

MINUTES
SHARON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

August 25, 2015

The meeting of the Sharon Board of Selectmen was called to order in the Town Hearing Room at the Sharon Community Center at 7:03pm with Chairman William A. Heitin, Clerk Walter B. Roach, Selectman John J. McGrath, and Town Administrator Frederic E. Turkington, Jr.

Railroad Parking Discussion

Chairman Heitin explained that the staff has put together some information and recommendations relative to train station parking. Mr. Turkington noted currently, we have a total of 599 spaces available for quarterly passes. The total breaks down to 583 parking spaces in the main lot (not including 16 accessible spots at the site) and 16 spaces at the One School Street location. We no longer have parking available at Eastern Bank, which accounted for 17 spaces that once was available for quarterly passes. The lot at One School Street is considered by residents to be less desirable due to its distance away from the station, which is a relatively short walk from the station to the center of town. According to data provided by City Hall Systems, we issue approximately 50 passes more than we actually have parking for and receive approximately 100 applications for passes more than we can fulfill.

At present, the railroad parking passes are priced at a considerable discount over the daily rate of \$4.00 per day to park in the MBTA spots. The value may be driving the demand up. Approximately 70% of the parking passes are used consistently each work day, with the remaining 30% used occasionally at the rate of about 2-3 days per week. The pass is currently priced so low that those who may only use the pass sporadically are purchasing the pass because of the significant savings over the daily rate and an increased likelihood of finding a parking spot, as the resident spots are more plentiful.

Out of the few communities that own and manage their own parking lot for the commuter rail, the average daily rate was approximately \$2.00 per day. The Town of Mansfield offers a parking sticker to residents, which entitles them to a reduced rate of \$2.00 per day over the MBTA rate of \$4.00 per day for parking. Other communities offer parking permits/passes, stickers or loadable cards that can be used like a debit card which have a discount built in that averages \$2.00 per day. Currently, the average daily rate for a Sharon quarterly pass is approximately \$1.67, if you estimate the average usage to be 20 work days per month. By any measure of equity, there is room to raise the parking fee to match the market value and still provide a meaningful discount to Sharon residents.

Mr. Turkington went on to say that we have had complaints from residents about the current approach to issuing passes. Frustrations seem to lie with how quickly the passes sell out, which is between 3-4 minutes from the sale opening each quarter. Some residents have complained that the current system does not cater to those who may not have quick typing skills or those with slower internet connections. Others noted the timing is not always convenient. Currently, the passes are posted for sale on the first Thursday of the month at 10:00am, prior to its validation. This creates a problem for those who may be at work or away on vacation. Some believe that switching to a lottery system will alleviate the issues of a restricted timeline to apply, while others would like a way of guaranteeing a pass for the next quarter to those who miss out in the current quarter. Residents are seeking a more "fair" approach to the issuance of the passes.

The fees for our vendor's services are as follows: we are billed quarterly at \$3.00 per application, \$2.00 per permit mailed and 3.2% credit card processing (3.2% of amount charged). After the initial passes are issued we are not billed for anything further, such as replacements, reissues or refunds that may occur during the quarter.

Revising the process of how the passes are issued and potentially increasing the cost may help determine whether there is adequate parking. A price increase may certainly be justified when comparison is made to other communities and likely down demand; a lottery system may reduce complaints about how the passes are

issued, at least initially. It will be interesting to learn whether a fee increase or changing the method of distributing the passes will lower demand sufficient to eliminate the need for more parking spaces.

At the Board's September 24 meeting, this issue will be brought up again and the public is welcome to offer feedback that evening or in writing in advance of the meeting.

Selectman McGrath believes this research is fantastic and thanked the staff for their efforts.

Approval of Mobile Telecommunications Equipment Site Lease with Sprint & Approval of Assignment of Lease to Crescendo

Chairman Heitin explained that the agreement will assign mobile telecommunications equipment leases to Crescendo Capital. This translates into a \$360,000 purchase price for the AT&T lease and the Town will receive the funds by the end of the week. Mr. Turkington noted that Town Counsel has reviewed and approved the contract. The town will receive payment for the Sprint lease within ten days of approval of the lease now pending with Sprint internal legal counsel.

MOTION: To approve the assignment of lease for 135R Upland Road and assignment for the Sprint lease within 90 days
(Roach – McGrath) 3-0 **PASSES**

Three Board Meeting Preparation Discussion

Chairman Heitin explained that a three-board meeting between the Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee and School Committee will take place on Thursday, September 10 at 7:00pm in the School Committee Meeting Room in the Administrative Offices at the Sharon Middle School. It is important to discuss the demands and the needs early in the budget process. Mr. Turkington provided a brief overview of the meeting's agenda. The topics of the meeting include a review the town's fiscal condition, will take a preliminary look into FY17 budget issues and to have a discussion about planning for the future.

Consent Calendar

- I. Vote to approve regular and executive session minutes of August 11, 2015
- II. Vote to approve Common Victualler's License for Tedeschi Food Shops
- III. Vote to approve the banner request from H.U.G.S Sharon for October 5-13, 2015 in the first position.
- IV. Vote to appoint Matthew Baldassari as the Department of Public Works representative to the Sharon Standing Building Committee for the Public Safety Building Project
- V. Vote to approve One-Day Alcohol License to Bakers' Best Catering for a Bat Mitzvah at the Community Center on September 5, 2015
- VI. Vote to approve Annual Muscular Dystrophy Association "Fill the Boot" Fundraiser Request by Sharon Firefighters IAFF Local 1880

MOTION: To approve the August 25, 2015 consent calendar
(McGrath - Roach) 3-0 **PASSES**

Town Administrator's Report

The Town Administrator reported the following:

- The new Facilities Supervisor, Matthew Baldassari, began on August 17 and will serve as the DPW representative to the Standing Building Committee for the purpose of the new public safety building, in place of Eric Hooper. Since Mr. Baldassari is already on the committee, he will resign as a resident member and the committee may search for a new member.
- He is meeting with department heads on September 1 to discuss the following:
 - Review FY2015 close out

- Review capital outlay timetable and process
- Review FY2017 budget process
- Discuss information to be considered at three-board meeting on September 10
- Update on COA executive director search
- Employee Development Day overview; BC mitigation fund settlement/premium holiday
- Town Offices/fire station ADA compliance and space utilization study update
- Facebook page and website uploads
- There will an insurance premium holiday for active employees for all of November and the first half of December; this will liquidate the remaining balance in the fund established to share some of the premium savings from health insurance reform in 2012.
- The town is implementing the switch to a Blue Cross Medex plan with prescription drugs as a ride for retirees to save both the Town and retirees on premium costs. The coverage will change effective January 1, 2016.
- The COA Director position has been re-advertised. The closing date is September 11 and the screening committee is expected to conduct interviews on September 15.
- The annual Employee Development Day is set for Friday, September 18.

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

MOTION: To approve the block party request for Mallard Drive
(Roach – McGrath) 3-0 **PASSES**

Chairman Heitin reminded residents of the September 19 “Light Up the Night” – sailboat parade, barbeque and fireworks at Memorial Park Beach. On September 20, the anniversary parade will take place along South Main Street and Pond Street.

Selectman McGrath thanked the Department of Public Works for their assistance with the beautification of the Keating Monument, lighting at One School Street as well as landscaping.

Executive Session – 7:30pm

MOTION: To enter into Executive Session to conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel, discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining, discuss pending litigation, and at the end, to reconvene in open session to take action on matters discussed in executive session, as necessary; and at the conclusion, to adjourn for the evening. Discussion of any of these in open session would be detrimental to the Town.
(Heitin - Roach) 3-0 **PASSES**

Heitin: Aye
McGrath: Aye
Roach: Aye

Return to Open Session – Discussion of Executive Session Matters

At 8:18pm, the Board returned to open session.

Chairman Heitin explained that the Board has been in discussions with Brickstone officials on a development agreement that will allow for some development but will also settle a potential legal matter, pending ZBA approval. It will go next to the Conservation Commission.

MOTION: To approve the development agreement as discussed
(Heitin – Roach) 3-0 **PASSES**

Chairman Heitin explained that the Board discusses a personnel matter that involves an injury to a town employee, and the need for more sick time than the employee presently has.

MOTION: To grant ten (10) sick days of sick leave for the employee discussed in executive session
(Heitin – Roach) 3-0 **PASSES**

Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn at 8:20pm
(Heitin - Roach) 3-0 **PASSES**