



**Board of Selectmen
Minutes
Tuesday, March 7, 2017 at 7:00pm
Town Hall Meeting Room**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chair Ken Swanton in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Selectmen Ron Ricci, Stu Sklar, Alice von Loesecke and Lucy Wallace were in attendance as well as Acting Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro.

Town-wide clean up

Resident Libby Levison asked the Selectmen to again support a town-wide clean up. The dates chosen for this year are Thursday, April 27th thru Sunday, April 30th. She asked for permission allowing the Department of Public Works to pick up the bags on the Monday following. She indicated last year the cleanup was funded privately and this year they are asking various boards/committee to contribute \$100. On a Sklar/Ricci motion, the board voted unanimously to donate \$100. Ricci suggested this effort be funded through the DPW budget in the future.

Bare Hill Pond Watershed Management Committee appointment

Committee member Peter von Loesecke introduced Ashwini Kumar for appointment to the committee. Kumar took a few moments to explain why he is interested in serving on the committee. On a Wallace/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint Ashwini Kumar to the pond committee with a term expiring in 2019.

Town Hall & Hildreth House Construction Committee

Rick Maiore reported both projects are almost finalized. He commented on the two outstanding issues at town hall to be paving and landscaping. TTI has been hired to draft a landscape plan around Town Hall for consideration by the board in April. They plan to also install directional signs to emphasize the entrance and exit for Town Hall, Hildreth House and Fire Station. Sobalvarro is confident much of this cost will be covered by existing funds.

Maiore indicated the Hildreth House project has one outstanding item which is paving. They are working on a final traffic configuration with the Planning Board.

Council on Aging – senior survey results

Co-Chairs Katie Petrossi and Deb Thomson were in attendance to review the results from their recent survey. Petrossi said with aging being a complex issue many cities and towns are tasked with finding ways to meet elder needs. She indicated 26% of Harvard's population are seniors with 287 of them responding to the survey. Petrossi noted the CoA has seen an increase in demand for services such as meals, transportation and social services. She noted there continues to be an unmet need with space at the Hildreth House therefore support is strong for the phase two addition which includes a dining room, multi-purpose room, handicap accessible kitchen, and additional restrooms. She said those who more frequently use COA services are more likely to support improving Hildreth House. Petrossi pointed out property taxes were a factor but the majority of respondents were still in favor of Phase 2. The board members asked some questions and commented on the survey results. They thanked the CoA for their work in developing the survey and facilitating the high responses received.

Devens Enterprise Commission

Commissioner James DeZutter was present to encourage the board to review the DEC annual report. He said it will help to better understand how their activities fit in with Harvard's plans for the future. They spoke about the upcoming ballot question related to Devens. The board members asked questions about the progress of the Grant Road project and status of Salerno Circle. Swanton asked DeZutter if there is anything of significance Harvard should be focused on. He spoke about the importance of Harvard understanding what it will take to govern that portion of Devens if the town chooses to in the future. He reminded everyone how quickly time goes and decisions will need to be made sooner rather than later. The board members agreed and asked DeZutter to attend the Devens public forum being held on March 23rd.

Public Communication

Deb Thomson, CoA Co-chair, asked when the phone and internet services will be working at the Hildreth House. Sobalvarro confirmed the phones were operational as of that afternoon and the fiber connection for both the Hildreth House and Fire Station will be completed by March 17th.

Acting Town Administrator report

Sobalvarro reported the Town Administrator's surgery went well and he is currently recovering at an undisclosed location.

Sobalvarro reported the server migration has been completed.

Sobalvarro announced the Town Hall project final calculations are close to complete and are coming in well under budget.

Sobalvarro said the Athol Solar Holdings net metering agreement has been reviewed by town counsel and signed by all parties. Energy Advisory Committee member Eric Broadbent is assisting Sobalvarro to map which accounts make the most sense to be applied to this contract.

Sobalvarro reviewed the Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) actuarial valuation report. She guided them toward the summary page which indicated Harvard is funding the liability adequately. She took some time to review other important details included in the report. She pointed out the timeframe used for this report is 2014-2016. She cautioned moving forward the number of retirees will be increasing quite a bit and expectations for increases in health care costs are probable. She explained how the discount rate is calculated. Swanton and von Loesecke expressed their interest to further investigate retiree benefits.

Sobalvarro gave an update on free cash. She said some oversight occurred when closing of the books last year with posting of payments in July instead of June. She said Finance Director David Nalchajian is working with the Department of Revenue (DOR) to reevaluate our free cash number which will be closer to \$1,200,000.00.

Sobalvarro reported the Old Library Accessibility Committee will be reviewing their submissions.

Sobalvarro said a municipal training will be held on April 27th in Taunton on Chapter 70 and net school spending. She will send a link for those board members interested to register.

Department of Public Works Director

Sobalvarro briefly reviewed contract details agreed upon by Tim Kilhart and indicated he will start on April 3rd. On Ricci/Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously to sign the contract.

One-day liquor license – Library Trustees

On a Ricci/Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously to approve the one-day liquor license for the Library Trustees. Ricci noted the fee was waived only because they are a municipal entity. He suggested this be codified in the policy.

Old library lease

Sobalvarro reviewed two subsequent items:

- To have a qualified outside expert inspect the interior of the building
- Amendment – this agreement may only be amended or modified by a writing signed by both lessor and lessee. Following the initial inspection of the building the parties will negotiate by mutual consent any modifications to the lease. Following the Town’s determination of accessibility choice, the parties to the lease will negotiate by mutual consent any modifications to the lease.

Wallace made a motion seconded by Ricci to execute the lease with Harvard’s Cultural Collaborative.

Ricci had questions on why the town needs to request permission under the lessor entry section and about verbiage related to the accessibility of the rear door. He wants to avoid any impediment to the town when accessing designated areas. Sobalvarro suggested a motion to address these concerns. Wallace is confident the collaborative will work with the town and recommends acting on previous motion. Ricci amended the motion to add striking “as agreed to by the parties” in the lessor entry section. The original motion to execute the lease with Harvard’s Cultural Collaborative was voted on. (4-1, Ricci – abstain)

Annual Town Meeting Warrant

On a Wallace/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to support articles 1 -5.

On a Sklar/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to support articles 6 – 9.

On a Wallace/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to articles 10 – 13.

On a Sklar/Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously to support articles 14, 15 and 16.

They discussed article 17 for the Town Planner and talked about increasing the amount.

On a Ricci/Sklar motion, the board voted to take no position until hear from Finance Committee and Planning Board. (4-1, Wallace – abstain)

Wallace expressed concern to not support the originally requested dollar amount for article 18 for the Conservation Fund. On a Ricci/von Loesecke motion, the board voted to support article 18.

(3, 1, 1 Sklar – Nay, Wallace – abstain)

On von Loesecke/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to support articles 19-20.

On a Sklar/Ricci motion, the board voted unanimously to support articles 21-24.

On a Von Loesecke/Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously to support articles 25-28. Von Loesecke gave a brief overview of these capital requests.

On a Wallace/Ricci motion, the board voted unanimously to support articles 29-31.

On a Wallace/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to support articles 32-36.

On a Wallace/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to support articles 38-40.

On a Wallace/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to support article 41.

On a Wallace/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to support articles 42-44.

The board members discussed article 45 - citizen’s petition. They did not agree with the entire submission therefore they decided to take no action. On a Wallace/Sklar motion, the board voted to not take a position on article 45.

On a Sklar/Ricci motion, the board voted unanimously to support articles 46-47.

The board decided to pass over article 48 for the Park & Recreation Director to allow more time to finalize the details.

On a Ricci/von Loesecke motion the board voted to take no position on article 48.

On a Wallace/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to support articles 49-50.

Selectmen goals

Wallace gave an update on the outreach for the Devens forum on March 23rd. She said Victor Normand will write a “consider this” for the Harvard Press. She asked members to contact their liaison assignments to invite them to the forum. Discussion ensued on how best to proceed with respect to Devens.

Wallace participated in the March Meals on Wheels campaign and many recipients expressed their appreciation for all of the Council on Aging services. She said we should all seriously consider funding of phase 2.

Wallace said at the next meeting the old library accessibility group will have an update and a recommendation for an architect.

Von Loesecke shared what she learned after further investigation into insurance coverage for rental of the upper town hall. She is recommending reducing the general liability limits from the proposed \$1,000,000 occurrence/\$3,000,000 to \$1,000,000 occurrence/\$2,000,000. She indicated many towns require a hold harmless agreement however she was not in favor of that approach. Von Loesecke explained those holding public events requesting a one-day liquor license would likely hire a caterer who would carry adequate insurance coverage. She said many towns do not require insurance coverage for private events such as birthday parties or showers. Von Loesecke will work with Sobalvarro to finalize options for consideration by the board at an upcoming meeting.

Sklar gave an update on the War Monument Restoration Committee. They are investigating either repair or replace of the flag pole on common. They will come with a plan once it is finalized.

Ricci asked the members to select a date to hold a meeting of the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust to review proposals for 166 Littleton Road. They will meet March 27th at 1pm.

Swanton said the school building committee anticipates having a recommendation in June.

**** On a Ricci motion, the Board voted unanimously by a roll call vote:

Swanton – Aye, von Loesecke – Aye, Sklar – Aye, Wallace - Aye to enter into executive session at 10:00pm, as authorized by Chapter 30A, Section 21. 3, to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. Following the executive session, the Board will reconvene only to adjourn. ****

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30pm.

Documents referenced:

BHPWMC appointment – Kumar vol form dated 2.22.2017

THCC report – dated 3.2.2017

CoA Survey results – dated 3.2.2017

One-day liquor request – dated 3.2.2017

Old library lease – dated 3.6.2017

ATM warrant – dated 3.2.2017