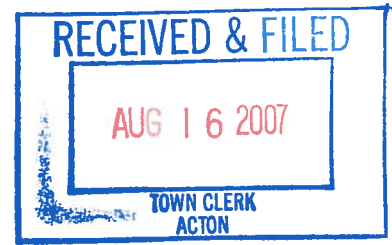


Clerk

BOARD OF SELECTMEN & SEWER COMMISSIONERS'
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM AT THE
ACTON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

July 23, 2007
8:00 AM – 10:00 AM



Present: Chairman Hunter, Selectmen Lauren Rosenzweig, Andy Magee, Peter Berry and Paulina Knibbe, Temporary Town Manager John Murray and Steve Barrett

CITIZENS' CONCERNS

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND APPOINTMENTS

None

SELECTMEN'S BUSINESS

BUDGET WORKSHOP

The Temporary Town Manager stated that he would like to create a budget that will follow the Board's policy directives. ALG will have to be factored in later and will impact some decisions. Department heads are the specialists and give budget data on their immediate needs. Discretionary spending is actually very limited. If there is input from the Board that could change direction of staff, then Mr. Murray would like to give the department heads those new directives. Are the current services offered at Town Hall meeting the Board's expectations? Is the Town at build-out and does the Master Plan project an accurate view of our plans? Mr. Murray questioned the selectmen and asked them to decide if they would like to have the scope of the Master Plan revisited. If we were to market the Town, what do the citizens need and what do the businesses require? Are our services meeting those needs? The Temporary Town Manager stated his budget goal for FY 09 is to bring the staffing and salary levels into parity with comparable communities.

Chairman Hunter wanted it stated in Public Meeting that one of his goals is to act on the salary survey information that has been forwarded to the Board.

Selectwoman Rosenzweig: The town offers a high level of services and oversight that is very professionally managed by staff.

- She would like to see a forward thinking direction on bringing more technology into the town. Citizens expect our IT presence to be like a corporation. This is unrealistic given our staffing and budget. If people want a higher level of Information Technology this needs to be looked at.
- Multi-modal transportation should be given a higher priority. She would like to see any new development have mandated shuttle access and the town to invest in bus or shuttle vehicles and facilities.
- The Master Plan is very important and the Town needs to incorporate strong citizen support for the plan. Selectwoman Rosenzweig would like a workshop to develop the definition of a Master Plan. That workshop should have policy input from the Board. Selectwoman Rosenzweig does not want to rush the Master Plan; it should go to Town Meeting if there is a good plan ready. Possibly once a year all

town boards and committees could meet together for setting goals and decide how those goals will be funded. Mr. Murray stated that currently the Master Plan is primarily a zoning document.

- Selectwoman Rosenzweig noted that we might need increased Social Services in our town. The integration of new people is not sufficient in Acton; should that funding be upgraded? Temporary Town Manager John Murray was asked if the Town Departments are having any issues with translation in accomplishing Town business. The library for example has put more effort into Chinese books.
- Selectwoman Rosenzweig would like to see infrastructure under ground, especially in the town center and historic districts. We should go wireless and keep wires underground. At the very least the Board would be interested in seeing that poles come back before them for any changes.

Chairman Hunter: Feels most folks are satisfied with the level of services in Acton.

- He would like to see more walk-ability. Neighborhoods, especially those with significant traffic, need to have sidewalks. Selectwomen Knibbe should keep her committee focused and head the effort to have sidewalks to tie the town together.
- He would like to see green fleets in town as vehicles are replaced. More green efforts in town approach to growth.
- Chairman Hunter would like technology upgrade so that people could interact with the town using a credit card.
- Chairman Hunter noted the weakness of the Master Plan; not enough people involved in the make-up of the document. Chairman Hunter might like to see the plan referred to as the Master Zoning Plan. The goal is to make it a fluid plan to be reviewed each year. Chairman Hunter noted it should be updated in such a manner that each zoning vote should relate back to the Master Plan.
- Chairman Hunter 's goal for Town Meeting is to get the Fire Station's conceptual design approved before other major renovations in town need to be voted.

Selectwoman Knibbe:

- Wanted clarification on the concept of structuring of the Town's energy portfolio.. The Temporary Town Manager explained that Acton could act as an energy aggregator and then buy power for ourselves? Can we have a bus fleet that runs on natural gas stored at the transfer station instead of diesel?

Temporary Town Manager updated the Board on the Green Line and noted that the 20 year contract for savings reminded him of a similar contract - NESWC. Mr. Murray will continue to meet with Mary Smith, an expert in the field who lives in Acton, and will continue to meet and update the Board as information becomes available.

- Selectwoman Knibee stated that the citizens do not think the Master Plan is only a zoning document. Many things are changing in town - school management, town management, town goals - and the Master Plan should be changed to be a fluid, updated and detailed document. . Selectwoman Knibbe stated that the State of the Town meeting could include a discussion of the future of the Town and provide an opportunity for citizens to provide input as we begin the process of updating the Master Plan.

Chairman Hunter stated that it is possible for The Master Plan go to State of the Town Meeting. Don Mckenzie would have to approve it.

- Selectwoman Knibbe stated that investing in IT to have more citizens engaged in town government is a good place to spend money.
- She would like to see the Town focus on constructing more sidewalks. She is not convinced that this requires substantially more money since there is money in the sidewalk fund but we are currently limited by staff time.
- Selectwoman Knibbe would like to see the Town apply for the Department of Environmental Protection's Municipal Sustainability Grant Program and other environmentally focused programs.

Mr. Murray opinioned that another person we could use is a grant writer whose sole purpose is to find and submit grants.

Selectwoman Knibbe asked the Temporary Town Manager for an explanation on debt exclusion and debt inside Prop 2 1/2.

Selectman Berry: Agrees with previous statements.

- The biggest thing he has heard about services in town is about sidewalks.
- Green, he stated is generally a culture as well as vehicles. He agrees with Bill Mullin that we should think about what the town will look like in 20 years.

Selectman Magee: Agrees that things are generally in pretty good shape.

- Acton has a citizenship that is willing to balance where services are low with the cost of making changes. Acton can't change the level of service too greatly. Technology is still email driven and we have other planning items that should be upgraded. Think globally about technology and service and about what the goal is. GIS is more than just maps. It helps the citizens interact with the Town at their level.

Mr. Murray stated a fully interactive computer system seems to be a necessity.

- It is important that we don't duplicate services. Link Conservation trails, BFRT and sidewalk plans to simplify. Unfortunately the Master Plan does not have a 20 year vision.

Chairman Hunter would like to recap the results of this meeting in a subsequent Board meeting. Mr. Murray set the time for 6PM Executive session on August 13, 2007. Mr. Murray stated that as the Board plans goals to keep in mind that at this point in time the staff is consumed with the current workload and not able to do much 5-20 year planning or take on large projects.

In conclusion the Board consensus is:

1. The Master Plan should be updated into a comprehensive document.
2. Staffing and salary levels should be in parity with comparable communities.
3. Place a priority on achieving a "green culture".
4. Update our current level of technology.
5. Citizen engagement should be the priority of all efforts in making municipal improvements.
6. Transportation needs to become multi-modal, including but not limited to the walk-ability of our town.
7. The goal of FY09 is to fund the North Acton Fire Station construction.

CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Hunter would like to approve the consent items. Selectman Magee would like to hold # 4. He moves to approve # 2 and # 3. Selectman Rosenzweig seconds and the vote is unanimous.

- 2. TRANSFER WILLOW/CENTRAL STREET PARCELS FROM THE TOWN TO THE ACTON COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION (ACHC) DEED**
- 3. REQUEST FOR A ONE-DAY LIQUOR LICENSE, NARA PARK**
A confidential request for a One-Day Liquor License for a surprise Birthday party at NARA Park was approved.
- 4. ACCEPT MINUTES, MAY 7, EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES AND MAY 29, 2007 EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES**
Selectman Magee held the Executive Session minutes and Selectwoman Knibbe would like to have the amount of money in the minutes of May 29th replaced with the words "a substantial sum of monies with the town". Selectman Magee moves to approve the amended minutes of May 29th; Chairman Hunter seconds and all votes approve the minutes. Selectman Magee would like those present at the May 7th Board of Selectmen meeting to be included in the minutes. Selectman Magee moves to approve the minutes of May 7th with those changes; Chairman Hunter seconds and all vote to approve the amended minutes.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

House Bill #2531 – Minimum Manning for Firefighters

The Temporary Town Manager addressed the concerns on the house bill. The board must support all aspects of the bill in town meeting however it is worded. Chairman Hunter recommends that we send a letter to disagree. Selectman Magee stated statistics on firefighter's deaths. Acton should express concerns rather than state strong opposition. Mr. Murray stated that the town will not be allowed in tight budget times to run light. Selectwoman Knibbe said if you cannot have control over your budget, she is opposed. Selectwoman Rosenzweig noted that from the firefighter's perspective they believe that this is what they need for safety and we in the town should not be making a decision on a safety issue. Selectman Berry asked if all 42 of Acton firefighters are academy trained. They all become academy trained if not when hired. He stated that firefighter safety is being weighed against budgeting power. It is a piece of budgeting negotiation and he is not in favor of passing it. Acton should state their safety concern but vote against the legislative. As an aside, Selectwoman Rosenzweig noted the state government needs to fund more. Acton should be concerned but budgeting restraints make it prohibitive. Chairman Hunter moves to draft such a letter and Selectman Magee seconds. All voted in favor of the letter. Selectwoman Rosenzweig would like the Board to see letter on consent before it goes out.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Not required.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Enclosed please find additional correspondence that is strictly informational and requires no Board action.

MINUTES PENDING APPROVAL

May 10, 2007 Meeting at the Jr High School
May 21, 2007 Regular and Executive Session
June 25, 2007 Regular and Executive Session
July 16, 2007 Regular and Executive Session
July 23, 2007 Special Meeting

PENDING COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Dr. Barbara Willson Regular Member of the Board of Health (Selectman Berry to Interview) Corrina Roman-Kreuzer, CPC (she was interviewed by VCC on July 16 and paperwork has been forwarded to liaison (Selectman Berry to Interview)

FUTURE AGENDAS

To facilitate scheduling for interested parties, the following items are scheduled for discussion on future agendas. This is not a complete agenda.

AUGUST 13

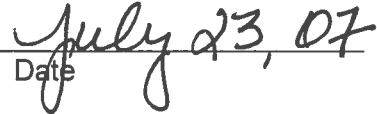
Follow up on Salary Survey in Executive Session. Chairman Hunter invited the Historic District to discuss options for Vallincourt house. (Check with chair and get staff opinions). Selectwoman Knibbe would like to hear an update on WR Grace. Selectwoman Rosenzweig would like to know the status of the Exchange Hall

lease. The selectman felt given the heavy August schedule that the Water Resource Advisory Group oversight meeting should be moved to the September meeting.

SEPTEMBER 10 and 24


Recording Secretary


Andrew D. Magee, Clerk


Date