

Aug. 3, 2010

WENHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Meeting of Friday, June 04, 2010 9 am
Wenham Senior Center ~ School Street

With a quorum present Ms. Martins opened the meeting at 9:03 AM.

Selectmen present: Molly Martins, Chair; John Clemenzi, Vice Chair; Harriet Davis, Secretary

Also present: Jeff Chelgren, Town Administrator; Catherine Tinsley, Minutes Secretary

RSD Operational Audit

Present: Bruce Wadleigh from Enough is Enough

Mr. Chelgren briefed the BOS on the Operational Audit Timeline and presented a timeline proposed by Michael Lombardo, Hamilton Town Manager.

He asked if the BOS is interested in a Selectman Liaison to keep in touch with the School Committee and Hamilton BOS. The Board talked about their role agreeing that a liaison is not necessary at this time, that there appear to be no gaps in the timeline, and that they just want to be sure the documents (RFP) are in line.

Ms. Davis commented that the BOS has no role at this time except to implement the citizen's petition, to monitor the process, and to pay Wenham's share. Ms. Davis will speak with the School Committee as liaison.

Mr. Chelgren will circulate the RFP document upon drafting before a joint meeting.

Ms. Davis said once the RFP is prepared, there will be a joint meeting with the Hamilton Selectmen to thoroughly vet it. (Mr. Wadleigh left.)

Issues of Immediate Importance:

Rail Trail

Present: Bill Tyack

The Conservation Commission has issued a negative Determination for the Rail Trail project and has approved the work on the 40 foot hole or gap in the trail.

Iron horse has agreed to provide labor and material with Wenham providing materials except for the top coating; cost associated with this part of the trail include but are not limited to gravel, filter fabric, clay, pipe, riprap.

Iron Horse will reconstruct the trail per the plan. The BOS talked about funding the required materials with the estimate under \$10,000.

National Grid (NG) has been contacted but has not responded to the town's query if they are using the poles and require access; it is believed that the lines are active. Clarity is necessary from NG if they need access to the poles and if they will participate in the cost to restore the hole for access to their poles.

Ms. Davis referred to past experiences with NG where they did not respond expeditiously and emphasized that the town needs to move forward at the risk of cutting NG off from accessing the poles.

For public safety the trails are built to permit passage of a one ton vehicle for e.g. Brush Truck, ambulance.

Mr. Tyack noted there are FIOS lines on the cables that are sublet by NG. A letter will be sent to NG as a negative confirmation. Line item transfers will be done to pay for the costs, not to exceed \$10,000 to repair the washout part of the trail with the cooperation of Iron Horse. (Mr. Tyack left.)

Status of televised BOS meetings

The BOS addressed comments from League of Woman Voters, Salem News, and residents that they are conducting non televised meetings.

Ms Davis noted that the BOS is under scrutiny at this time and needs to clarify with the public that they will not take action during off camera meetings. Ms. Davis suggested that this be discussed later in the meeting and that the BOS continues with the agenda.

Mr. Clemenzi agreed that no votes are taken during the off camera meetings.

Ms. Martins suggested that issues be defined and assigned as to who will take the lead on the issues and bring forward as needed and not to focus on the details.

Ms. Davis reiterated that these issues have been ongoing and need to be addressed.

Town Hall Landscape Plan

Mr. Clemenzi reviewed that the Building Committee needs direction regarding the War Memorial and Enon 1.

Mr. Chelgren discussed the Barter Property on Friend Court as an ideal property for the town to buy as affordable housing and that the garage could be used to store Enon 1. Ms. Martins noted that it is not the Trust responsibility to include Enon 1 and that the property is priced too high and is not appropriate for the Trust to buy.

Ms. Davis suggested that the property be purchased and renovated and sold but not necessarily as an affordable unit.

Ms Martins noted that this property potentially needs \$100,000 of repairs e.g. bathrooms, kitchen and that discussion can continue of how to best make use of the property and what the value is to the town.

The BOS identified that the Building Committee is responsible for the Town Hall site and that the BOS has not authorized the War Memorial Committee to proceed but also has not set any limits to the committee regarding cost or design.

The BOS talked about directing the WMC to work together with the BC on a place for the Memorial within the plan and that it fits in with the scope of the overall plan, if indeed the WMC wants to site the memorial on TH land.

Mr. Chelgren will work with Chairman of BC (John Darling) and work on parameters and that the Barter property and car barn lot be considered as potential inclusion in the entire plan and that multiple sites be identified including scale for monuments. The Landscape designer (recently hired by the TH-PS BC) will include monument sites with appropriate scale for each location.

Town Boards & Committees

Ms. Martins reported on the Finance Committee appointment meeting saying the members (Mr. Wilhelm, Mr. Weaver, and herself) reviewed a list of potential members whose interests will be confirmed over the next week.

Mr. Clemenzi suggested a job description for the Finance Committee be put together including the time commitment and description of the responsibilities of that committee; Ms. Martins responded that the process is ahead of this but it will be clearly communicated during interviews.

The Selectmen included in this discussion the need for balance on the committee with experience and perspectives with no "one agenda advocates" being selected; there are three to four candidates at this time.

Mullen property

Mr. Chelgren reported that there is renewed interest in the Mullen property being purchased and built out as senior living complex. New candidates appear to be financially prepared to go forward as it appears that Deaconess Abundant Life is not able to do so at this time.

Mr. Chelgren will work with Mr. Mullen on permitting but a liaison is needed from the BOS.

Mr. Chelgren noted that there will be impact to the Iron Rail Property value and the anticipation of increase interest in the purchase of the main building which is currently being leased.

Ms. Davis brought up the possibility of the Iron Rail property being considered for a school site and therefore advocated a lease not a sale..

Mr. Clemenzi will be the public relation person.

Use of New Tax revenue Generated from Economic Development

Mr. Chelgren noted that the use of the Mullen property will increase tax revenue and the BOS needs to prepare the budget appropriately. Mr. Chelgren suggested a subcommittee e.g. FC BOS CMC to create a well thought out financial plan for the money. Ms. Davis commented that these revenues have been previously lost by the town side of the budget (i.e. to the Schools) and the income needs to be carefully managed to make up for previous personnel losses by the town (highway, police, fire)

Mr. Chelgren will work with Ms. Martins.

Bolder Lane

Mr. Clemenzi will maintain connections with interested parties.

Town Flow Chart and Terms of Engagement

The BOS was provided with Draft forms of the Town Flow Chart and Terms of Engagement for review dated January 26, 2009.

Ms. Martins asked for the chart to be discussed at a future off camera meeting.

Committee Development - Ongoing discussion on the evolution of Wenham e.g. regional services, Master Plans, Solid Waste, Recreation Facility Expansion

The Board specifically talked about the fire department and the cost of mutual aid. Mr. Clemenzi suggested a Sub Committee to explore further the way the Call Department is dispatched and trained. He noted that if the department is getting more medical calls than fire calls, then training and responses should be guided by that history. Mr. Chelgren will begin the process of putting a committee together.

Government Study Committee

The BOS talked about a Government Study Committee and if operating under the town bylaws is the most efficient way to operate noting for example that the Town Clerk is an annually elected position.

The BOS agreed that the purpose of this committee is an Operational Study. It is not to be confused with Hamilton's Government Study Committee which recommended a five person Board of

Selectmen/Town Manager. Rather this study committee is to be an ongoing resource for how the town does business on a daily basis including employees, volunteers, and elected positions. The committee will be entitled the Operational Study Committee. Mr. Chelgren will prepare this for a future meeting including the structure of the town as a business, troubled areas, and the comparisons of resolutions affected by other communities.

Master Plan Committee – Town, Town Center, Open Space Acquisition, Recreation Facility expansion;

Because this committee will be considering property, the BOS will rename this committee. The open space plan catalogs the properties of open space each year. Properties will be identified, potential value to the town and restrictions. Mr. Chelgren will put together a charge for this committee.

The BOS suggested that the Town promote boards and committees at Wenham Day and other fairs to inform residents about Wenham's boards and committees and to solicit volunteers.

Capital Management Committee

Mr. Chelgren reviewed that the CMC is proceeding with the details of long term projects including Solid Waste and a Recreation Facility Master Plan.

Ms. Davis noted that H-W joint committees and Wenham interests may need to be clarified.

Ms. Martins as Selectman is on this committee.

Dearborn Property & Cedar Street Sidewalk

Mr. Chelgren reported that the Salem Beverly Water Board (SBWB) is interested in the Dearborn property in exchange for the easement of sidewalks on Cedar Streets.

There is interest in an easement to allow a sidewalk along 97 to connect Maraine Farm.

The Town can transfer the right of first refusal to SBWB.

Mr. Darling will be asked to come before the Board for further discussion.

Salary Survey and Compensation Adjustment

The BOS talked about having a salary survey of nearby communities done.

Ms. Davis reminded the BOS that the economy is not improving agreeing that a salary evaluation will keep the town updated but Wenham has limited resources and is a small town with 4500 citizens and must accept that some employees will move on to greener (richer) communities.

Mr. Chelgren noted that he believes that since Wenham is attached to a regional school district with Hamilton, that it is more than a small town.

Departmental Review

Police – PD is down an officer. Reserve officers are being used to fill in; the department is \$30,000 over budget due to unforeseen expenses e.g. investigations.

Fire Department

The FD is unable to predict calls making the budget a continuous moving target. The BOS discussed possible ways to recommend budget stabilization.

Highway Department

DPW is down one position. The BOS agreed that this position would be considered first if the town reinstates cut positions.

Library (Administered by Wenham)

The Library is expanding and staffing is a concern, especially for the Children's Library.

Town Hall

There are transitions in the Permitting, Town Clerk, and Finance Department. Covering during vacations (floater) and data management is the priority.

Ms. Davis recommended more public details regarding the town budget.

Mr. Chelgren noted that the Town has gone to a centralized budget which looks different on paper.

Council on Aging (Joint Van Service administrated by Wenham)

Hamilton and Wenham are in discussion regarding a joint COA and/or sharing one COA director.

Ms. Davis asked for confirmation if a senior complex is in town, how many units count towards affordable units as previous court cases disagree.

Joint Recreation (administered by Hamilton)

Staff, facility and funding are needed for growth in the best interest in the towns.

Legal

Mr. Chelgren talked about the legal budget saying that the legal demands are significant and to consider a broader spectrum in hiring a small firm and replacing Paul Weaver as Town Counsel.

Ms. Davis commented that this needs to be discussed with the current Town Counsel and his responsibilities identified before discussions continue.

She noted that Mr. Weaver is responsive to attending Selectmen meetings and giving guidance to the Board and has served the BOS for over 30 years.

Planning Board

Mr. Chelgren noted that a plan for succession of the current chair should be in place.

ZBA

It was discussed that the ZBA may need to be pushed to meeting more often to handle the needs of the town.

The Selectmen will continue this discussion at a future meeting.

Longfellow road is a safety issue.

PILOT program- Ms. Davis stated that she is not in support of pushing the PILOT program although Ms. Martins and Mr. Clemenzi agree with the concept.

On a motion by Mr. Clemenzi, the BOS adjourned at 1:02pm

Respectfully submitted by
Catherine Tinsley