

**BRATTLEBORO SELECTBOARD
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2016
REGULAR MEETING – 6:15PM
SELECTBOARD MEETING ROOM, MUNICIPAL CENTER
MINUTES**

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

Staff Present: Town Manager Peter Elwell, Assistant Town Manager Patrick Moreland, Finance Director John O'Connor, Fire Chief Mike Bucossi, Assistant Fire Chief Len Howard, Police Chief Mike Fitzgerald, Town Assessor Russell Rice, Town Clerk Annette Cappy, Highway/Utilities Superintendent Hannah Tyler, Planning Director Rod Francis, Library Director Starr LaTronica, Recreation & Parks Director Carol Lolatte, and Executive Secretary Jan Anderson.

Media present: Chris Mays representing the Brattleboro Reformer and BCTV staff and volunteers.

Others present: Mary B. Grove, Franklin Chrisco, Ingrid Chrisco, Tad Montgomery, Merrill Bent, Michael Boswell, Steve Horton, Connie Snow, Pete Paggi, Franz Reichsman, Robert Spencer, William Isch, ASL interpreters Janet Dickinson and Elizabeth Fox, and others who did not sign the attendance sheet.

Chair Gartenstein called the meeting to order at 6:15pm. He confirmed that the meeting was officially warned.

APPROVE MINUTES

MOTION BY RICHARD DEGRAY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 1, 2016, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chair Gartenstein noted that Thanksgiving was next week and he wished everyone a happy and safe holiday. He also noted that the Skatepark and Dog Park received approval for the necessary Act 250 and Stormwater permits. He said that the permits required construction to commence prior to December, 2019. He congratulated everyone who had worked on those projects. Gartenstein announced that the Board would begin to meet weekly through December in order to discuss the proposed FY18 budget and other matters, including the Windham Solid Waste Management District's budget and whether the Town would continue to recycle through WSWMD or to utilize another facility. He said that the Board would discuss the matter at its meeting on December 6.

MANAGER'S COMMENTS

Town Manager Elwell discussed the recent construction activity near the Municipal Center. He said that electric vehicle chargers were installed in the High-Grove Parking Lot and the cost of installation of the chargers and power to recharge vehicles would be borne by Green Mountain Power with no costs to the Town. The other project on Grove Street was the installation of infrastructure to increase the water delivered to the Municipal Center in order to install sprinklers as required by the State Fire Division.

SELECTBOARD COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Schoales discussed the recent meeting of the Windham Solid Waste Management District (WSWMD) Board, where a budget was passed to retain the current Material Recovery Facility (MRF) which included application of a 20% surcharge to the outlying towns in order to make the cost more equitable and fair. He said that he voted in favor of the 2-part motion to (1) pass the operations budget (2) with a 20% surcharge. He said that he tried unsuccessfully to amend the motion but a straight up/down vote on whether or not to keep the MRF open was not going to be considered. He said that the 20% surcharge was introduced late in the process so the alternative funding balance between population and grand list also was not going to come up for a vote. He said that the Selectboard would now have to decide whether to stay in the District or contract with a private firm. Allen expressed his confusion on Schoales'

vote because it was not the consensus of the Selectboard's vote. Schoales said that the surcharge option was never discussed by the Selectboard because it was introduced after the meeting where the Selectboard voted. Gartenstein spoke of his concerns that the representative's vote was contrary to the Selectboard's instructions not to continue operations at the MRF. He said that he would request that the Selectboard discuss the Town's representation on the WSWMD Board at its meeting in early December.

O'Connor reminded the public about the open house to celebrate the life of James Banslaben that was scheduled on Sunday, November 20, from 1:00 to 3:00pm at 118 Elliot Street. She said that snacks would be provided and that additional snacks would be accepted. Allen said (in memory of Banslaben) "Have a great Vermont day."

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Tad Montgomery spoke about the Highway Art Project that he previously introduced to the Selectboard. He said that he recently met with members from the Travel Information Council, who seemed interested in the project but were unable to assist in formation of the project because their roll was enforcement and complaints. He said that he learned much about the about State's statute entitled Highway Sign Law (also known as the "Bill Board Law") and was encouraged by the Council to work provisions from the law into the proposal.

DeGray announced that on Friday, November 25, the holiday tree would be lit at Pliny Park at 6:00pm. He said it was rumored that Santa may visit at 5:00pm, that hot chocolate would be provided, and that entertainment may be available. He invited the public to attend.

LIQUOR COMMISSIONERS

MOTION BY JOHN ALLEN TO CONVENE AS LIQUOR COMMISSIONERS. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Approve Second Class Liquor License – DG Retail, LLC, d/b/a Dollar General Store #12210. Gartenstein said that the Board was asked to approve a second class liquor license for DG Retail, LLC, d/b/a Dollar General Store #12210, located at 23 Marlboro Road. Elwell said that the application was approved and recommended by staff. Merrill Bent, Attorney for Dollar General, was present and said that the application was consistent with other applications submitted throughout the State, although the review by Brattleboro was more thorough. There was no discussion by the Board.

MOTION BY JOHN ALLEN TO APPROVE A SECOND CLASS LIQUOR LICENSE FOR DG RETAIL, LLC, D/B/A DOLLAR GENERAL STORE #12210, LOCATED AT 23 MARLBORO ROAD. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

MOTION BY JOHN ALLEN TO ADJOURN AS LIQUOR COMMISSIONERS. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Police-Fire Facilities Project Update. Town Manager Elwell provided the Board with an update on the progress of construction at the West Brattleboro Fire Station. He also spoke about an issue that had arisen about the wall system and moisture control in the building. He said that after several discussions, it was agreed to modify the original design to apply a different material that would allow the walls to breathe more freely and that testing procedures would be implemented with guidance provided by Efficiency Vermont. Steve Horton, Owner's Project Manager, spoke about general moisture controls and the specific modification that had been agreed upon. He said that the vapor barrier/retarder that was being substituted would be a step-up with no additional cost to the project. Tad Montgomery expressed his disappointment that the insulation's R-value barely exceeded code. Horton spoke about insulation considerations in the building and said that the R-value exceeded code. He said that in any project there was a cost v. performance consideration. There was some discussion by the Board.

Elwell then spoke about the preliminary construction activities at Central Fire Station. Horton provided more details about the excavating work that was taking place. There was some discussion by the Board.

Elwell spoke about activities related to the Police Station, including that the closing on the building was anticipated by the end of November and that construction bids were currently being solicited. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

NEW BUSINESS

Financial Report – Monthly Report, October. Finance Director John O'Connor was present and reviewed the October, 2016 monthly financial report. There was some discussion by the Board. Gartenstein asked about the financial audit. O'Connor reported that the audit and single audit were received today and no findings or significant deficiencies were reported. DeGray noted that since O'Connor's employment with the Town, no findings had been reported and he applauded O'Connor and his staff for their performance.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

FY18 Budget

- (i) Revenues
- (ii) Capital
 - (a) Projects
 - (b) Equipment

Town Manager Elwell provided a brief summary of staff's proposed FY18 budget and noted that every Department Head was at the meeting and available to answer any questions. He said that the proposed budget would result in a 5.5 cent (or 4.6%) tax increase but the increase was smaller than previously anticipated when planning the Police-Fire Facilities Upgrade Project. He said that the proposed budget maintained all existing levels of service and included debt service for the Police-Fire Facilities Project, new investments for traffic safety items and sidewalk maintenance, an increased commitment to capital projects and capital equipment replacement, and some energy efficiency improvements. He then reviewed the estimated revenue portion of the proposed budget and discussed several aspects of it. There was a lengthy discussion by the Board about specific line items, as well as the amount and use of excess unassigned fund balance, necessary improvements to the aging infrastructure, and non-resident fees for programs provided by the Recreation & Parks Department.

Elwell introduced the capital portion of the budget and discussed an amendment being requested to the capital equipment portion. He said that he sent an e-mail to the Board earlier in the day (dated November 15, 2016) noting that a reserve fire truck pumper had to be removed from the fleet because it did not pass the latest inspection, and consequently the Board was being asked to fund its replacement. He discussed the use and need for the pumper and he introduced a creative solution to purchase a combination pumper/rescue truck. Fire Chief Bucossi discussed department operations and clarified that the "reserve" pumper was not the frontline equipment but was used regularly during simultaneous or large calls. Elwell discussed borrowing a portion of the necessary funds and amending areas of the capital budget to pay for the new equipment. There was much discussion by the Board, particularly about the need for the vehicle, probable wear and tear on the vehicle, reliance on Mutual Aid, and the budgeting process.

Elwell then discussed the FY18 Capital Request, as presented on page 1 of the proposed Capital Budget. There was a brief discussion by the Board and the members agreed to defer further questions until individual departments presented their budgets.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

Small Business Assistance Program (SBAP) Loan Approval – True North Granola. Elwell said that the Board was asked to approve a Small Business Assistance Program loan to True North Granola in the amount of \$37,000, to be amortized over seven years at 3% interest. Ingrid Chrisco and Franklin Chrisco, owners of True North Granola, were present. Mrs. Chrisco spoke about the business and said that the loan would be used to purchase a rotator rack oven in order to increase capacity and production. There was a brief discussion.

MOTION BY JOHN ALLEN TO APPROVE A SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM LOAN TO TRUE NORTH GRANOLA IN THE AMOUNT OF \$37,000, TO BE AMORTIZED OVER SEVEN YEARS AT 3% INTEREST. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Gartenstein asked, and Board members agreed, to take the following agenda item out of order because people were in attendance to discuss it.

VCDP Implementation Grant 2016 – Approve Grant Application and Resolution, Brattleboro Permanent Supportive Housing Project, Windham & Windsor Housing Trust. Gartenstein said that the Board was asked to adopt a resolution authorizing the submission of an implementation grant application in the amount of \$449,000 to the Vermont Community Development Program to support the Brattleboro Permanent Supportive Housing project for Windham & Windsor Housing Trust (WWHT), as set forth in the memo from Assistant Town Manager Patrick Moreland, dated November 3, 2016. Representatives from WWHT - Connie Snow (Executive Director) and Pete Paggi (Director of Housing Development) - were present and they discussed the supportive housing model, in general, and specifics of the project. Snow said that WWHT had an option to purchase the Lamplighter Motel on the westerly side of Putney Road and to convert it into 22 fully contained micro apartments, 11 of which would be targeted to the homeless population. She said that WWHT had memorandums of understanding with two service providers – Groundworks Collaborative and HCRS – to provide life skill and counseling services to the residents. Paggi spoke about the plans to convert the southerly building into 8 efficiency apartments and the northerly building into 14 one-bedroom apartments, and the construction of a central community building with living room space, laundry facilities, a community kitchen, and office space for the service providers. DeGray spoke about his concerns for the safety of the pedestrian occupants who would have to walk on Putney Road where sidewalks and crosswalks were non-existent. Snow said that was a concern of WWHT and they were holding conversations with the local bus service. There was further discussion by the Board, including the cost of the project (\$197,000 per unit), other funding sources, applicable tax rates, and tenants' lengths of stay.

Assistant Town Manager Moreland said that the Board was asked to hold a public hearing on this matter. Gartenstein opened the public hearing and incorporated the previous discussions into the public hearing.

DeGray inquired about providing furnishings and the maintenance costs of the building. Snow said that furnishings would undoubtedly be part of the package and that maintenance of the buildings would be included in the operational budget.

O'Connor inquired whether current tenants could continue to live at the location after conversion to the new housing model. Snow said that tenants could apply.

There was no public comment.

Gartenstein closed the public hearing.

MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN TO ADOPT A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SUBMISSION

OF AN IMPLEMENTATION GRANT APPLICATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$449,000 TO THE VERMONT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM TO SUPPORT THE BRATTLEBORO PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROJECT FOR WINDHAM & WINDSOR HOUSING TRUST. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Close Out VCDP Planning Grant – Groundworks Collaborative, Public Hearing. Gartenstein said that the Board was asked to hold a public hearing in order to close out the Vermont Community Development Program Planning Grant for the Groundworks Collaborative, as set forth in the memorandum dated November 9, 2016, from Grants/Loan Manager Kim Ellison.

Gartenstein opened the public hearing.

Elwell said that the purpose of the grant was to help Groundworks develop a plan for the 39 Frost Street location to create a multi-purpose space consisting of housing for the homeless that would also provide office space for Groundworks. However, he said, due to the withdrawal of a certain funding source Groundworks was unable to proceed with the project as envisioned. He noted that this was a planning grant and not a project grant, and that no further action was required.

Gartenstein confirmed that the planning grant was spent and that the project was not able to be completed.

There was no public comment.

Gartenstein closed the public hearing.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

There was no further business.

MOTION BY RICHARD DEGRAY TO ADJOURN AT 9:18PM. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

David Schoales, Clerk