



Town of Abington

OFFICE OF BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES SEPTEMBER 14, 2009 6:30 P.M. COTTER ROOM

Present: Rich Cunningham, Andy Burbine, Jerry Corcoran, Chris Aiello, Tom Corbett

Announcements:

Letter read in appreciation of "movie night" at the Police Station.

Letter read from Henry DiCarlo announcing inter-generational story reading hour at COA, 441 Summer Street, 9/21/09 at 10 a.m.

The first Farmer's Market event was successful, despite the rain.

The Annual Coombs Race on 9/13 had a great turnout.

Seoane Landscaping generously donated the two planters with flowers and plants in front of Town Hall.

6:35 pm. Comcast Renewal Proposal. Atty. Bill August and Henry DiCarlo, Cable Advisory Committee Chairman, gave brief history. Comcast is at the end of a 10-year contract. A not for profit public access board has been set up. They have negotiated a contract with Comcast, which allows a 90-day transition to turn the studio over to the town. 4.3% of revenue will maintain studio and fund staff. The Cable Advisory Committee voted unanimously to accept the contract. They are recommending that the Board of Selectmen approves and signs the contract for the next ten years. They will have an adequately funded studio. Contracts are similar for Verizon and Comcast; Atty. August worked on both of them. A budget of \$150,000 is anticipated for the studio that would be from both companies combined. Towns are pre-empted from setting rates by act of Congress. Legally there does not need to be an equivalency between the two contracts. Gerry Buckley, Comcast, reported basic lineup is still available on analog. Digital will be enhanced in the next few months. There will be more speed on Internet and more choices on viewing. The new license doesn't change any of the packages.

M/Burbine to approve the contract

S/Corcoran

Voted 5-0

6:40 p.m. Revocation of underground storage licenses for: 190 North Avenue, 761 Bedford Street, 1477 Bedford Street, 118 Monroe Street. This topic had been before the Board before, but license holders had not been notified.

Fire Chief Arthur Pelland – license is not needed since there is no longer a tank on these properties. Went through regulations on permitting. Someone could come before Board to have license reissued, and abutters would be notified of hearing if license were applied for at another

date. License is issued to property, not individual, for a specific quantity. By law license stays with property. License would transfer with the property in the event of it being sold. There is an annual fee for storage. Permit would also be required.

Rich Little, 3 Plain Street, owns 190 North Avenue, and gave a history of what had transpired. His issue is that he was before Board in 1989 to transfer business license. Tanks were removed in 1989. He asked at that time if license should be transferred and was told no. Tenant and Mr. Little were under the impression that this license allowed operation of his commercial garage business with the combustible liquids involved and the license had to be maintained. Has kept it up for 20 years.

Discussion took place, and Board determined that the license added value to Mr. Little's property. He could maintain the license and obtain the necessary permit from the Fire Department to resolve the issue.

M/Corcoran to allow license for 190 North Avenue to go on, subject to all permitting approvals
S/Burbine

Voted 5-0

M/Burbine to revoke the license from the other three locations

S/Aiello

Voted 5-0

Discussion on Special Town Meeting, October 26, 2009. Mrs. Jamieson updated Board on financial status, which shows a deficit of \$833,485. A total of \$1,035,932 will be requested at STM. There will be a meeting of the department heads on 9/15/09 to give them an update. Town Accountant Sulmonte gave an overview of the factors involved – local receipts lower than expected, permitting fees less than half of what was anticipated, lower return on investments, excise taxes down 20%, FY'09 is affecting free cash, and moratorium on sewer has affected permitting. This year's finances have been unprecedented.

Chairman Corbett requested the School Department be included in all meetings. Mrs. Jamieson will speak with town counsel as far as hiring freeze. Schools don't fall under this; School Committee has control over School Department. Board requested government and school to adjust for what is coming. The Town will need the help and assistance of all departments and boards.

M/Aiello for hiring freeze – no positions to be filled

S/Cunningham

There are going to be vacancies for positions of health agent, and Council on Aging director. Regionalization was suggested for both positions to reduce salaries. T/Corbett and R/Cunningham have spoken to Whitman re Board of Health. Board of Health is not under the Board of Selectmen's control, but the recommendation can still be made.

David Klein, 90 Temple Street, on the Board of Directors of COA - there are other towns in need of space. He is concerned that there won't be someone responsible for what is going on in the Sr. Center for programs. Concerned about liability. Suggested hiring a director for Abington, but allowing Whitman to use the Center.

M/Burbine to send letter to Board of Health strongly suggesting regionalization and/or part time health agent for the remainder of this fiscal year due to current fiscal situation

S/Cunningham

Voted 5-0

M/Burbine to authorize Mrs. Jamieson to speak to Whitman Town Administrator re sharing a COA director, and other towns, and discuss this with COA itself

S/Cunningham

Voted 5-0

M/Cunningham to implement hiring freeze, attrition, and make recommendation to all those who Board doesn't have authority over – express this at department head meeting, by letter, sending same letter as last year, and follow up with discussion with departments. Department heads and boards need to be aware of future 9C cuts to this year's budget. rich, 5-0.

S/Burbine

Voted 5-0

An allocated budget was brought up, to be discussed at a future meeting. Chairman Corbett mentioned Kopelman & Paige coming to a meeting giving a presentation on regionalization and human resources. Board to discuss this at next meeting.

Mrs. Jamieson went over articles for STM. Articles 13 (charter change regarding Strong Fire Chief) and 14 (charter change regarding the Health Agent) were discussed. Chief Pelland spoke in favor of strong chief. Board did not support either article. Board questioned the removal of storage tank at SVGC. Chief Pelland explained the necessity.

There was a discussion on budget cuts. Mrs. Jamieson will meet with department heads and will come back on 9/28 with recommendations.

Town Manager's Report

Updates given on lights at 509 Washington Street – scheduled to be replaced.

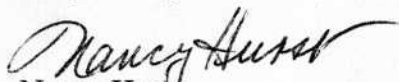
Train noise – Concerned Abington Citizens Against Excessive Train Noise came before Board on July 13th. Sen. Morrissey contacted someone from Federal Railroad Administration, and a meeting was requested. Town will research going forward with petition for quiet zone; will contact other towns with quiet zones.

Abington now has an inter-municipal agreement with Norwell for the building inspector. Received letter from Able Restoration for cleanup situation at Town Hall, in which they cancelled the amount due. Letter of thanks will be sent out.

M/Corbett to go into executive session for purposes of collective bargaining and not to reconvene into open session, S/Cunningham – roll call vote taken – Voted: 5-0 Burbine, Aiello, Corcoran, Cunningham, Corbett.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Nancy Hurst