



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF SELECTMAN MINUTES February 17, 2016 – 7:00 PM Town Hall

Call Meeting to Order

Steve Mitchell called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Present at the meeting is Vice-Chair Steve Mitchell, Yolanda Greaves, Rob Scherer, Carl Hakansson and Town Manager Michael Herbert.

Steve Mitchell read the Board's mission statement and explained that the meeting is not be broadcast live on WACA at the moment but will be as soon as the issue is resolved.

Mike Torosian led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Citizen's Participation

Mark Dassoni, 49 Hawthorne Rd., commented that the new website is a great update from what it was. Mr. Dassoni asked whether the discussion regarding the vacancy on the Board of Heath will be open to the public.

Steve Morgan, 136 Concord Street, explained that he found the new website to be a challenge and would like to have old website put back in place until the issues are all resolved. Steve Morgan is also interested in understanding why the Override Study Committee did not work collectively with the Capital Improvement Committee when discussing the money that would be allocated to the Capital Improvement Committee.

Michael Herbert explained that detailed budget discussions are ongoing and he also mentioned that the \$500,000.00 that has been discussed is going to the Capital Improvement Committee, but explained that this money is for stabilization and Economic Development and the reason it did not go to the Capital Improvement Committee.

Steve Morgan explained that he feels the Capital Improvement Committee is not being included on items that should be under the purview of the committee.

Carl Hakansson explained that he feels calling the \$500,000.00 capital may not be the best way of identifying this money.

Scheduled Appointments

Adopt a Hydrant Program

Mike Torosian reported that the Fire Department has launched a new program called Adopt a Hydrant and he announced that the first 3 winners; Jace Fry, George Henry and Geoffrey Paddock.

New Town Website

Michael Herbert explained that redoing the town's website was deemed a priority in the 2016 budget. Mr. Herbert explained that a survey was completed to determine what the community wanted and as a result the IT Department started working to choose a vendor that would develop the new website. Paul Carpenter explained that although the new website is live, the IT Department is working to resolve issues that have been encountered. Mr. Carpenter also mentioned that the new website has many integrated

data from a variety of sources and they are still working to load all the information into the system. Mr. Carpenter explained the website's main Government Calendar is a compilation of other town calendars that are maintained by the individual groups and departments.

Municipal Aggregation Plans

Michael Herbert explained that the Town of Ashland offered a Municipal Aggregation Plan a few years ago, but the town opted out of the plan when rates were no longer less than the rates offered by NStar.

Phillip Williams, Energy Manager, explained that he has been working with Mark Capadona from Colonial Power on a Municipal Aggregation Program. Phillip Williams explained that using the purchasing power of the community will result in cost savings to each resident, but residents always have the option to opt out if they choose not to participate in the program. Phillip Williams explained that the average savings for citizens would be approximately 10% of their electric bill.

Carl Hakansson asked about the program's "green" product options. Mr. Williams stated those options are more expensive and would be included based on whether it was a direction the town wanted to explore.

Steve Mitchell wanted to understand how the program relates to customers with solar net metering and how municipal solar projects would be impacted by this program.

Mark Capadona of Colonial Power, 277 Main St., Marlborough MA, explained that there are options concerning the types of power offered, which include green energy. He also mentioned that he will provide a couple different options with the proposal. Mark Capadona also explained that Eversource would continue to work with net metering, and the Town of Ashland could include its municipal solar projects in the program.

Yolanda Greaves asked what portion of the electric bill will be affected by the program. Mr. Capadona replied the aggregate charge will be reflected in the generation service charge on their Eversource bill.

Yolanda Greaves asked how often the town would need to review the rates. Michael Herbert said the pricing would be based on a 12, 18, 24, 30 or 36-month lock.

Yolanda Greaves asked if adding the town buildings would increase the savings to all users. Mr. Capadona explained that including the buildings would not have an adverse effect on the program.

Yolanda Greaves asked about the period to opt-in and opt-out. Mr. Capadona explained that there is a 30-day period prior to the start date when residents will be mailed a card that allows them opt-out of the program.

Rob Scherer asked if users that are currently not on an Eversource Program can join this program. Mark Capadona suggest the user contact their current supplier to determine if there would be penalties for leaving their current program contract.

Mark Capadona explained that Offer-A includes 12, 24 and 36-month pricing and Offer-B is a fixed price offered every 6 months. All the prices discussed are only brown pricing, but Mr. Capadona explained that he will provide pricing that includes both brown and green pricing.

Mr. Capadona explained a couple different options and one is a fixed rate program that could result in the town managing a stabilization fund.

Michael Hebert recommended a 12-month contract that would be re-evaluated after 12 months.

Carl Hakansson feels the program would benefit the consumers.

Rob Scherer said he would support a 12-month program, if it offers a savings to the residents.

Yolanda Greaves made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to enter into an agreement with Colonial Power, based on the price that will be provided tomorrow. This motion was seconded by Carl Hakansson with a unanimous vote of 4-0-1 (Magnani-absent).

Acceptance of Minutes

Yolanda Greaves made a motion to accept the minutes of January 20, 2016 as amended. This motion was seconded by Carl Hakansson with a unanimous vote of 4-0-0.

Selectmen Appointments

Road Traffic Safety Committee

Sgt. Ed Burman explained that he served on a similar committee when he worked for the Town of Framingham that was very successful. Sgt. Burman feels this committee will allow all the safety concerns to filter thru one committee, which would allow them to address each issue collectively.

Izzy Assencoa, 9 Lakeview Terrace, explained that he submitted his Talent Bank Form, because he is very concerned about the overwhelming traffic volumes on Olive St. and many other streets in town. He thinks he can help address this issue.

Yolanda Greaves made a motion to appoint Ed Burman, David Manugian, Nat Strosberg, Izzy Assencoa and Dona Walsh to the Road Traffic Safety Committed, with a term to expire August 31, 2016. This motion was seconded by Carl Hakansson with a unanimous vote of 4-0-1 (Magnani-absent).

Town Manger's Appointments

Michael Herbert explained that he is appointing Arminda Morais to the tax clerk position in the Treasurer/Collector's Office and he requested that the Board waive the 15-day waiting period.

Yolanda Greaves made a motion to approve the recommendation of the Town Managers appointment of Arminda Morais to the tax clerk position, and waive the 15-day waiting period. This motion was seconded by Carl Hakansson with a unanimous vote of 4-0-1 (Magnani-absent).

Old / New Business

Sign March 1, 2016 Warrant

Yolanda Greaves made a motion to approve and sign the March 1, 2016 warrant for the March 1st primaries. This motion was seconded by Carl Hakansson with a unanimous vote of 4-0-1 (Magnani-absent).

Joint Meeting of the Board of Health

Steve Mitchell read the letter of resignation submitted by Edward P. Hart and thanked him for all he has done. Steve Mitchell explained that Ed Hart was resigning from the Board of Health, effective February 10, 2016. The Board of Selectmen thanked Ed for the work he has done for the community and regrettably accepted his resignation.

Mark Dassoni explained that he has attended several meeting of the Board of Health and he thinks the board currently has several personality conflicts and he feels that he could work well with the board.

Announce BAA Spring Grants

Susan Robie suggested that the Board open up the round of grants from February 18th to March 31st and use the 1st and 2nd meetings in April for review and decision making.

Steve Mitchell asked that the grant applications are made available on the town's website starting tomorrow and at the Selectmen's Office.

Yolanda Greaves suggested that the Board require past grant recipients to report on how they used the grant.

Runner's Breakfast

Steve Mitchell explained that the Board of Selectmen hosts an annual breakfast at TJ's for marathon runners. This year the event will take place on April 16, 2016 from 9:00am to 11:00am.

Volunteer Breakfast

Steve Mitchell reminded everyone that the Board is hosting the Volunteers Breakfast on February 27th, 8:30am to 10:00am at the Community Center.

Override Discussion Planning

Steve Mitchell explained that the Board voted to put forth the override question and would like to discuss hosting a forum(s). Michael Herbert explained that he would look at the calendar and send out some dates.

Joint Board of Selectmen/Town Manager Goals

Steve Mitchell asked that Michael Herbert work on setting up a workshop meeting. Michael Herbert asked that each member of the Board submit their goals and initiatives to the Chair.

Declaration of Surplus

Michael Herbert explained that the town has cars to declare as surplus and then for auction.

Yolanda Greaves made a motion to declare the 2007 Ford Taurus and the 2004 Ford Expedition (VIN numbers document in the Board's note) as surplus, so that the vehicles can go to auction. This motion was seconded by Carl Hakansson with a unanimous vote of 4-0-1 (Magnani-absent).

Town Manager Reports

Town Manger Open Forum

Michael Herbert stated that it's important to him to have an open dialog with the residents, so he will host an Open Forum on March 8, 2016, from 6:00pm to 8:00pm in the Town Hall Room B/C.

National Citizens Survey

Michael Herbert reported that the town is moving forward with a web only survey that will go out to a sample-size of 1,800 households. Funding for this will come from the budget and he expects this process to take about 4 months.

Steve Mitchell explained that the Town of Hopkinton did this and the feedback was well worth it.

Ameresco Solar Projects

Michael Herbert explained the Howe Street project, to turn the former landfill into a solar farm, is currently being reviewed by the Planning Board. Michael Herbert expects this project to be completed this summer. Michael Herbert also mentioned that the schools' solar projects are on schedule.

Mass DEP Grant

Michael Herbert mentioned that the Mass DEP Asset Management Grant is being explored to determine if the town's wastewater project would be eligible.

Town Meeting Update

Michael Herbert reminded everyone that the deadline to submit notice of intent for warrant articles is tomorrow. Michael Herbert reported that currently there are approximately 20 warrant articles.

Board Reports

Carl Hakansson

Carl mentioned that there is a DCR Matching Grant that is being offered and he feels that this is consistent with conversations the Board has had regarding the rehabilitation of the Ashland State Park, given it is a DCR property.

Carl also mentioned that there have been discussions about revitalization of downtown and he hopes that the Board hosts another Downtown Summit in the spring. Yolanda asked when the general public will be included. Carl agreed citizen participation would benefit the process.

Rob Scherer

Rob was happy to hear that someone is going to work on DCR Matching Grant and he offered to help Carl if needed.

Yolanda Greaves

Yolanda reported that on Friday she will attend the Pond St. working group meeting

Yolanda will attend the Metrowest Regional Collaborative meeting next week. She noted that the Collaborative will no longer have a Regional Director and the assessment should be reduced as a result.

Yolanda mentioned the Volunteer Breakfast on the 27th, and the State of the Town Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday April 12th.

Steve Mitchell

Steve mentioned that last night was the first meeting of the Warrant Woods Ad Hoc Committee and the meeting went well. Carl felt the committee is made up of a great group of people and it should be a very productive. Yolanda asked for a time frame on 22 Eliot Street, which Carl explained the transfer of the house should happen sometime in April and the land will be transferred sometime in Phase 2.

Steve mentioned the Volunteer Breakfast.

Steve reported that the Ashland Lions will host a Chilifest on Saturday February 27th at the American Legion on Summer St. from 11:00am to 1:00pm. Tickets may be purchased at the door.

Steve reported that a new event, Ashland Mystery Festival, will be held on March 19th at the Ashland Public Library.

Steve extended his best wishes to Ed Hart and thanked him for his participation on the Board of Health.

Adjournment

Yolanda Greaves made a motion to adjourn. This motion was seconded by Rob Scherer with a unanimous vote of 4-0-0.

