

**BRATTLEBORO SELECTBOARD
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2014
EXECUTIVE SESSION – 5:15PM
REGULAR MEETING – 6:15PM
MINUTES**

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

Staff present: Interim Town Manager Patrick Moreland, Town Attorney Robert Fisher, Fire Chief Mike Bucossi, Assistant Fire Chief Peter Lynch, Public Works Director Steve Barrett, Police Chief Mike Fitzgerald, Police Captain Mark Carignan, and Executive Secretary Jan Anderson.

Media present: Tim Johnson representing WTSA, Howard Weiss-Tisman representing the Brattleboro Reformer and Olga Peters representing The Commons.

Others present: Leon C. Boyd, Jr., Philip B. Chapman, Russ Grabiec, Ellen Fairchild Martyn, Steve Horton, Tony P. Farnum, Amy Farnum, Kathy Dowd, Robin Sweetapple, Emilie Kornheiser, ASL Interpreters Elizabeth Bjerke and Janet Dickinson, BCTV staff and volunteers, and others who did not sign the attendance sheet.

Chair Gartenstein called the meeting to order at 5:15pm in the Selectboard meeting room. He confirmed that the meeting was officially warned.

MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS CONTRACTS WITH A FINDING THAT PREMATURE GENERAL PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE WOULD CLEARLY PLACE THE TOWN AND PEOPLE INVOLVED AT A SUBSTANTIAL DISADVANTAGE. ALSO IF TIME PERMITS, THE BOARD MAY ALSO DISCUSS APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT OR EVALUATION OF A PUBLIC OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE. THE TOWN ATTORNEY, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR, POLICE CHIEF, POLICE CAPTAIN, AND INTERIM TOWN MANAGER WERE INVITED INTO THE SESSION AT VARIOUS STAGES. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Chair Gartenstein reconvened the meeting at 6:20pm.

APPROVE MINUTES

MOTION BY DONNA MACOMBER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 16, SEPTEMBER 23, AND SEPTEMBER 30, 2014, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chair Gartenstein said that last Friday he attended the ribbon cutting and re-opening of the Brooks House that had been damaged two years ago in a fire. He also noted that the opening of the solar array on Technology Drive would take place in the near future. He said that the Town was on the rebound after the fire at Brooks House and flooding caused by Hurricane Irene and he encouraged the public to visit Brattleboro and the downtown area. Gartenstein provided an update on the Town Manager search and said that the Board would be conducting interviews over the next two days. He said that the Board hoped to move the process forward promptly and he thanked the people that were involved in the process. He also wished Tim Johnson (from WTSA) a happy birthday and congratulated him on his nomination for induction into the Vermont Association of Broadcasters Hall of Fame.

MANAGER'S COMMENTS

Interim Town Manager Moreland also congratulated Tim Johnson.

SELECTBOARD COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

John Allen spoke about the opening of the Brooks House and encouraged the public to visit the building and support the businesses opening there.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Leon Boyd spoke in support of the Interim Town Manager.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Human Services Funding – Discussion. Gartenstein discussed the structure and history of human services funding and the Human Services Review Committee. He suggested that the Board and the Committee communicate early in the budget process in order to determine a reasonable target amount to be included in the proposed budget provided to Representative Town Meeting. Emilie Kornheiser and Ellen Martyn, members of the Human Services Review Committee, were present and discussed the qualifications of the Committee and the process by which the Committee reviewed and awarded agencies' funding requests. They spoke of the financial needs by Brattleboro agencies and the dwindling funds available. There was discussion by the Board about the authority of Town Meeting representatives over the Committee, the ambiguity of the process in forming the Committee, the application and review process currently being followed, the support of the current process, level funding the recommendation for the upcoming fiscal year, and possible increases to the funding in the future. It was believed that the recommendation made for FY15 was \$120,000 and the Board was in support of maintaining that level.

MOTION BY DAVID SCHOALES TO RECOMMEND TO THE COMMITTEE TO KEEP THE HUMAN SERVICES FUNDING AT \$120,000. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Regional Economic Hub Study Group – Discuss Committee Charge/Mission. Gartenstein said that the Board formed the Regional Economic Hub Study Group at the last meeting and he read a proposed charge for the Study Group that had been provided to the Board in its packets. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN TO ADOPT THE CHARGE OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC HUB STUDY GROUP AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Police-Fire Facilities Project – Discussion. Gartenstein said that the Board was asked to discuss he renovation project to the Police and Fire stations, and to provide guidance on how to move forward with the project after it had stalled following a budget referendum after Representative Town Meeting. Schoales reviewed the history of the project, including approval of the project, designs, and bond funding almost two years ago, the defeat of the proposed 1% sales tax, passage of the FY15 budget by Representative Town Meeting, a budget referendum, the defeat of the FY15 budget by the voters at large, reduction of the proposed budget, and passage of the revised FY15 budget at a Special Representative Town Meeting in June. Steve Horton, Project Manager, provided and reviewed a document with six possible building options (Plans A through F) ranging from spending the balance of the \$5 million bond for a "band aid" approach to substantially completing the renovations to all three stations. Some members from the Police-Fire Facilities Building Committee, Robin Sweetapple, Kathy Dowd, Tony Farnum and Philip Chapman, were present and spoke in detail about the six proposals that were presented to the Committee at its most recent meeting. The Committee members indicated that the Committee rejected any "band aid" approach and it unanimously approved Plan F. There was much discussion by the Committee members, including breaking the project into three parts, the Committee's commitment to save money, the equal importance of improving the Fire and Police stations, the Committee's expertise and ongoing commitment of time to the project, and the existing readiness of the two Fire stations plans to proceed. There was substantial discussion by the Board, including the overall project, remaining bond funds, amending the charge of the committee, whether the Board has authority to spend the remaining borrowed and non-borrowed bond funds, need for the improvements to all three stations, listening to the Town Meeting Representatives and voters at large, reductions to the project and/or funding, borrowing in phases, proceeding in stages, relocating the Police station, reducing expenditures and/or borrowing in phases, and possibly scheduling a special Representative Town Meeting. There was compromise by Board members and general agreement to focus first on completion of the fire stations because that portion of the project was essentially shovel-ready, plans were nearly complete, and property had been purchased and readied. There was further discussion about making substantial changes to the Police station location and plans, and whether authorization by Representative Town Meeting would be required.

MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN TO ADOPT THE FOLLOWING AMENDED CHARGE FOR THE POLICE-FIRE FACILITIES BUILDING COMMITTEE: THE SELECTBOARD REQUESTS THAT THE POLICE-FIRE FACILITIES BUILDING COMMITTEE MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO COSTS AND RELATED PLANS FOR MOVING FORWARD WITH: (1) RECONSTRUCTION OF CENTRAL FIRE STATION, (2) RECONSTRUCTION OF WEST BRATTLEBORO FIRE STATION, AND (3) FOR DEVELOPING PLANS AND PURCHASING A LOCATION FOR A POTENTIAL NEW POLICE STATION. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Non-Profit Institutions – Billing for Emergency Services – Discussion. Schoales said that the Board was asked to discuss the costs to the Town and various departments in providing services to non-profit institutions and possible ways of charging for those services in order to increase revenues and maintain a quality of life in town. He explained that the concept was a different approach to program-based budgeting and to finding ways to generate additional revenue by charging for services provided. He cited a positive agreement by the University of Vermont to contribute funds to the City of Burlington for services that were being utilized by the college. He suggested tracking charges for services to the top four or five non-profits. There was some discussion by the Board. It was agreed that Administration would prepare a report tracking the costs of services provided to the top four or five non-profits for the past three months, and that the Board would discuss it at later meeting.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

Town Manager Evaluation Forms – Discussion. Gartenstein said that the Board had been provided with two evaluation forms and was asked to decide which form it would utilize for the annual evaluation of the Town Manager. The Board agreed to use the long form. Gartenstein explained that the evaluation would take place at a later date in executive session.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

Accept and Appropriate Grant – Rescue Rope, Brattleboro Fire Department. Moreland said that the Board was asked to accept and appropriate a grant in the amount of \$2,500 from Vermont Department of Public Safety Equipment Grant Program for the purchase of 2,500' of ½" super static rescue rope. There was no discussion.

MOTION BY KATE O'CONNOR TO ACCEPT AND APPROPRIATE AN EQUIPMENT GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,500 FROM THE VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY FOR THE PURCHASE OF 2,500' OF ½" SUPER STATIC RESCUE ROPE. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Ratify Grant Application – Strong Communities Better Connections (SCBC) Pilot Program Grant, Planning Services. Moreland said that the Board was asked to ratify a grant application to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for a grant to support an intensive planning project near lower Main Street in anticipation of building a new bridge from New Hampshire at some point in the future. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

MOTION BY DAVID SCHOALES TO RATIFY A GRANT APPLICATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$36,000 TO THE AGENCY OF COMMERCE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, STRONG COMMUNITIES, BETTER CONNECTIONS GRANT PROGRAM, AND TO COMMIT A \$4,000 MATCH FROM PROGRAM INCOME FUNDS, TO SUPPORT A CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR LOWER MAIN STREET. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Accept and Appropriate Grant – Edward J. Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG), Brattleboro Police Department. Moreland said that the Board was asked to accept and appropriate a grant in the amount of \$90,000 from the Vermont Department of Public Safety to support regular staff time and benefit costs associated with law enforcement activities involving illicit drug trafficking. There was no discussion.

MOTION BY DONNA MACOMBER TO ACCEPT AND APPROPRIATE AN EDWARD J. BYRNE JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$90,000 FROM THE VERMONT DEPARTMENT

**OF PUBLIC SAFETY LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES INVOLVING ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING.
MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

CORRESPONDENCE AND MEETINGS

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

**MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS
APPOINTMENT OR EMPLOYMENT OR EVALUATION OF A PUBLIC OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE,
WITH A FINDING THAT PREMATURE GENERAL PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE WOULD PLACE THE
BOARD, THE TOWN, AND THE PEOPLE INVOLVED AT A SUBSTANTIAL DISADVANTAGE.
MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

Gartenstein reconvened the meeting at 8:45pm. There was no further business.

MOTION BY JOHN ALLEN TO ADJOURN AT 8:45PM. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

David Schoales, Clerk