

MINUTES
SHARON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
January 19, 2016

The meeting of the Sharon Board of Selectmen was called to order in the Town Hearing Room at the Community Center at 7:00pm with Chairman William A. Heitin, Clerk Walter B. Roach, Selectman John J. McGrath, and Town Administrator Frederic E. Turkington, Jr.

Sharon Gas Pipeline Project Petition Presentation

Philip Pitha with the *No Sharon Gas Pipeline* organization was present before the Board. Mr. Pitha presented the Board with a petition that asks the Board to oppose the proposed pipeline, which he read.

Chairman Heitin noted that this petition is factually incorrect and asked that, in the future, they bring forth something with factual details. The meeting in December was the first interaction the Board had with Spectra Energy. He reiterated that they are learning about this project at the same time as the general public. He expressed concern that the people that signed the petition were given false information.

Selectman McGrath said that it appears that this group jumped to conclusions and the Board is in the learning process. He added that the Board wants to get as much information as possible. The false perceptions lead to people panicking. Selectman Roach said he anticipates the Board will have another public meeting with Spectra, which the public will be invited to.

Bri McAlevey, 14 Century Hill Road, asked if they could have a meeting within the next eight weeks with various boards/committees without Spectra. Chairman Heitin said that the Board will speak with the Town Administrator about this request. Selectman McGrath suggested that they meet with the other town boards in the meantime, and a Selectman will try to attend.

POSTPONED: Birch Hill Subdivision Plan Presentation

This agenda item has been postponed to a future meeting.

One School Street Discussion with Library Board of Trustees

Library Director Lee Ann Amend and several member of the Board of Library Trustees were present for the discussion.

Ms. Amend explained that the Library Trustees are pursuing a new public library using grant funding from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). As part of the grant process, an alternative site review is required by the MBLC. The Trustees are looking at the One School Street location as the alternate site, as it is three times larger than the site of the existing library and will allow for a two-story library with 10,500 square feet on each floor, and 43 parking spaces. The challenges for the current site are many. Ms. Amend noted that at the current site, designated library parking is an issue, as 53-55 spaces would need to be created.

Some of the benefits of considering One School Street location are:

- Existing town owned property
- Not listed on the state or federal register
- The building has been significantly altered twice from its original form
- The building is in need of significant capital outlay funding to repair the building

- The building is obsolete in its present condition
- There will be a significant savings in construction costs to use that site for a library
- Lower demolition costs
- Results in contemporary library services for 20 to 50 years
- Provides near full on-site parking
- Adjacency to downtown and walkable
- Provides total freedom in the design process to accomplish the future goals of the library
- Access for patrons and deliveries much easier
- The 11 North Main Street site can provide 10,000 square foot space for another town or community service

Challenges for current site include:

- No onsite parking
- More costly
- Higher demolition cost to preserve Carnegie structure
- Higher costs associated with retrofitting historical Carnegie structure
- We would need to rent space to provide temporary library service during construction – a requirement of the grant
- We would need to pay for storage for items that we can't fit at the temporary site
- Must build to property line
- No adjoining property available to construct a three story building on site, with no land for storage or crane equipment
- Staff would be required for all three floors

Other uses for 11 North Main Street:

- Possible use of historical Carnegie library as police/fire museum as it is already in the state and federal register of historical places
- Rentable office space
- Rentable artist studio and teaching space
- Private pre-school use
- Rentable space for the Chinese School, multi-cultural events and other non-profits
- Potential town department use – storage of historical records, etc.

Mr. Turkington asked Ms. Amend to talk about the timetable. She explained that twenty-three (23) communities have asked for grant funds from the MBLC. They will create a list; it is possible that Sharon may not be considered for 5-10 years. She pointed out that up to 50% of the cost would be reimbursed from the state.

Mr. Turkington explained that he asked the library officials to come tonight because the Board has asked for information about the grant funding and the timeline they are faced with.

Selectman McGrath asked about the potential cost of a new library building. Ms. Amend said that no figures have been provided but that the ballpark would be \$10-15 million for a new library. Selectman McGrath noted that given the long timeframe for state approval the costs would likely increase.

Selectman Roach asked about the parcel of land next to One School Street and Ms. Weinstein from the Board of Library Trustees said that the purchase of that property is off the table.

Mr. Levin from the Board of Library Trustees said that they have two warrant articles that will allow them to proceed in the process with the MBLC. By next January, they have to get schematic drawings with a definitive location to the state. As far the timeframe goes, the MBLC will review all of the communities' information and will create a list of those most and least deserving. Upon receiving funding from the Legislature, the MBLC will be able to allocate money. If/when Sharon receives the grant funding, the Trustees will have to come Town Meeting seeking an override but added that they would do fundraising as well.

Ms. Weinstein noted that the Trustees are at a crossroads and will need to give information to their architects if they are given permission to pursue One School Street. Mr. Levin added that the One School Street site would allow for a much simpler design.

Mr. Turkington asked if the architects' review have taken into account the work needed to keep up 11 North Main Street and Mr. Levin replied yes. Mr. Levin said that the current library has been maintained over the years, although the furnace is 50 years old. Ms. Amend noted that a new roof will be needed shortly.

Chairman Heitin thanked the Trustees and Ms. Amend for their time. The Board will have a conversation and will keep the Trustees informed.

FY17 Budget Review - Information Technology

IT Director Donald Hillegass appeared before the Board. Chairman Heitin asked Mr. Hillegass to speak a little about the department's budget.

Mr. Hillegass spoke about the staff changes in his department and how he inherited the technology issues at the Police Station at the same time. His department has been involved with the technology needs at the new public safety building. He had to increase his budget for MUNIS by 5% and will be looking at cheaper alternatives.

Mr. Hillegass spoke about purchasing permitting software for the Department of Public Works. He has found a company that offers a reasonable package - \$11,000. There will be a recurring cost of \$8,000 which would be added to his budget. Mr. Turkington said that this seems to be the best value for the town.

Mr. Turkington said that we can find savings from other departments to fund the initial cost and the recurring annual cost will be added into the IT Department's budget.

Chairman Heitin stated that the FY17 budget request for the IT Department is \$278,963, \$148,821 of which is salaries.

Chairman Heitin told Mr. Hillegass that the Board is supportive of purchasing the online permitting software.

FY17 Budget Review - Council on Aging

Council on Aging Director Kathleen Medeiros appeared before the Board. Chairman Heitin asked Ms. Medeiros to speak a little about the department's budget.

Ms. Medeiros explained that her budget sees savings because her salary is less than her predecessor. As a result, she is requesting that the COA receptionist have her hours increased from 19 hours to 30 hours per week. Overall, the cost would be an additional \$10,800.

Mr. Turkington reminded the Board that the Friends of the Sharon Council on Aging paid for a 13 hour/week person, but they could no longer pay for it, so the town had to pick up the salary in last year's budget and now they are seeking an increase, which would trigger benefits. He suggested that a second person be hired to pick up the additional hours so no benefits would be needed. Ms. Medeiros believes it would be better to keep with one person instead of job sharing to avoid benefits.

The FY17 budget request for the Council on Aging is \$288,206, \$266,612 of which is salaries.

Chairman Heitin said that they will take her request under advisement and thanked her for her time.

FY17 Budget Review - Treasurer/Collector

Treasurer/Collector Elizabeth Siemiakaska appeared before the Board. Chairman Heitin asked Ms. Siemiakaska to speak a little about the department's budget.

Ms. Siemiakaska noted that the budget's bottom line is good, and the department seeks additional funds for postage. She explained that the department is fully staffed for the first time in a long time, which is great. Selectman Roach said that things seem to be running much smoother. Ms. Siemiakaska noted that the office configuration has been changed for better efficiency.

Mr. Turkington explained that the auditors recommended that the salaries of the staff of the Treasurer/Collector and Accounting offices be paid from the water enterprise account. In the FY18 budget, the fringe benefits would also come from the water enterprise account.

The FY17 budget request for the Treasurer/Collector's Office is \$360,598, \$282,698 of which is salaries.

The Board thanked Ms. Siemiakaska for her time.

FY17 Budget Review - Veterans' Services

Veterans Agent Paul Bergeron appeared before the Board. Chairman Heitin asked Mr. Bergeron to speak about the department's budget.

Mr. Bergeron announced that there is a scam going on around about fundraising for local veterans. Both Chairman Heitin and Selectman Roach commented that they received calls about this tonight. This group is not giving full disclosure about how the money is being spent. Selectman McGrath suggested that residents be careful about donating to any organization and look further into the group first.

The major change in Mr. Bergeron's budget relates to the Valor Act, as additional training and an examination is now required for all veterans agents. The knowledge now includes the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs directives for benefits, health care and burial. As a result, he has requested a salary of \$30,000 for the position; presently the amount is \$14,694.

The FY17 budget request for the Veterans' Services Office is \$75,575, \$30,600 of which is salaries.

Chairman Heitin said that the Board will take his budget increase under advisement. Selectman Roach asked about flags on the poles and Mr. Bergeron said that this budget has been increased to reflect this increase. Mr. Bergeron noted that the DPW's Forestry & Grounds staff have been diligent in adapting or repairing so that the flags can still fly. Selectman Roach asked about veterans flags. Mr. Bergeron does not anticipate any issues - he has a number of flags on hand.

Chairman Heitin told Mr. Bergeron that the Fourth of July Committee will receive \$15,000 from Four Daughters Compassionate Care, and will continue to do so annually. The Board negotiated donations from FDCC for three organizations. Mr. Bergeron reiterated that donations to the Fourth of July Committee are always welcome.

Recreation Director Screening Committee Appointments

Chairman Heitin stated that the Board has sought interested individuals to serve on the Recreation Director Screening Committee and they received a number of candidates. After reviewing the list, Chairman Heitin suggested Ted Philips, Paul Driscoll, and Scott Brody to serve with Gloria Rose from the Personnel Board and Cheryl Whiting from the Recreation Advisory Committee. Selectman McGrath agreed with the recommendations.

MOTION: To appoint Ted Philips, Paul Driscoll, Cheryl Whiting and Scott Brody to serve on the Recreation Advisory Committee with Gloria Rose from the Personnel Board
(Heitin - McGrath) 3-0 **PASSES** (Selectman Roach recusing from voting for Cheryl Whiting)

Consent Calendar

- I. Vote to approve regular and executive session minutes of January 5, 2016
- II. Vote to approve the banner request from the Brotherhood of Temple Israel for their 36th Annual Auction for February 29 - March 7 in 2nd position
- III. Vote to approve the banner request from the Sharon Soccer Association to announce registration for February 1-8 in 2nd position and February 22-29 in 1st position and to approve request to post lawn signs around town on public property from February through April 8th
- IV. Vote to confirm the borrowing maturities for FY16 capital projects

MOTION: To approve the January 19, 2016 consent calendar
(Roach - McGrath) 3-0 **PASSES**

Town Administrator's Report

The Town Administrator reported the following:

- He met with Recreation Director Amanda Levasseur and Assistant Recreation Director Christine Kasparian to review the transition and discuss how best to position themselves during this time. He also attended the Recreation Advisory Committee to discuss the transition and process for searching for a new director and updates to the job description.
- Work continues with staff to complete work on the prospectus and prepare for the rating discussion with Moody's on February 2. The tentative date of the bond sale is February 18, with the execution of the documents on February 23.

2016 Annual Town Meeting Discussion

| | Topic |
|---|--|
| 1 | Appoint Finance Committee Members |
| 2 | Act Upon Reports |
| 3 | Personnel By-Law |
| 4 | Budgets/ Compensation of Elected Officials |
| 5 | Capital Outlay Articles |

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| 6 | CPC Annual Funding & Projects: new recreation fields; Ames Street playground |
| 7 | Norfolk County Retirement |
| 8 | Unemployment Fund |
| 9 | O.P.E.B. Fund |
| 10 | Stabilization Fund |
| 11 | Revolving Fund Authorizations |
| 12 | Property Tax Exemptions - Veterans, Blind, Disabled & others qualified |
| 13 | Sharon Friends School Fund Records & Appointments |
| 14 | Annual Audit |
| 15 | Codification of Town's bylaws |
| 16 | Town Report delivery |
| 17 | One School Street - care, custody, control |
| 18 | Civil Service rescission |
| 19 | Accept provisions of MGL Law Ch. 60, sec. 62A |
| 20 | Sharon Gallery? |
| 21 | By-law change: alternate for Priorities Committee |
| 22 | Heights Elementary roof |
| 23 | Library - Approval of the project |
| 24 | Library - Authorization to apply for, accept and expend PLCP grant funds |
| 25 | Cable Advisory Committee composition/name change? |
| 26 | Citizen's petition - topic TBD - potential |
| 27 | Citizen's petition - topic TBD - potential |

MOTION: To insert items 2, 5, 7-19, 21 into the 2016 Annual Town Meeting warrant
(McGrath – Roach) 3-0 **PASSES**

Topics not reasonably anticipated forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting

Selectman Roach announced that the 250th pole banners that were sponsored by residents and local businesses have been taken down and are available to pick up in the Selectmen’s Office during normal business hours.

Executive Session - 8:27pm

MOTION: To enter into Executive Session at 8:27pm to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and at the end, to adjourn for the evening. Discussion of this item in open session would be detrimental to the Town.

(Heitin – Roach) 3-0 **PASSES**

Heitin: Aye
McGrath: Aye
Roach: Aye

Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn at 9:00pm
(Heitin – Roach) 3-0 **PASSES**

Heitin: Aye
McGrath: Aye
Roach: Aye