



Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Date: Wednesday, December 17, 2014
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: McCourt Social Hall, Memorial Town Hall, Spencer, MA
Present: Chairman Pepe, Vice Chair Fritze, Clerk G. Woodbury, Members Stevens & C. Woodbury and Administrator Gaudette.

Chairman Pepe Opened the meeting at 6:02 pm.

Parade of Lights

Celebrations Committee members Donnie & Wendy Berthiaume offered their thanks to the many people who helped to make the Christmas Parade of Lights a success. There were over thirty float and fire entries. In addition to the Spencer Fire Department, E. Brookfield, Leicester, Oxford, Sturbridge, and Paxton participated as well.

Mr. Pepe thanked the Berthiaume's for their ongoing work in organizing the parade each year.

Discussion: FY2014 Auditor Report – Tom Scanlon, Jr., Scanlon & Associates

Tom Scanlon of Scanlon & Associates reported on the Town's financials. He noted the Town is well managed and received an "unmodified" opinion, which is the best that can be given. With over \$966,000 in free cash from both appropriations and local receipts, the Town is doing a good job budgeting and using sound financial practice. In addition, the Town has over \$2.1 million in reserves and only 3% debt, compared with the average of 5%. The real estate tax collection rate is also excellent at 96%.

Mr. Stevens asked if it would be feasible to budget more tightly and have less free cash. Mr. Scanlon explained that free cash is like stabilization and bond companies want to see reserves in place; it leads to good interest rates. It also prevents the use of the tax rate for unforeseen circumstances.

Mr. Scanlon noted the management report has two recommendations. The first is to research the borrowing to fund the water improvement capital project from the Massachusetts Water Pollution Abatement Trust (MWPAT) as funds are classified as proceeds and unlike traditional borrowing the accounting for MWPAT projects is complex. Payments are based on all available funds having been withdrawn, even though they have not been. The Town should research and adjust the payment schedule accordingly.

Steven Tyler noted the Town only paid back what was owed, not extra.

The second recommendation is for the Town to get involved in the GASB accounting standards without delay.

The Board thanked Mr. Scanlon for his time.

Action Item (continued): Lodging House License for Lismorris, 126 Main Street

Mr. Pepe explained the discussion is a follow up from the last meeting where the vote to renew the license was postponed pending a review of any recent disturbances.

Sean and Lena O'Doherty, owners of the property were present. They explained their policy is to review each situation and any tenants involved in frequent disturbances are asked to vacate the premises; two were recently evicted.

Mr. Pepe noted that the Board will continue to receive reports from the Police Chief to monitor the situation.

Mr. C Woodbury asked if reference checks on potential tenants are being done. Mr. O'Doherty said they are not. The property is mainly a rooming house with some apartments and helps people going through difficult times have an affordable place to live.

A motion to approve the Lodging House License for Lismorris (Stevens/Fritze) passed 5/0.

Discussion: Request for Parking Restriction at Town Hall from Utilities & Facilities

Utilities & Facilities Superintendent Steven Tyler asked to have a restriction placed on the first two parking spaces (from Main St) in the Town Hall Municipal Drive parking lot for "Electric Vehicle Parking Only." The parking restriction is a requirement of the Electric Vehicle and Charging Station grant. The Station may be used by the public. A sign will be installed indicating parking of non-electric vehicles will be towed at owner's expense.

A motion to restrict the first two parking spaces on the right side for electric vehicles only and to install signage as discussed (C. Woodbury/G. Woodbury) passed 5/0.

Discussion: Request for Traffic Regulations from Utilities & Facilities

The Highway Department, based upon conversations with Police and Fire, requested a hearing to discuss the following necessary traffic rules for formal implementation/adoption:

- TOWNWIDE: No parking upon any street or road within 20 feet of an intersecting way.
Notes: Mandatory for public safety; matches State standard and language. Must be adopted prior to Main Street project to comply with project safety audit.

Mr. Tyler noted this restriction is necessary for turning purposes and requests to change the existing 15 feet to 20 feet from an intersection. Existing signs need to be relocated.

A motion to adopt a 20 foot parking restriction at an intersecting way (C. Woodbury/G. Woodbury) passed 5/0.

- ADAMS STREET (from Maple Street to Clark Street): No Parking on either side of the street.
Notes: Some park on the sidewalk side but they have no problem getting cars off the street and finding parking during winter parking ban. At the very least, the request is to have no parking on the northerly side and from Maple Street to the first utility pole of the southerly/sidewalk side, which is important for turning buses and emergency vehicles.

Mr. Tyler noted this is a very active street with school busses and other traffic. By extending the 20-foot restriction to the pole on the corner, it will allow buses to make the turn safely. The Board will do a site visit for all streets to make an informed decision on whether or not to have a public hearing or notification. A decision will be made after the site visit.

- CLARK STREET (from Adams Street to Ash Street): No Parking on either side of street.
Notes: No one parks on street now as it's too narrow.

A motion to approve No Parking on either side of Clark Street from Adams Street to Ash Street (C. Woodbury/G. Woodbury) passed 5/0.

Mr. Gaudette will notify the property owner of this restriction.

- WATER STREET (from Main Street to Valley Street): No Parking on either side.

Mr. Tyler noted that Water Street is also very narrow and there has been no parking there at all, this will make it official.

A motion to approve "No Parking" on either side of street from Main Street to Valley Street (G. Woodbury/Fritze) passed 4/1, with Mr. Stevens opposed.

A walk-through will be scheduled in the coming weeks for Adams St., coinciding with a visit to Church St.

Action Item: Set Town Administrator Goals

The final draft of the Town Administrator goals for the period of December 2014 through April 2015 was reviewed. Pavement Management Study Review and Economic Development Committee Support were added.

A motion to set Town Administrator goals as written (C. Woodbury/Stevens) passed 5/0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 pm. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Savoie
Administrative Assistant

Referenced Documents

FY2014 Auditor Report
Town Administrator Goals
Traffic Regulations Requests