

APPROVED BY
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
AT THEIR MEETING OF

Aug 2, 2011

WENHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Meeting of Friday, June 10, 2011 ~ 9 AM
Hamilton – Wenham Library, 14 Union Street

With a quorum present, Ms. Martins called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM
Selectmen Present: Molly Martins, Chair; John Clemenzi, Vice Chair; Patrick Wilson, Secretary
Also Present: Jeff Chelgren, Town Administrator; Catherine Harrison, Finance Committee Representative;
Catherine Tinsley, Minutes Secretary

Abbreviations used:

BOS Board of Selectmen

DPW Department of Public Works

Public Information

Agenda

Ms. Martins identified the BOS would first discuss the War Memorial Park and Monument as carried over from the BOS meeting of June 7, 2011.

WAR MEMORIAL COMMITTEE / CAR BARN LOT

Public Information: "War Memorial Park and Monument" Charge

Present: Bruce Blanchard, Chair War Memorial Committee (WMC); John Darling, Chair; Town Hall & Police Station Building Committee (THPSBC);

Ms. Martins stated that the intention is to bring a recommended plan, including the memorial structure, location, and landscaping to the Fall Town Meeting for a vote; to meet this goal the plan must have the BOS approval by September 9, 2011.

Ms. Martins summarized the charge, suggesting the THPSBC and WMC work together to bring a plan forward that achieves the recognition of the men/ women from Wenham that have served in the military, reflects the symbolism, history, and style of Wenham.

Ms. Martins noted the Car Barn Lot is located within the Historic District and the Historic District Commission (HDC) will need to be included in the process.

A lengthy discussion ensued.

Larry Swartz, Conrad Circle identified the WMC asked him to represent the Committee during discussions, but that he is not serving on the WMC.

Mr. Clemenzi stated he is supportive to see this through.

Mr. Wilson read a portion of a letter from a constituent supporting the plan is user friendly, and welcoming with the use of paths, and benches.

Mr. Swartz asked the BOS to edit the Charge to the THPSBC and WMC, specifically that the WMC collaborates with the THPSBC and that it is a joint decision.

Mr. Blanchard also spoke in favor of changing the wording saying the main focus of the WMC is the Veterans and has nothing to do with Town Hall or the Police Station.

Mr. Darling responded that the Charge is a mechanism to get to the end result that the War Memorial in downtown is not only respectful of the Veterans that have served but that it also appreciated the context of the downtown; the issue is the monument was designed for a different context.

He reiterated the landscaping design has been drafted; a portion of the lot (1/2 to 1/3) has been designated for the monument, which should be adapted to the location as part of the Master Plan.

Mr. Swartz suggested the September date forces the two parties to make a decision/resolution and the Charge empowers one committee over the other making the THPSBC the lead and that the responsibility be changed to be a shared and equal responsibility.

Mr. Darling asked that the BOS handle this directly with the WMC, reiterating there is a Master Plan and a base design in place for the Car Barn lot, saying if there is not a harmonious agreement, than an agreement is not possible and stated he will have no further roll in this and will also recommend to the THPSBC that they do not give this further consideration.

Mr. Wilson responded far more unites the two committees than divides them and asked that the WMC reevaluate that something is being forced on them, and to work with the THPSBC.

Mr. Clemenzi made a motion to accept the document as presented regarding the War Memorial Park and Monument Charge to the Committees of the THPSBC and the WMC.

Mr. Wilson offered an amendment to the motion to change the wording and amend the word "Confer" in Step 1 & 3 with "Collaborate".

Mr. Clemenzi, as the maker of the motion, accepted the amendment and that the BOS accept the Document as amended.

Mr. Wilson seconded and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

The BOS began to address the retreat agenda at 10:27 AM.

Mr. Chelgren gave an overall summary explaining the BOS retreat serves the purpose of talking about goals and important issues, preview the next 12 months, and give policy direction.

The following was discussed under Issues In Need of Immediate Action.

October Special Town Meeting

The BOS briefly acknowledged that they would need to determine if an election would be needed as a result of a Fall Town Meeting. No date was determined.

Salary Survey

The BOS were provided with "Salary Survey Findings" dated 6.10.2011

This included information from local communities regarding their department's wages. The BOS requested this information includes comprehensive information such as the number of years in the position, median income, and the tax rate of the individual towns.

The BOS will discuss this further with the Finance Committee with possible action at the Fall Town Meeting.

This document will be kept current and institutionalize as a long-term tool.

Operational Audit

Ms. Martins reported the town has received all edits, responses, and updates, regarding the Audit from Evergreen, and the Audit is considered complete. A request has been submitted to the School Committee if there will be a response to the information; it is hoped the three entities to talk through the best possible actions

The Operational Audit Committee will prepare a presentation to the Joint BOS and if there is the desire to have additional charges to the Committee.

Recreational Master Plan/ Iron Rail Soccer Field Lease

Although five years remain of the twenty-year lease with the Hamilton/Wenham Soccer Association Lease, the BOS were asked to consider another 20-year lease, with the understanding that it is the intent of the Soccer Association to make capital investments in the near future.

The BOS talked about the Iron Rail Soccer Field lease negotiations including the review of the agreement to date, how the fields are being used, and possible future plans.

Mr. Wilson will be the liaison.

The following was discussed under General Themes:

Financial Sustainability Plan

It was noted that 80 % of the budget is under a regional service with Hamilton, including the schools. The goal is for all entities to be using the same financial system within three to five years.

The BOS asked that inter-municipal agreements are reviewed and updated.

Communication / Cooperation

The Budget Process Committee responsibilities were reviewed and a possible new charge from the three entities.

The BOS requested data, in graphical form show over time what the tax rate had done in the term of increases and break out components of government that have increased/ decreased, define sustainable, create strategies, and utilize resources.

Mr. Wilson noted that Hamilton and the School Committee are tied to the same factors, influences, and trajectories and the most successful exercise for Wenham would include these other entities. He went on to say that an annual report of where we have been, where we are, and where we need to go and the process to get there, should be considered.

It was suggested the three entities each report on how best to approach working together, possibly do a comparative pier analysis for accurate projections using key focuses.

Regarding the citizen's petition as related to Chapter 70 funds, the BOS agreed to consult Town Counsel if the town can participate in the financing of a class action suit petitioned by the citizens.

Regionalization

The BOS identified various areas' to focus economical development with Hamilton such as downtown, residential, resource allocation priority.

The BOS supported discussions with Hamilton needs or shared position to work with both town Zoning Board, Planning Boards, Permitting Office, etc. to eliminate duplication in committee structure.

Administration Collaboration was referenced with Hamilton including potential shared positions to create higher efficiencies, but noted concern with the loss of individual identities and to what levels further collaboration should be considered. It was noted that regionalization goes beyond Hamilton and the intention to work with other communities.

Mr. Chelgren explained Hamilton has hired a consultant to review town operations review; this is the first level of engagement and should Wenham have a similar audit at the same time; discussion and updates will continue.

The BOS talked about a PILOT program (Payment In Lieu Of Taxes), including how these schools are a part of the community as well as financial contributions. The BOS supported continued discussions for a PILOT program and requested data of cost of services incurred to Gordon College annually and what the land would generate for revenue if it were taxable property.

Mr. Chelgren stated that the Hamilton and Wenham DPW have successfully been sharing grounds maintenance of the schools and talked about the possible further consolidations of the DPWs in some form to be more efficient, specifically ground services. This is anticipated to increase productivity, reduce cost, and improve coverage.

If shared ground services are successful, town building maintenance will be tried.

Mr. Wilson asked to see the financial analysis of the proposed shared grounds service.

Ms. Martins suggested the BOS review the program as recommended by the Capital Management Committee (CMC). Contracted services were a part of the discussion for comparison of costs.

Regionalization

Regional Emergency Center Operations (ECO)

Both the Fire and Police Chiefs are on the Regional ECO Committee.

It is expected the towns will transition into the new ECO around October 2012. Mr. Chelgren recommended the BOS enter into discussions this summer with Hamilton regarding the value buy out of hard and soft elements.

Mr. Clemenzi asked for monthly updates. Mr. Clemenzi will be the liaison to the Regional ECO.

Communications remain open with Hamilton.

The BOS briefly talked about the need to consider full time firefighters. The Town Advisory Committee (TAC) will be asked to look at emergency services and if it meets the current need and future needs.

The discussion included consideration of an independent needs assessment of public safety e.g. number and types of calls, efficiency, and options.

Mr. Chelgren will sit with the two Chiefs for an initial discussions and report back to the BOS before going forward.

The BOS went on to talk about a Government Study Analysis of the operations of Wenham Government working the most efficiently and if functions match rolls and what are appropriate rolls and do bylaws need to be updated.

It was the consensus of the BOS that a consultant would be a more efficient use of time and resources.

The BOS ask to have seen it work in another town and produce a positive result; communities that have gone through this will be sought.

Ms. Martins read a letter from the School Committee encouraging Wenham BOS to support Hamilton voting on the recertified budget of \$300,000 give back.

It was agreed Mr. Clemenzi would be liaison to the Wenham Tea House.

Mr. Clemenzi made a motion to adjourn at 1:17 pm and it was unanimous to do so.

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley