

TOWN OF HOPKINTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Meeting Date: January 23, 2007 (Quarterly meeting)
MINUTES

Members Present: Muriel E. Kramer, Chairman; Mary C. Pratt, Vice-Chairman; Leonard A. Holden, Ronald M. Clark; Michael W. Shepard.

Others Present: Casey Pulnik, HCAM; Robert Falcione, HopNews; John Hilliard, MetroWest News; Theodore D. Kozak; John T. Gaucher, DPW Director; Finley Perry, Land Use Study Committee; Michael Duffy, Capital Improvement Committee; Stuart Cowart, Appropriation Committee; Robert Bushway, Principle Assessor; Al Rogers, Parks & Recreation Commission; Rownak Hussain, Public Library Director; Scott Richardson, Downtown Revitalization Committee; Brian Main, Facilities Director; Tom Ryder, Public Health Administrator; Claire Wright, Cemetery Commissioner; Ann Click, Town Clerk; Maureen Dwinnell, Town Treasurer; Robert Murphy, Conservation Commission; Dr. John Duffy, Board of Assessors; Cindy Chesmore, Senior Center Director; Rebecca Robak, School Committee; Dr. John Phelan, School Superintendent; Fire Chief Gary Daugherty; Police Chief Thomas Irvin; Selectmen's Office: Anthony Troiano, Town Manager; and Geri Holland, Executive Assistant

QUARTERLY MEETING OPENED:

7:00 p.m. Mrs. Kramer opened the public meeting and invited everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Land Use Study Committee Report: Finley Perry, Chairman (See attached PowerPoint Presentation)

Mr. Perry gave a PowerPoint presentation reviewing the Land Use Study Committee's meeting that pertains to the 742 acres of Weston Nurseries property. He explained that the property is under bankruptcy law with a current buyer, Boulder Capital for an approximate cost between \$21-26M. His presentation explained that the Town holds the right to purchase the land at matching terms under MA Gen. Law Chapter 61A. Mr. Perry said that as the sale is taking place under Federal Bankruptcy Law there is a 30 day period during which counter offers may be made by January 25th and that the price might go up, but the terms of the sale would remain the same. Mr. Perry further explained the Town's options and how the Town can remain active in this process to protect the best interests of the Town. Mrs. Pratt would like the Board to sponsor an article to purchase the property or portions of the property on the 2007 Annual Town Meeting warrant.

FY'08 Budget and Capital Spending Overviews: Anthony J. Troiano, Town Manager

Mr. Troiano gave a handout (see attachment) of a level-services budget projection for fiscal year 2008 and said that the Town is looking at a \$2M deficit budget. He also projected a smaller budget with a 1% increase that still project a deficit of \$163,000. He noted that the school department has money built into their budget for contractual increases, which the town does not have. Mr. Troiano also handed out a 10 year capital expenditure plan and available funds for FY'08 (see attachments).

FY'07 Goals Update by Department Heads and Supervisory Personnel

Mrs. Kramer invited those department heads in attendance to give an update of their department's FY'07 goals. (See attachments).

Mrs. Kramer reviewed the Board of Selectmen goals for FY'07 as follows: To Encourage an economic plan to maintain municipal services within current revenue constraints; Act to refinance the Stabilization Account by targeting 1% FY'07 expense savings; Review fee schedules for adequacy; Produce a five year plan to address forecasted imbalances between budget requests and revenues; Encourage and support initiatives for economic development and retention in commercial/industrial zones and the Downtown; Execute Charter directives;

Establish and adhere to a fiscal timeline for all budgets and money articles for Town Meeting in accordance with the Charter; The hiring of a Town Manager: Town By-law review completed for vote at ATM May 2007; Ensure establishment of a Department of Finance effective 7/1/07; Execute Town Counsel RFP process and hiring; Improve cooperation and communication within and between town boards and committees; Schedule pertinent guest speakers and workshops; BOS internal workshop; Monthly roundtable of Committee and Department Chairs to build teamwork and facilitate results on common goals and initiatives. She also stated and that Town Counsel is researching the issue of purchasing the Lake Maspenock Dam and how to maintain and insure the dam. The Board would also address the estimated cost of the Town's Wastewater Treatment Plant for Fruit Street going from \$4.6M to \$7.8M. Mr. Troiano commented that Town Counsel is researching the issue of the Town purchasing the Lake Maspenock Dam and how the town plans to fund maintenance, insurance etc.; and how to protect the Town's rights before signing the deed. Mr. Clark asked if the Board would place this issue on a future agenda to sort out all these issues. Mr. Troiano responded that once the legal information i.e., funding, insurance is obtained then the Board of Selectmen could discuss this issue. Mr. Clark asked what the timeline is. Mr. Troiano said that Town Counsel is doing a title search and should have the information within a couple of weeks.

The following department heads gave reports (see attachments): John T. Gaucher, DPW Director; Michael Duffy, Capital Improvement Committee; Tom Ryder, Public Health Administrator; Rownak Hussain, Public Library Director; Police Chief Irvin; Robert Bushway, Principle Assessor; Brian Main, Facilities Director; Stuart Cowart, Appropriation Committee; Ann Click, Town Clerk; Maureen Dwinell, Town Treasurer; Robert Murphy, Conservation Commission; Al Rogers, Parks & Recreation Commission; Cindy Chesmore, Senior Center Director; Charles Kadlik, Municipal Building Inspector; Rebecca Robak, School Committee; Scott Richardson, Downtown Revitalization Committee; Claire Wright, Cemetery Commission.

Recess/Re-Open Public Meeting (10 minutes)

Accept Facilities Board Resignation: Ken Allor

Mrs. Kramer read a resignation letter from Ken Allor from the Facilities Board effective immediately.

Vote: Mrs. Kramer entertained a motion to accept with regret Ken Allor's resignation from the Facilities Board effective immediately. **So moved Mr. Holden. Second Mr. Shepard. Unanimously voted.**

Readout Mail

Woodville Road and Gun Club: MA Fisheries and Wildlife Program:

Mrs. Kramer read a letter from Lee Wright of the Woodville Rod and Gun Club stating that the Club is hosting the MA Fisheries and Wildlife deer biologist Bill Woytek on Tuesday, February 6th at 7:00 p.m. The letter states that the presentation is open to the public.

Proclamation: Dee Wilson, Boy Scout Committee Chairman

Mrs. Kramer presented a proclamation to be presented to Dee Wilson in recognition of his 10 years of service as a Boy Scout Committee Chairman for Troop 1.

Vote: Mrs. Kramer entertained a motion to approve the proclamation to Dee Wilson in recognition of his 10 years of service as a Boy Scout Committee Chairman for Troop 1. **So moved Mr. Holden. Second Mr. Shepard. Unanimously voted.**

Town Manager's Report

1. Human Resource position

Mr. Troiano talked about the newly hired Benefits Coordinator, and the possibility of training another individual as a backup should the Benefits Coordinator is out of the office. He also gave an update about advertising the 20-40 hour Human Resource position. Mr. Troiano also gave an overview of other

potential positions such as an Assistant Town Treasurer, a Public Health Agent versus a Public Health Director, and a technical position.

2. Land Use Study Committee: Legal Fees Process

Mr. Troiano said that the Land Use Study Committee (LUSC) is being more careful about the legal fee expenditures that pertain to the sale of the Weston Nurseries property. Mr. Clark asked how much the LUSC is requesting for its legal assistance request. Mrs. Kramer read the legal assistance request from the LUSC for 60 hours from Attorney John Dennis totaling \$21,000. Mr. Clark pointed out how it might be a lot more than the 60 hours and asked what the LUSC is trying to accomplish with \$21,000. Mrs. Kramer responded that the LUSC is trying to protect the Town's MA Gen. Law Ch. 61A's rights. Mr. Clark commented that he believes the Town has "no appetite" for an override this year. Mr. Shepard commented that this legal action gives the town an opportunity to voice their own opinion on whether or not to purchase or not purchase the land. Mr. Clark explained how much it would cost the average homeowner should a \$25M override pass that being approximately \$324 over 21 years; and if a \$30M override passes it would cost about \$400 for 21 years for the average homebuyer. He stated several concerns one being a \$2M deficit for next year and questioned what the town would do with the property if the town buys it. He stated his opinion that it is highly unlikely that the town's people will buy this and granting the LUSC \$21,000 for legal assistant is not a good investment. There was further discussion between the board members about the town's ability to purchase the Weston Nurseries land and the costs involved in doing so. Mr. Troiano stated that he spoke to Attorney Dennis and is impressed with the work that he has done to preserve the town's right under MA Gen. Law Ch. 61A and to obtain deferred taxes of about \$300,000 to \$500,000 which would be put into the stabilization fund. Mr. Clark offered the suggestion of asking Town Counsel to represent the LUSC. It was noted that the LUSC is not requesting Town Counsel. Mrs. Kramer commented that Town Counsel recommends that the Town use Attorney Dennis because of his expertise in these matters.

Vote: Mrs. Kramer motioned her recommendation to approve one-third of the LUSC's request which is \$7,000.
Second Mrs. Pratt. Discussion: Mr. Shepard said that if the LUSC needs more legal assistance, they could add to this request. Mr. Troiano recommended itemizing all of the legal bills concerning this issue. Mr. Clark recommended using Town Counsel, Richard DeAngelis, and Attorney Dennis. Mr. Shepard pointed out that the LUSC is only requesting Attorney Dennis' services. Mr. Clark said that should the LUSC need Town Counsel's services, they should come back to the Board of Selectmen with a separate request. **The votes follow: Mrs. Pratt: yes; Mr. Holden: yes; Mr. Shepard: yes; Mr. Clark: no; Mrs. Kramer abstained. So voted.**

Board of Selectmen's meeting to draft articles

The Board agreed to schedule a meeting on Monday, January 30 at 7 p.m. in Room 211 to discuss potential Town Meeting articles that they might sponsor. As Mr. Clark is unable to attend the meeting, he would submit his list of recommendations. Mrs. Kramer commented that the list would not be finalized on Monday evening.

Future Agenda Item Request: Request for Proposals (RFP)

Mr. Shepard requested that the Board discuss the Request for Proposals for Town Counsel at the February 13th meeting. Mr. Clark pointed out that the Board voted to give Town Counsel, Richard DeAngelis, a Performance Evaluation by April 1, 2007.

Meeting Adjourned:

10:30 p.m Vote: Mrs. Kramer entertained a motion to adjourn the public meeting. **So moved Mr. Holden. Second Mr. Shepard. Unanimously voted.**

Respectfully submitted,

Geri Holland
Executive Assistant

Date approved: 2/13/07