

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING
Monday, September 18, 2006
7:00 PM AT TOWN OFFICE BUILDING

PRESENT: Selectmen David W. Barry (presiding), James E. Thompson, and Patrick J. Brady, Town Administrator William J. Fogarty, and Pamela E. Beall, secretary.

I. APPOINTMENTS WITH THE BOARD

Special Counsel Dennis Tully

Special Counsel Dennis Tully met with the board requested signatures of previously agreed upon easements for Post Office Park improvements. He reported that the easements filed in March were filed with the wrong registry and must be refilled with Land Court.

Candidate for Finance Committee: Rob Murner

Mr. Murner addressed the board to talk about his interest in the Finance Committee. Mr. Murner was encouraged to volunteer by Finance Committee member Bob Boillard. He has a background and experience in military systems management. He has also served on the board of a private school. He has an interest in results oriented budgeting and accountability. Mr. Murner responded to selectmen's queries about his interests and abilities. Mr. Brady provided information about possibility of appointment to an *ad hoc* committee for financial planning and analysis.

Candidate for Cable TV Advisory Board: Daniel Cochran

Mr. Cochran addressed the board about his interest in the Cable TV Advisory Committee. He was encouraged to volunteer by Mr. Barry. He has an interest and some knowledge of the field, as well as particular questions about Charter Communications and how it is serving the town.

MOTION: To appoint Daniel Cochran to the Cable TV Advisory Committee for a term ending in 2007. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

Review of DARE Program

Selectmen met with Chief Allen Stratton and Officer Dennis LaPlante from the Wilbraham Police Department and Superintendent Paul Gagliarducci and counselor Dr. Scanlon from the Hampden-Wilbraham Regional District Schools.

Chairman Barry acknowledged the valuable service of Officer LaPlante to the DARE program and noted that he has signaled his intention to retire. In addition, Selectman Brady asked for a review of the DARE program.

Mr. Brady stated that a study by the federal General Accounting Office found no statistical difference between schools which offer the DARE program and other schools. He stated that the program has served it's usefulness and it's effectiveness should be reviewed.

Chief Stratton gave a history of the program's introduction, the involvement of Officer LaPlante and the strong parent and community support that it enjoys. He further stated that the past 18 months, when Officer LaPlante was on leave, the schools were disadvantaged

without the program. He reported that a meeting with school administration led to agreement that alternative program design would be considered.

Dr. Gagliarducci acknowledged that there are benefits and advantages that are not easily measured, that the program goes far beyond anti-drug messages. He stated that there is soft data on its effectiveness, but the schools and the community should not abandon the message. The program in Wilbraham is a model for other communities.

Officer LaPlante addressed the board, noting that the DARE program has changed and evolved in response to government studies and criticism. He spoke also of his involvement in the national program, including training for and testing of new curriculum components, some of which were developed here in Wilbraham.

Mr. Gagliarducci summed up the questions on the table: the school will consider what type of curriculum and program might be adopted, but the question of funding a trained police officer would be one for the town to answer. The school administration will have a recommendation for program by January and the selectmen will consider hiring a replacement with emphasis on the skills identified by the schools.

Selectmen commented further on the positive worth of the program and Mr. Brady repeated his concern with a program evaluation and objective measurements of effectiveness.

Chief Stratton: Police Position

Chief Stratton met with selectmen about the vacancy on the police department. He reported that he has begun to collect the information requested by selectmen. Selectmen repeated their questions for staffing data from comparable towns, the number of officers on patrol, coverage for shifts, and other concerns. The chief will report at the earliest possible time.

II. CITIZEN'S OPEN FORUM

III. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Fogarty reported on the **Moody's bond rating** for town, which is A1.

The **Cottage Avenue bridge** completion date has been moved to later in October.

The Assistant Town Administrator received notice of **successful grant award** of \$51,000 for the police department program called Save-Our-Schools.

Selectmen discussed scheduling of **Special Town Meeting**. Mr. Fogarty proposed a date of October 30, when the school auditorium is available. Selectmen also discussed possibly articles, with the principal concern being funding for the emergency sewer repairs before the tax rate is set for FY 07.

IV. SELECTMEN'S UPDATES

Patrick J. Brady

Mr. Brady requested information about the rescheduled **regional selectmen's meeting**, and that police operations be on the agenda.

Mr. Brady requested follow up and action on the Nemphos **mailbox problem** on Springfield Street. Mr. Fogarty reported that the DPW plans to contact the household this week.

Mr. Brady requested status of the **Pines Community Center** leasing effort. Mr. Fogarty reported that an RFP is available and has been advertised. One party has withdrawn interest and others have requested the RFP.

David W. Barry

Selectmen discussed the "**free cash**" report, noting that it was the lowest free cash certification for several years.

Mr. Barry announced the reporting telephone line for **dead birds** to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, in order to monitor mosquito-borne illness.

Chairman Barry reviewed **upcoming meetings**.

V. OLD BUSINESS

2006-2007 Appointments

Selectmen discussed the candidates for the Finance Committee. Mr. Thompson noted that the town was very fortunate to have so many willing and qualified volunteers for this important committee.

MOTION: To appoint Kimberly Lee and Roger Fontaine to the Finance Committee for terms ending in 2009. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

MOTION: To appoint Dan Miles to the Finance Committee for a term ending in 2007. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

MOTION: To appoint Van Gothner to the Finance Committee for a term ending in 2008. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

Grange Hall Disposition

Selectmen discussed the procurement procedures for disposition of the Grange Hall. Consensus was reached that the sale be conducted as a sealed bid, and that no restrictions or standards, other than answering zoning and special permit requirements, would be put forward.

Brainard Road and Glenn Drive Issues

Selectmen discussed Town Counsel's letter of opinion on traffic control signs. The board agreed to install signs consistent with the recommendations.

Facilities Study

Selectmen discussed the facilities study and possibility of funding it by appropriation at the Special Town Meeting. In a related matter Mr. Fogarty proposed that the facilities management position be re-advertised and that the Personnel Board review the salary as well as the criteria for a one-year evaluation of job performance.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

VII. LICENSING, OTHER APPROVALS

Excavation Permits

MOTION: To grant excavation permits to Bay State Gas Company to rerun gas service at 466 and 470 Main Street, cut off service at 11 Brookside Drive and for emergency repairs at 59 Main Street with such requirements and restrictions as listed by the town's Engineering Division on the permit application forms. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

MOTION: To grant an excavation permit to Zuffenhausen Builders, Inc. to construct a driveway at Lot B-1 at Red Gap Farm on Glendale Road with such requirements and restrictions as listed by the town's Engineering Division on the permit application form. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

MOTION: To grant an excavation permit to Todd Magill to construct a driveway at 42 Brainard Road with such requirements and restrictions as listed by the town's Engineering Division on the permit application form. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

MOTION: To grant an excavation permit to David Fortier to construct a driveway at 292 Burleigh Road with such requirements and restrictions as listed by the town's Engineering Division on the permit application form. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

VIII. MINUTES

MOTION: To approve the general session meeting minutes of September 11, 2006 as submitted. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

IX. OTHER CORRESPONDENCE, SIGNATURES

Correspondence signed at the meeting is itemized in Attachment A.

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: To go into executive session to discuss matters related to collective bargaining, because discussion in open session would undermine the town's bargaining position, and that the board will return to open session to adjourn. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

The executive session commenced at 9:27 PM

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 PM.

Town Administrator

David W. Barry, Chairman

James E. Thompson

Patrick J. Brady

ATTACHMENT A

The Board of Selectmen signed the following documents at their meeting on Monday, September 18, 2006:

1. Minutes of August 28, 2006
2. Excavation permits to Bay State Gas Company: 470 Main Street, 466 Main Street, and 11 Brookside Drive.
3. Excavation permit to David Fortier for 292 Burleigh Road.
4. Excavation permit to Todd Magill for 42 Brainard Road.
5. Excavation permit to Zuffenhausen Builders, for Lot B-1 Glendale Road.
6. Letter of congratulation to Town Clerk Beverly Litchfield, on attaining Master Municipal Clerk designation.