

TOWN OF WENHAM

Board of Selectmen
Meeting of Tuesday, September 2, 2014
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 September 2, 2014 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: Mark Andrews, Town Administrator; Catherine Tinsley, Minutes Secretary
The meeting was recorded with permission by HWCAM.

Public Information

Agenda

- Announcements
- Appointment Letters

PUBLIC INPUT / PRESENTATION BY GUESTS

Carin Kale, President of the Hamilton Wenham League of Women Voters (LWV) was present to speak on the LWV campaign to get information to the voters via their updated web site.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The following Town Committees have open positions:
 - a. Cemetery Commission
 - b. Historic District Committee
 - c. Iron Rail Committee
 - d. MBTA Representative
2. Wenham Public Safety will hold a public memorial service at 9:45 AM on September 11, 2014 at the Fire Station.
3. The First Church in Wenham will hold a Remembrance Service on September 11, 2014 at 6 PM.
4. Fire Chief Blanchard announced that the Fire Department would conduct their annual Muscular Dystrophy Boot Drive on Sunday September 7, 2014 from 8 AM to 11 AM on Main Street in front of the fire station.
5. *Vote: Ms. Harrison moved, and it was seconded, that the Wenham Fire Fighters be allowed to collect money on Main Street, September 7, 2015 for the annual Muscular Dystrophy Boot Drive from 8 Am to 11 AM. The motion carried unanimously.*
6. The Town remains under a Mandatory Water Ban; only hand watering is allowed from 5 PM to 9 AM.
7. The BOS will plan a one-topic BOS meeting to discuss the proposed Maple Street Affordable Housing project. The date, time, and location will be announced at the next BOS meeting.
8. The Chairman stated that the Town Administrator's contract requires his annual review be done before December 31, 2014. He recommended this be done in the month of November. The BOS will discuss the format of the review at the next meeting.
9. The State Primary Elections are September 9, 2014. Polls will be open at the Wenham Town Hall from 7 AM to 8 PM

NEW BUSINESS

Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee – Update

Present: Fanny de Lacvievier, Chair of the BPC, was present to update the BOS on sidewalk projects and answer questions. Other committee members present included, DPW Director Bill Tyack, Harriet Davis, and Win Dodge. Ms. de Lacvievier reviewed the BPC was formed 15 years ago with the express purpose to build sidewalks on the most dangerous streets in Wenham. A master plan identified eight roads that would benefit from sidewalks as Topsfield Road,

Approved 10.21.14

Maple Street, Cherry Street, Pleasant Street, Cedar Street, Larch Row, Grapevine Road, and Walnut Road. The Committee successfully raised more than \$300,000 to build those sidewalks. The fund raising was so successful that the line item for sidewalk maintenance was cut from the budget in 2009. The sidewalks on Main Street are now in desperate need of repair but there is no line item for sidewalk maintenance.

The BOS requested a detailed assessment of the Main Street sidewalks be done, including photographs of stressed areas, cost repair estimates, timetable, and a description of work to be done.

The BOS recommended the BPC speak to the Finance Committee regarding this matter.

Representative Hill noted an economical package was recently passed by the House, and there may be some downtown development funds and suggested a meeting to discuss how fixing the sidewalks would bring commerce to the downtown area.

Appointments

Wenham Affordable Housing Trust (WAHT) - Ms. Harrison reviewed the WAHT has six appointed members. The Charter requires no less than five members and no more than seven. A letter of interest has been received from Jennifer Forsey.

Vote: Ms. Harrison moved, and it was seconded, to appoint Jennifer Forsey to the Wenham Affordable Housing Trust for a two-year term through June 30, 2016. Under discussion: Mr. Whitaker stated that although he interviewed Ms. Forsey and found her to be a very capable and articulate woman, he does not believe this is the right appointment at the right time. He went on to say that Ms. Forsey lives on Maple Street and is almost a direct abutter to the proposed Maple Street project. He noted his concern of the potential for a conflict of interest regarding any decisions by the Trust. He went on to say Ms. Forsey would have to recuse herself from any decision connected to the Maple Street project and he was hesitant to appoint a member that would need to recuse him/her self. He also voiced his concern that there are many new people on the committee and recommended appointing a past committee member.

Mr. Wilhelm commented that the State has not approved this project at this time. Ms. Forsey has requested her application still be considered for the WAHT, as she is not interested in serving on another committee at this time.

He opined that it is unfair to exclude anyone who lives on a street near a project, as there are a number of projects in town and not to exclude someone in the proximity of a project, saying all members need to keep an open mind. He noted this committee needs to meet and reorganize, and there are people serving on this committee that are well versed.

Ms. Harrison agreed with both comments saying it may be difficult to find residents willing to serve that do not live in an area where something might be happening.

Vote: The motion carried by majority vote with Mr. Whittaker voting in the negative.

Call Firefighter: Robert J. Brown - It was explained that Mr. Brown was granted a military leave in 2008. He has returned to town and is willing to continue serving as a call firefighter.

Vote: Ms. Harrison moved, and it was seconded, to appoint Robert J. Brown as a Call Firefighter, after returning from active duty, through June 30, 2015. The motion carried unanimously.

Town Mechanic: Michael Martin - Mr. Andrews recommended the BOS appoint Mr. Martin.

Vote: Ms. Harrison moved, and it was seconded, to appoint Michael Martin to the position of Town Mechanic for a term of one year to expire June 30, 2015.

Update on the BOS June Retreat Action Items

Mr. Andrews reported that he is working with (IT) Andy Wood on a replacement for the email system. Cost estimates including the advantages of a new system, are being sought for FY 2015. This will be brought to the Finance Committee upon the approval of the BOS.

Chairman Wilhelm asked for feed back from other employees using the town's email system regarding the system.

Ms. Harrison noted that she is "alright" with the current system but would also supported looking into a new one.

Mr. Whittaker agreed that it is "usable" but an updated system would be more secure, with legal advantages.

It was noted this is a basic, inexpensive, outdated system.

An outside consultant should be included in the choice of a new system.

A progress report will be provided to the BOS at the next meeting on different systems.

State Legislative Update

Approved 10.21.14

Representative Hill gave a brief Update on the State Legislature saying the FY 16 budget season is beginning at the State House. He noted Regional School Transportation saw a big increase this fiscal year. He recommended the Town prepare it's annual "grocery list" for the FY 16. He noted concern for FY 17 saying the state has been receiving about \$900 million in Federal funding to implement "Obama Care" but this funding will disappear in FY 17 and said it is unknown how the State will come up with the funding.

Recognition of Al Dodge 100 Birthday Celebration - Representative Hill observed that Wenham resident Al Dodge turned 100 years ago a few months ago and presented him with a Proclamation from the House of Representatives and a Citation from the Governor.

He reviewed that Mr. Dodge was the first Eagle Scout in Wenham, helped create the Hamilton-Wenham School District, was a successful businessman, and served the Town in many capacities.

Chairman Wilhelm presented Mr. Dodge with a Proclamation from the Board of Selectmen.

Senator Bruce Tarr arrived and presented a Citation from the State Senate in honor of Mr. Dodges' 100th Birthday.

Town Hall Telephone System

Chairman Wilhelm explained that the telephone system at the town hall recently failed and was out for a few days, noting that emergency services were not affected. The phone system was not an action item from the Selectmen's retreat but he strongly suggested this be made a priority. He has asked the Town Administrator to identify alternative systems/features and what type/kind of systems are available to the Town.

Ms. Harrison questioned if money from the Town Hall Building funds could be used towards a new system. Mr. Andrews will talk with the Building Committee regarding what funds if any remain available for use.

Mr. Whittaker was in favor of an upgrade to the telephone system and suggested putting together a rough assessment of what the needs are in preparation of a proposal.

Mr. Andrews said he would look into the list of vendors on the state's list.

There is the potential to combine email and telephone systems; this will be considered as a cost savings. The BOS asked for weekly progress reports from the TA.

Regarding the Retreat Update list, the BOS asked detailed completion dates to be included on the chart.

The Selectmen will each prioritize the top items from the retreat list and email to the Town Administrator.

MINUTES - July 15, 2014; August 5, 2014; August 19, 2014

Vote: Mr. Whittaker moved to accept the minutes of July 15, 2014 and it was unanimous to do so.

Vote: Mr. Whittaker moved to accept the minutes as edited of August 5, 2014 and it was unanimous to do so.

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

On a side note, Ms. Harrison suggested the Town Administrator add a "to do list" at the end of the draft minutes that were tasked during the course of the meeting. Mr. Whittaker asked the Minute Secretary to insert an asterisk to indicate such action items.

ADJOURN

Vote: Mr. Whittaker moved to adjourn at 8:18 PM and it was unanimous to do so.

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley
9.22.14