Board of Selectmen
Minutes
Tuesday, January 30, 2018 at 7:00pm
Town Hall Meeting Room

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

SMART (Save Money and Reduce Trash) Program presentation
Regional Recycling Coordinator Irene Congdon from the Massachusetts DEP Central Mass Recycling Office came to introduce the SMART program. Harvard Board of Health members were also in attendance. Congdon gave an overview of how the program works and how it can be sustainable given the financial incentives. She explained it is unit based pricing which provides a true cost for disposal and promotes more recycling and composting. Participants purchase bags for a flat fee which covers the cost for disposal and then an annual fee for operation of the transfer station. Congdon outlined the next steps and noted as a green community this program supports Harvard's mission. On a Sklar/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to move to the SMART program by following steps as outlined in the presentation. Sklar and Swanton will work with Congdon and the Board of Health to discuss the details and how best to address challenges with implementation and administration of the program.

Building Maintenance Plan review
Swanton stated the goal tonight is to review a preliminary plan for next year. DPW Director Tim Kilhart provided an outline of anticipated projects for each town building. He explained this is a basis to work from with preliminary estimates for cost. In addition, he will develop a roof replacement plan by hiring an expert to inspect roofs and recommend replacement timelines over the next several years. He has categorized items as either repair/emergency or routine maintenance. He admitted this plan does not include all of the "wish list" items mentioned by department heads but it is a good start. He is confident with all the data now organized and a plan in place a fully functioning system will evolve. This will allow for timely recommendations to the Capital Planning and Investment Committee and establishment of a five year plan.

Council on Aging appointment
CoA Chair Beth Williams introduced Cathy Walker for appointment to fill vacancy left by Sue Guswa. On a Sklar/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint Cathy Walker.

Housing @ Hildreth House charge and appointments
Committee Chair Rick Maiore was unable to attend. Wallace explained the committee has a desire to keep moving forward recognizing there is still a lot of interest in creating housing. They will work with the Fire Department to produce safe access with or without land currently

occupied by the Fire Station. They will also proceed to attain water and sewer permits. The committee is optimistic an updated proposal may be ready for consideration at a special town meeting in the fall. On a Swanton/Minar motion, the board voted unanimously to add the Fire Chief and Bill Barton, representing the Fire Association to the committee. Sklar made a friendly amendment to the motion adding amending charge as indicated in the red-line version. The board voted unanimously in favor.

Town Administrator report

Bragan reported back in 2016 a request was sent to the Governor's office asking to have Eric Stoltzfus move to the alternate position on the Devens Enterprise Commission and Duncan Chapman moving into the commissioner seat. We have never received confirmation from the Governor's office of this request. Bragan was contacted this week by Peter Lowitt at MassDevelopment informing us the Governor's office is requesting a female be named as alternate.

Bragan is working with the Tree Warden on an issue that has arisen with a tree on Elm Street. He has hired a surveyor to determine if the tree is on town or private property.

Bragan announced there is a deficit in the snow and ice account. He has also notified the Finance Committee.

Bragan reported the state is reporting a 3.5% increase in revenue therefore the Town of Harvard will receive an additional $51,000 in unrestricted local aid.

Bragan said we will need to move the deadline from the 5th to 12th of March to finalize the warrant booklet for the annual town meeting.

Bragan attended a recent MART meeting. They discussed the proposed change to how towns are reimbursed. Bragan explained their methodology is problematic. He expects this issue to be voted on at the next meeting scheduled for February 15th. He is also investigating other regional transportation companies at the request of the CoA Director.

Bragan has received a citizen's petition. The request is to amend Chapter 125-55 Hildreth overlay district require 25% of the units be affordable (per Chapter 40B) in order to expand the supply of affordability housing opportunities in a manner consistent with the towns housing production plan.

Bragan announced the refilling of Bare Hill Pond will start the first week in February.

Bragan went to a hearing in Lowell on the recent changes made to the GIC health insurance offerings. He expects this to be an on-going discussion.

Upper Town Hall rental fee waiver

On a Swanton/Minar motion, the board voted to waive fee for the Ashe memorial service. Von Loesecke received feedback that instead of having to make judgement calls on a case by case basis it may be a good idea to allow rental of the space at no cost for any Harvard citizen who is requesting the space for a memorial service.

Sklar exited the meeting at this time.

War Monument Restoration Committee
On a von Loesecke/Swanton motion, the board voted unanimously to award contract to Regini Zoll for $14,800.

Authorize repurpose of vehicle
Bragan reminded the board this came up at a past meeting. He is requesting the crown Victoria from the Police Department be repurposed to the Fire Department. Firefighter/EMT Andrew Perry will use this for inspections. On a Swanton/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to shift the fleet vehicle from the police department to the fire department.

Devens Jurisdiction Committee
Wallace explained the proposal is to create a standing committee from the current working group. She said the working group ended up drafting an RFP as a way to organize their thoughts. Swanton asked to have more careful discussion within the board before moving to creation of a committee. He is interested in hearing input from the other members and from the public. Minar explained the Devens section of the recent Master Plan provides data that can be analyzed assisting in making informed decisions. Von Loesecke suggested more involvement with the other boards/committees. She developed a list of questions to guide the process and offered the idea of a phased approach. She agrees with Swanton that the Board of Selectmen need to take the leadership role on this as instructed by the ballot question last year. Swanton and von Loesecke are interested in advertising the opportunity to volunteer instead of handpicking the group. Additionally, Wallace suggested informing Shirley, Ayer and MassDevelopment. The board members agreed to schedule a meeting when they can discuss Devens in more detail and when Sklar is present.

Senior Tax Relief
Bragan explained Sklar and Finance Committee member Jennifer Finch have been working together to provide additional information on the proposed program. They are asking the board to consider adding an article for a means tested senior citizens property tax exemption to the annual town meeting warrant. Bragan noted if the board votes to add the article it will allow additional time for the concept to be improved. If submitted as a citizen's petition it cannot be changed. On a Swanton/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to place a home rule means tested property tax exemption article on the annual town meeting warrant. This can be a placeholder and does not indicate support from the board. They talked with Finch about the program trial period, state circuit breaker qualification, percentage and asset maximums. Bragan recommended the Town Administrator, Assistant Town Administrator/HR Director, Finance Director and the Council on Aging Director be the individuals who administer the program.

Budget update
Bragan distributed a copy of the omnibus budget. He indicated the cherry sheet receipts amount reflects the amount listed in the Governor's budget. He indicated the amount for benefits, insurance and OPEB has increased. The budget currently indicates a surplus of $43,639 but this does not include changes resulting from the Personnel Study being finalized or health

insurance increases beyond the currently estimated increase. He said the Finance Committee is looking for prioritization of the cuts the board specified back in December. Minar asked if the School Committee had any specific priorities.

The board decided on the following:

1. Public building repairs
2. $20,000 for the schools
3. Cost of living adjustment for the Fire Dept. personnel - $3,000
4. Finance Dept. Technology - $2,500 & DPW Maintenance & Equipment - $2,500

On a Swanton/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to prioritize the cuts as decided.

Bragan mentioned the deadline for non-monetary articles is Thursday, February 1st. He is working on a summary of articles for review at the next meeting.

Selectmen Reports

Minar has been working with the Energy Advisory Committee on the HeatSmart program. They have been reviewing installers for air source and geo-thermal heat pumps. Once installers are chosen they will begin a public outreach campaign.

Swanton said the Old Library Accessibility Committee is awaiting word from the Procurement Officer on securing a contract with Abacus Architects. Von Loesecke asked if there is a status update on the grant submittal. Wallace reported the grant process has begun.

Von Loesecke reported the School Building Committee is meeting on Friday and are in the process of reconciling estimates from architects. She noted they have to be very careful in setting the budget as it cannot be changed. A public information session will be held on Monday morning at 8:00am.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45pm.

Documents referenced:
SMART – PowerPoint presentation dated 1.23.2018
Building Maintenance – spreadsheet w/ costs FY18 & FY19 plans
CoA appointment – Walker vol form dated 12.29.2017
Housing @ Hildreth House charge – dated 1.15.2018
Senior Tax Relief – draft home rule & highlights dated 1.30.2018