

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING
Monday, November 19, 2007
7:00 PM AT THE TOWN OFFICE BUILDING

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

I. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: To go into executive session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining and litigation because discussion in open session may have a detrimental affect on the town's bargaining and litigating position, and that the board return to open session to continue the business meeting.

The executive session commenced at 6:00 PM and ended at 6:18 PM. Selectmen addressed some routine business, included in the minutes below, and recessed from 6:40 to 7:00.

II. APPOINTMENTS

Hollow Road

Chairman Thompson outlined the recent concerns about Hollow Road, raised by the Town of Hampden selectmen. He reported that selectmen from both towns met on Hollow Road on October 20 to view the conditions. Several residents of both towns were present and spoke of their concerns. Selectmen have also received an evaluation and history of the road use from the Wilbraham DPW, the Wilbraham Fire Department and the Wilbraham Police Department. He noted that the road was closed to traffic by the Wilbraham Board of Selectmen in 2004, on the request of the DPW director, in order to prevent a significant and ongoing problem with roadside dumping. Mr. Thompson stated that the board would follow statutory procedures for discontinuance of the road, if it was deemed to be appropriate.

A number of residents spoke of concerns on the road, as well as offering suggestions for the future upkeep of the road. These suggestions and concerns included common road washouts, a locked gate accessible to emergency services only, past history as a "party place" and dumping grounds, the nearby wetlands, fatal accidents in the past, need for signs to warn drivers of the road closure ahead, use of monitoring cameras, need for regular police patrols if the road is reopened, need for improvement to the road bed – and winter snow removal – if it is reopened, loss of access by private abutting land owners,

Chairman Thompson expressed appreciation to all the citizens who comments and indicated this would be an ongoing review and that no decision would be made for a few weeks. If the board decided to formally discontinue the road, it would be only after a formal, advertised public hearing.

III. CITIZEN'S OPEN FORUM

Stoughton Smead spoke to the board briefly about revisiting construction of **traffic calming features for Main Street**. He had some recent materials he offered to send to the DPW for review.

IV. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Weitz reported that the tax rate documentation has been submitted to the Department of Revenue and a **tax rate** may be set before the end of the month.

V. SELECTMEN'S UPDATES

David W. Barry

Mr. Barry requested that a letter be send to the recreation commission asking them to respond to the letter received by selectmen about a **skateboard park**.

Patrick J. Brady

Mr. Brady asked that time be set aside at a future meeting to discuss the proposal for a **stabilization fund in the school budget**.

James E. Thompson

Mr. Thompson requested that Lance Trevallion investigate the soccer club fields and report on the **tree cutting** that is being done.

Mr. Thompson noted that conversation with Stoughton Smead about **Main Street traffic calming measures** and asked that the information be forwarded to the DPW to review and comment.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Town Counsel

Town Counsel Michael T. Hassett met with the board to share a final review copy of the **use agreement** with the Wilbraham Soccer Club. Changes proposed by selectmen have been incorporated and this draft will be forwarded to the club for review.

K9 Proposal

Selectmen met with Chief Allan Stratton, Captain Ray Kallaugher and Les Lohnes, Assistant Director of the Massachusetts Masonic Child Identification Program (MyCHIP).

Chief Stratton shared the additional information requested by selectmen after the previous meeting regarding a K9 unit for Wilbraham. This included policy direction and practices for mutual aid response, experiences and costs with K9 units in towns similar to Wilbraham (Granby, Williamstown, Dracut, and Ludlow, and Suffield CT), overtime and training, use of a gift fund for all costs, use of a dedicated cruiser, the experience in Southwick (which reported statistical drop in burglaries when the K9 unit became widely known), and whether it is appropriate to fund a key service with gifts and donations.

Mr. Weitz reported that there are no additional premiums for insurance with the town's carrier for general liability. Chief Stratton stated that he would be willing to approach the Executive Office of Public Safety about using community policing money for some of the dog unit costs, especially those related to building community and school relationships.

Finance Committee members Roger Fontaine and Marc Ducey objected to the timing of the proposal, stating that there are too many unanswered financial questions about police staffing

and ongoing support for this resource, as well as incomplete analysis of the pros and cons to such a program.

Mr. Lohnes stated that the trainer is keeping the dog, at some cost, and is anxious that the dog begin training with a designated handler soon. The deadline has already been extended for a decision about this dog. The Masons have made a commitment to give this dog to a willing community in Massachusetts and there are towns ready to take the dog if Wilbraham doesn't want it.

Each selectmen offered personal views before voting

MOTION: To accept a proposal from the Wilbraham Police Department which provides for acquisition of a trained scent discrimination dog and support for a canine handler in the Wilbraham Police Department, provided that initial expense of acquisition and training is covered by gifts and donations specific to this public service. (BARRY, THOMPSON) Approved 2-1.

K9 Gift Fund

MOTION: To authorize the Treasurer to establish a gift fund to accept donations and gifts for the implementation and ongoing expenses in support of a K-9 unit in the Wilbraham Police Department. (BARRY, THOMPSON) Approved 3-0.

K9 Department Policy

MOTION: To accept a policy statement entitled "K-9 Unit Policy and Procedure" submitted in Section G of the proposal dated October 24, 2007. (BARRY, THOMPSON) Approved 3-0.

K9 Appreciation

MOTION: To express the board's appreciation to the Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts and the Wilbraham Masonic organization for offering a comprehensive child identification program to the Town of Wilbraham and for making available a K9 component which will enhance police resources to respond to missing- and lost-person situations in our community. (BARRY, THOMPSON) Approved 3-0.

Public Safety Staffing Study

The Town Administrator recommended that all pricing proposals for the Public Safety Staffing Study be rejected, due the huge disparity between the bidders.

MOTION: To reject all proposals received for the Public Safety Staffing Study and to ask the Town Administrator to review and refine, if practical, the proposed Scope of Services of said Request for Proposals. (BARRY, THOMPSON) Approved 3-0.

Insurance for Elected Officials

Selectmen discussed the issues regarding health insurance for elected officials. Mr. Barry proposed that the board consider adopting a restriction with provision for existing officials with coverage to continue. Chairman Thompson asked that the policy be revisited at a meeting in December. Selectmen asked for additional information about optional policies. Chairman Thompson stated that this proposal has no application to any of the current selectmen, who are not enrolled in town-sponsored health insurance.

Disposal and Recycling Center/Enterprise Fund.

Selectmen discussed the status of the DRC. Mr. Weitz reported that the Solid Waste Advisory Board has not responded with recommendations on the issues requested by selectmen. Mr. Brady suggested that a proposal should be considered to privatize the DRC operations. During budget planning, the enterprise fund operations will be examined, particularly for the use of retained earnings.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Winter Meeting Calendar

The meeting calendar for December, January and February was review and approved with the addition of one meeting January 15.

Town Hall Telephone Systems Proposal

Mr. Weitz reported that the Finance Committee has no objection to the use of the so-called “efficiency appropriation” for a new telephone system.

MOTION: To accept a proposal for a new telephone system for the Town Office Building for the sum of \$13,206.98, from vendor Valley Communications. (BARRY, THOMPSON) Approved 3-0.

Recreation Director

Mr. Weitz explained that the Personnel Board has review the proposal to upgrade the position of the Recreation Director at two different meetings, but the full board was not present at either meeting, resulting in a mixed recommendation.

MOTION: To request that the Personnel Board review it’s previous recommendation, with a full Personnel Board present, and report back to the board their findings as soon as possible, but no later than February 1, 2007. (BARRY, THOMPSON) Approved 3-0.

VIII. LICENSING, OTHER APPROVALS

Lions Club food service

I move to grant a temporary food establishment permit to the Wilbraham Lions Club for an event January 11, 2008 for an education program/charitable event at the YMCA on Boston Road. (BRADY, BARRY) Approved 3-0.

Sewer Project License Agreement

Selectmen met with Town Counsel and with Special Counsel Dennis Tully to review generally the easements and project agreements for the Main Street Sewer Extension Project. The legal business includes orders for taking of permanent and temporary easements from a variety of abutters and special purpose agreements with organizational entities such as the

Wilbraham Housing Authority, Falcon Heights Housing Authority, the Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District, and the Wilbraham & Monson Academy.

MOTION: To approve an agreement with the Wilbraham Housing Authority by which the Town of Wilbraham shall construct and maintain a sewer line along Miles Morgan Court, pursuant to the conditions itemized in an agreement dated November 13, 2007, and that the chairman be authorized to sign on the board's behalf. (BARRY, BARRY) Approved 3-0.

Sewer Project Easements

MOTION: To approve a permanent easement from Wilbraham & Monson Academy, Faculty Street, for the purpose of installing a sewer line, in consideration of payment of \$1, and further to accept a temporary easement for construction and installation of same, as shown on "Figure 3, Main Street Sewer Expansion Project, WMA/Faculty Street Easement Plan" dated November 2007. (BARRY, THOMPSON) Approved 3-0.

MOTION: To approve Confirmatory Permanent and Temporary Easements for the property owners:

**Deborah S. Kelder and William S. Howell of Wilbraham;
Joseph Kumiega and Urszula Kumeiga of Wilbraham;
James S. Burke and Beverly A. Burke of Wilbraham;
Thomas P. Najemy and Sarah B. Najemy of Wilbraham;
David B. Bennett and Linda B. Bennett of Wilbraham; and
Lucille Engel of Wilbraham**

in connection with the town's Main Street Sewer Expansion Project.(BARRY, THOMPSON) Approved 3-0.

**MOTION: To approve payments for permanent easements to
Deborah S. Kelder and William S. Howell of Wilbraham;
Joseph Kumiega and Urszula Kumeiga of Wilbraham;
James S. Burke and Beverly A. Burke of Wilbraham;
Thomas P. Najemy and Sarah B. Najemy of Wilbraham;
David B. Bennett and Linda B. Bennett of Wilbraham; and
Lucille Engel of Wilbraham**

in connection with the town's Main Street Sewer Expansion Project. (BARRY, THOMPSON) Approved 3-0.

IX. MINUTES

MOTION: To accept the minutes of October 29, 2007 as submitted, and minutes of October 29 Executive Session as submitted. (BRADY, BARRY) Approved 3-0.

X. OTHER CORRESPONDENCE, SIGNATURES

Correspondence signed at the meeting is itemized in Attachment A.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive session noted above.

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 PM.

Town Administrator

James E. Thompson, Chairman

Patrick J. Brady

David W. Barry

ATTACHMENT A

The Board of Selectmen signed the following documents at their meeting on Monday, November 19, 2007:

1. Recognition letter to Treasurer Thomas Sullivan, for certification as a Massachusetts Collector
2. Temporary Food Permit for Lions Club, January 11, 2008.
3. License agreement with Wilbraham Housing Authority, relative to Main Street sewer project.
4. Permanent and temporary easements from Wilbraham & Monson Academy for Main Street sewer project
5. Additional orders of taking (permanent and temporary easements) for abutters to the Main Street sewer project. (Town Counsel took signed originals for further filing and recording).