

February 21, 2017

**Board of Selectmen
Minutes
February 21, 2017**

Present: Mary Blanchard, Chairman
Priscilla Gimas, Vice-Chair
Mary Dowling, Clerk
Craig Moran
Michael Suprenant
Leon Gaumond, Jr., Town Administrator

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and read the Agenda

Motion: To enter into to Executive Session under MGL Ch. 30A, §21a for the purpose of reviewing executive session minutes to be released and to conduct collective bargaining with non-union personnel. by: M. Dowling
2nd: by: C. Moran

Roll Call Vote: M. Dowling YES, M. Suprenant YES, C. Moran YES, M. Blanchard YES

M. Blanchard informed the Public the Board will reconvene in Open Session following Executive Session.

6:30 p.m. Open Session

Public Service Announcements

M. Blanchard read Announcements.

Tantasqua Regional/School Union 61 Districts – Public Hearing on FY17-18 Elementary School Budget, Thursday, March 2, 2017 at 6:30 p. m. in the Cafeteria at Burgess Elementary.

M. Blanchard informed the public that the Board of Selectmen will not be discussing the water issue on McGilpin Road at this evening's meeting. That discussion is tentatively scheduled for Monday.

L. Gaumond, on behalf of the Town he wanted to apologize to all residents and businesses that might have been inconvenienced last week when attempting to contact the Town Hall or the Center Office Building. Both buildings had a major interruption of operations and servers went down. All Offices were dealing with the inability to access their emails and files. Offices are now operating fully.

**6:35 p.m. Public Hearing – FY 2017 Sturbridge Regional Community Development Fund Application
Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development Block Grant Program**

M. Dowling, read the Public Hearing notice.

Erica Johnson of the PVPC approached the board for a presentation on the Community Development Block Grant application being submitted on behalf of the Towns of Sturbridge, Brookfield and North Brookfield. This application covers two projects: a housing rehabilitation program and the "aging in place" program.

E. Johnson stated that the PVPC has many years of experience in housing rehab programs and provides low income loans for eligible residents. The program is open to home owners and those who wish to rent their property to eligible residents. The 'aging in place' program is a grant program for up to \$5000 to residents 65 years of age or older who are also income qualified. Typical projects include grab bars, door levers, tub cuts, smoke detectors, furnace cleanings and other similar projects. This program can assist up to 30 home owners for the rehabilitation program and 35 homeowners for the "aging in place" program primarily in the town of Sturbridge.

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M. Suprenant asked for clarification on the amount for the rehab program. Confirmation is made on \$25,000 maximum amount per unit, but in rare occasions can go up to \$40,000 for projects such as septic repair, roof replacements, and windows. Handicapped access ramps are done through another source of funds.

Erica Johnson replied the application process will be handled by the PVPC.

Laura Baldracci of 6 Cooper Road, Fiskdale spoke as a resident and as a loan fund officer of Worcester Community Housing Resources. She asked about the qualification certification process. E. Johnson stated that the PVPC requests proof of income and the burden of proof is on the resident. L. Baldracci is also a volunteer on the Elderly Taxation and Disability Commission for the town of Sturbridge and would like to work with residents and the PVPC to help lower the interest rate to provide more resources to the residents.

Motion: I move to close the Public Hearing. by: C. Moran
2nd: by: M. Suprenant
Vote: Passed 4-0

Motion: I move to authorize the submission of the proposed FY 2017 Sturbridge Regional Community Development Fund grant application to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development in an amount not to exceed \$1,018,000 as detailed in the public hearing and to include funding for a Housing Rehabilitation Program and an Aging in Place Program for Sturbridge, North Brookfield, and Brookfield residents. by: C. Moran.
2nd: by: M. Suprenant
Vote: Passed 4-0

Motion: I move to give authorization for the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen to sign all required forms, documents, letters, and authorizations pertaining to the proposed FY 2017 Sturbridge Regional Community Development Fund grant application.
2nd: by: M. Suprenant.
Vote: by: C. Moran
Vote: Passed 4-0

Note: Vice-Chairman P. Gimas arrived at the meeting at 6:36 p.m.

Discussion on Recreational Marijuana

M. Blanchard introduced Jean Bubon, the town's Zoning and Planning Director, Joel Bard from KP Law and Planning Board Committee members: Russell Chamberland, Susan Waters, James Cunneiff, Heather Hart and Penny Dumas.

Attorney J. Bard explained there are two ways to handle the control of recreational marijuana. The first would be to adopt a zoning bylaw. A vote on a moratorium bylaw would be required. The second control method would be to ban it entirely. This would require a ballot question on the Annual Town Election ballot; a moratorium vote would also be done at the Annual Town Meeting.

J. Bubon stated they have decided to go with the moratorium with the language from KP Law but felt it was important for the Board of Selectmen to have this discussion because as Attorney Joel Bard stated, it is more of a policy issue than a planning issue. The Planning Board can draft a bylaw for next year's Annual Town Meeting. They already have the Medical Marijuana bylaw that they can follow. The Planning Board felt that the Board of Selectmen could determine if the Ballot question was warranted and if the Board was going to pursue it before going with the moratorium and the Planning Study, which is required by law.

M. Blanchard asked if the Board went forward with the Ballot question; would it need to be for the upcoming 2017 election. J. Bard responded yes, as April 1, 2018 is the deadline. L. Gaumond stated that if the Board voted tonight KP Law would be able to help with the wording on the Ballot question.

Motion: I move that the Board present at Town Election a ballot question to ban the cultivation, manufacturing or selling of Recreational Marijuana products in the Town of Sturbridge. by: M. Dowling
2nd: by: P. Gimas
Vote: All in Favor Passed 5-0

7:00 p.m. Public Hearing – Hull Forest Products Inc. – Walker Pond Forest Cutting Plan
Ross. P. Hubacz for a Logging Permit

M. Dowling, read the Public Hearing notice

Ross Hubacz, a, licensed Forester with Hull Forest Products Inc., filed for a Harvest Cutting Plan to harvest timber on Walker Pond Road. The property is owned by 2 Walker Pond Corporation and is in Chapter 61. This harvest project is one that has been laid out for a 10 year Plan. They are doing a selection Harvest on most of the property and removing about 100,000 board feet and 185 cords of wood.

L. Gaumond stated this application was reviewed by Conservation Department and the DPW and is recommended for approval. A list of standard conditions will also be part of the Forest Cutting Plan.

Adam Stanhope, owner and resident of 23 & 25 Podunk Road was present to voice his concern of the flagging of the back of his property. The property is directly to the rear of his and is owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; not 2 Walker Pond Corporation. He wants to know why this is being done. R. Hubacz replied that when flagging the boundaries of a property, they find the abutting line and use that to tie in so they can locate their lines. It does not mean that they will be harvesting in that area. L. Gaumond added that based on the comments heard, he thinks it is imperative that the Board is clear on what trees will be coming down and which ones are not. R. Hubacz stated that they will be flagging the property and all the trees being cut will be marked with blue paint.

Motion: I move that the Board close the Public Hearing. by: P. Gimas
2nd: by: C. Moran
Vote: All in Favor Passed 5-0

M. Blanchard, stated a motion was needed to authorize the logging permit for Hull Forest Products Inc.

Motion: I move to approve the foresting permit for Walker Pond Forest as described with the following conditions. by: P. Gimas

1. Logging operations shall be allowed Monday through Friday (with no harvesting on recognized Massachusetts legal holidays) from 7:00 a.m. to dusk; and on Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. Noon; no Sunday or holiday hours;
2. The applicant shall coordinate transportation with the Town's school bus schedule to avoid conflict between logging operations and school bus operations;
3. Work shall not commence when the ground is dry, frozen or otherwise stable;
4. A \$5,000 road maintenance bond shall be submitted to the Town Administrator before starting work to ensure that repairs are made to any Town roads damaged as a result of the subject forestry harvest project and may additionally require a performance bond to ensure erosion control measures before, during and for a reasonable period of time, after the proposed operation. Said bond shall be released by the Treasurer upon inspection and satisfactory findings by the DPW Director.
5. A license timber harvester is identified prior to commencement.
6. The DPW Director should be notified before starting work.
7. The Board has a copy of the letter from the property owner giving them permission to harvest

2nd: by: M. Suprenant

Vote: All in Favor Passed 5-0

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**7:30 p.m. Public Hearing – LNL Hospitality, LLC – Purchase of Colonial Motel, Inc.
215 Charlton Road, Sturbridge, MA 01566 – Change of Owner**

M. Dowling read the Public Hearing notice

Attorney John McCoy and Vinny Patel representing the new owner, LNL Hospitality, LLC, who purchased the Comfort Inn in Sturbridge, appeared before the Board. The new owner is requesting the transfer of the liquor license. All the required paperwork is in order.

Motion: I move the Board close the Public Hearing. by: M. Dowling

2nd: by: M. Suprenant

Vote: Passed 4-0-1 (C. Moran abstaining)

Motion: To approve LNL Hospitality LLC for the transfer on a Liquor license. by: P. Gimás

2nd: by: M. Suprenant

Vote: Passed 4-0-1 (C. Moran abstaining)

Final Report on Trolley Study

Jean Bubon, Town Planner and Kevin Filchak Economic Development / Tourism Coordinator and Dan Perez from Nelson Nygaard were present to discuss the Sturbridge Tourist District Seasonal Trolley Study.

Dan Perez from Nelson Nygaard, the Sturbridge Commercial Tourist District Seasonal Trolley Study was funded from a grant through the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development from the Downtown Initiative Technical Program. The goal of the program is to help foster the growth of Downtown areas in Massachusetts. Sturbridge was approved for the Commercial Tourism Trolley Study. They broke the study into two parts: 1) Western Gate Way which stretches from Brookfield Road (Rt. 148) to Cedar Street (Rt. 20) and 2) Eastern Gateway from Cedar Street to New Boston Road which is Sturbridge's primary hotel center. The Sturbridge Common Historic District is the area they are looking to develop. A survey of 300 businesses in the area showed 89% of the people traveling to Sturbridge would be driving a personal vehicle. The challenges are trying to get a 30 minute route that would stop and pick up people and also have a restroom for the driver and tourists. Another option would be a 60 minute ride with one vehicle or the Town purchases two vehicles for two 30-minute rides. Another option would be for the Town to provide a charter service Trolley for rentals when the Town has a large event. Additionally, the Town could enter into contracts with local hotels or businesses to charter the Trolley for weddings, local events, or a community benefit arrangement with non-profit agencies.

M. Dowling stated the Town has been told by residents that the master plan on Rt. 20 and Rt. 131 does not have enough parking but this survey does not show any problems with parking. This is a contradiction from what we have been told for years. M. Blanchard stated many restaurants in Town have valet parking at other areas. J. Bubon, stated more restaurants are offering valet parking and the Town has amended the Zoning bylaws throughout the years for share parking when a business is closed and leasing the lot for parking for the evening.

M. Suprenant had a question on whether a Trolley in Sturbridge, provides an opportunity for more events throughout the year and generating more revenue for the Town? The Town needs to analyze this as perhaps a first step if we can increase tourism.

L. Gaumond feels this type of an asset available in Sturbridge for unique style conferences might look at the Host Hotel, Old Sturbridge Village and Publick House as options. He pointed out that C. Moran had mentioned some good ideas about the PMC Challenge and how during the Brimfield Flea Market, the community could have buses and Trolleys transporting people from the hotels to Brimfield as a way of decreasing the cars on our streets. There are dozens of ways the Town could look at the Trolley service and find it could be a benefit. Not a lot of towns outside of the seashore communities have this and it makes sense for Sturbridge to be one of those communities.

Request from Planning Board for Zoning Changes

The Planning Board submitted three proposed zoning changes for the upcoming Annual Town Meeting. The Selectmen are required to formally submit the zoning amendments to the Planning Board to hold a hearing

Park and Drive thru Standards

Motion: I move to refer the proposed zoning amendment regarding Drive through Standards to the Planning Board for a hearing. by: M. Suprenant
2nd: by: P. Gimas
Vote: All in Favor Passed 5-0

Restaurant Definitions and Amend Chapter 7 and 11

Town Planner, J. Bubon, stated the Planning Board recently received a request by a property owner to consider allowing a drive-thru for a restaurant in the Village Gateway district. They currently have two definitions for restaurant; one is fast foods defined as servicing largely in paper to people sitting in their vehicles and the other is full service restaurant. What they decided to do is to create categories of restaurants so you have the traditional fast foods which you think of as McDonalds or Burger King and then create a new category for fast casual that is taken from industry standards. She did a review of industry tour restaurant sites and created these new categories. The fast casual is classified or defined as being a little larger than a typical fast food; it would have a minimum of 4,000 square feet and have a full service waiting staff along with a to go option. They will also be a change to the definition for full service restaurants for clarification.

Motion: I move to refer the proposed zoning amendment regarding Restaurant Definitions to the Planning Board for a hearing. by: P. Gimas
2nd: by: C. Moran
Vote: All in Favor Passed 5-0

Recreational Marijuana Moratorium

Motion: I move to refer the proposed zoning amendment regarding Recreational Marijuana to the Planning Board for a hearing. by: M. Suprenant
2nd: by: P. Gimas
Vote: All in Favor Passed 5-0

Department Head Reports:

Planning/Zoning – Director Jean Bubon

J. Bubon spoke about the summary of activities for the past six months. The Board previously asked for more details in the report so names and addresses were provided. The work of the Planning department has been in bylaws alongside with the Zoning Board of Appeals and Town Counsel to develop new comprehensive permit rules; the clear waters grant received last year; Old Sturbridge Village; and currently, the RFP to update the permit software.

Fire Chief Appointment

L. Gaumond, called upon John Grasso to come forward and meet the Board of Selectmen. John Grasso thanked the Fire Chief Search Committee for their confidence and support of him in addition to the many hours they worked. He is looking forward to beg working for the Town of Sturbridge and bringing the Fire Department in its next step to its long history.

Motion: I move to concur with the appointment of John Grasso to serve as the Sturbridge Fire Chief effective February 27, 2017. by: C, Moran
2nd: by: P. Gimas
Vote: All in Favor Passed 5-0

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L. Gaumond stated the Town will be having a more formal ceremony and reception in the upcoming weeks. L. Gaumond also reported that he met with Chief Grasso earlier in the evening after the Executive Session and he is happy to report the concurrence with all the terms and conditions of the contract as discussed in Executive Session.

Motion: I move to approve the labor contract agreement with John Grasso as amended by the Board of Selectmen. by: M. Suprenant
2nd: by: P. Gimas
Vote: All in Favor Passed 5-0

Firefighter Appointment

L. Gaumond introduced the Interim Fire Chief Paul Ford.

Interim Fire Chief Paul Ford requested the appointment of new Fire Fighter, Jennifer Ashe who is currently working part-time for the Fire Department. She has successfully completed the entire requirement to become a full time Fire Fighter. She has been a part-time Fire Fighter for one year and she has completed Fire Fighter I/II certification. She has been a paramedic for 10 years and is currently working for Med Star. She worked for the Monson Fire Department as a Fire Fighter/Paramedic and EMS Coordinator and received a great review from their Chief.

Motion: I move to appoint Fire Fighter Jennifer Ashe to the Sturbridge Fire Department starting on February 27, 2017 with a starting pay rate of \$22.22.
by: P. Gimas
2nd: by: M. Suprenant
Vote: All in Favor Passed 5-0

Vote to set Special Agenda Meeting 2/27/17

M. Blanchard asked the Board if they could schedule a meeting for Monday at 6:30 p.m.

New Business

L. Gaumond added he will be providing an update on the recent Board of Health meeting about the Southbridge Landfill Expansion Application and recent well tests in the area of Fiske Hill/ McGilpin Road. At that meeting, our legislative delegation was present to hear the neighborhood concerns and to offer their support. He stated it would be appropriate to authorize the Town Administrator to invite interested residents to attend the special meeting on 2/27/17 and to prepare a letter for the Selectmen's signature formally asking the Commonwealth for assistance in dealing with this matter.

Motion: I move to authorize the Town Administrator to write a letter on behalf of the Board of Selectmen to both the State Representative and State Senator for assistance in dealing with well tests in the Fiske Hill and McGilpin Road area. by: M. Dowling
2nd: by: P. Gimas
Vote: All in Favor Passed 5-0

Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the meeting. by: P. Gimas
2nd: by: M. Dowling
Vote: All in Favor Passed 5-0

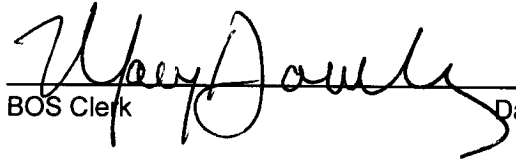
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The Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

The Board reconvened to Executive Session until 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Colleen King, Administrative Assistant

 4/13/18
BOS Clerk Date