

Monday, November 24, 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 #20 in the amount of \$2,929,280.77.

1. **Citizen Speak**

None.

Mr. Mills wished all Wellesley citizens a happy and safe Thanksgiving and encouraged residents to attend the Wellesley Needham football game, the oldest school football rivalry in the country.

2. **Executive Director's Update**

Dugan moved, Searle seconded, and the Board voted (5-0) to approve the minutes of the Board of Selectmen meeting on November 17, 2008.

Mr. Larsen noted the dates of the public hearings to be held by the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority regarding proposed toll changes. Mr. Dugan noted that our local State legislators are supportive of an increase in the gas tax, in lieu of increased tolls on the Mass Pike.

Mr. Larsen noted the successful transition of 750+ Town employees to the new Rate Saver health insurance plans and extended his thanks to Susan Adler and Marc Waldman for their exceptional efforts on this initiative.

3. **Change of Manager – China Sky**

Vincent Wu appeared before the Board in connection with a change in manager for China Sky. Mr. Wu has been employed at China Sky for a number of years. Mr. Dugan questioned Mr. Wu as to whether he had received training related to the service of alcohol. He confirmed that he had, and in fact, all of the restaurant employees have been trained. Mr. Larsen also noted that Mr. Wu had met with Deputy Chief Brooks, and Mr. Brooks is supportive of Mr. Wu's candidacy.

Dugan moved, Searle seconded, and the Board voted (5-0) to approve the Change of Manager for China Sky located at 11 Forest Street to Vincent Wu, 1 Grant Avenue, Wellesley, subject to receipt of a corrected Board authorization vote (to eliminate words "she and").

4. **Comon Victuallers License – Northend Wellesley-Pizza, 7A Washington Street**

Yasser Lawendi appeared before the Board in connection with his application for a Common Victualler's license. Mr. Larsen noted that Mr. Lawendi has not obtained a traffic study as normally required by the Town's CV regulations. The Board is well aware of the traffic and parking issues in the area, based on a number of prior studies. Noting that this proposed restaurant would be similar in nature to other restaurants in the area (i.e., Peter's Pizza, Wellesley House of Pizza, Mark's and Papa Razzi), he suggested it can be argued that it would not generate additional traffic or parking demands. Furthermore, Mr. Lawendi has 3 dedicated parking spaces behind the building and he has arranged for employee parking behind the Taylor Rental.

Mr. Lawendi introduced himself and reviewed his business plans. The Board asked questions regarding parking and planned hours of operation. Mr. Larsen noted that by acting favorably on this application at this time, the Board would effectively be differentiating between the parking needs of this type of establishment vs. a sit-down restaurant such as the Falls Grille.

Monday, November 24, 2008

Dugan moved, Searle seconded, and the Board voted (5-0) to approve the Common Victuallers License to Yasser Lawendi d/b/a North End Wellesley Pizza located at 7A Washington Street, Wellesley, MA.

5. **Tax Classification Hearing**

Mr. Mills opened the Tax Classification Hearing and Deborah Carpenter, Steve Mahoney, David Livingston and Donna McCabe representing the Board of Assessors joined the Board. Ms. Carpenter reviewed the Fiscal Year 2009 Tax Rate Calculation (pending DOR approval) and Tax Rate Options. The Board asked questions regarding the potential implications of shifting to a split rate. Mr. Mahoney reviewed the trends in assessed values, tax rates, mean and median tax bills, and property values. He also reviewed the parcel counts by property type and the trend in personal exemptions.

Ms. Babson questioned the multiyear trend in parcel count by property type. Ms. McCabe noted that the most significant change is the increased number of condominiums.

Mr. Livingston reviewed related data for comparable towns.

The Boards discussed the merits of a single vs. dual tax rate.

Mr. Larsen clarified the role of the Selectmen in the establishment of the tax rate, in order to correct a recent article in the Townsman

Ms. McCabe reviewed the various Property Tax Relief Programs. Ms. Babson described several potential refinements to these Programs, including increasing the Elderly Exemption and the Senior Work-Off maximums from \$750 to \$1,000 (the latter item would require special legislation). The Board discussed the merits of making these modest refinements and deferred action to a subsequent date.

Mr. Mills welcomed public comment. There was none.

Mr. Mills continued the Hearing until December 15th.

Old Business/ New Business

- Fire Chief Search – N/A.
- Wellesley High School Building Committee – Ms. Babson noted the third and final Open House was held at the Library; the Cable Channel replay times for the High School project; and the availability of the related Advisory Committee report.
- 27 Washington Street – N/A.
- Senior Center Study – N/A.
- Ms. Babson noted the action by Town Meeting in Brookline to deny health insurance benefits to Selectmen in that community.

At 9:00 the Board was polled all aye to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with regard to litigation and collective bargaining.