

TOWN OF WENHAM

Board of Selectmen
Meeting of Tuesday January 6, 2015
Town Hall, 138 Main Street

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30 A, § 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Board of Selectmen (BOS) was held on JANUARY 6, 2015 at 7 PM in the Selectmen Chambers.

WELCOME AND OVERVIEW OF THE AGENDA

With a quorum present, Chairman Wilhelm called the meeting to order at 7 PM
Selectmen Present: Jack Wilhelm, Chair; Catherine Harrison, Vice Chair; Ken Whittaker, Clerk
Also Present: Catherine Tinsley, Minutes Secretary

Public Information

The meeting was audio recorded with permission by HWCAM

Agenda

Announcements

FY14 Audit Report

Animal Control Transition Plan

Minutes- December 2, 2014; December 16, 2014; December 19, 2014

Executive Session Minutes for Release May 21, 2014; June 11, 2014

Chairman Wilhelm took the agenda out of order.

Update on Town Administrator Search

Alan Gould, Vice President and Chief Operations Officer of Municipal Resources Inc (MRI), was present and gave a brief introduction of MRI saying they have been in business for 25 years, and most recently assisted the Town of Danvers with their search for a Town Manager.

He reported that the advertisement for a Town Administrator for Wenham has been placed, with a soft deadline of February 1, 2015; twelve applicants have responded to date and MRI will continue to recruit candidates.

MRI will screen applicants to narrow the pool down to 15-20 candidates who will be sent essay questions and receive telephone interviews, which is used to further help decide on the top candidates to recommend to the screening committee.

The BOS will be creating a screening committee. Mr. Gould will work with the screening committee to interview and present three candidates to be interviewed by the BOS to make a final choice.

Mr. Wilhelm announced that the BOS are seeking residents of Wenham that are interested serving on an ad hoc screening committee. Anyone interested in serving, that is not a town employee, must have the ability to attend 3-4 shorter meetings, and a full day of interviews between mid February and mid March being an estimated time-frame. Letters of Interest should be submitted to the Administrative Assistant. Mr. Whittaker suggested people submitting letters also comment on qualities, character, or capabilities they think are important in a new Town Administrator.

Vote: Ms. Harrison moved and it was seconded, the BOS formally accept Municipal Resources, Inc. contract, based on the contract as described in section G (of the agenda) and previously received. The motion carried unanimously.

Presentation Regarding the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Audit by Powers & Sullivan

Jim Powers was present and gave an overview of the FY 2014 audit saying the audit was completed on October 15, 2014 and "went well". Some efficiency matters were noted and would be addressed by the Town in FY 15.

The FY 14 was an unmodified opinion and a clean audit.

- The FY14 budget was accurate and the actual balance of the General Fund at the end of the year was on target
- The Stabilization Fund was balanced
- The Water Enterprise fund recovered its cost with a small surplus the year

Mr. Powers went on to state that GASB (Government Accounting Standards Board) has implemented two new accounting standards:

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1. Municipalities will be responsible for putting the unfunded pension liabilities on the balance sheet; this is currently shown as a disclosure item on the financial statement as supplementary information. Wenham's unfunded liability for Essex Regional Retirement system is (approximately) 6 million dollars, a pay as you go liability.
2. Similarly, municipalities will be required to disclose Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) within the next couple of years. This liability is about 4 million dollars.

Mr. Wilhelm noted that the audit report was presented and accepted, by both the Audit Committee and the Finance & Advisory Committee.

Mr. Whittaker observed that Powers & Sullivan would work with the Town going forward regarding OPEB analysis. John Clemenzi, Stage Hill Road, was recognized by the Chair and questioned if the Town's unfunded liability includes the school's responsibilities. Mr. Powers responded that the State is committed to fund teacher's retirement; administration and non-teachers are members of the retirement system but are assessed separately from the Town; this is an indirect cost to the Town through the funding of the school budget that is presented at the annual Town Meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. American Red Cross 2015 Community Hero's Breakfast is Thursday, March 19, 2015 to recognize heroic individuals who have exemplified the mission of the Red Cross over the past year by giving of themselves to support other people within the community. Nominees that meet the criteria may be submitted to the Town Administrator's office through January 16, 2015.
2. There will be a test of Gordon Colleges' outdoor emergency PA system on Friday, January 9, 2015 at 1:30 PM.
3. Applications for Community Preservation Funds are due by noon on Friday, January 9, 2015.
4. The Wenham Fire Department has two openings for on call firefighters.

Chairman Announcements

1. Bill Tyack, Director of the Department of Public Works, was present to talk about a sinkhole on Maple Street. He reported that heavy rains in November caused a large puddle to form near 57 Maple Street. The DPW started digging and found the pipe had rotted out on top and was sucking in dirt as the water rushed out, causing it to clog. The pipe is 15 feet down. The town borrowed a plug from Beverly to temporarily stop the water from leaking but the trenches kept caving in and it became too dangerous to continue working. The Beverly Salem Water Board is lending the town a 16-foot trench box. The DPW will begin work next week to replace the section of pipe when the weather should be above freezing. Maple Street will be closed during the construction; updates will be posted on the Town's web site.
2. Nomination papers for the Town's elected positions are available at the Town Clerk's office.
3. The Council On Aging has a monthly news letter called *The Wenhamite*. This publication has a lot of information and can be viewed electronically on line or requested through the Council on Aging, to be received by mail.

NEW BUSINESS

Open Annual Town Meeting Warrant for April 11, 2015

Mr. Wilhelm noted that with the opening of the annual town meeting citizens may submit warrant articles that meet the criteria as a citizen's petition.

Mr. Wilhelm asked for written confirmation that the Town of Hamilton has taken an affirmative vote to move the meeting to April 11, 2015 and the election is April 16, 2015. This will be on the next meeting agenda.

Vote: Ms. Harrison moved, and it was seconded, the BOS open the Special & Annual Town Meeting Warrant. The motion carried unanimously.

Iron Rail Commission (IRC) Appointment – Alan Evans

The BOS acknowledged a letter of interest from Alan Evans, Porter Street, for consideration to serve on the Iron Rail Commission. The Board acknowledged a letter from the IRC supporting Mr. Evans be appointed.

Vote: Ms. Harrison moved, and it was seconded, to appoint Alan Evans to the Iron Rail Commission for a two-year term ending June 30, 2016. The motion carried unanimously.

Animal Control Transition Plan

Police Chief Tom Perkins reviewed that in 2012 the State mandated that all Animal Control Officers in Massachusetts be certified through a state academy; the Town is well beyond the required date to implement the new requirement and Chief Perkins recommended the town join a regional collaboration to share the position with the Towns of Hamilton and

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Manchester. This includes hiring a trained certified person, responsible for 24/7 coverage including covering their own time when not available, as well as providing weekly office/patrol hours in each community. Each community would contribute \$12,000 plus \$2,000 for expenses. He stated that the current Animal Control Officer, Steven Kavanagh, has indicated his willingness to attend the academy, but there is no funding for this expense.

Chairman Wilhelm noted that Mr. Kavanagh is the preferred candidate and was offered the position but has not yet agreed to attend the academy. Mr. Kavanagh also serves as the Town's Indigenous Animal Control Officer and has agreed to continue in this capacity, and holds the proper license; wild animal control does not need to be certified. He was recognized for serving the town well and "going above and beyond".

Wendy Waller, William Fairfield Drive, relayed what she claimed was a recent conversation with Mr. Kavanagh, when he indicated to her his willingness to take the required course and continue serving as Wenham's Animal Control Officer. According to Ms. Waller, the cost of the certification course is \$450 and Mr. Kavanagh does not expect to be paid for his hours attending the course.

Mr. Whittaker suggested regional services be reconsidered if the course is \$450 and Mr. Kavanagh is not charging the town for the hours he attends, observing that the cost for the regional service far exceeds the cost of the course and what the town currently pays Mr. Kavanagh.

The Chairman asked for something in writing from Steve Kavanagh indicating his view on the certification and continuing as the Animal Control Officer and the Indigenous Animal Officer.

Update on ESCO (Energy Savings Co) – Johnson Controls

The estimated energy savings as calculated by Johnson Controls over the past three years did not materialize and is short \$33,691 of the projected savings. Options for the Town are to either continue with energy saving projects or take the funds and put it into Free Cash. The BOS discussed and agreed it was in the best interest of the Town that a check in the amount of deficient savings be issued annually and used for other energy saving projects, e.g. waste oil heater, zone control heating at the Iron Rail building, etc. The Town has a twelve-year contract with Johnson Controls.

Vote: Mr. Whittaker moved, and it was seconded, that the BOS request that Johnson Controls return deficient of savings from energy conservation program over the three years in the amount of \$33,691 be in the form of a check to the Town of Wenham, and that all subsequent years be automatic, absent a contrary vote by the BOS. The motion carried unanimously.

Presentation - Vicky Masone & Bill Tyack

Ms. Masone, Energy Manager, was present to give an updated on the following:

1. Town of Wenham Purchase of Streetlights – Ms. Masone talked about the \$196,316 grant received by the Town of Wenham through Green Communities to purchase streetlights from National Grid and convert them to LED lights. This includes the purchase of the light fixtures from National Grid and the new LED fixtures. The grant will cover the entire project and no matching funds are required; the net cost to the town is negative as the value of the lights has gone down since they were last evaluated.

Mr. Tyack noted that the Town has paid \$18,000 annually to National Grid to maintain and change light bulbs. Upon the purchase of the lights from National Grid, the maintenance immediately transfers to the town. The DPW is assuming this responsibility and significant cost savings are anticipated.

MAPC organized a regional procurement with 13 other communities to purchase LED lights. The vendor is Siemens. It was noted that if the purchase is completed in the next two months, the project could be done in FY 2015. If Wenham does not get it done this fiscal year, there is no grant funding from Green Communities for the Town in FY16.

Mr. Whittaker observed that the *Agreement of Sale* document from National Grid for the sale of "existing outdoor street and /or area lighting and associated equipment located within the boundary limits of the Town of Wenham" appears to be a standard, non-negotiable contract. In the absence of Town Counsel, Mr. Whittaker offered to read the contract by next week. Mr. Tyack noted that the parking lot of town hall would soon be changed over to LED lights, providing an example of how LED lights look. Ms. Masone noted that Siemens would work with the Town to select the best lights for specific areas and recommend specific test pilot areas in town.

Chief Perkins questioned if the cost for police detail during the retrofitting process was built into the cost estimate. Ms. Masone will look into this.

Vote: Ms. Harrison moved, and it was seconded, to go forward according to the plan as presented, subject to contract review and that the updated cost estimate is approximately the same as presented in the April 2014 documents, not to exceed \$3,000 more. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Update on Green Communities

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Ms. Masone talked about the smaller grants provided through Green Communities. Some projects slated for this grant were a condenser at the high school, kitchen hood control in the middle school, exterior lighting (town hall, library, DPW garage), pump upgrade control for water department; some of these project have already been completed. The total cost of these projects is \$250,000.

3. Update on Energy Manager's Grant

Wenham and Hamilton also share an Energy Manager supported in part by a grant. Ms. Masone was hired in September for this joint position. This is a two year grant with some matching fund requirements of \$2500 shared between the two towns for the first year, and \$10,000 for the second year split between the two towns.

Ms. Harrison asked questions regarding the shared grant as related to an inter-municipal agreement. The grant money goes to the Town of Hamilton to pay the salary of the Energy Manager payable in FY15 and FY16. Ms. Masone confirmed she shares the hours evenly between Wenham and Hamilton. Ms. Masone is working closely with Bill Tyack in the absence of a Town Administrator. The BOS requested quarterly reports including goals, targets, and upcoming grant opportunities.

Appointment of Interim Treasurer/Collector

Mr. Wilhelm stated that consistent with the Finance Director's presentation in November to reorganize the finance department, changes have been made and the BOS have been requested to appoint Leslie Davidson as the interim Treasurer/Collector. Ms. Wills was present and confirmed her recommendation to appoint Ms. Davidson.

Ms. Wills reviewed the current organization of the department consisting of a full time Finance Director/Accountant, a full time Treasurer/Collector, a part-time Financial Assistant, and a (new) part-time (10 hour) temporary, flexible position to be used where needed, until the re-evaluation of the department is completed. This is a net increase of up to a 10-hour per week additional general help. The new 10-hour position is posted on the town's web site. Mr. Whittaker requested to review the resumes of the finalists.

Mr. Whitaker asked if there was any outstanding issues with the employee that left and Mr. Wilhelm responded that a six week severance package was offered to that employee in exchange for a signed release prepared by outside counsel.

Vote: Ms. Harrison moved, and it was seconded, to appoint Leslie Davidson as Wenham's Interim Treasurer / Collector for a term ending June 30, 2015 or until the permanent position is filled. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Whittaker opined that if there are negotiations with employees, such as severance packages, it would be appropriate to come before the BOS for consideration.

MINUTES – Release of Executive Session Minutes May 21, 2014 & June 11, 2014:

December 2, 2014; December 16, 2014; December 19, 2014

Chairman Wilhelm stated that he reviewed the unreleased executive session minutes and determined that the reason for which the executive session minutes of May 21, 2014 and June 11, 2014 were held, had passed and the minutes could be released.

Vote: Mr. Whittaker moved, and it was seconded, to release the executive session minutes of May 21, 2014 and it was unanimous to do so.

Vote: Mr. Whittaker moved, and it was seconded, to release the executive session minutes of June 11, 2014 and it was unanimous to do so.

Vote: Mr. Whittaker moved to approve the minutes of December 19, 2014 and it was unanimous to do so.

The minutes of December 2, 2014, and December 16, 2014 were held for review. No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

Vote: Ms. Harrison moved to adjourn at 8:41 PM and it was unanimous to do so.

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley
1.9.15