

Board of Selectmen Meeting – November 13, 2012
Held at: Felix Juliani Meeting Room, Town Hall
Present: Tsagaris, Gibbs, Searle, Babson, McCauley
Also present: Larsen, Connolly
Call to order: Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm.
Warrants approved: #19 in the amount of \$1,617,316.49

At 6:30 The Board was polled all aye to go into executive session with representatives of the School Committee and Human Resources Board to discuss strategy for collective bargaining. (See related minutes attached.)

At 7:35, the Board resumed open session.

Announcements

Ms. Tsagaris thanked MLP, DPW, Police, and Fire for all of their efforts during and after Hurricane Sandy. Later in the meeting a video was presented that showcased the collaborative effort and damage done during the storm.

Ms. Tsagaris also thanked Kathy Nagle, the Town Clerk staff, Terry Connolly, Police, DPW, Schools and the volunteers for their work on the November 6 election and for making sure the election was smooth, efficient and fair.

Ms. Tsagaris announced the dates for the upcoming Tax Classification hearing.

1. Citizen Speak

None.

2. Executive Directors Update

Minutes

The Board voted (5-0) to approve the minutes of the October 30, 2012 Board of Selectmen Meeting. (*Certain business was conducted at this meeting that was previously on the agenda for the October 29th meeting, which was cancelled due to Hurricane Sandy.*)

One Day Special License

The Board voted (5-0) to grant a One Day Special License to St. Andrew's Church for a Charity Outreach Fundraiser to be held at Dana Hall on November 16, 2012.

Gifts

The Board voted (5-0) to approve \$500 from an anonymous donor to the Council on Aging specifically to recognize the volunteers of the Council on Aging who assist with their bi-monthly newsletter mailing.

The Board voted (5-0) to approve donations for holiday lights from the following donors:

- \$1,845 – From CrossPoint Engineering on behalf of the Library Trustees – 210 Washington St.
- \$4,920 – From an Anonymous Donor - Elm Park
- \$2,460 – From an Anonymous Donor - 577/591 Washington St. & 8/16 Church St.
- \$1,230 – From Linear Retail – Cross St. @ Central St.

- \$1,230 – From an Anonymous Donor - Central St. @ Weston Rd.

Total Donations = \$11,685

2012 ATM – Key Dates

Mr. Larsen previewed the following potential dates for the upcoming Annual Town Meeting.

December 3, 2012 - Open warrant

January 4, 2013 - Close warrant

January 15, 2013 - Sign warrant

April 1, 2013 - First Day of Town Meeting (Town Meeting starting later this year due to the Passover holiday.)

3. Retirement Board

David Kornwitz, Retirement Board Chairman, joined the Board and provided an update on the Town's retirement system. He reviewed the findings from a recent Pioneer Institute Study regarding investment return assumptions, discussed a potential increase in the retiree COLA (cost of living adjustment) base, and summarized the potential impact of these items on future appropriation requirements. He believes that, at some point in the near future, the Town will need to lower the assumed rate of return on plan assets and raise the level of annual contributions. He counseled against any reduction in funding that would preclude fully funding the Town's liability by 2030.

Mr. Kornwitz also reviewed the results of the 2012 actuarial valuation of the OPEB (Other Post Employee Benefits) liability. While the valuation suggests the possibility of lowering the Town's "additional contribution required" (i.e., the amount of funding in addition to the pay-as-you-go cost, currently \$3 million/year), he advises against any such reduction because the Town is not yet funding an amount sufficient to cover the annual normal cost plus the interest on the unfunded liability.

Ms. Searle questioned whether we should consider some form of Prop 2 ½ exclusion to fund the growing cost of pension, as the Town did for OPEB. Ms. Babson noted this would require us to obtain special legislation. Mr. Larsen noted that, given the long-term duration of the funding schedules (OPEB and Pension), another alternative would be to fund the ongoing contributions inside the levy, perhaps with an override that takes effect following the expiration of the current exclusion.

In response to a question from Ms. Babson, Mr. Kornwitz noted that the annual cost associated with the proposed increase in the COLA base is approximately \$250,000. Ms. Babson opined that if a decision is made to increase the COLA base, the budgeted level of annual funding should be increased by this amount.

4. Reserve Policy

Sheryl Strother, Town Finance Director, joined the Board for a discussion of the draft Reserve Policy. Ms. Strother recapped the past Reserve Policy discussions and reviewed the Town's reserve levels over the past decade. Ms. Strother continued with an overview of the current draft of the Reserve Policy, which details what the reserves should be used for, and also establishes a methodology for quantifying reserve levels in relation to revenue. Ms. Strother answered questions. She noted that reserves at the end of FY12 represented 11.37% of revenue, and reviewed the details of this calculation. Mr. McCauley raised concerns regarding the potential rigidity of the draft language requiring the Town to maintain a minimum reserve level.

The Board agreed to defer action for a week, to give Mr. McCauley time to submit some suggested revisions to the draft.

5. Firefighter Appointments

Fire Chief DeLorie and Deputy Fire Chief Peterson approached the Board to present two candidates for recommendation to the Wellesley Fire Department. Mr. DeLorie disclosed the fact that one candidate, Lindsay DeLorie is his niece which was previously disclosed to the Board, Executive Director, HR and Labor Counsel and as a result he removed himself from the selection process. Deputy Chief Peterson continued the presentation by giving an overview of the process which led to the selection of these two candidates as well as detailing their resumes. He requested the Board of Fire Engineers vote to reaffirm the committee's decision to offer the two candidates permanent employment.

The two candidates introduced their respective family members present.

The Board voted (5-0) to make a conditional offer of employment to Lindsay DeLorie as Firefighter for the Town of Wellesley, contingent upon successful completion of the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy, her employment to commence November 14, 2012.

The Board voted (5-0) to make a conditional offer of employment to Alison Foley as Firefighter for the Town of Wellesley, contingent upon successful completion of the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy, her employment to commence November 15, 2012.

6. 2013 Boston Marathon Waivers – Charity Selection

Ms. Tsagaris updated the board on the current status of the 2013 Boston Marathon Waivers invitational entry Charity Selection. Six applications were received by the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Tsagaris described the different charities and how they would use the funds if chosen. There are 20 invitational entries available with 2 reserved for the Fire and 2 reserved for Police which would leave 16 for fundraising purposes. Each runner is required to raise \$4,000 for a specified charity.

The Board voted (5-0) to approve the following charitable organizations to be preliminarily approved for the receipt of proceeds generated from the Town's lottery of Boston Marathon Invitational Entries:

- Wellesley Friendly Aid Association for 5 entries
- Wellesley Scholarship Foundation for 5 entries
- Wellesley Theatre Project for 4 entries
- West Suburban Veterans District for 2 entries

Mr. Larsen noted that he is awaiting word on whether the Police/Fire departments may require extra marathon numbers, which might result in a change in the number of awarded entries to individual charities.

Ms. Tsagaris noted that applications for runners will now be posted on the website.

7. 900 Worcester Street – Parallel Process

Ms. Searle and Ms Babson summarized the results of their work on this issue. Their comments focused background information, the process they followed, suggested uses that have been proposed, the criteria used in their review, and their conclusions and recommendations.

Ms. Tsagaris questioned the basis for their conclusion that 900 Worcester Street is not an appropriate site for the Senior Center. Ms. Searle and Ms. Babson noted that nobody has expressed the view that 900 Worcester is a good site for such a use and concerns have been raised regarding the risks associated with requiring seniors to travel by car or otherwise on Route 9.

Mr. McCauley suggested the lack of proximity to other Town services, e.g., the Library, is a key requirement for the Senior Center, and the 900 Worcester Street site does not meet that requirement.

8. Board's Response to Request for Change in Alcohol Regulations – Intent to Dine

The Board discussed a merchant's request that the Selectmen take the necessary actions to allow for the retail sale of beer and wine for consumption off-premises.

Ms. Searle said that she is open to the idea, but would prefer to first allow time to assess the impact of the recent changes in alcohol licensing applicable to restaurants with 50-100 seats. Ms. Babson noted she opposed such a change, particularly given the recent changes that were intended to benefit the Town's commercial areas. Mr. McCauley and Ms. Gibbs expressed their willingness to work on this issue. The Board deferred further action pending such work.

Projects and Other Updates

- Wellesley High School – Ms. Babson noted that tours of the new High School will be conducted on the Saturday after Thanksgiving
- Tolles-Parsons Center – The Planning Committee is completing its work and will have a recommendation regarding membership of the Advisory Committee at an upcoming meeting.
- Wellesley Square Initiative – Ms. Searle noted the Town is hoping to have holiday lights on 18 trees vs. 4 trees last year, as a result of various gifts. She also noted the dates for the Holiday Stroll and free customer parking in Wellesley Square.
- Advisory Committee Update – Dave Murphy noted the Advisory Committee is beginning its consideration of capital budgets.
- Fuller Brook Park – The Friends of Fuller Brook Park held a cleanup day last Saturday and have started the removal of invasive species.
- 900 Worcester Street – None.
- Regional Matters/Transportation – Ms. Gibbs noted the Traffic Advisory Group is continuing to seek grant funding for the first two years of operating fixed route bus service.
- Sustainability – None.
- School Facilities Task Force – None.

Old Business/ New Business

None.

At 10:10 the Board was polled all aye to go into Executive Session to discuss litigation and acquisition of real property.