive tree planting program
- Comprehensive fee study
- Wage & Classification study for municipal positions: M. Suprenant felt this is something that should be done regularly, every 5-10 years.
- Policy development: CORI Policy
- Policy Development: Driver License Checks
- Policy development: policy on appointing board members: There was significant discussion regarding this issue. P. Gimias asked to look at the way we appoint/reappoint the members of boards and committees. M. Dowling asked how much weight should go to longevity. L. Gaumond said it also depended upon the other members of the Board. He agreed to prepare something for an upcoming meeting prior to the reappointments
- Consolidate Traffic Rules and Regulations into one document using MassDOT format and file it with the Town Clerk
- Continue working on the Senior Center, Safety Complex and Public Works feasibility studies with designer selection on at least one project
- Submit an Article for the purchase of the Belanger Property (Part of the Riverlands) to Town Meeting
- Apply for a MassWorks Grant and bring Articles to Town Meeting for an Underground Utility Study and a Functional Design Report for Route 20 from River Street to New Boston Road: M. Dowling was happy to see this item made the list.
- Work with Housing Partnership on an Affordable Housing Plan, One Loan Program and becoming a Housing Choice Community, and with the Planning Board and CMRPC on an update of housing data
- Study the feasibility of creating a Town Park with part of the Shepard property and adding the Williams and Shri Gavatri, LLC parcels (68, 72 and 80 Route 15)
- Prepare an update for the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
- Achieve Green Communities Designation
- Improvement of the cable operations
- Moving forward on the recreational field project
- Revisiting the double pole issue

After the presentations on these items, L. Gaumond provided a rating sheet to the Selectmen to score their top choices for the upcoming year. After tabulating the scoring, the top choices were:

- Bring forward the rezoning of Rte.15 to promote development
- Work to establish a strategy for recreational marijuana
- Work to implement the McGilpin Road water line grant
- Continue working on the Public Building studies for the Senior Center, Public Safety Complex and DPW
- Work on the underground utility study for Rte. 20
- Establish the Affordable Housing Committee and prepare a study on housing data
- Look at the hours of Town Offices as a way to provide night hours for residents
- Support the Recreation Committee on the Recreational Field Project
- Pursue Age/Dementia Friendly designation for Sturbridge

L. Gaumond thanked the Selectmen for their thoughtful deliberation on the goals. He will prepare a report for the Selectmen and will ask the Selectmen to vote these at their next meeting.

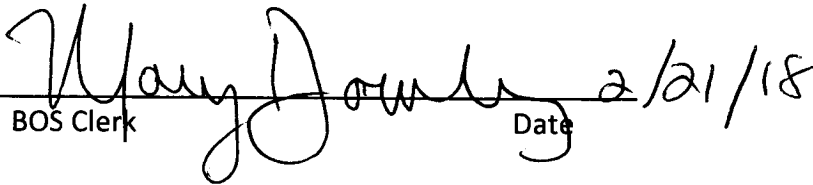
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P. Gimas mentioned her displeasure at having M. Suprenant claim she had a conflict of interest during the M. Beauchemin discussion in January. She pointed out that based on a public records request, there was no indication that M. Suprenant ever provided any COI to the town of Sturbridge.

M. Suprenant disagreed and responded that he did complete the COI certification process with the Town as well as for the Town of Ware as a municipal employee and could provide the papers if P. Gimas wanted them; P. Gimas responded that she did.

The Meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Colleen King, Administrative Assistant



BOS Clerk Date 2/21/18