



**Town of Boylston 221 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505**

## **Board of Selectmen Minutes 03/24/2014**

Date of Meeting: Monday, March 24, 2014

Location: Town Hall, 221 Main Street

Time: 6:30 PM – 8:05 PM

Members Present: Chairman James Wood; Michael May; Martin McNamara, Town Administrator, Lori Esposito, Administrative Assistant; Mike Kane of *The Banner*

The meeting commenced at 6:30 PM.

### **Conservation Commission:**

Shannon Holgate of 32 Ethan Allen Drive has volunteered to serve on the Conservation Commission. He has lived in Boylston for seven years and wants to help out. Mr. May informed him of the opening on the Commission. Mike May said the Conservation Commission has two vacancies and they asked him to assist in filling those openings. He said he felt Shannon would make a good member of the Commission.

*Mike May made a motion to appoint Shannon Holgate to the Conservation Commission. Jim Wood seconded the motion; voted all in favor.*

### **Meeting Minutes:**

*Mike May made a motion to approve minutes as follows: January 21, 2014, approved as drafted; March 3 approved with the addition of the words "at Tahanto" at the end of the sentence on page 3 regarding Septic System Failure; March 10, approved as drafted. Jim Wood seconded the motion; voted all in favor.*

### **Report of the Town Administrator to the Board of Selectmen:**

**Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company** proposes to upgrade its existing pipeline due to the increased demand for natural gas. A portion of the pipeline will come through Boylston. They propose to begin construction in April, 2017.

Mr. May asked if this is an overlay of the abandoned Shell pipeline, using the existing Town easement? The Town Administrator said "no," but it will likely connect into the line at Frito-Lay.

**Frito-Lay:** The TA contacted Frito-Lay concerning the number of vehicles garaged at the Boylston location. Their Fleet Manager sent a report indicating 51 vehicles. The information has been passed on to the Assessors so they can compare that figure with excise tax records. At last check, we were getting excise tax from 28 vehicles.

**Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB):** With regard to changes which the legislature is considering, the years of service and the age requirement for receiving retiree health benefits would be increased; benefits would also be pro-rated, based on years of service. They also propose to strip cities and towns of their existing authority to adjust the percentage of health insurance a retiree pays. The MMA is looking into the effect this will have on communities. Mike May suggested sending a letter to our state representative. The TA said we still don't have all the details but can do so when the time comes.

**New DPW building:** On March 18, the TA, Frank Reale and Steve Mero toured the Westborough Highway Department building. This is a steel "package" building, similar to the one proposed for Boylston. The building is 20 years old and is approximately four times bigger than what we need. It did give us an idea of the longevity of such buildings and some ideas about possible design factors.

**School Dept. budget:** On March 18 the TA attended a School Department budget meeting with the Finance Committee. Mr. Butler will discuss with the Board the information provided. A presentation was made regarding a study being conducted by CMRPC to determine the feasibility of regionalizing the elementary schools in Berlin and Boylston. Information from that study will be presented in the fall.

**Assessing Services:** Thursday, March 20, was the deadline for submitting proposals for providing assessing services to the Town. Two proposals were received and will be reviewed by a committee comprised of the TA, Lori Esposito Cheri Cox and Sandy Bourassa. The TA will then have a joint meeting with the Board of Assessors and the Finance Committee on April 7. The Board of Assessors will make the decision.

**Facility Technician:** With regard to a Facility Technician to be employed here at Hillside, it was hoped we could find someone with skills in basic plumbing, electrical, carpentry, etc., who could do minor repairs without the necessity of bringing in outside contractors. Our internal application process did not produce a viable candidate and the application process will be opened up to outside candidates. It will be advertised ASAP.

**Annual Town Meeting Budget/Warrant:** (Meeting with the Finance Committee: Dave Butler, Eric Brose and Vincent Sasso)

- Dave Butler met with the School Committee last week. There is \$92K to transfer at the FY14 Special Town Meeting from the Vocational Education line to the Elementary School, which will be carried over and used for next year's operating budget. Dave warned them against the \$92K not being available in the FY16 operating budget; although they are hiring new staff, they might need to let go any new hires used because the Town cannot replenish the \$92, this is a one-time carryover. The Elementary School budget is up two percent, which includes the \$92K. Mike May said to clarify, the Elementary School is actually up \$142K, not just \$50K as shown in the budget. Dave said yes.

e Regional school has an additional assessment due to a one percent shift in population; this added approximately \$75K to Boylston's liability. The budget shows an increase of \$262K in our assessment; the school has an E & D fund that last year funded \$200K. The current E&D balance is minus \$9K. The problem is that an invoice was rejected by the State for the building project and it had to temporarily be paid out of E&D funds. Dave asked the Town Administrator to look into it; we now need to cover the additional \$200K since there is no longer any money in E & D.

ve's concern is the school is "keeping" money saved yearly on reduced debt for the new building and applying it to their operating budget. The new Tahanto building was sold to taxpayers as a declining commitment each year as debt is reduced. That needs to be a clear, separate discussion with the schools as they should not applying this saved money to their budget.

erty McNamara asked if Dave Butler knew the enrollment numbers and projected enrollments. Dave said he did not but Frank Reale probably does as he has been looking into it.

e total change is an increase of \$239,725 for the entire school budget. The Town's total increase is \$129,903.

The police budget is up \$90K, a portion of which is \$34K for a new cruiser.

e Fire Department engine is not budgeted this year since payment is due 12 months after signing the lease (\$1 buyout at the end with a 2.4% interest rate.) The first year's payment would not be due until after July 2015 (FY'2016). This will be explained on the Town Meeting floor when the Article for the down payment on the truck is being considered.

ce May said we need to look into regionalizing services; challenge the Police Chief to cut costs or identify new revenue sources. We should be getting a fee for the vehicle being on details. Why are we doing it for free? He would like a working session with the Chief and the Board. Discussion about inviting resources in Mr. May has to assist and evaluate our revenues/operating expenses.

ve Butler said, regarding the schools, the expense is too high but we need to come to middle ground. They had no increase last year. The \$369K would affect the tax rate by .45¢, as the budget stands now. The Board feels the need to reduce the tax rate impact; reduce the budget. Dave Butler said a two percent inflation rate on the tax would be about .35¢. It is reasonably in line with the inflation rate. Mike May said 1.5% max, ideally 1 to 1.5%.

We need to look at the police operating budget. That alone equals a .15¢ tax impact.

**Warrant:**

- Possibly take the \$34K for a cruiser out and pay with free cash.
- Could reduce the schools; we need to give them a number. If the school came down to \$250K, the tax

rate would be about .24¢.

- Remove Article 19 (\$25K for the Town House – they don't need it).
- Article 32 – two cruisers at \$34K each.
- Mike May asked the impact of additional tax collections -- \$80K has been collected.
- Dave Butler said if there is additional free cash, he suggests adding it to the DPW building stabilization fund.
- The Bard agrees to have the Finance Committee ask the school to reduce their requested increase to

\$150K.

**Adult Entertainment By-law:** Continue with Town Counsel for the next Special Town Meeting.

**NSTAR Road Opening Request:**

They want to replace the gas line from East Temple Street to North Sewall Street. Steve Mero said he has no problem with the request. The Highway Department has been waiting to pave Edgebrook for a few years but held off until the gas line replacement was completed. Steve Mero just told them to replace the road to grade with asphalt.

*Mike May made a motion to approve NSTAR's request for the road opening, based upon the Highway Superintendent's feedback with a \$100K bond in place. Jim Wood seconded the motion; voted all in favor.*

**Frito-Lay:**

Mike May would like to send a letter to the Conservation Commission regarding Frito-Lay providing on-site fueling of their trucks. Jim provided a draft and is in favor of sending the letter on behalf of the Board. Lori is to transcribe the letter to Selectmen letterhead, sign and send it on behalf of the Board.

*At 8:05 PM Mike May made a motion to adjourn. Jim Wood seconded the motion; voted all in favor.*

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lori Esposito, Administrative Assistant