

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
NOVEMBER 5, 2014
REGULAR MEETING

Members Present: David Parker, Nelson Almeida, David Andrade,
Michael Brady, Gary Sagar

Town Administrator: Shawn E. Cadime

Executive Assistant: Anne P. Rogers

Chairman Parker opened the meeting at 6 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence.

He announced that, in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 30, Section 20, anybody recording the meeting must notify the Chairman. The Board of Selectmen is recording the meeting both audio and video.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE OPENINGS UPDATE

Mr. Almeida announced that volunteers are needed on the Capital Improvement Committee, Conservation Commission, Cultural Council, Economic Development Committee, Energy Committee, Property Tax Work Off Committee, and Zoning Board of Appeals. Talent bank forms are available at the Town Hall and on the website.

Mr. Sagar advised there are two openings on the Finance Committee.

LICENSE MATTERS

Approve RWJ Beverage (MA) LLC (BJ's Wholesale) Request to Open at 10 a.m. on Sunday under the New Ruling by ABCC

A motion was made by Mr. Brady, seconded by Mr. Sagar, and it was

VOTED: 4 Ayes; To amend the license to allow RWJ Beverage (MA) LLC (BJ's Wholesale) to open at 10 a.m. on Sunday.

Approve Winn's Liquors, Inc. Request to Open at 10 a.m. on Sunday under the New Ruling by the ABCC

A motion was made by Mr. Brady, seconded by Mr. Sagar, and it was

VOTED: 4 Ayes; To amend the license to allow Winn's Liquors, Inc. to open at 10 a.m. on Sunday.

Mr. Andrade was not in attendance at the time of the above votes.

PRIORITY MATTERS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion and Vote on Reduction of Costs or Elimination of Blue Bags for Rubbish

Mr. Cadime advised that, at the request of the Board, Mr. Lamoureux, Mr. Cabral, Mr. Alexander and he met to prepare the analysis to eliminate the pay as you throw.

DPW Superintendent Robert Lamoureux explained that the program has been in existence since 1998. Seekonk was the model for other communities to enter into this program. The Town of Plymouth's recycling rate increased by 33% in a year. Natick had similar numbers.

Katie Mirza, Regional Municipal Assistance Coordinator for Mass. DEP, stated that she provides technical assistance and grant support to communities.

She confirmed that Seekonk has been a leader in the pay as you throw program, now called "SMART" - Save Money and Reduce Trash. Seekonk has been used as a model in publicity and video tapes.

Every year more and more communities transition to these SMART programs.

Having some kind of pricing mechanism like Seekonk has gives a direct benefit to residents to reduce trash to the greatest extent. It reduces trash collection and disposal costs.

About 142 communities in Massachusetts use this program. Very few go back to the old way. In comparison, programs like Seekonk generate about 1,100 lbs. per household per year. Without pay as you throw, the average is about 1,800 lbs. per household per year.

In this part of the state, they have seen the transition to automated collection with carts quicker than other parts of the state. Part of that has to do with the hauling companies.

Communities that have automated trash collection with 64 gallon carts for trash are generally about 1,600 lb. per household.

If Seekonk eliminated the bags and stayed with the carts, the trash would be up between 35% and 40% in terms of tonnage. That is over 1,000 lbs. increase in tons. It would take the community away from a high quality high performance program.

Mr. Cadime referred to his analysis. There are 5,140 households in Seekonk; and, with exemptions, the number is actually 5,000.

For FY 2014, 3,000 tons per year and recycling of 1,370 tons. The estimated tonnage with the new toter program in place dropped down by 7%. That is a conservative estimate. The tonnage went down to 2,800 tons per year and recycling increased to 1,570 tons for FY'15. The tipping costs for bags is \$201,600 and the tipping cost for FY'15 is \$72.00 and will increase subsequently with the contract. Current trash fee is \$185.00. They contacted ABC to figure out what the hidden costs would be to do away with the bags. With the current system, there is one truck to pick up solid waste with recyclables. That truck is almost filled to the max. It would require a second truck, but that truck would not be full. It would require another driver and insurance. The estimated cost is \$250,000 because it wasn't built into the contract. In addition, \$201,600 would be lost revenue from the bags.

ABC projected a 33% to 50% reduction in recycling by eliminating the bags. The total amount of \$453,861 would have to be made up. By dividing that by 5,000 households, it would come to an increase of \$91 for trash fee per individual. The new trash fee would be \$276.

As a base line approach, especially for the elderly population (15%), they would just be using one bag. That would generate under \$52 per week. That individual would see a \$234 fee. With the new fee, it would be \$41 more. He had figures for different percentages.

Mr. Lamoureux said the contract with ABC was based on the pay as you throw program. The contract might be null and void if the bags are eliminated.

Mr. Sagar said every time this is discussed there are new numbers. Mr. Alexander had said it would be \$39.95 additional cost per household if blue bags were eliminated. The people from ABC were going to buy all new trucks. Now, they need another truck at \$250,000.

Mr. Lamoureux pointed out if recycling goes down, trash will increase. One truck will not accommodate the trash.

Mr. Sagar talked about asking Town Meeting to adopt the Rhode Island plan. That is, in order to have trash picked up, residents have to put out recyclables. That would eliminate the need for blue bags.

Mr. Lamoureux noted that the elderly do not generate much recycling or trash.

Ms. Mirza said mandatory recycling is a secondary program in some communities. Pay as you throw is an incentive to reduce trash.

Mr. Sagar asked if the Town is locked in to have blue bags for the duration of the contract.

Mr. Lamoureux felt it would require a legal opinion on that.

Mr. Sagar said people are tired of buying blue bags. He questioned what if there is another way of getting tipping fees down.

November 5, 2014

-4-

Mr. Sagar said people are getting good salaries to provide adequate information and it changes every time.

Mr. Lamoureux said people would not have to buy as many blue bags if they do a good job recycling.

Mr. Cadime said that ABC was not contacted on the additional cost. If you eliminate the \$250,000 for the additional truck, it would be similar to the numbers that were presented.

Mr. Sagar felt the whole program was designed for a vendor not the taxpayers and it is wrong.

Chairman Parker noted the program has only been in town for two months. He felt they should wait until next summer.

Ms. Mirza said that Seekonk is on the cutting edge. It is difficult because it is new. Only a few communities are using pay to throw bags inside a cart. There are safety and efficient issues with the automated collection.

She said there is a grant where the State provides up to \$20 per household for communities that are thinking about transitioning into a pay as you throw program. Seekonk would not qualify for that.

There is a program approved by the DEP if communities are using a 35 gallon cart.

Mr. Cadime advised there is about \$2,600 in an account from a grant the Town received years ago.

Mr. Lamoureux said the Town received a \$2,800 grant from DEP that was used to purchase bike racks.

Mr. Andrade asked about a cost savings to pick up trash every other week.

Mr. Lamoureux said not in tipping fee. They are monitoring the program. There are still quite a few people who put out a cart but have a bag or two alongside of that.

Ms. Mirza said it is not efficient for them to empty a cart that is not full. Carts should be at least half full or more.

Chairman Parker agreed that there may be a way to pass along savings to taxpayers, but it is too early to talk about it.

Mr. Andrade asked for a projection so they could evaluate the program at the end of the year. They might be able to reduce the trash fee.

November 5, 2014

-5-

Mr. Cadime suggested further discussion during the budget process.

Mr. Sagar said as long as it is a work in progress. He thanked Ms. Mirza for attending the meeting.

Mr. Brady thanked her for saying the Town is doing something right.

He felt they should review the program on a quarterly basis.

Mr. Cadime said his intention was to do quarterly budget updates. It is a month behind right now.

Mr. Brady felt it is unfair to the person who uses one bag to pay the same fee as the person who puts out five big bags.

Discussion on Smaller Toter for Trash/Recycle Pickup

Mr. Lamoureux advised that DPW will assist in the delivery of 35 gallon carts once they arrive. He cautioned that once residents get the smaller cart and find out it is too small it might be difficult to get the big cart back.

He said some residents have asked for even larger carts - 96 gallons.

DPW is keeping track of violators who do not use the blue bags. There are about 22 to 25 residents. He has sent out notices indicating that there is a \$25 fee if it continues.

COMMUNITY SPEAKS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider Approval of RFQ Bid for Architectural Design Services for Senior Center to Brewster Thornton Group Architects, LLP

Mr. Andrade recused himself and left the room.

Mr. Cadime advised that Mr. Bowden and Mr. McLintock of the senior center building committee and he interviewed all six architects who submitted proposals. They visited the corporate headquarters of each one. All six firms met the minimum requirements. They ranked the individuals based on qualifications outlined. They came up with similar rankings in different order. They did a weighed average. A unanimous vote was taken by the building committee to award to the Brewster group. That is also his recommendation.

November 5, 2014

-6-

Mr. Sagar expected the negotiations would have been completed by this meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Sagar, seconded by Mr. Brady, and it was

VOTED: 4 Ayes; 1 Abstention; To authorize the Town Administrator to negotiate with Brewster Thornton Group Architects, LLP for architectural design services for the senior center.

The vote: Mr. Sagar – Aye; Mr. Brady – Aye; Mr. Almeida – Aye; Chairman Parker – Aye; Mr. Andrade - Abstained.

Vote on First Right of Refusal for Property Located at 1977 Fall River Avenue

Mr. Cadime advised the property is being sold. It includes a miniature golf course and driving range. The Town has the first right of refusal. It will be added tax revenue into the Town.

Mr. Sagar said a house on Hollister Road is also included. He was told a large warehouse will be built there – 265,000 sq. ft. building with 450 parking spaces. The property was assessed at \$1.6M. He enthusiastically supports this project.

A motion was made Mr. Brady, seconded by Mr. Sagar, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To decline the first right of refusal on property located at 1977 Fall River Avenue and that the Board of Selectmen enthusiastically supports any proposed use of that land that would be beneficial to the Town of Seekonk.

Mr. Almeida noted that it is one less recreational facilities in town. (It is now a miniature golf and driving range.)

Discussion on Recreation Fees

Mr. Sagar acknowledged the work done by the Recreation Commission.

He added that he has a problem with the fact that the Town charges students to use its fields.

Mr. Brady said he talked about this before. He heard there were charges for the junior football team to practice on the fields. He brought it up to the School Department and Recreation. It hadn't been authorized. He agreed with Mr. Sagar.

He noted that DPW maintains those fields and parents volunteer to do some of the work.

Mr. Sagar said the little league is charged a fee to use the concession stand.

November 5, 2014

-7-

The Chairman of the Recreation Commission told him that all fees were approved by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Sagar asked to see the documentation to support that.

Mr. Sagar felt that leagues from out of town should be charged any increases in fees.

Mr. Cadime will check to see if it is a revolving fund.

Consider Approval of Regular Session Minutes of October 8, 2014 and Work Session Minutes of October 29, 2014

A motion was made by Mr. Sagar, seconded by Mr. Almeida, and it was

VOTED: 4 Ayes; 1 Abstention; To accept Regular Session minutes of October 8, 2014.

The vote: Mr. Sagar – Aye; Mr. Almeida – Aye; Mr. Brady – Aye; Chairman Parker – Aye; Mr. Andrade – Abstained.

A motion was made by Mr. Sagar, seconded by Mr. Almeida, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept the Work Session minutes of October 29, 2014.

OTHER BUSINESS

Discuss Other Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chairman 48 Hours Before the Meeting

None.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Cadime advised that the Human Service Council has invited the Board of Selectmen to attend its meeting on Monday, December 15, 2014, at 3:30 p.m., especially the Chairman and Vice Chairman. The issue is transportation.

He advised that Mr. Lamoureux had asked to waive fees on work being done by DPW that requires a permit.

It will be on next week's agenda. But, the consensus of the Board is to waive the fees.

He would like to have the board revisit administrative policy #17 which states the Board of Selectmen can waive all fees with signs, including School Committee, Water District and Housing Authority. It does not include fees for plumbing, electrical and gas.

November 5, 2014

-8-

Mr. Sagar noted that the plumbing and electrical inspectors are paid by the hour.

The Board has waived all fees for other projects.

Mr. Cadime said they still need to apply for permits.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN LIAISON REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Mr. Andrade asked if Mr. Cadime could explain a few e-mails he had received from residents.

Mr. Brady knew what that was about. He asked who determines what people on the tax work off program should be doing.

Chairman Parker said that the program comes out of Human Services. Mrs. Huck works with department heads in placing these individuals.

Mr. Brady said it should be the responsibility of the Town Administrator. He noted that he walked into Town Hall and saw someone he had never seen before sitting in an office. He inquired of Mrs. Gamer, and she told him it was a person on the tax work off program. He felt strongly that the Town Administrator should determine what they do and what authority they have.

Mr. Cadime advised he is talking with that department head. Last week something did transpire that he is not happy about. He will address it.

Chairman Parker said there has to be a reason for them to be there; not just to keep the chair warm.

Mr. Andrade received a complaint about ATV use on conservation land near Allen Avenue. The police went out there. After the police left, those individuals harassed the people who called the police until 4 a.m.

Mr. Brady suggested contacting the environmental police. They know all the regulations.

Mr. Sagar said that Chief Mace used them about a year ago for an incident off Newman Avenue.

Mr. Cadime said he has been getting similar complaints about Cole Street.

Mr. Andrade said he got an e-mail from the County Commissioners. There was a budget he was supposed to sign but he didn't get a notice to attend that meeting.

Mr. Almeida asked about the part time inspector position.

Mr. Cadime said the position is still posted but there have been no applicants.

November 5, 2014

-9-

Mr. Almeida announced that a ceremony is scheduled for Veterans Day, November 11th, at 11 a.m. at Town Hall. He urged residents to attend to honor all veterans.

Mr. Sagar commended Town Clerk Janet Parker and her staff for making the election a smooth process. Almost 5,000 people voted.

Police officers were present at the polls. He asked one to remove his van so it could be used for handicapped and senior citizens. He never moved the vehicle. He will address that through Mr. Cadime and to the chief.

Patrolman Shawn Kelly was very helpful. He assisted people in wheelchairs. He thanked Officer Kelly.

Mr. Sagar announced that the Banna Fire Station will be dedicated on December 14. That is the day that firefighter Banna died in the line of duty. The Fire Chief should be sending out invitations.

He asked if there is any information on snowplowing on unaccepted streets.

Mr. Cadime said he will meet with Atty. Brainsky on November 24.

Mr. Sagar would like to attend that meeting.

He asked Mr. Cadime to forward the e-mail from GPI re: Bakers corner pavement failure to Mass. DOT and Rep. Steve Howitt.

Mr. Sagar asked to have the lease for the old town hall on the website.

He watched part of the School Committee meeting. The finance officer was giving a budget report for the schools, and she indicated the Town and schools are in a consortium for gas that will be ending, and the rates will double.

Mr. Cadime said the Town will be at 50% and the schools 75% increase.

Mr. Brady asked how that can be. There is more natural gas in this country.

Mr. Cadime said it is cheaper right now to go directly with the gas company.

Mr. Sagar noted that the previous town administrator and Mr. Lamoureux had planned to have the gas company do an evaluation. He asked Mr. Cadime to follow up.

He said all the boards but the Board of Selectmen are listed on the website calendar.

November 5, 2014

-10-

Mr. Andrade wanted to make sure agendas and minutes for the Board of Selectmen are posted on the website.

Mr. Sagar asked for an update on negotiations.

Mr. Cadime said he should have information on two of the unions for the next meeting. He is hoping to finalize contracts in December.

Mr. Brady thanked DPW for putting the stop signs at Cole and Anthony Streets. However, he has seen violators. He felt the Police Department might want to start using enforcement to change the behavior of the people.

He asked who the liaison person with the cable committee is.

Chairman Parker suggested that Mr. Cadime request a copy of the monthly treasurer's report from cable and put in the Board's packet.

Mr. Brady said that people want to know what happens with the money from Comcast.

A motion was made by Mr. Brady, seconded by Mr. Almeida, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn at 7:21 p.m.

The vote: Mr. Brady – Aye; Mr. Almeida – Aye; Mr. Andrade – Aye; Mr. Sagar – Aye; Chairman Parker – Aye.

Respectfully submitted,

David Andrade, Clerk

Patricia Gamer, Secretary