Board of Selectmen
Minutes
Tuesday, September 5, 2017 at 7:00pm
Town Hall Meeting Room

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chair Lucy Wallace in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Selectmen Ken Swanton, Alice von Loesecke, Stu Sklar and Kara McGuire Minar were in attendance as well as Town Administrator Tim Bragan, Assistant Town Administrator/HR Director Marie Sobalvarro and Executive Assistant Julie Doucet.

<u>One-Day liquor license hearings</u>

Carlson Orchards

Applicant and Owner Frank Carlson explained he has obtained a farm winery license through the state to produce and sell hard cider. He is seeking a one-day special license request to introduce tastings of his cider during the u-pick apple season. He will offer tastings on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays in September – November. Carlson will have two tents on the property to accommodate the tastings however cider will only be purchased for consumption off-premise. Carlson is TIPS certified (training for the responsible service, sale and consumption of alcohol) and he expects other employees will become TIPS certified as well.

On a Sklar/Swanton motion, the board voted unanimously to approve the thirty one-day licenses for Carlson Orchards.

Harvard Cultural Collaborative

Mark Mikitarian and Willie Wickman said the collaborative will hold a grand opening/open house on Friday, September 15th from 6pm to 9pm and they wish to offer a celebratory toast. They are aware they must limit the amount of attendees to ninety-nine since the building does not have sprinklers.
On a Sklar/Minar motion, the board voted unanimously to approve request.

Old Library Accessibility Committee (OLAC) request to the Capital Planning & Investment Committee (CPIC)

Mikitarian explained as a result of the vote taken at the annual town meeting to restore the historic front entrance of the old library Abacus Architects was hired to develop schematic drawings. OLAC worked closely with Abacus on schematics and cost estimates. The scope of work and cost of $439,000 does trigger more costly accessibility improvements on the buildings interior. The proposed plan includes a short bridge that will bring visitors to a landing at the front door, removal of the current side door/steps and a list of interior improvements that may be required. Many of the items are not reflected in the $439,000 cost estimate. He reported Abacus and OLAC expect the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (AAB) will grant variances for the minor upgrades not requiring implementation. OLAC and Abacus will finalize the list at a meeting tomorrow. OLAC plans to submit a grant request for $100,000 from the Massachusetts Office on Disability. They will explore all avenues to reduce the cost of the project. Minar suggested investigating community preservation and cultural council funds. Von Loesecke made it clear if variances are not granted the costs could increase up to $139,000. On a von Loesecke/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to endorse the filing of the Old Library Accessibility Committee application to the Capital Planning & Investment Committee.

Amendment to lease on the old library
Bragan explained due to a need for storage by the Fourth of July Committee the previous lease has been amended to allow the lessee use of room 004 requiring three months' notice if use of the room is needed at which time the lessee will vacate its use of room 004 no later than three months from the date of notice. In addition, the town can use a portion of the top floor for storage. On a von Loesecke/Swanton motion, the board voted unanimously to accept lease addendum #1.

Appointments
Historical Commission
Historical Commission Chair Ben Guthro introduced Aron Clarke for appointment. Clarke lives in the historic district and has experience serving on town committees. On a Swanton/Minar motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint Clarke to the Historical Commission.

Election officials
On a Swanton/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint democratic, republican, and unenrolled officials

Retired teacher's health insurance
Following the hearing held at the last meeting Wallace said it is now time for the board members to deliberate and take a vote to either remove the teachers from the GICRMT or maintain the current arrangement. Sobalvarro provided information on some questions that arose at the hearing. She confirmed life insurance will be available through Hartford Life, Tufts Medicare supplement PPO is accepted nationwide, and surviving spouses can be covered under the town's indemnity plan. Minar and Swanton asked for confirmation out of state retirees can obtain coverage. Sobalvarro said the Tufts plan is accepted nationwide with the same reach as Medicare. Minar asked about those who are not Medicare eligible. Sobalvarro answered coverage is available through the traditional indemnity plans. Swanton did some research of his own and learned many of the top notch school districts such as Lincoln/Sudbury and Concord/Carlisle do not participate in the GICRMT and many of them have a 50% cost sharing split. Sklar and Minar asked if the town has the ability to offer options through Minuteman Nashoba to soften the blow of the cost increase. The board members discussed options to help mitigate the cost increases however acknowledge this is not an easy task considering part of the reason for the change is to bring parity to all town retirees. Minar and Sklar understand the rationale behind making the change however they are not convinced it is the right thing to do. Sklar and Minar strongly support finding ways to mitigate the increases for long term retirees. Wallace urged the board members to separate the two issues by first voting on the GICRMT and then having a subsequent discussion about options within the Minuteman Nashoba Health Group. Von Loesecke said currently state law has frozen retiree percentages therefore any mitigation could not include that. After further debate and discussion the following motion was made:

On a von Loesecke/Swanton motion, the board voted to provide retired teachers health and life insurance through the Minuteman Nashoba Health Group effectively moving them out of the retired municipal teachers. (4-1, Minar – nay)

Minutes
On a von Loesecke/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to accept 8/1 minutes, as presented.

On a von Loesecke/Swanton motion, the board voted to accept 8/22 minutes, as presented. Minar and Sklar did not vote as they were not present at the meeting.

Master plan assignments
Wallace explained she worked with Minar to finalize assignments. She asked the board members to have proposals on how they will accomplish each goal for discussion at the October 3rd meeting.

Town Administrator report
Bragan reviewed information he will provide at the all boards meeting this week. He has also asked Charter Commission Chair Paul Cohen to speak about the proposed budget process. Bragan will provide a handout at the meeting.

Public communication
Kathleen Doherty does not live in Harvard but has worked in the school system for twenty five years and plans to retire from Harvard. She said the vote this evening will have an obvious impact on her retirement plans. Doherty disagrees with the decision of the board however she understands and is aware of the issue rising health care costs presents. She acknowledges the financial responsibility and difficult decisions the Board of Selectmen have to make. She suggests the board consider grandfathering the current retirees at the percentages they have now as other towns such as Gloucester have done. Doherty understands the board wishes to find parity for all retirees. She believes parity will not be immediate but eventually moving forward with new retirees this goal will be met. Doherty asked the board to keep in mind fairness does not always mean equal. She understands the board faces difficult financial choices but she encouraged them to respect retirees and work to balance competing demands by finding solutions that show fairness and parity.

Julia Chadwick, 34 Woodside Road, lived and taught in Harvard for many years. She urged the board to remember if percentage splits go up with Minuteman Nashoba on top of the increase by moving retirees from the GICRMT it is likely retirees could realize increases up to 22%. She is very concerned for those who retired many years ago.

HEAT Smart Mass Program
Energy Advisory Committee member Eric Broadbent and Ellen Sachs Leicher came to seek support from the Board of Selectmen to participate in the HEAT Smart Mass program. Broadbent explained the Town of Bolton approached Harvard to combine efforts toward applying for a community based outreach and education program. The program encourages clean heating and cooling technologies that include air-source heat pumps, group-source heats pumps, central biomass heating and solar hot water. Broadbent said this is similar to the Solarize Massachusetts program Harvard participated in. The program will offer savings to residents who participate and encourages a switch from fossil fuels to more environmentally friendly heating and cooling. He said up to four municipalities or groups of municipalities will be chosen to participate. On a Swanton/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to authorize submittal letter of participation in the heat smart program and authorize Minar as the municipal representative and Broadbent as Heat Smart coach.

Special Town Meeting
On a von Loesecke/Swanton motion, the board voted unanimously to set Monday, November 6th for the fall special town meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20pm.

Documents referenced:

Carlson liquor license request – dated 8.22.2017
Cultural Collaborative liquor license request – dated 8.22.2017
OLAC – capital request application - dated 8.31.2017
Lease addendum – dated 9.5.2017
Vol forms – Clarke dated 8.11.2017
Election officials – listed dated Sept 2017 – Aug 2018
HEAT Mass Program – dated July 2017