

**BRATTLEBORO SELECTBOARD
TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2016
EXECUTIVE SESSION – 5:30PM
REGULAR MEETING – 6:15PM
MINUTES**

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

Staff present: Town Manager Peter Elwell, Assistant Town Manager Patrick Moreland, Fire Chief Mike Bucossi, Police Chief Mike Fitzgerald, Police Captain Mark Carignan, Fire Alarm Superintendent Joe Newton, Public Works Director Steve Barrett, Highway/Utilities Superintendent Hannah O'Connell, Town Assessor Russell Rice, Planning Director Rod Francis, Library Director Starr LaTronica, Grants Manager Kim Ellison, and Executive Secretary Jan Anderson.

Media present: Olga Peters representing The Commons, Bob Audette representing the Brattleboro Reformer, and BCTV staff and volunteers.

Others present: James Banslaben, Sharon Couturier, Avery Schwenk, Terry Carter, Louise Zak, Kathleen White, Matt Mann, Paige Martin, Van Kcoyannakis, Jane Southworth, ASL Interpreters Elizabeth Bjerke and Janet Dickinson, and others who did not sign the attendance sheet.

Chair Gartenstein called the meeting to order at 5:30pm in the Selectboard meeting room in the Municipal Center. He confirmed that the meeting was officially warned.

MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS WITH EMPLOYEES, CONTRACTS, APPOINTMENTS, AND EVALUATION OF A PUBLIC OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE, WHERE PREMATURE GENERAL PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE WOULD PLACE THE TOWN, SELECTBOARD, AND PEOPLE INVOLVED AT A SUBSTANTIAL DISADVANTAGE. THE TOWN MANAGER AND ASSISTANT TOWN MANAGER WERE INVITED TO ATTEND. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Gartenstein reconvened the meeting at 6:20pm.

APPROVE MINUTES

MOTION BY DONNA MACOMBER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 16, 2016, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chair Gartenstein noted the high level of participation by registered voters in the recent election and thanked the voters for participating in their government. He reminded the public about the upcoming special and annual representative town meetings (on March 12 and March 19), as well as the informational meeting scheduled on March 9. He also suggested that the public look at the unique construction of the I-91 bridge. He said that with the onset of mud season, there may be problem areas on back roads and he asked the public to contact Town officials to report any problems.

MANAGER'S COMMENTS

Town Manager Elwell said that the Public Works Department would inspect and report daily on the dirt roads during mud season. He said that emergency services would be notified of road conditions. He noted that some parking spaces at the Transportation Center had been blocked off as a precaution after cracks in the wall had been identified. He announced that the reconstruction of the Green Street retaining wall was about to commence with the construction to be complete in June. He also discussed the preconstruction process of the Elliot Street bridge.

At this time, Gartenstein asked if the Board would agree to adjust the agenda to add a request by Hermit Thrush Brewery under Liquor Commissioners. The Board members agreed to the adjustment.

SELECTBOARD COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Schoales noted the many signs of the coming spring season.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Kathleen White, a member of the Safe Streets Project, announced an event on May 5, from 5:00 to 8:00pm at River Garden to inform the public about the various projects in Town to improve road safety. She invited the public to attend.

LIQUOR COMMISSIONERS

MOTION BY DONNA MACOMBER TO CONVENE AS LIQUOR COMMISSIONERS. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Special Event Permit – Hermit Thrush Brewery, Brattleboro Area Jewish Community “Purimpalooza”
Gartenstein said that the Board was asked to approve a special event for the Brattleboro Area Jewish Community at the Vermont Jazz Center at Cotton Hill on March 19 from 7:00pm to 10:30pm. Elwell said that the application was filed on Friday but the Town Clerk was out of the office until Monday and was not able to process the application prior to this meeting. He said that the event was being held on Saturday so the Board was asked to include the matter on this agenda. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN TO GRANT A SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT TO HERMIT THRUSH BREWERY AT 29 HIGH STREET TO SERVE BEER FROM 7:00PM TO 10:30PM AT AN EVENT SPONSORED BY THE BRATTLEBORO AREA JEWISH COMMUNITY AT THE VERMONT JAZZ CENTER AT 74 COTTON MILL HILL, #222, ON MARCH 19. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

MOTION BY DONNA MACOMBER TO ADJOURN AS LIQUOR COMMISSIONERS. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

WATER AND SEWER COMMISSIONERS

MOTION BY DONNA MACOMBER TO CONVENE AS WATER AND SEWER COMMISSIONERS. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Utilities Trailer – Award Bid, Department of Public Works. Highway/Utilities Superintendent Hannah O’Connell said that the Board was asked to award a bid in the amount of \$11,690 to Vassar’s Complete Auto Service of Greenfield, Massachusetts, for a utilities trailer for the Public Works Department. She said that five bids had been received and were described in her memo dated February 23, 2016. She said that Vassar’s was the lowest bid that met bid qualifications. Elwell spoke about the bid and budgeted amount. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

MOTION BY KATE O’CONNOR TO AWARD A BID IN THE AMOUNT OF \$11,690 TO VASSAR’S COMPLETE AUTO SERVICE OF GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS, FOR A UTILITIES TRAILER. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

MOTION BY JOHN ALLEN TO ADJOURN AS WATER AND SEWER COMMISSIONERS. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Police-Fire Facilities Project – Continued Discussion. Gartenstein said that he asked for this matter to be to this agenda in order to review comments heard at the informational town meeting last week. He said that Representative Town Meeting members would vote on Saturday whether to move the Police Department from the Municipal Center to the proposed location at 62 Black Mountain Road. Jane Southworth inquired about a police presence downtown if the department moved to Putney Road. There was some discussion by the Board. Gartenstein said that additional information would be available and distributed prior to the Special Representative Town Meeting on March 12. He also noted that the proposed FY17 budget would likely be revised by the Board at its meeting on March 15 to include costs

for the Police-Fire Facility Project and the amount of money to be added would depend on the decision made by Town Meeting Members at the Special Representative Town Meeting on March 12. There was some discussion by the Board.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

NEW BUSINESS

Downtown Traffic Lights – Discussion about Cycle/Flash. Public Works Director Barrett and Van Kcoyannakis, an engineer from Milone & MacBroom, were present to discuss the downtown traffic lights. Barrett said that during the downtown sidewalk reconstruction project last summer, the traffic lights were taken off regular cycle and set on flash mode to facilitate the construction, and during that time many comments had been received from drivers and pedestrians about the lights. He said that in response to the comments and due to the length of time since the system had been analyzed, the Town hired a consultant to collect traffic data and provide recommendations on the traffic lights and flow. Kcoyannakis spoke about the study and information contained in his report, dated February 2, 2016, and the summary memo from Barrett, dated March 3, 2016. Kcoyannakis concluded that although the amount of traffic had increased somewhat, he did not recommend making major changes to the system due to the configuration of the streets and intersections, safety of pedestrians, and coordination between the four traffic signals. He also recommended continuing the use of the current system with a regular light cycle, rather than flash mode, during times when traffic was steady. He also recommended that Flat Street not be made into a one-way street and that a separate traffic cycle not be added for traffic exiting the Food Co-Op's parking lot. Terry Carter, Sharon Couturier, and Louise Zak provided their comments and opinions. Kcoyannakis said that minor adjustments could be made to the system to address certain concerns. There was much discussion by the Board.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

Regional Economic Hub Study Group –

- (i) *Final Report to Selectboard*
- (ii) *Recommendation to Dissolve Committee*

Elwell spoke about the work of the Regional Economic Hub Study Group over the past year. He said that the Study Group agreed that further study would require a substantial amount of time and it would be more beneficial to begin work at the administrative level around building coalitions. He reviewed the Study Group's final report, dated March 8, 2016, and spoke about the three tentative findings on page 3 of the report, and additional areas to be addressed as identified in the Structural Outline (attached to the Final Report),. He said that the Study Group met for the final time on February 25, 2016 and recommended that it be dissolved at this time. There was some discussion by the Board.

MOTION BY DONNA MACOMBER TO ACCEPT THE FINAL REPORT OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC HUB STUDY GROUP AND TO DISSOLVE THE STUDY GROUP, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.

Schoales offered a friendly amendment to add the matter to future Selectboard agendas on a regular basis so the Board could hear reports around coalition building efforts with other communities, getting involved at the State level, and developing strategies. Macomber accepted the friendly amendment.

AMENDED MOTION BY DONNA MACOMBER TO ACCEPT THE FINAL REPORT OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC HUB STUDY GROUP AND TO DISSOLVE THE STUDY GROUP, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, AND ASK THE TOWN MANAGER FOR REPORTS EVERY OTHER MONTH ON THE PROGRESS OF COALITION BUILDING AND OUTREACH WORK. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Small Business Assistance Program – Amend Policies and Procedures. Grants Manager Kim Ellison said that the Board was asked to approve changes to the Policies and Procedures for the Small Business Assistance Program (SBAP), as set forth in the backup materials. She reviewed the major changes to the policy, including adding another program with an increased maximum loan amount of up to \$70,000 in

order to encourage larger projects and businesses. Avery Schwenk spoke in favor of the changes. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

MOTION BY JOHN ALLEN TO APPROVE CHANGES TO THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SBAP), AS RECOMMENDED BY THE SBAP LOAN COMMITTEE. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Business License Fines – Assessor’s Office. Town Assessor Russell Rice said that the Board was asked to assess the sum of \$175 in fees and fines to certain businesses that had not obtained General Business Licenses for 2016, as set forth in his memo dated March 4, 2016, 2016. Gartenstein read the names of the twelve businesses on the list. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

MOTION BY JOHN ALLEN TO ASSESS THE SUM OF \$175 IN FEES AND FINES TO BUSINESSES THAT HAVE NOT OBTAINED GENERAL BUSINESS LICENSES FOR 2016. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Committee Appointments. Gartenstein said that the Board was asked to appoint volunteers to various committees as set forth on the Committee Applicants and Vacancies included in the backup materials. He asked for nominations.

ADA COMMITTEE:

**DONNA MACOMBER NOMINATED JULIE TAMLER FOR A 2-YEAR TERM.
DAVID SCHOALES NOMINATED RUEBEN TAMLER FOR A ONE-YEAR TERM.
NOMINATIONS CARRIED 5-0.**

ARTS COMMITTEE:

DAVID GARTENSTEIN NOMINATED DALE JOY. NOMINATION CARRIED 5-0.

ENERGY COMMITTEE:

DAVID SCHOALES NOMINATED KIP TEWKSBURY. NOMINATION CARRIED 5-0.

PLANNING COMMISSION:

**DAVID GARTENSTEIN NOMINATED SHANNON PRIMROSE FOR A TERM ENDING 6/17 AND
JAMES CUMMING FOR A TERM ENDING 6/16. NOMINATIONS CARRIED 5-0.**

SENIOR SOLUTIONS ADVISORY COUNCIL:

JOHN ALLEN NOMINATED BARBARA WOODS. NOMINATION CARRIED 5-0.

Gartenstein announced that the Board would enter into executive session and would not conduct further business during or after the session.

MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS LABOR RELATIONS AGREEMENTS WITH EMPLOYEES, CONTRACTS, AND EVALUATIONS OF A PUBLIC OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE. THE TOWN MANAGER WAS INVITED TO ATTEND. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Gartenstein reconvened the meeting at 9:35pm. There was no further business.

MOTION BY DONNA MACOMBER TO ADJOURN AT 9:35PM. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

David Schoales, Clerk