

BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND SEWER COMMISSIONER'S MEETING**July 14, 2014****Francis Faulkner Room 204****Regular Meeting 7:00 p.m.**

Present: Katie Green, Janet Adachi, Franny Osman; Town Manager Steven Ledoux. Ms. Adachi recorded the minutes.

Vice Chairman Green opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Citizens' Concerns

None

Chairman's Update and Operational Update

Ms. Green provided updates on the NARA Summer Concert schedule and Selectmen's upcoming meetings. NARA concerts: Help Wanted on Thursday; Indian Hill Jazz Band on 7/22; the No Doubt tribute band on 7/23. The Selectmen will continue with the Trudeau site plan hearing on 7/28, and will hear the report of -Healthcare Management Solutions about Acton Nursing Service on 8/11.

Mr. Ledoux reported a very successful, weather-postponed Fourth of July celebration on Saturday 7/5. The Town applied successfully for a Green Community grant that will cover the cost of all energy-related improvements for which the Town sought funding in the Memorial Library, at the junior high, high school and Conant, Douglas and Gates grammar schools. Negotiations are ongoing with the firefighters union regarding the proposed paramedic-level service; the Selectmen probably will need an Executive Session before the next meeting to discuss a possible settlement. The developers of the previously undeveloped Avalon Acton phase have a local-initiative-program development proposal for 64 units, of which 16 would be affordable, with some possible mitigation. Finally, the Town's risk-management efforts have resulted in a discount from MIIA of just over \$20K on municipal insurance coverage.

Public Hearings and Appointments

7:10 p.m. **Idylwilde Farms, Inc. – Change in Manager.** Unanimous vote, 3-0-0, to approve the change in manager.

7:20 p.m. **National Grid Gas Line Installation, Concord Street.** Unanimous vote, 3-0-0, to approve the application of National Grid for the installation and maintenance of approximately 20 feet of gas main in Concord Road, extending from the existing main near Nagog Hill Road westerly to serve 65 Concord Road and 58 Wood Lane.

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7:25 p.m. **NSTAR Pole Location, School Street.** Unanimous vote, 3-0-0, to approve and execute license agreements with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority and NSTAR Electric Company, authorizing the installation, use and maintenance of two electric poles at the rear, southerly side of the Town parking lot located at 13 School Street.

7:30 p.m. **Sewer Easement Relocation, 400 Massachusetts Ave.** This authorization is a follow-up to Town Meeting approval. Unanimous vote, 3-0-0, to approve the proposed sewer easement relocation.

Selectmen's Business

Discussion of FY 2015 Sewer Operation and Maintenance Rates. Finance Director Stephen Barrett proposed decreased rates for the coming year. The current estimated cost for a single-family residence is \$810 instead of \$842 (and compared to \$850) in FY14). The Sewer District, which now has been in place over 12 years, sends monthly bills. Based on the water readings from the Acton Water District, water consumption is flat; the sewer fees account only for water going into the sewer system, and not, for example, as happened recently, water leaking into the ground from a water-pipe break. The change in units of measurement from gallons to cubic feet is for consistency with the Water District's use of cubic feet. Other towns are consistent in the units of measurement for water and sewer services, whether gallons or cubic feet. Unanimous vote, 3-0-0, to approve the proposed rates for FY15: residential at 12.15 cents/ft³; commercial at 17.27 cents/ft³.

Complete Streets Policy. Health Director Doug Halley and Chris Kuschel, a professional planner with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, presented a proposed "Complete Streets" policy for the Selectmen's approval. Mr. Kuschel already has developed similar policies for Maynard and Littleton, using a grant that MAPC received for that purpose.

The concept originated in public-health concerns--the need to decrease smoking, improve eating habits, increase physical activity—that eventually spawned the idea of "complete streets" that include crosswalks, bike lanes, accessibility, etc., are safe for all users and multiple modes of travel, and can spur economic development and further environmental protection. The same concept in the MA Legislature formerly was known as "active streets." The policy is high-level and does not prescribe specific actions or mandate crosswalks and bike paths in every situation. The policy includes exceptions, such as for state highways not under the Town's control. The policy also includes a section for evaluating the effectiveness of the policy. Certified "complete streets" communities, which have policies in place and have set goals, would be eligible to apply for state grants. The MA Legislature included FY15 grant funding in the transportation bond bill. MAPC is working to get the funds released.

Ms. Adachi said the policy is rather long and complicated, without necessarily explaining clearly the "complete streets" concept. She suggested that perhaps the slide presentation, which provided a very clear explanation, could be attached to and made a part of the policy. She also asked for clarification of the final "Whereas" clause, which states that the policy might help to reduce "crashes." If the reference is to crashes involving motor vehicles, it should so specify, given that bicycle-on-bicycle crashes, etc. also

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are possible. She also wondered if there were supporting data for the idea that the policy might reduce crashes.

Ms. Osman said she would be interested in more metrics about the possible reduction of crashes.

Ms. Green said that bicycles already are on roads, so the addition of bicycle lanes will not make a difference, and marked lanes will help to make motorists more aware of bicyclists. She asked whether the MAPC had a model letter that the Selectmen might adapt and send to the Legislature about the grant-funding. Ms. Green recommended postponing the Board vote on the policy so that the two absent members, Chairman Gowing and Mr. Berry, will have an opportunity to hear and ask questions about the policy, which involves issues of great interest to both. Messrs. Halley and Kuschel said a postponed decision and second presentation would not be a problem.

Herman Kabakoff asked if the policy would be "mandatory." Messrs. Halley and Kuschel explained that the policy provides suggestions that are not mandatory. Mr. Kabakoff noted the absence in the presentation of any information about financial ramifications, and asked whether there had been any consideration of the financial impact. He suggested that a presentation to the Finance Committee might be appropriate. Ms. Green noted that Page 4 of the policy acknowledges the need for an assessment of financial costs.

Jim Snyder-Grant said he had been invited to provide feedback and was happy with the resulting policy. He said that Acton has narrow roads, sometimes with space only for the road and a sidewalk. He is glad to see children riding their bicycles on the sidewalks. In implementing the policy, the Town might consider designing wider sidewalks that will accommodate bicyclists.

Selectmen's Reports

Ms. Green: Recreation Commission – has not met recently.

School Committee – Voted to continue with the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System—MCAS-- testing rather than try the alternative standardized system that the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers—PARCC—has developed.

-Acton Boxborough United Way – Needs-Assessment Steering Committee.

Ms. Adachi:

-Minuteman Regional School member towns meeting, 7/24, at Weston Town Hall. She and Town Manager Steve Ledoux were present. Superintendent Ed Bourquillon present to answer questions. Proposed revised regional agreement does not have unanimous support. Member towns continue to confer about the issues facing the region.

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Design Review Board, 7/2. Ms. Adachi's first meeting as liaison. DRB working on proposed changes to organizational charge that eventually will go to Selectmen for consideration. DRB also aware of the new site plan proposal for 467 Great Road, for which Ms. Osman is assigned Selectman. Selectmen agreed to formally invite DRB to review Great Road filing and submit comments for Selectmen to consider during site plan hearing.

Finance Committee, 6/24. Started with joint meeting with Selectmen about Nursing Service. After Selectmen adjourned, meeting continued with Finance Department presentation of municipal global cash flow overview, meaning identification, explanation of various municipal funding accounts, including enterprise and revolving funds. Ms. Adachi is setting up meeting of Finance staff, Town Manager, Finance Committee chairman Steve Noone, and Ms. Adachi.

Water Resources Advisory Committee, 7/1, 7/9 – Continued work on slide presentation for Selectmen as well as other Town committees.

Other: Belle Choate remembrance reception, Thursday, 7/10, Powers Gallery, 5:00-7:00 p.m. Ms. Osman and Ms. Adachi attended. Ms. Choate's water colors and photography on display. Gallery packed with people having diverse connections to Ms. Choate: historical preservation, environmental, good government, Grange, etc. Graveside service at 1:00 p.m. apparently attended by over 100.

Ms. Osman

- Glenn Miller Orchestra performance at NARA last Friday – Well-attended.
- Commission on Disabilities - Held a productive retreat on the 11th that included a person leading team-building exercises.

Consent Agenda

Unanimous approval, 3-0-0, of all items except 8-9, 17.

Item 8: Selectmen Meeting Minutes of March 10, 2014 – Ms. Adachi held to note corrections not reflected in the meeting-packet version of minutes. Unanimous approval, 3-0-0, of minutes with Ms. Adachi's changes.

Item 9: Annual Goal Setting Meeting Minutes of June 30, 2014 – Ms. Osman held to propose some punctuation and other changes in Short-Term Goal 3, pertaining to CrossTown Connect. She also explained for the benefit of the audience that suggestions not ending up among the top five short-term and long-term goals were not necessarily less important. Unanimous approval, 3-0-0, with punctuation changes.

Item 17: One Day Liquor License Middlesex Chamber of Commerce, NARA. Ms. Green held to note that the organizers expect 350 attendees, and the Police Department want the organizers to confer with the Department about having at least one officer, possibly two officers, on site during the event.

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Unanimous approval, 3-0-0, with the condition that applicants confer with the Police Department about on-site police presence.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Tomy, Recording Secretary

Peter J. Berry, Clerk