

September 29, 2021

**Board of Selectmen
September 29, 2021
Town Hall
Veterans Memorial Hall, Sturbridge Town Hall
308 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566**

Present:

Mary Blanchard, Chair
Mary Dowling, Vice Chair
Selectman Chase Kaitbenski, Clerk
Selectman Ian Dunnigan
Selectman Jamie Goodwin

Staff:

Jeff Bridges, Town Administrator
Alex McConnon, Executive Assistant

Chair Blanchard called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

The Selectmen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Blanchard read the agenda.

Moment of Silence

The Selectmen held a moment of silence in honor of all those affected by COVID-19.

Review of the warrant articles for the October 28, 2021 Special Town Meeting and take any action relative thereto

Chair Blanchard said the Board of Selectmen could vote to place, vote to place and support, or vote not to place the warrant articles. Mr. Bridges said the Board of Selectmen would also see these warrant articles again at their October 4, 2021 meeting with the dollar amounts in it.

ARTICLE 46: SENIOR CENTER DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION PROJECT (2/3 Vote Required)

Chair Blanchard read the full draft article summary of article #46.

Motion: Place and support the article as written, subject to additional information.

By: Selectman Goodwin

2nd: Selectman Kaitbenski

Mr. Bridges said the Town anticipates that it would receive donations and grant funding but for the purpose of the warrant and authorization debt, the Town would ask for the full amount.

All in favor

Vote: 4-0-0 (Vice Chair Dowling ABSENT)

ARTICLE 47: MULTIUSE USE RECREATIONAL FIELD DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION (2/3 Vote Required)

Chair Blanchard read the full draft article summary of article #47.

Selectman Kaitbenski said he would feel more comfortable if this goes after the equine center project or if the Board of Selectmen held this article until Town Meeting in June. Per Selectman Kaitbenski, if the Town were to get the four fields, he would struggle with asking for 4 million dollars on top of that. Chair Blanchard said the Recreation Committee has been working on this proposal and wants to move forward now and the fields for the equestrian project is a far way away. Annie Roscioli, Recreation Director said both projects together would meet their end goal and said it is a full recreation enhancement for the full American with Disabilities (ADA) plus the parking and she is hopeful that the equestrian project would move forward to benefit the Town. Ms. Roscioli said it is their opportunity to bring enhancements to the recreation area. Selectman Kaitbenski said he is in support for the project but had concerns for the public. Selectman Dunnigan suggested separating the ADA piece from the fields. Ms. Roscioli said the project would have to be changed significantly to separate it. Selectman Goodwin said he does not want to see the Town missing its opportunity and thought that holding or addressing the article might be best for giving its most likely chance to pass.

Mr. Bridges gave edit suggestions to the paragraph and said he supported the project. Mr. Bridges stated that he thinks that Town Meeting should vote on it since there is not another spot in Town and that the Recreation Commission is in support of it. Mr. Bridges said they could switch the order of the articles and that article #47 could become article #48.

Motion: Place and support article #48 with the words that Mr. Bridges added.

By: Selectman Kaitbenski

2nd: Selectman Dunnigan

Mr. Bridges said he does not know if there is another opportunity to do more studies or to buy more land for these types of projects. Per Mr. Bridges, he understands the neighborhood concerns and thinks they could be accommodated but the Town does need a field.

All in favor

Vote: 3-1-0 (Selectman Goodwin NO, Vice-Chair Dowling ABSENT)

ARTICLE 48: AMEND CHAPTER 300 - ZONING BYLAW OF THE TOWN OF STURBRIDGE BY INSERTING A NEW ARTICLE XXI (2/3 Vote Required)

Chair Blanchard said this article would become Article #47. Jean Bubon, Town Planner referenced the public hearing that the Planning Board had on the equestrian center on September 28, 2021 which received comment and input regarding the changes to bylaw that were made. Per Ms. Bubon,

the Planning Board voted unanimously to support the bylaw with two minor changes from the September 28 meeting. Ms. Bubon went through the two minor changes in the article.

She also said that there was an issue raised by Dane LaBonte, Member of the Planning Board questioning the 60% maximum in pervious surface, which Ms. Bubon had to later research. Per Ms. Bubon, there was a revision to reduce the maximum lot coverage to from 35% to 30% and the maximum pervious surface from 60% to 40% and asked the Board of Selectmen to consider that amendment if they vote to place the article.

Vice Chair Dowling arrived at the meeting.

Motion: Approve the revisions that were submitted today.

By: Selectman Dunnigan

2nd: Selectman Kaitbenski

All in favor

Vote: 3-1-1 (Selectman Goodwin NO, Vice Chair Dowling ABSTAINED)

Motion: To place and support article #47.

By: Selectman Kaitbenski

2nd: Selectman Dunnigan

All in favor

Vote: 3-2-0 (Selectman Goodwin and Vice Chair Dowling NO)

ARTICLE 49: AMEND CHAPTER 300, ARTICLE II, SECTION 300.2-2 OF THE ZONING BYLAW (2/3 Vote Required)

Chair Blanchard read the full draft article summary of article #49.

Motion: To place and support article #49.

By: Selectman Dunnigan

2nd: Selectman Kaitbenski

All in favor

Vote: 3-2-0 (Selectman Goodwin and Vice Chair Dowling NO)

ARTICLE 50: AMEND THE ZONING MAP OF THE TOWN OF STURBRIDGE (2/3 Vote Required)

Chair Blanchard read the full draft article summary of article #50.

Motion: To place and support article #50.

By: Selectman Kaitbenski

2nd: Selectman Dunnigan

Selectman Goodwin asked if these should be integrated into one article and Chair Blanchard said they go into different parts of the zoning bylaw. Mr. Bridges stated that it is the way the attorney suggested them.

All in favor

Vote: 3-2-0 (Selectman Goodwin and Vice Chair Dowling NO)

ARTICLE 51: COMMUNITY PRESERVATION OUTBUILDING REMOVALS

Chair Blanchard read the full draft article summary of article #51. Rebecca Gendreau, Conservation Agent said this is in addition to the funds the Conservation Department received last year. Per Ms. Gendreau, the project was going to be completed in the spring but there was a timing restriction and with the icy conditions, the department was not able to have them removed. Ms. Gendreau said with the pandemic and increased cost, they received a change order from the contractor for about \$5,000. She stated that the project would be completed in the Fall.

Motion: To place and support.

By: Selectman Goodwin

2nd: Selectman Dunnigan

All in favor

Vote: 5-0-0

ARTICLE 52: COMMUNITY PRESERVATION GRAND TRUNK TRAIL CONSTRUCTION

Chair Blanchard read the full draft article summary of article #52. Mr. Bridges said in the Community Preservation Committee's meeting scheduled for September 30, 2021, the Grand Truck Trail project, which the Town got the earmark for, is an ongoing project and the Trails Committee received grants over the years. Per Mr. Bridges, Eastern Federal Lands is administrating the project and there are four people getting paid from it. Mr. Bridges said the construction/engineering cost would be over \$200,000 and the Town is short \$250,000 to build this piece of trail. Mr. Bridges stated that the Town could take the project, bid it, and hire an engineer so instead of being short \$250,000 the Town would only be short \$92,000. Mr. Bridges said the Trails Committee is recommending that the Town take the project and Eastern Federal Lands approves of the idea. Per Mr. Bridges, the plans are at 95% and the Town could bid it soon and hopefully build it in the spring.

Motion: To place and support article #52.

By: Selectman Goodwin

2nd: Selectman Kaitbenski

All in favor

Vote: 5-0-0

ARTICLE 53: FUNDING FOR POLICE UNION CONTRACT

Chair Blanchard read the full draft article summary of article #53.

Motion: To place and support this pending the Board of Selectmen's meeting on Monday.

By: Selectman Dunnigan

2nd: Selectman Kaitbenski
All in favor
Vote: 5-0-0

ARTICLE 54: FUNDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PUBLIC PARKING LOT AT 501 MAIN STREET, STURBRIDGE

Chair Blanchard read the full draft article summary of article #54. Mr. Bridges said there is a \$50,000 earmark through the state budget and the total cost is around \$350,000.

Motion: To place and support article #54.
By: Selectman Kaitbenski
2nd: Selectman Goodwin
All in favor
Vote: 5-0-0

Mr. Bridges said this would get the Town 25 extra parking spots.

Vice Chair Dowling said before the Board of Selectmen close the warrant, if there could be a placeholder for Community Preservation Committee to fund some of the senior center work since it is a historical building. She said she spoke with the Chair who seemed amenable. Mr. Bridges said the Community Preservation Committee is meeting on September 30, 2021 and he could check on it. Per Mr. Bridges, their discussions at the meeting would be incorporated into the Board of Selectmen's meeting on October 4, 2021. Vice Chair Dowling stated that it would be nice for the residents to see that the Town is drawing the money from as many resources as possible.

Motion: To close the warrant.
By: Selectman Kaitbenski
2nd: Selectman Dunnigan
All in favor
Vote: 5-0-0

Motion: To adjourn.
By: Selectman Goodwin
2nd: Selectman Dunnigan

Vice Chair Dowling said if the article is approved, the Town would be rezoning 378 acres and asked why it says 223 acres. Mr. Bridges said there are three parcels and one of the parcels does not have the equine facility on it. He said even the motion to cite the equestrian facility is for the two parcels on the one side of Breakneck Road and there would be no gambling on the third parcel. Per Mr. Bridges, all three parcels would be rezoned since the ballfield might go there. Vice Chair Dowling asked about the 75 acres on Cross Road and Mr. Bridges said there are two parcels on the project. Vice Chair Dowling stated that 223 acres is for 180 Breakneck Road and 75 acres is for 16 Cross Road for a total of about 300 acres.

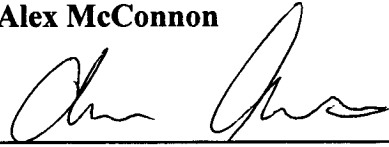
All in favor
Vote: 5-0-0

September 29, 2021

The meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

Minutes prepared by: Alex McConnon

Clerk of the Board:



Date signed:

11/1/21