



**Board of Selectmen**  
**Minutes**  
**Tuesday, November 3, 2015 at 7:00pm**  
**Hapgood Meeting Room**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by Chair, Ron Ricci in the Hapgood Meeting Room. Selectmen Lucy Wallace, Leo Blair, Ken Swanton, Leo Blair and Stu Sklar were in attendance as well as Town Administrator Tim Bragan.

**Devens Economic Analysis Team (DEAT) report**

Committee members:

Chair Victor Normand, Paul Green, Chris Roy, Noyan Kinayman, Steve Finnegan

Normand thanked the BoS for the opportunity to be involved in researching Devens finances over the past few years. They were tasked with understanding the economic viability of Harvard if we were to take back our historic portion of Devens. He described the committee's approach as always being conservative. Normand disclosed this year's report is different due to a clear recommendation from the committee. They fully support the idea of Devens as an economic enterprise that would generate sufficient revenue necessary for operation. With sites for sale, some pending sale and sold sites with planned expansion there is evidence of the development potentials. They also recommend Mass Development continues as the development authority.

In summary, Normand said the committee has completed their task. They recommend the BoS receive an annual report from the Devens Assessor on changes to property valuations focused on new growth. In addition, the committee hopes the town will begin long range planning with assistance from a professional planner to establish a methodology which will provide a greater understanding of any potential issues. The volunteer work is now complete and knowing someday MassDevelopment will be finished at Devens it makes sense for Harvard to be prepared. Selectmen Swanton asked questions about the duration of ongoing and future development and if taking over Devens could potentially reduce the Town's tax rate. Wallace asked about continued use of their modeling structure and how the utilities might be handled. Paul Green described how the utility structure as established can transition into a municipal facility. The board was thankful for the committee's hard work over the years.

**Public communication**

Jim Breslauer, 130 Poor Farm Road, has been up to the Hildreth House the last two weeks and could not find the driveway. He suggested the need for reflectors to help designate the driveway.

**Town Administrator report**

Bragan received an estimate of \$3,000 from Ross Associates to design a new septic system to replace the failing one at the DPW facility. A reserve fund transfer from the Finance Committee will be requested. On a Blair/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to take whatever action is necessary to have septic system at the DPW Department repaired irrespective of where the money comes from. End of last week 2015 legislature did finally vote the money for the snow and ice money but we do not yet know the exact amount we will receive. The Friday after Thanksgiving the Town Hall will be closed and all the staff will be using their PTO time for that day.

### *Account review*

Bragan explained he and Selectmen Blair used basic accounting to review over 90 accounts. They first settled how the accounts were established and how they can be used. Bragan then reviewed some of the accounts and further explained the spreadsheet details. They did find some accounts that are not being used that could be. Bragan noted the reason funds go without notice is not unique to Harvard. He said the loss of institutional knowledge occurs when there is turnover of staff and committee/board members. He suggested policies be in place to prevent this in the future maybe by setting sunset dates. Blair offers a concept of identifying funds which can be used now, allocate funds to the appropriate party and work with finance committee to reduce budgets for one year only. The difference would then be applied toward OPEB. This would require an article at the ATM. Wallace suggested notifying those who have funds they are not aware of.

Blair offers a concept of identifying which funds can be used now, allocate funds to the appropriate party and work with finance committee to reduce budgets for one year only. The difference would then be applied toward OPEB. This would require an article at the ATM. Wallace suggested notifying those who have funds they are not aware of. Bragan will follow up with an actuarial and the Finance Committee to finalize the numbers and will provide an update for the first meeting in December.

### **Municipal Building Maintenance Fund**

Blair said with the prospect of a new Town Hall and renovated Hildreth House now is the time to create a municipal building maintenance fund administered by the BoS. He recommends the funding source start with \$75,000 of free cash and the capital stabilization thereafter. The board discussed how the fund and maintenance of buildings could be managed. They will discuss the facility maintenance position in more detail at the November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **Resignation of Dennis Collins**

On a Wallace/Swanton motion, the board voted unanimously to accept the resignation of Dennis Collins from the Elm Commission and send him a letter of thanks for his service.

### **Appointments to MAHT**

Blair encouraged his fellow board members to take a more active role on the trust. He is optimistic the 10% goal of affordable housing will be achieved in conjunction with the Hildreth House project. He asked the board to vote to appoint two members to fill the current vacancies.

On a Blair/Swanton motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint Ron Ricci to the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust.

Blair nominated Swanton seconded by Ricci.

Sklar nominated Wallace seconded by Blair.

Swanton and Wallace explained why they are interested in serving. Swanton offered to will wait until the next vacancy.

The Board voted unanimously to appoint Wallace to the Trust.

### **Review of goals**

Ricci reviewed the goals scheduled for action in October and November. He noted the goals that have been accomplished and those underway.

Goals 4 & 5 – facility maintenance and assessment of IT hardware/software will be discussed in detail at the next meeting.

Goal 6 - Ayer Road traffic calming measure cannot be achieved this year although the process to identify options is underway. They discussed the request from the Frasers on Ayer Road to do a traffic study on the traffic speed. Chief Denmark and the Frasers will attend the next meeting.

### **Selectmen reports**

Wallace announced the Master Plan Steering Committee is holding a presentation on the financial and economic impacts at Devens at Volunteers Hall on Thurs, November 12th at 7pm.

Sklar attended an event at Devens honoring World War II veterans. He commented on the Governor recognizing a specific day in this honor and asked if Harvard may want to do the same.

Sklar said the Civil War reenactors want to return to Harvard. Other groups in town are in favor of this event.

Swanton asked for clarify on the next steps related to the Harvard Cultural Collaborative and the broader question of what happens with the other town buildings such as the old library and Bromfield House. Ricci confirmed answers from the collaborative will be in the BoS packets for discussion at the next meeting. Ricci reported he has met with School Committee, Finance Committee and CPIC Chairs where they discussed the need to understand the impact on long term excluded debt first considering the K-wing project, Bromfield House and old library.

They decided on some action items which included:

- Understanding costs for reuse of old library and Bromfield House.
- Understanding what can be done with funds if Bromfield house was sold.
- Determine market rate for lease of the old library

The board discussed how best to approach the Architectural Advisory Board and how converting to a fiber network will affect the dynamics.

\*\*\*\* On a Swanton motion, the Board voted unanimously by a roll call vote: (Wallace – Aye, Ricci –Aye, Sklar – Aye, Blair – Aye, Swanton - Aye) to enter into executive session at 9:02pm, as authorized by Chapter 30A, Section 21.3 of the Massachusetts General Laws, at a meeting for which 48-hours' notice has been given, to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. Following the executive session, the Board will reconvene into open session only to adjourn. \*\*\*\*

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm.

Documents referenced:

DEAT report – dated 11.3.2015

Fund report – dated 10.29.2015

Collins resignation letter dated – 10.21.2015

MAHT volunteer forms:

Ricci dated 10.29.2015, Wallace dated 10.30.2015, and Swanton dated 10.30.2015