

**BRATTLEBORO SELECTBOARD
TUESDAY, APRIL 15, 2014
EXECUTIVE SESSION – 5:45PM
REGULAR MEETING – 6:15PM
MINUTES**

Selectboard members present: David Gartenstein, Kate O'Connor, David Schoales, and Donna Macomber.

Staff present: Interim Town Manager Patrick Moreland, Fire Chief Mike Bucossi, Police Chief Gene Wrinn, Police Captain Mike Fitzgerald, Planning Director Rod Francis, and Executive Secretary Jan Anderson.

Media present: Howard Weiss-Tisman representing the Brattleboro Reformer.

Others present: Hugh Keelan, Christopher G. Chapman, Kate Anderson, Michael Bosworth, Eli Gould, John Wilmerding, Doug Cox, Leon Boyd, Nick Biddle, George Harvey, ASL Interpreters Janet Dickinson and Elizabeth Bjerke, BCTV staff and volunteers, and others who did not sign the attendance sheet.

Chair Gartenstein called the meeting to order at 5:45pm in the Selectboard meeting room. He confirmed that the meeting was officially warned.

MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL MATTERS WHERE THE SELECTBOARD HAS DETERMINED THAT PREMATURE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE AND KNOWLEDGE WOULD PUT THE MUNICIPALITY AT A SUBSTANTIAL DISADVANTAGE. THE INTERIM TOWN MANAGER WAS INVITED TO ATTEND. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

Chair Gartenstein reconvened the regular meeting at 6:15pm.

APPROVE MINUTES

MOTION BY DONNA MACOMBER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM APRIL 1 AND APRIL 7, 2014 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chair Gartenstein remarked that the members of the Board had received some angry correspondence. He said that Board members, Town staff, and residents all have the common goal of the welfare of the Town, and he asked that communications be respectful and courteous. He noted that I-91 had been closed from exit 1 to exit 3 over the weekend due to bridge work which resulted in slow traffic that was routed through town. He asked drivers to be patient during periods of construction. Gartenstein acknowledged that Austine School had announced its closure in the near future. He also noted that the referendum on the budget was scheduled for vote on April 17 and the polls were open from 9am to 7pm in the Selectboard room, and he encouraged votes to vote.

MANAGER'S COMMENTS

Interim Town Manager Moreland spoke about the difficult winter and mud season this year and said that he expected the winter road maintenance would come in over budget this year, and he thanked the residents on dirt roads for their patience. He noted that Pat Moulton Powden was appointed by the Governor as Secretary of the Agency of Commerce and Community Development and that she would be leaving Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC). He noted some events in town recently and he thanked members from the Police Department and Fire Department for risking their lives to save the lives of others. Finally, he reminded voters to go the polls on April 17 to cast their vote with regard to the budget referendum.

SELECTBOARD COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Schoales said that the Police-Fire Facilities Building Committee met recently and had been tasked with reviewing possible reductions in project costs. He said that the committee would continue to discuss possible reductions and review energy conservation considerations.

Macomber said she recently attended an Arts Committee meeting and she welcomed members from the committee who were present to give a presentation later in the meeting. She thanked Gartenstein for his comments regarding recent correspondence, and suggested that in stressful times it was most important for communications to be respectful.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

LIQUOR COMMISSIONERS

MOTION BY DAVID SCHOALES TO CONVENE AS LIQUOR COMMISSIONERS. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

Liquor & Tobacco Licenses – Annual Renewals. Gartenstein said that the Board was asked to approve the annual renewal of liquor and tobacco licenses for three businesses on a list presented to the Board. He read the names on the list. There was no discussion.

MOTION BY DAVID SCHOALES TO APPROVE RENEWALS OF LIQUOR AND TOBACCO LICENSES FOR THE BUSINESSES ON THE LIST. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

Special Event Permit – Go America Go Beverages d/b/a WhistlePig Whiskey, Strolling of the Heifers Friday Night Event, June 6. Gartenstein said that the Board was asked to approve a special event permit for Go America Go Beverages d/b/a WhistlePig Whiskey, of Shoreham, VT, at the River Garden on Friday, June 6 from 5:30pm to 8:30pm in conjunction with the Strolling of the Heifers weekend. Moreland reviewed the application and conditions of the permit. There was a brief discussion.

MOTION BY DAVID SCHOALES TO APPROVE A SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT FOR GO AMERICA GO BEVERAGES D/B/A WHISTLEPIG WHISKEY OF SHOREHAM, VERMONT, FOR AN EVENT AT THE ROBERT H. GIBSON RIVER GARDEN ON FRIDAY JUNE 6 BETWEEN 5:30PM AND 8:30PM. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

Special Event Permit – Go America Go Beverages d/b/a WhistlePig Whiskey, Maple n' Mud Festival, April 26. Gartenstein said that the Board was asked to approve a special event permit for Go America Go Beverages d/b/a WhistlePig Whiskey, of Shoreham, VT, to be held on Saturday, April 26, from 10:00am to 4:00pm in conjunction with the Strolling of the Heifers Maple n' Mud Festival. There was a brief discussion.

MOTION BY DONNA MACOMBER TO APPROVE A SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT FOR GO AMERICA GO BEVERAGES D/B/A WHISTLEPIG WHISKEY OF SHOREHAM, VERMONT, FOR AN EVENT AT THE ROBERT H. GIBSON RIVER GARDEN ON SATURDAY, APRIL 26 FROM 10:00AM TO 4:00PM. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

MOTION BY DAVID SCHOALES TO ADJOURN AS LIQUOR COMMISSIONERS. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Financial Report – Monthly Financial Report, March. Moreland reviewed Finance Director O'Connor's financial report for March and the corresponding memos. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

Staffing Level Review – Brattleboro Police Department and Planning Services. Gartenstein said that the Board previously requested a staffing level review when an employee leaves employment. Moreland said

that Police Officer David Godinho tendered his resignation effective April 5, 2014 and Planning Services Clerk Julia Perks tendered her resignation effective April 4, 2014. Police Chief Wrinn reviewed the process and timeline in hiring and training new police officers, the work schedule within the Department, and the department's call volume. Planning Director Francis reviewed the need for an administrative staff member in Planning Services. Gartenstein said that the staffing level review was for information purposes. There was some discussion by the Board.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

Award Bid – Police Cruiser, Brattleboro Police Department. Police Chief Wrinn said that a RFP was recently sent out for a 2014 police cruiser. He said that the cruiser was included in the FY14 Capital Plan and that three bids were received but only one met the bid specifications. He recommended that the Board award the bid to the lowest bidder, Imperial Municipal Partners for \$33,449. Schoales suggested tabling the matter to investigate the reasons why two bidders submitted bids that did not meet the specs. Fire Chief Bucossi discussed the time-intensive procedure in preparing bid specifications and spoke in opposition to re-opening the bid process. There was some discussion by the Board about the bids and the bid process.

MOTION BY DONNA MACOMBER TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF A 2014 AWD FORD POLICE CRUISER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$33,449 FROM IMPERIAL MUNICIPAL PARTNERS. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

Grant Application – GHS Seatbelt/Safety and DUI Enforcement Grant, Brattleboro Police Department. Police Captain Fitzgerald asked the Board to approve a grant application for a Governor's Highway Safety Grant from the Vermont Department of Public Safety. He said there was a typo in the supporting documents and that the actual amount requested for the DUI grant was \$16,560 (rather than \$16,065 as noted on the paperwork) and the Highway Safety grant was \$10,560, for a total grant request of \$27,120. There was a brief discussion about the correct grant amounts and use of the grant funds.

MOTION BY DAVID SCHOALES TO APPROVE A GRANT APPLICATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$27,120 TO THE VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, GOVERNOR HIGHWAY SAFETY GRANT PROGRAM FOR SUPPORT OF LOCAL ENFORCEMENT OF DUI, SEATBELT AND OTHER DRIVING VIOLATIONS. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

Grant Application – LSTA Resources Sharing Grant, Brooks Memorial Library. Moreland said that the Board was asked to approve a grant application in the amount of \$2,212 to the Vermont Department of Libraries to be used to offset the cost of activities associated with the interlibrary loan program and other resource sharing activities between Vermont libraries. There was no discussion.

MOTION BY KATE O'CONNOR TO APPROVE A GRANT APPLICATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,212 TO THE VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARIES TO SUPPORT RESOURCE SHARING. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

Accept & Appropriate Grant – VDEMHS Communications Grant, Brattleboro Fire Department. Fire Chief Bucossi said that the Board was asked to accept and appropriate a grant in the amount of \$59,739 from the Vermont Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security to replace 35 portable radios and 40 pagers. Moreland said that the grant did not require a match. There was a brief discussion.

MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN TO ACCEPT AN APPROPRIATE A GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$59,739 FROM THE VERMONT DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF 35 PORTABLE RADIOS AND 40 PAGERS. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

Appoint Town Forest Fire Warden – Fire Chief Michael Bucossi. Fire Chief Bucossi said that the Board was asked to reappoint him as Town Forest Fire Warden. He said that the State requires the Board to appoint a Fire Warden for a term of five years. There was no discussion.

MOTION BY KATE O’CONNOR TO APPOINT FIRE CHIEF MIKE BUCOSSI TO THE POSITION OF FOREST FIRE WARDEN FOR A FIVE YEAR TERM BEGINNING ON JULY 1, 2014 AND CONCLUDING JUNE 30, 2019. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) – Update, Town Manger’s Office. Gartenstein said that in 2013 Representative Town Meeting authorized the formation of a PACE District, and since then the program details and documents had been reviewed by the Town Attorney, Finance Director, and auditors, all of whom agreed there was a significant lack of clarity about how the program would work. Moreland reviewed the PACE procedure and said that he asked Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) to query other towns in the State as to their participation in the PACE program. He provided a report to the Board with responses from six towns. He said that none of the towns had yet received requests for PACE funds so had not implemented the program, and that it was obvious from the responses that there was a significant lack of clarity by the towns about how to implement and operate the PACE program. He said that the Town Attorney was in the process of writing a proposed amendment to the program to address a special assessment if a PACE loan was reported delinquent. There was discussion by the Board about the program, the lack of clarity, and the need to implement it properly.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

Arts Committee – Discussion. Members from the Arts Committee – Kate Anderson, Doug Cox, Nick Biddle, Hugh Keelan, and John Wilmerding – were present. Anderson said that the Committee was asking the Selectboard for its visions and ideas on how the Arts Committee might better serve the Town. Cox, Biddle, Keelan, and Wilmerding each spoke about their involvement in the arts community and service to the Town through the Arts Committee. There was discussion by the Committee members about a comprehensive information sharing network, regional arts hub, connecting resources with opportunities, providing collaborations between different sectors, how to better perform arts services, and economic opportunities within the arts community. There was discussion by the Board about the importance of the arts within the community and economic development within the arts community. Gartenstein reviewed the charge of the Arts Community. He also asked that the Board be updated within the next month or two on the NEA Our Town Grant that had been awarded last year for the focus of an arts campus area.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

Funding Municipal Services Through Donations - Chris Chapman. Chris Chapman and Eli Gould were present and each discussed possibilities of creating avenues for voluntary contributions to benefit the Town. Chapman provided the Board with a ‘Proposal for Augmenting Municipal Resources,’ and he discussed past philanthropic donations and future opportunities. He reviewed gifts from Fred Harris, Nelson Withington, and Bob Gannett and discussed the value of those gifts. He said that the Town and its staff were modest about many of their achievements, and suggested that it promote itself more and provide donation opportunities that could be directed to specific areas not contained in the budget, such as improvements to the skating rink and better sidewalks. Gould proposed a broad based voluntary contribution opportunity where a local “hometown” card could be used to purchase goods and a small portion of each sale (1%) could be directed to the Town. He said that it would boost local pride, provide some relief to the local property taxpayers, and mend the hard feelings from the recent debate over the local option sales tax. John Wilmerding spoke in support of the proposals, and suggested establishing a community foundation possibly through a committee. There was discussion by the Board about fundraising activity by the Town, current donation opportunities, and the importance of being open to new ideas for revenue sources.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

Committee Formation Request - George Harvey. George Harvey spoke of his suggestion to form a committee “to investigate both the technical, economic, environmental, and other details of an organization to generate electricity for all ratepayers in Brattleboro, possibly also providing heat if that is appropriate.” He discussed the amount of money spent on energy and fuel that was leaving the Town. He suggested making electricity locally, preparing for future events, being resilient, harms of global warming, carbon emissions, solar projects, and structuring a business to generate its own power and keep the money and profits local. John Wilmerding spoke in support of renewable energy and of

Harvey's suggestion. Michael Bosworth spoke in support of exploring Harvey's suggestion. Leon Boyd spoke about the aesthetics of solar arrays and cell towers, and in general support of the Town. There was discussion by the Board about Harvey's suggestion and that he combine efforts with the Energy Committee.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

CORRESPONDENCE AND MEETINGS

Gartenstein read the dates and times of Town committee meetings and other upcoming events.

There was no further business.

MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN TO ADJOURN AT 9:05PM. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

David Schoales, Clerk