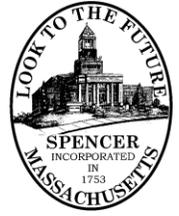


Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen



Date: Monday, December 10, 2012
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: McCourt Social Hall, Memorial Town Hall, Spencer, MA
Present: Chairman Pepe, Vice Chair Woodbury, Clerk Stevens, Members Berthiaume & Fritze, and Town Administrator Gaudette

At 6:00 p.m. Chairman Pepe called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of the Business Meeting of November 26, 2012 (Berthiaume / Woodbury) passed 5/0.

Citizen Input:

None

Communications:

Wendy Berthiaume, Chairman of the Celebrations Committee, provided an update on the Christmas Parade of Lights. She said the event was a complete success, with over forty creative floats. Camp Marshall was the winner, SEMA came in second and Boy Scouts Troop 101 came in third. The event also saw the largest Fire Department participation ever. The Board thanked Ms. Berthiaume and the Celebrations Committee and expressed appreciation for the Fire and Police Departments.

Chairman Pepe noted that the Board received a letter from a resident thanking Police Detective Jim Murray for his outstanding work on a theft case.

New Business:

a) FY2012 Financial Audit: Tom Scanlon Jr. & Spencer Finance Team

Mr. Gaudette introduced Tom Scanlon, of Scanlon & Associates, Alaine Boucher, Town Accountant, and Mary Barrell, Town Treasurer/Collector.

Mr. Scanlon reported that the audit went very well. The Town received one of his highest ratings and is one of his top five communities.

Management Letter/Recommendations include:

- Proration of Retiree Health Insurance Premiums Between Employers – allows governmental units to prorate costs for retirees after January 1, 2011. Recommend the Town review and monitor to ensure compliance.
- Reconciliation of Health Insurance Withholding Accounts – need a formal reconciliation of the surplus.
- Payroll Retirement Deductions – retirement deductions were withheld from overtime in error. Overtime is not subject to retirement deductions. This has since been corrected.

Prior recommendations have been implemented and Alaine will reconcile any remaining. Mr. Scanlon commended the Board and Town Administrator, noting the Town is well managed and one of their top clients in terms of administration.

Mr. Stevens asked how the Town has progressed over the years. Mr. Scanlon said Spencer has made significant improvement over the past ten years.

Mr. Gaudette and the Board thanked Mr. Scanlon, Mrs. Boucher, and Mrs. Barrell.

b) Action Item: Vote to submit support letter to CMRPC for Route 31 Corridor Study – Steve Tyler, P.E., Utilities & Facilities Superintendent

Mr. Gaudette and Mr. Tyler will meet with CMRPC to discuss the Route 31 Corridor Study as part of the TIP program. Mr. Tyler is working on details of the project and is looking for the support of the Board moving forward. This is a regional study, through Charlton, Spencer, and Paxton. Meadow Rd is included in the proposal as an important connector to Route 31 and is a high hazard intersection. New signage will be installed there, including four new stop signs, dangerous intersection signs, and additional tree and brush clearing will take place. Anything beyond that needs DOT approval. There is no cost to the Town for the Corridor Study.

A motion to submit a letter of support to CMRPC for the Route 31 Corridor Study (Berthiaume / Woodbury) passed 5/0.

c) Action Item: Vote to adopt CMRPC Hazard Mitigation Plan - Steve Tyler, P.E., Utilities & Facilities Superintendent

Mr. Gaudette reported that CMRPC developed a Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan with no cost to participating communities. High hazard areas were identified for Spencer.

Mr. Tyler noted that in order to qualify for funding from FEMA, each community must have completed a Hazard Mitigation Plan.

A motion to adopt a Resolution as pertaining to the CMRPC Hazard Mitigation Plan (Berthiaume / Fritze) passed 5/0.

Old Business:

- a) Action Item: Vote to endorse Community Development Strategy for 2013 CDBG – Chris Dunphy, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)

Mr. Gaudette reported that Christopher Dunphy, from PVPC was at the November 26th meeting in preparation for the CDBG application which is due in February, 2013. Mr. Dunphy revised the Community Development Strategy to incorporate comments received from the Quabog Chamber of Commerce.

A motion to adopt the revised Community Development Strategy for the 2013 CDBG (Berthiaume / Woodbury) passed 5/0.

- b) Discussion: Transfer Station Recommended Changes for Public Hearing - Steve Tyler, P.E., Utilities & Facilities Superintendent

Mr. Gaudette said that the Transfer Station was identified as an area that needed to be addressed. Mr. Tyler worked with Ms. Congden from the DEP and received comments from the public during a hearing.

The revenue is not enough to cover the line item resulting in a \$130,000 annual budget shortfall. Recommendations to address include:

- Bag fees – increase revenue with bag fee increase. \$1.25 for small bags and \$2.50 for large bags will result in an \$80,000 to \$90,000 increase in revenue
- Sticker fees –increase fees from \$30 to \$50 for the first vehicle and \$10 to \$20 for an additional vehicle; this will result in a \$40,000 revenue increase
- Recycling – offer additional plastic recycling
- Metal –could utilize 24 hour video monitoring and / or automatic gate system
- Recycling Transportation and Management – suggest doing an RFP and compare a variety of options
- Textiles – having a clothing bin is an option
- Compost area – need to monitor and maintain
- Hours of operations – expand to open until 7 pm one night per week
- Capital improvements - ongoing maintenance, crack sealing, paving, monitoring, an additional bailer, and two new trailers are some of the future needs
- Staffing – one additional part time person & possibly a technical administrator for long term management
- Landfill budget should be separated from the Transfer Station line item
- Update trash hauler permit - possible preferred hauler for curbside pickup

At 7:58 p.m., Chairman Pepe announced a recess for a tape change. The meeting reconvened at 8:06 p.m.

- Layout changes – will look into in the future
- Potential future use - investigate areas to generate additional funds in the future

The Board would like to hold a second public hearing on January 28th.

There was discussion on selling Transfer Station stickers at Town Hall and also at the Transfer Station on Saturdays. Mr. Gaudette advised the Board that it makes more sense to keep it centralized. Mr. Tyler agreed and noted that special arrangements may be made to accommodate those who are not able to purchase a sticker during normal business hours.

Mr. Berthiaume noted that the WeCare contract is \$140,000, plus two employees. The result is a high cost for each load being transported. He believes the Town could operate independently and more cost effectively. He is not in favor of raising bag fees and does not believe the Town should operate the Station with the goal of making a profit.

Mr. Woodbury agreed and would like to see the Town handle the entire operation. He appreciates all the work Mr. Tyler has done on this project, however is not in favor of increasing fees.

Mr. Fritze commented that using WeCare is more expensive for the Town. In the long run, it would be better for the Town to operate.

Mr. Stevens asked if time would allow for developing a scenario with the Town operating the Station.

Mr. Pepe advised Board members to come up with a list of items to include in an RFP and bring to the December 17th workshop.

Mr. Tyler mentioned that he does not believe a Town operated structure would balance the budget and asked the Board to consider raising bag fees only. He is willing to work with the Board on the best solution for the Town.

The Board thanked Mr. Tyler for his efforts.

- c) Action Item: Vote to Issue Franchise Agreement to Charter Communications – Joint meeting with Cable Advisory Committee

Aaron Keys, representing the Cable Advisory Committee (CAC) was present.

Mr. Gaudette noted that the CAC held meetings over that past year and developed a long range plan to negotiate a Cable Franchise Agreement with Charter with assistance from Town Counsel. A survey was conducted to determine the needs of the community. Only seven terms of the agreement are negotiable, everything else is FCC regulated. The Town does not have the ability to negotiate programming.

Key elements include:

- A ten year agreement was in the best interest of the Town; laws change and current funding may not be available in a few years
- \$200,000 in capital support payments
- Researched fiber optic network connection for all Town buildings, however it is not possible at this time
- Senior citizen discount is offered at 10% off the basic service

- 80 hours of technical assistance in years 1-5, with an additional 80 hours in years 6-10 if staffing is available
- Ligated damages in the event of widespread issues

Mr. Gaudette said that Spencer CAC voted to recommend this agreement to the Board as negotiated.

Tony thanked Mr. Keys for his work on this project.

A motion to approve the Franchise Agreement with Charter Communication, contingent upon an agreement between Charter and Spencer Cable Access (Berthiaume / Woodbury) passed 5/0.

d) Discussion: Community Comparison Chart

The Board agreed to table until the December 17th workshop.

Town Administrator's Report:

a) Bid Update – Annual Town Meeting authorized sewer to do a five year agreement for sludge.

b) Annex Fire Station frame is up and will be starting on metal

c) Policy Introduction: Sugden Block Sale Committee Charge

Mr. Gaudette reported that he looked at the MHPI sale format to explore the sale of the Sugden building. A seven member Sugden Sale Advisory Committee will be created and comprised of a member of the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Library Trustees, Town Administrator, Town Planner, Library Director and one citizen-at-large. The Committee will be charged with making recommendations to the Board by October 1, 2013. Further discussion will take place at the January 14th meeting.

d) Governor's Proposed "9C" Cuts

Mr. Gaudette advised the Board that the Governor announced revenue is not what was expected. Cuts are being proposed for local aid, special education, regional school transportation, municipal incentive grants, and veteran's benefits. The biggest concerns for Spencer are with regional school transportation, Chapter 70, and special education. Mr. Gaudette will check with the school district to see how it will impact them.

A motion to authorize the Town Administrator to send a letter to the school district regarding the impact for 9C cuts (Berthiaume / Woodbury) passed 5/0.

e) FY2014 Budget Calendar

Mr. Gaudette reviewed the FY14 budget calendar with the Board

Board Liaison Reports:

None

Citizen Input:

None

Board Member and Staff Comments:

None

The meeting adjourned at 9:26 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Savoie
Administrative Assistant

_____ Chairman

_____ Vice Chairman

_____ Clerk

_____ Member

_____ Member

Documents Reviewed:

Scanlon & Associates Management Letter
CMPRC Hazard Mitigation Plan Certificate of Adoption
CDBG 2013 Revised Community Development Strategy
Charter Franchise Agreement
FY14 Budget Calendar