

Board of Selectmen – March 15, 2011

Present: Babson, Tsagaris, Searle, Gibbs (Dugan was absent)

Also present: Larsen, Ketchen

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm.

Warrants approved: None

1. Citizen Speak

Susan Ryan, 50 Madison Road expressed support for no further reductions in the FY12 School Department budget.

2. Executive Director Update

The Board voted (5-0) to appoint Sylvia Hahn-Griffiths of 26 Whittier Road to the Kepes Panels Study Committee.

Mr. Larsen summarized the status of work related to the High School oil spill. He noted that an oil-water separator had been installed at the end pipe connecting the boiler room drain to the Caroline Brook, and that additional analysis is being done on the merits of removing the pipe and the extent of oil beneath the boiler room floor. He also noted that air quality testing and maintenance of the containment booms is ongoing.

3. Board of Public Works – Proposed DPW Office Building

Paul Criswell, Dave Donohue, Bill Charlton, Mike Pakstis, Judy Curby and Dave Cohen joined the Board and Mr. Criswell summarized the BPW's intention to request \$3,596,000 at Town Meeting to construct a new DPW office building. He reviewed the rationale for a new building, comparisons of the size of the proposed building to similar facilities recently constructed in other communities, alternatives considered, a breakdown of the estimated costs, and the anticipated schedule for the project. He also noted efforts made to achieve a sustainable design.

The Selectmen asked a number of questions. Mr. Criswell noted plans to host tours of the existing facility and to further study potential compliance with the Stretch Building Code.

4. David Himmelberger – Facilities Maintenance

David Himmelberger and Susan Hurwitz joined the Board and Mr. Himmelberger explained his intention to request that Town Meeting authorize the Moderator to appoint an ad hoc committee to study the merits of reconsolidating facilities maintenance responsibilities Town-wide. Ms. Hurwitz briefly summarized the lessons learned from her prior involvement in this issue.

The Board expressed their support for the goal of consolidated facilities maintenance and for Mr. Himmelberger's proposal for an ad hoc committee.

5. Tree Preservation Bylaw

Ms. Searle reviewed the purpose of the proposed Tree Preservation Bylaw and the potential fees for tree removal that would be paid to the Tree Bank. The fee level would be established by the Selectmen at a later date. The Board questioned the fee level in other communities and Ms. Searle indicated such data would be made available at a later date.

Mike Grignaffini, a resident of Natick, questioned why the Bylaw does not apply to all property owners. Ms. Babson responded that the applicability of the Bylaw is not a subject of tonight's meeting.

The Board expressed support for setting the fees at a level that would encourage residents and developers to preserve trees.

6. FY12 Budget

Mr. Larsen summarized the status of the FY12 budget. He noted the School Committee, at their meeting earlier in the day, discussed potential further reductions of \$600-700K, including an improved assumption regarding Circuit Breaker reimbursement of \$300K. Virtually none of the reductions discussed by the School Committee represent "programmatic" cuts. He further noted that he foresees similar reductions in other departments totaling \$300-400K. The combined effect of these reductions would be to reduce the FY12 deficit to a level closer to \$1 million. Lastly, he noted that more details would be presented at an Inter-Board meeting on Thursday night.

Mr. Larsen expects to have a balanced budget proposal completed by the middle of next week.

7. Selectmen's Spring Work Plan

Ms. Babson led a brief discussion of the following issues to be studied over the next few months:

- Reassess parking meter fees and parking lot rates
- Sticker parking on Washington Street, e.g., for High School students
- Sheet metal permitting fees
- Reassessment of other fee schedules
- Policy on sale of town-owned land
- Potential implementation of dual tax rate
- Special legislation for Senior tax exemptions similar to recent legislation efforts in Hamilton and Sudbury
- Reassess Payments in Lieu of Tax (PILOT's)

Project and Other Updates

High School – Ms. Babson noted that the PBC voted to turn over responsibility for the new High School to the School Committee on January 5, 2012.

Senior Center – Ms. Tsagaris noted ongoing efforts by the Selectmen and Council on Aging to define the Town's requirements for the potential redevelopment of the Wellesley Community Center (WCC) site, and that the Board had received a letter from the WCC summarizing various proposals for renovation of the WCC. Furthermore, the WCC is no longer willing to consider the Town's assumption of control of the Community Center in the future. Ms. Tsagaris is drafting the Board's response to the WCC and will schedule a meeting of the parties.

Sustainability – The Sustainable Energy Committee will meet on Friday to continue the discussion of opportunities to reduce the amount of energy used for summer cooling.

Old Business/New Business

Ms. Babson reminded all of the Board members to complete the draft motions and presentations for their assigned Town Meeting Articles.

At 9:19 p.m. the Board was polled all aye to go into executive session to discuss strategy for collective bargaining and potential acquisition of real property at 27R Kenilworth.