Board of Selectmen
Minutes
Tuesday, March 21, 2017 at 7:00pm
Town Hall Meeting Room

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chair Ken Swanton in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Selectmen Ron Ricci, Stu Sklar, Alice von Loesecke and Lucy Wallace were in attendance as well as Acting Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro and Executive Assistant Julie Doucet.

MINUTES
On a Ricci/Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously to approve the regular and executive session minutes from 2/28, as presented.

Old Library Accessibility Committee update
Committee member Mark Mikitarian reported they received five responses from their Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for architectural design services and three candidates were interviewed. Those interviewed were scored and ranked. Acting Town Administrator/Procurement Officer Marie Sobalvarro will handle negotiations. If cost estimates come in 10% or higher she will recommend negotiation with the second ranked finalist. Mikitarian suggested following up with the Capital Planning & Investment Committee and the Finance Committee to ensure everyone is still supportive of the project for when the article comes up at the annual town meeting. They also discussed the article requesting $55,000 to construct an Americans with Disabilities Act accessible back entrance which requires a variance from the Architectural Access Board. They will ask the Moderator to address both questions together. The board members agreed having cost estimates for the annual town meeting is important.

Town Administrator report
Sobalvarro reported Tim Bragan is doing well.

Sobalvarro reaffirmed with the Municipal Modernization Act, as the Acting Town Administrator she was able to declare deficit spending of the snow and ice budget. In the past the Board of Selectmen would have had to take this action.

Sobalvarro has been attending Finance Committee meetings with Finance Director David Nalchajian. She will prepare and distribute a grid indicating who will speak to which articles at the annual town meeting.

Sobalvarro reported the Massachusetts Office on Disabilities supplies grant funding through the community compact program. She said this may be appropriate for the old library accessibility projects.

Sobalvarro said the Police and DPW department contracts will return to the Board of Selectmen for signatures following ratification at the annual town meeting.

Sobalvarro announced Charter Communications is sending information to all subscribers about programs they have for low income families and seniors.

Sobalvarro informed the board that the Fruitlands Museum liquor license will now be issued however they need to update the management agreement information they currently have on file with the state.

Sobalvarro announced an entertainment license request has been received for the Apple Blossom Festival to be held on May 13th. The board will need to act on the request at their next meeting.

Historical Commission appointment
On a Ricci/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to approve Emanuel Lindo for appointment through 2018.

Complete streets policy
Ricci said the revised policy focuses on the town center and Ayer Road.
On a Ricci/Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously to approve the complete streets policy.

Gift of land – Quarry Lane & Stonecutters Path
Wallace indicated the property abuts existing conservation lands. Ricci noted easements on the property provide for maintenance not walking. Planning Board Chair Kara Minar was in the audience and stated it had been uncovered those easements were never recorded. Ricci suggested the land be purchased for $1 by using community preservation (CPC) funds which would allow the town to utilize CPC funds to maintain the land. Sobalvarro will follow up with town counsel and the Conservation Commission so this modification can be made. On a Ricci/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to accept land subject to having town counsel word the acceptance document to qualify the town for use of CPC funds. Ricci offered to contact the owner.

Family Medical Leave Act
Sobalvarro explained the existing policy needs to be updated to federal standards.
On a Ricci/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to accept the revised policy.

Article 47 – Devens discussion
The board members admitted until the public forum is held on Thursday night it is difficult to know how much public interest there will be. They discussed the forum and some important areas for panelists to touch upon including what a yes or no vote means for the town. Sklar said the forum will be live broadcast and he will provide an email address for members of the public to submit questions or comments if they cannot be present. Von Loesecke suggested a summary of key points from the forum be shared in a handout at the annual town meeting. Ricci said if voters direct the town to move forward in establishing a plan it will be a monumental effort requiring many volunteer hours and town resources. Von Loesecke made a good point stating voters really need to comprehend “what is in it for them and what is in it for the town?” Wallace and Sklar will finalize a handout next week for the annual town meeting.

Annual town meeting article assignments
The board members chose which articles they will read motions for.

Selectmen reports
Wallace reported committee/board members have approached her about the lack of communication from the Finance Committee through this budget season. She assumed if questions came up during budget reviews the committee/board under review would be invited to a meeting for further discussion. Von Loesecke said this was always the practice and she offered to bring this feedback back to the committee.

Von Loesecke, Sobalvarro and Doucet have been working to establish reasonable parameters with respect to insurance coverage for rental of the upper town hall. It was decided to split events into two categories; public versus private.

Sobalvarro recommended the following:

- Public – with alcohol – follow one-day liquor license policy - $1,000,000 Occurrence/$2,000,000 General Aggregate
- Public – no alcohol - $1,000,000 Occurrence/$2,000,000 General Aggregate
- Private – alcohol – require hold harmless agreement
- Private – no alcohol – add **may** require insurance

They will formalize the policy changes at their next meeting.

Ricci reported proposals are due by 8:00am Monday on 166 Littleton Road property.

Wallace said the Housing @ Hildreth House Committee is moving expeditiously and will be reviewing conceptual plan suggestions next week.

Swanton said the school building committee has learned there is a cap for reimbursement from the state on building projects. They are meeting prior to the annual town meeting and plan to have a base project to replace the k wing and bring the building up to code.

Swanton has spoken with residents concerned about the traffic pattern around Town Hall. Sobalvarro confirmed the landscape/traffic/parking plan will be reviewed at the next meeting. She said this has been the last task of the Town Hall & Hildreth House Construction Committee A draft plan will be distributed with the packets for the next meeting agenda.

Swanton requested the Finance Director come to the next meeting to go over the free cash number. Von Loesecke and Swanton are curious why the number is so high and are interested to see where the funds are coming from.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.

Documents referenced:
Hist. Com. Appointment – Lindo vol form updated 3.16.2017
Complete Streets policy – dated 3.9.2017
Gift of land – deed dated 3.7.2017 and map 1.14.2017
Family Medical Leave policy – dated 1.12.2017