

MINUTES
SHARON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
August 1, 2014

The meeting of the Sharon Board of Selectmen was called to order in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at Sharon Town Hall at 2:30pm with Chairman William A. Heitin, Clerk John J. McGrath and Selectman Walter B. Roach, Jr.

Chairman Heitin explained that the Board did not need to meet in executive session and proceeded with the remainder of the agenda.

Town Administrator Appointment & Approval of Employment Agreement

Chairman Heitin said that this Board went through an extensive process to find a new Town Administrator and considerable time has been spent in negotiating a contract, which included the assistance of Town Counsel. It is a 3 year contract with Fred Turkington.

MOTION: To appoint Fred Turkington as our next Town Administrator
(McGrath – Roach) 3-0 **PASSES**

MOTION: To accept the employment agreement between Fred Turkington and the Town of Sharon
(Roach – McGrath) 3-0 **PASSES**

Chairman Heitin noted that Fred's start date is August 18 and the Board is looking forward to working with him.

NSTAR Switching Station

Chairman Heitin noted that the August 5 deadline is for the Town to be involved in the evidentiary hearings but that there is no deadline for public comment. If residents would like to offer public comment, the Board would be happy to facilitate. He went on to say that there is only so much that the Board can do with respect to this site and that the Town doesn't control the final decision – state regulatory requirements are above us.

Selectman Roach noted that NSTAR held a hearing in February 26, 2014, and many of the residents noted they did not receive it. He said that it was in the newspaper, however. NSTAR came before the Board in March and at the time, he said that the open house was not well attended. Selectman Roach noted that he and retired Town Administrator Ben Puritz entered into negotiations regarding such issues as security and landscaping, and then discussions ceased. He wants to have more conversations with NSTAR.

Selectman McGrath commented that he was not in office when this issue first came up but that he has been trying to get caught up on this matter. The issues of noise and pollution should be of concern and brought up a potential well site at that location. He said that the area still looks like a country road –

there is an historic cemetery nearby – and he feels this will detract from the whole neighborhood. He also has concerns about abutter notification or lack thereof.

Chris Robb, 25 Richards Avenue, attended the July 21 meeting in Stoughton. She read some of the technical specifics relative to the project as printed in the *Notice of Public Comment* hearing. NSTAR gave no reason as to why they are placing the switching station at the Canton Street site. She is concerned that they haven't thought about an alternative site. She has concerns about the impact to the nearby cemetery. She wants the Board to formally intervene. Chairman Heitin replied that was the intention of the Board.

Joe Markt, 64 Richards Avenue, said that he will be looking down on this from his property and wondered if they could move it at a different place on the site. Selectman Roach commented that negotiations have ceased with NSTA and he wants to be more forceful with NSTAR and wants them to have more public meetings.

John Blumensteil, 115 Maskwonicut Street, believes that NSTAR has rights-of-way all throughout town wonders why this specific spot is being considered. He wants to know what the Board is doing to do and how they are working with the state.

Milton Koopmann, 50 Canton Street, wonders why Canton Streets keep getting put upon things that no one else in town wants. He expressed concern about landscaping because the Stoughton site was not properly landscaped. He also has concerns about security – from terrorists and vandals. He expressed concerned about humming and hissing from the switching station and is afraid that property values are going down. He wants a reduction in their real estate taxes for the area residents.

Chairman Heitin said that the Board is here to work on the resident's behalf. He reiterated that NSTAR reports to a higher authority and they have rights that the Town cannot control.

Valerie Ordway, 54 Richards Avenue, believes this project is detrimental to the whole area. It is unsightly and brings property values down. She believes the whole town should get involved to let everyone know that we aren't happy with NSTAR.

Lawrence Sandberg, 2 Saw Mill Pond Road, read a lengthy statement. He offered a personal story of how he was displeased with NSTAR's response with respect to the tree removal and acknowledged that NSTAR has an easement on his property. He is concerned about public safety with respect to the roadway itself and adding a construction site to the area would make the area even worse. He filed the paperwork with the Siting Board to participate as an intervener.

Michael Lang, 60 Canton Street, believes he will be looking at this spaceship and is concerned about noise and lighting. He just doesn't trust NSTAR. He thinks they should place this substation elsewhere.

Nancy Connors, 52 Canton Street, offered a history of problems in the area with NSTAR, the gas company and the MBTA.

Ms. Ordway is concerned that if the switching station comes in, it will encourage the further expansion of the high tension wires.

Mary Lang, 60 Canton Street, expressed concern about the street. She believes Route 1 and/or Route 95 would be a great spot for this site and believes there are other areas that they could choose. They are not good neighbors.

Dave Martin, 350 North Main Street and Vice Chair of the Historical Commission, noted that the Commission is concerned about the proximity to the cemetery.

Julia Wood, 111 Maskwonicut Street, asked if the Selectmen have spoken with Senator Joyce's office or the Stoughton Board of Selectmen. Chairman Heitin noted that Selectman McGrath spoke with Senator Joyce's office and will reach out to the rest of the legislative delegation.

Paul Vitali, 8 Valley Road, believes this is a bad situation and wants to help. Selectman McGrath said that the power rests with the residents and that the Board is going to contact our legislative delegation and also asked residents to do the same – the numbers count. The power rests with people higher up from the Board of Selectmen. He suggests talking to local groups – like the Lions Club and the Rotary Club – to help affect change.

Mr. Sandberg believes it is important to contact the Department of Public Utilities and our federal legislative delegation. Ms. Connors asked that cable keep replaying this meeting.

Chairman Heitin noted that the Board will take everyone's comments and will continue down the path of keeping people informed. Public comments are still welcome.

MOTION: To send a letter to the Energy Facilities Siting Board in advance of August 5 in support of the Town of Sharon

(Roach – McGrath) 3-0 **PASSES**

MOTION: To adjourn at 3:39pm

(Roach – McGrath) 3-0 **PASSES**