

Selectboard Minutes  
June 17, 2013

Meeting opened at 6:30pm

Present: Alan Vint, Chair; Howard Knickerbocker, Clerk; Mitch Feldmesser  
Duane Pease, Administrative Assistant (AA)

No warrants to sign.

Howard requested permission to speak regarding the Open Forum portion of the Board meetings. He felt it should be placed at the beginning of the meetings that way residents that wanted to speak would not have to wait through the meeting. Alan stated the S/B is meeting to carry out the business of the Town and sometimes there are significant issues to discuss. Mitch added the Board went through this before and sometimes the Open Forum portion gets to long and the agenda is neglected. Alan thought it was something to think about and discuss at a future meeting.

Ron Radwich, Fire Chief, requested the Chair sign documents that will keep the department available to receive Federal Surplus equipment. He is working with the District Fire to locate and list the inventory of all the prior items received through surplus. These articles must be kept on Town property. Once the inventory is completed non needed items may be disposed of through the government.

Animal Control Officers Jan Hines and Terry Andrews spoke to the Board about the Town By-Laws as related to their duties. After completing the required animal course, they felt the Town should update their By-Laws regarding Chapters 140 and 272. There was discussion regarding how long to hold an animal, fines, licensing, quarantine and unlicensed dogs. Alan thought this should be followed with Town Counsel re State law vs. Town law. Alan then motioned to re-appoint both as Animal Control Officers, Howard 2<sup>nd</sup>; vote was 3-0 to re-appoint.

An Order to Vacate for the Crepeau property was signed and the AA will send certified and regular mail.

At next week's meeting, interviews for the Town Hall custodian and Town Handyman will take place. AA will notify parties.

Also, there was discussion of having the Chair of various committees/commission appear before the Board for recommendations on yearly appointments.

Upgrades and improvements to the Town Hall were discussed. Maryann Walsh had initially said she would consider designing a more efficient model for the Town Hall but she no longer wants to be involved as everyone seems to be personally involved with their space. Alan felt a lot could be done to improve it, it needs painting and that would be an improvement. Mitch said a professional should be hired. There was discussion on

an interior designer; Susan Baker-Donnelly said there are some companies that provide free design for the chance to have their furniture purchased. Jack Cobb said to hire a professional planner, develop a plan and budget and go from there.

Next item discussed was the Town Center, primarily the former General Store and adjacent house. Howard felt the tax taking should be put on hold until the Town could do its due diligence on the property. Alan explained the Board had authorized the taking and the Town would have no liability for any brown fields that may still exist. He had spoken with the Town's tax attorney, Ron Berenson, and was told the State and DEP are happy with the Town's position. There is a lien of \$100,000+ for the prior clean-up and DEP may waive most or all of their lien. Once the property is owned by the Town, a licensed site professional can do a survey of the pollution and if he finds none, the DEP may sign off. There has to be research done to see what State, Federal or private grants may be available to aid in the development of these properties. At this time it may be premature to have committees involved but the Board would be willing to anyone who has an idea on the property's future. Mitch said if any committee is formed, there should be opposing viewpoints on ideas, development and usage, but the final decision is up to the Selectboard. Alan said the Town has to find out what is possible, doable and viable. Among the possible uses for the area are maintaining the current house for possible use as a library, creating a safety complex with more space for the fire dept, highway and police. Also, demolishing the store and possibly selling the house to private buyers.

Jack Cobb was glad to see the town moving to take the property as he worries about the possibility of a fire in one of the buildings.

Wally Smith stated about 10 years ago DEP and the Town Counsel looked at this and DEP advised the Town not to touch this property. He felt there was a problem in the basement of the store that was never addressed. Also, the Building Commissioner and Health Agent should tour the buildings and give their impressions on conditions, etc.

Sherri Venditti suggested someone speak with Jim Berry to see if any other towns were successful in solving their brown field's problems.

It was agreed a structural assessment of the buildings needs to be done and then a site assessment to see if there is any leftover pollution.

Susan Baker-Donnelly said since the buildings are in the Historic District there may be non-profit or corporate grants available.

Skip Savery said the kerosene tank was not removed and is still there. And, the DEP did not go inside the building as they did not have permission from the owners. In order for the Town to obtain brown filed funds, the Town needs to take the property.

Howard said he is not against doing anything with the property but he is scared there may be a huge liability for the Town.

Lastly, Judy Hoag advised the Board the historical signs are being made by Signsmith and will be installed at either end of the Historicla District.

The next scheduled Selectboard Meetings will be: July 1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>.

Alan motioined to adjourn, Howard 2<sup>nd</sup>; vote was 3-0 and meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Minutes respectively submitted by:

Duane Pease  
Administrative Assistant

Minutes accepted with/without changes

Alan Vint, Chair

Howard Knickerbocker, Clerk

Mitch Feldmesser