

Tuesday, October 7, 2008

This regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held this evening in the Juliani Meeting Room, Town Hall. In attendance were: Gregory B. Mills, Chair, Barbara D. Searle, Vice Chair, Owen H. Dugan, Secretary, Harriet S. Warshaw and Katherine L. Babson, Jr. Also in attendance were Hans Larsen, Executive Director, Terrance J. Connolly, Deputy Director and Albert S. Robinson, Town Counsel. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

The following warrants were executed: #12 in the amount of \$2,756,836.87.

The Chairman gave special recognition to Fire Chief Kevin Rooney who is retiring after 36 years of service in the Fire Department. His retirement date was September 29th which had special significance to him, as it was the date his father retired as Chief of the Natick Fire Department. The Chief will stay with the department until a new Chief is chosen.

The Chairman offered thanks from all the residents of Wellesley for his commitment and dedication to the Town and the Fire Department.

The Chief provided a few brief words and expressed his gratitude and appreciation to all the citizens of Wellesley, his firefighters and all the Town boards for such a fulfilling and satisfying career.

1. Citizen Speak

None.

2. Executive Director's Update

Today the Wellesley Teachers Association has voted to ratify its contract with the School Committee, which included the new Rate Saver Plan effective January 1, 2009. We are anticipating the Patrolmen's contract will be approved at the Special Town Meeting. The Rate Saver Plan for all non-union employees will also go into effect January 1, 2009.

Ms. Babson and Mrs. Warshaw commended the School Committee and Hans on their work on coming together on this contract especially on the high priority of the health care issue.

Approval of Minutes of September 26, 2008

Dugan moved, Searle seconded and the Board voted (5-0) to approve the minutes of September 26, 2008.

Gifts to the Council on Aging

Dugan moved and Searle seconded and the Board voted (5-0) to accept the gift of \$50.00 from Tricia Butler and the gift of \$25.00 from Robert Gray to the Council on Aging.

Traffic Loop Contract Award

Terry Connolly, Deputy Director walked the Board through the background on the Linden Street traffic loop. The Police Department vehicles have been completely outfitted with the pre-emption devices.

The project has been approved on the upgrade of the 7 signals on Washington and Central Streets. The fiber installation by the MLP is supportive of the signal enhancements and will be linked back to the police station. This should be operational by March, 2009.

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Dugan moved, Searle seconded and the Board voted (5-0) to award the Traffic Signal System Improvements – Washington Street / Central Street Project IFP#09E-10-09 to Dagle Electrical Construction Corporation of Salem, MA.

3. National Grid Petition – to install gas main in Dewing Path

Harold Cooper from National Grid appeared before the Board to give details of the request.

Dugan moved, Searle seconded and the Board to approve the request of National Grid to install and maintain approximately 490 feet, more or less of 4 inch gas main in Dewing Path, Wellesley, 233 feet Easterly from the existing 4 inch gas main in Dewing Path and 257 feet Northerly to proposed building No. 3 Dewing Path.

4. Building Inspector Appointment

Michael Grant, Inspector of Buildings appeared before the Board to request the Board's approval to appoint Russell Wheeler as Local Building Inspector/Assistant Zoning Enforcement Officer.

Dugan moved, Searle seconded and the Board voted (5-0) to appoint Russell W. Wheeler, 7 Sanford Street, Medway, MA, as Local Building Inspector / Assistant Zoning Enforcement Officer for a one-year term to expire June 30, 2009.

5. MUNIS Building Department Implementation

Brian DuPont, appeared before the Board to provide the Board with information regarding the implementation of the MUNIS system for the Building Department. Mr. DuPont's primary role is GIS Administrator however he will be acting on behalf of the NIS Department as project manager on this job.

This automation of the Building Department is coming out of the Babson Management Training Initiative. The purpose is to automate the Building Department with some type of software application with the MUNIS permitting module having been chosen.

Working with Michael Grant, Inspector of Buildings, they first had to identify the opportunities for improvements for the department. They identified three areas for improvement and determined how they would be implemented. Mr. DuPont gave details on how the MUNIS system works and how it will improve customer service for the applicants.

6. Abbott Road/Forest Street

Kien Ho, Traffic Engineer for the BETA Group reviewed the proposed plan. The Board of Selectmen had asked BETA to consider a modified plan from the earlier proposed plan. Mr. Ho provided a slide show for his presentation. He walked through and gave an update on the proposed plan modification. The slides illustrated the school bus/fire truck turn radius from Forest onto Abbott and the proposed relocation of the island if were shifted 4 ft. back from Forest St. It also showed the existing curb and the proposed curb if where pushed back. Mr. Ho stated that by pushing the curb back vehicles would be forced to slowdown to approximately 15 mph.

The estimated cost for the proposed modified plan would be approximately \$10,000. Mike Pakstis, Director of the DPW said the time frame for the construction would be the end of November or beginning of December.

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Chief Cunningham felt that placing a 30 mph advisory sign at the intersection of Abbott and Inverness Roads would be acceptable and was comfortable with the revised plan from a traffic calming standpoint and thought it would make the intersection safer.

Public Comment

Mary Beth Sandman – 93 Abbott Rd. introduced Beth Gilbert Bono – 139 Abbott Rd. Ms. Bono read a letter from neighbors with proposals and concerns with two solutions they would like the BOS to consider.

Linda Morgan- 112 Abbott Rd. read names of residents who signed the letter.

Russ Corsini – 19 Lincoln Rd. he and his wife oppose the modifications to the intersection and are concerned about ice in the road in the winter.

Thomas Keiser – 38 Inverness Rd. thinks slowing down the traffic is a good idea and sees no negatives.

Richard Baum – 84 Abbott Rd. feels the Marx issued is resolved now that the trees are removed. Feels the traffic will be more dangerous if this plan is adopted. He suggested further study be done and asked the Board to reconsider the plan.

Amy Smith – 11 Lincoln Rd. feels there can be a less expensive way of doing this e.g. more police presence and that there are probably other intersections in town as or more dangerous.

Meg Greer – 24 Windsor Rd. feels the school bus issue is a red herring and asked if there have been any complaints from the school department re the turning radius.

Jonathan Francis – 165 Forest St. concerned the island will become an eyesore and the tree will be removed and that will it not continue to be a raised island

Mike Pakstis said the island can be landscaped but the small island will not be conducive to planting a tree.
Kien Ho said the island will be raised.

Sharon Kasper – 90 Abbott St. would like to see sidewalks installed.

Alex Marx – 164 Forest St. said they will maintain the area near the road. The issue is not the visibility but the speed issue and the safety for all the families in the neighborhood. He thanked the Board for all their hard work on this issue.

Marla Robinson – 33 Windsor Rd. the town should be looking at the intersection but feels \$10,000 is a lot to spend and they should be looking at other intersections.

Melissa Marx, 164 Forest St. – thanked the Board for their time and efforts.

Richard Baum – 84 Abbott Rd. reiterated his previous comments.

Meg Greer – 24 Windsor Rd. asked the Board to contact the bus coordinator about re-routing the bus.

Beth Gilbert Bono – 139 Abbott Rd. her house is near the island and she has never heard the backup beep from the bus's three point turns prior to the pylons being installed.

Dugan moved, Searle seconded to approve the proposed roadway geometry changes at the intersection of Abbott Road and Forest Street shown on a plan entitled “Intersection Improvement Forest Street & Abbott Road, Wellesley Concept Plan” by BETA Group, Inc. dated October 6, 2008 and to amend the motion to include the addition of an advisory speed limit sign at the intersection of Abbott and Inverness Roads.

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Ms. Babson stated that she continues to believe that this issue grew out of proportion from the landscaping issue and doesn't feel the Town's responsible for the site issue and we have had no complaints on the school bus issue. If the pylons were not there the turning issue would not be an issue. It has mushroomed out of proportion. The Board has spent more time on this issue than any other issue this year and the only part of the issue she would vote yes on is the sign issue. She feels strongly we should listen to the neighbors and appreciates all the time everyone has spent on this issue. She will be voting no.

Mr. Dugan noted that the Marx's came to the Town about the safety issue. The \$10,000 is coming from the Traffic and Parking Fines account. We have an opportunity to calm traffic there and he will support it

Ms. Searle feels the issue is compelling and there is a significant safety issue. She volunteered to work with the neighbors to work on a solution and will vote no.

Mrs. Warshaw will support it and feels it is a larger neighborhood issue rather than just for one resident.

The Chairman feels several issues have cropped up from the original issue of an unsafe egress from 164 Forest Street and does support the modified plan.

Dugan moved, Searle seconded and the Board voted (3-2 Babson & Searle) to approve the proposed roadway geometry changes at the intersection of Abbott Road and Forest Street shown on a plan entitled "Intersection Improvement Forest Street & Abbott Road, Wellesley Concept Plan" by BETA Group, Inc. dated October 6, 2008 and to amend the motion to include the addition of an advisory speed limit sign at the intersection of Abbott and Inverness Roads.

7. Cable Access Corporation – Annual Financial Review

This agenda item was not taken up and will be moved to the meeting of October 27th.

8. Wellesley High School

Ms. Babson indicated her desire to obtain the Board's vote in support of the high school project as proposed by the SBC. The project includes a request from the SBC to fund a total project cost of approximately \$130,000,000, with approximately 40% of eligible cost to be paid from a state grant. The balance of approximately \$87,000,000 will be the net cost for the town. She also noted that the MSBA approved the grant up to \$44,000,000 and is working closely with us on the plans.

A slide show was presented showing the current status of the project design. A model of the new high school is in the library with information regarding the project in the Advisory Book, which will be sent out this week.

Mr. Larsen reviewed how the project would be financed and gave the projected amount of the debt. It will be about a year until the project will be put out for bid and in excess of a year, possibly in the spring or as late as June, until we borrow significant amounts of money. There will be data in the Advisory Book regarding the impact on tax bills and tax rates. We are continuing to assess the current economic conditions and will speak more to this issue at Special Town Meeting.

Ms. Babson covered the cost of the project, which includes some additional costs for green features, emergency generators and air conditioning for the entire building except the gym, kitchen area and locker rooms. There will be a Special Town Election regarding a debt exclusion question, to be called by the Board of Selectmen for December 9, 2008.

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Mr. Larsen said the related motions and debt exclusion language have been drafted and have been approved by the MSBA. We are waiting for feedback from Bond Counsel and are nearly ready to go.

Ms. Searle noted that the report in the back of the Advisory Book is very comprehensive and very well done and thanked Ms. Babson and Mr. Larsen.

Dugan moved, Searle seconded and the Board voted (5-0) to approve the High School project as proposed by the School Building Committee, including its request for funding, with a total project cost of approximately \$130.6 million of which approximately \$44 million is a state grant and the balance, or approximately \$87 million, is the net cost to the Town.

Old Business/ New Business

- **Naming Policy Update** – Ms. Searle said they have received comments from the Board of Selectmen and other Boards regarding the draft of the revised naming policy. A revised copy will be sent out shortly and then a public hearing will be scheduled.
- **Fire Chief Search** – Mr. Larsen said that MRI has been hired to conduct the fire chief search and has started the interview process. We will have a further update as we advance.
- **Sprague Fields** – Mr. Dugan reported that Field 1 the natural turf has been sodded. Fields 2 & 3 artificial surface fields are in use. Field 4 the back field and the baseball fields have been laid out. The upper fields have been leveled and ready to go. Rain had caused some delay in the completion of these fields. The road into the fields is complete and paved.
- **Senior Center Study** – Mr. Larsen reported that the RFP for an architect to form a feasibility study for the Legion site has been sent out. Several firms have been interviewed by a sub-committee of the Sr. Study Committee. The top firms have been ranked and Sterling Associates has been chosen.

The Executive Director asked the Board to authorize him to execute a contract with Sterling Associates in connection with the feasibility study for the Senior Center.

Mrs. Warshaw explained pieces of the contract and when it will be completed. She also gave details for some of the upcoming focus group meetings

Dugan moved, Warshaw seconded and the Board voted (5-0) to authorize the Executive Director to execute a contract with Sterling Associates in connection with the feasibility for the Senior Center.

- **Original Town Hall** – The Chairman noted that there were two documents in the Friday Night Mail regarding the Original Town Hall progress.
 - a. A letter of agreement between the Town and The Wellesley Country Club indicating respective responsibilities of each organization.
 - b. Work Plan that identifies the detailed arrangements on how certain items will be extracted and stored.

Searle moved, Warshaw seconded and the Board voted (4-0 Dugan recused himself) to approve the Letter of Agreement with the Wellesley Country Club regarding Preservation of Items from the Original Town Hall, prepared by Town Counsel and dated September 26, 2008, as amended and signed by Christopher Kelly, President of the Wellesley Country Club.

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Searle moved, Warshaw seconded and the Board voted (4-0 Dugan recused himself) to approve the Work Plan for the Original Town Hall project, dated September 29, 2008.

State Election Warrant

Babson moved, Searle seconded and the Board voted (5-0) to approve the warrant for the State Election on Tuesday, November 4, 2008. And further that the polls shall be open from 6:30 am until 8:00 pm. As presented upon the recommendation of the Town Clerk.

At 10:45, the Board was polled all aye to go into Executive Session to consider strategies for collective bargaining and litigation.