

**Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
7/13/09**

The Board of Selectmen met this evening at the Easton Town Offices, Selectmen's Office, 136 Elm Street, with Chair Colleen Corona presiding.

Members present: Colleen Corona, John Haederle, Chuck King, Ellen Barlow, Irwin Cohen and Town Administrator David Colton

Corona called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

Joint Meeting with the Finance Committee to appoint a new Finance Committee member

Finance Committee Members Donna Lopolito, Albert Benson, Patrick Goodman, Sean Noonan, Michael Ferrara, Steve Delano, and Robert Hicks were present.

Applicant Carol Nestler of 15 Clara Howard Way was present.

Nestler introduced herself as a resident of Easton since 2002, married, with two children. Nestler explained her Bachelors Degree in Accounting and Masters Degree in Finance.

Lopolito asked about Nestler's corporate experience; she gave a summary of her private experience working at different companies.

Delano asked Nestler if she has any experience in municipal finance. Nestler replied no.

Voted: (Barlow/Cohen) the Selectmen and Finance Committee voted unanimously by roll call to appoint Carol Nestler to the Finance Committee.

Lopolito-Nestler; Benson-Nestler; Goodman-Nestler; Noonan-Nestler; Ferrara-Nestler; Delano-Nestler; Hicks-Nestler; Cohen-Nestler, Haederle-Nestler; Corona-Nestler; King-Nestler; Barlow-Nestler

Budget update

Corona thanked the Finance committee for all their hard work. Colton updated the Board and Finance Committee on the state's budget. The budget is below what we expected when we passed the town budget at town meeting. Our state aid has been reduced another \$470,000 from what we planned in the budget. The revenue projections are worse than what they were when the budget was passed; there could be even more cuts later this year. Local receipts are down as well.

Colton gave a brief update on the Fire Union concessions which helped reduce layoffs by three in the Fire Department. The Police Department is down two police officers. We have a budget subcommittee meeting scheduled for next week. Later in the meeting, the Selectmen will be asked to vote on the retiree health insurance program which will save about \$100,000 from the health insurance budget; we are still \$300,000 or more in a deficit. Colton suggested the possibility of scheduling a special town meeting on October 5th. We need to have this meeting early enough in the fiscal year so we have a budget before we set the tax rate. The local option of a local meals tax will be discussed and it was noted that this cannot go into effect until October 1st. Colton referred to an upcoming Budget Subcommittee meeting; the shortfall will be discussed.

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes 7 13 09

Corona thanked the employees for the concessions and without their cooperation we wouldn't be in the situation that we are now. Colton reiterated we are about \$1million better off because of this. Corona thanked Colton for his efforts.

Lopolito noted that other communities are worse off than Easton. Haederle asked about the current reserves balance. Colton suggested the balance to be approximately \$2 million.

Barlow asked if there will be anything else to put back into reserves. Lopolito responded that after speaking with the Town Accountant, it is not likely.

Corona thanked the Finance Committee for all of their hard work.

Traffic Safety Committee recommendation – Harlow Street area

Police Chief Allen Krajcik, DPW Director Wayne Southworth and Fire Chief Tom Stone were present. Corona explained the request from a resident to review the area of Harlow and North Main Streets.

Southworth explained the improvements recently made in this area per the recommendation of Beta Group. He explained the recommendation of a "Stop Sign Ahead" sign. The three way stop sign warrant has not been met to allow for the installation of the requested stop sign at the intersection of Harlow and North Main Streets. Southworth explained the requirements for the three way stop sign.

Krajcik explained the need for five crashes in a 12 month period and noted that this doesn't exist in this area.

Barlow asked how effective the "Stop Sign Ahead" signs are. Krajcik stated it may alert the people that are not used to that area although it may not be as affective to the regular people that live in that area. Krajcik also noted the committee's recommendation of increased traffic enforcement and repainting the stop line at the intersection.

The Board accepted the recommendations and thanked the committee for their hard work.

Application for Transfer of Retail Package Goods All Alcohol License from Joemac Retail Corporation dba Independent Liquors to Shiv Om Liquor Corporation dba Independent Liquors – 503 Foundry Street, Easton, MA

Haederle read the notice of hearing into the record.

Attorney Jack Silverstein and Mr. Kalpesh Patel were present. Colton read the list of conditions to consider when approving the transfer.

Corona referenced Mr. Patel's other license liquor establishment in Fitchburg, Massachusetts and asked if he is the manager at that location. Silverstein replied yes and noted that Patel is proposed to be the manager at the Easton location as well. Corona asked how often he would physically be at the Easton location. Patel responded 20 hours per week. Corona asked if he had any liquor license violations at his location in Fitchburg. Mr. Patel replied that he has not had any violations. Corona noted for the record that Easton conducts compliance checks regularly and that we have a very strict violation policy. Corona asked Patel if he is TIPS trained. Patel stated yes. Corona asked if the other employees will be TIPS trained. Patel stated yes. Corona offered Patel a copy of the violation policy and noted that out of state identifications are not acceptable in Massachusetts as a valid form of identification.

King asked if the other on manager proposed to be on the premises would be TIPS trained. Silverstein noted that they are in the process of training this person.

There were no further questions.

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes 7 13 09

Voted: (Barlow/Corona) voted unanimously to approve the transfer of the package goods all alcohol license subject to the following conditions:

- * Filing of a of a new business certificate
- * Submission of the required workers compensation information
- * confirmation from the Board of Health that all the appropriate permits have been transferred

One day liquor license request – Michael Richard

Applicant Michael Richard was present. Richard explained Bill Callahan Memorial Run Fundraiser to be held at the North Easton Union Villa on July 25, 2009. All the funds raised will go to different charities. The motorcycle ride will leave Easton and then proceed into Stoughton and. He is expecting 150 – 250 participants.

Corona verified that the one day license is for the outside premises of the North Easton Union Villa property at 190 Washington Street from 1pm – 7pm. Richard noted that they will not go on to the town field with alcohol.

Haederle expressed some concern about parking. Richard does not see the parking as an issue. Richard spoke of the how other runs work and the orderly event that is anticipated.

Voted: (King/Barlow) voted unanimously to approve the one day liquor license from 1-7pm at 190 Washington Street.

One detail officers is required by the Easton Police Department.

Interviews for the CPA Committee vacancy

Sean Fitzgerald

Fitzgerald introduced himself and explained his request to serve on the CPA Committee as he feels that the CPA Committee is very important. He explained that the committee currently has a lot of money and they have a lot of responsibility. He understands the use of the money but doesn't see the money being spent. As a member of the Board of Assessors, Fitzgerald sees the many gifts of land donations to the town and the decreasing tax revenue. Over time, the number grows and grows. Fitzgerald expressed concern that that we have a number of historic properties on the tax roles and we spend taxpayer money on private facilities and suggested that we should spend money on our own properties before we spend money on private properties. He spoke of the tax consequences associated with this. Fitzgerald also spoke of need for more affordable housing and recreation.

King asked about the need to put more resources into recreation and affordable housing, would he wish to bring affordable housing to some type of affordable housing number and what the goal would be. Fitzgerald spoke of the 10% affordable number and he feels that people want to develop the properties. Fitzgerald suggested that we are spending extra money to acquire the properties. Fitzgerald suggested the town has purchased properties when a 40B development is threatened.

Barlow commented that the Affordable Housing Trust Fund is a vehicle to fund more affordable housing. Barlow asked what specific historical properties Fitzgerald spoke of earlier. Fitzgerald spoke of the pond/historical dam next to him on Elm Street that is owned by the town and suggested that we use funds to acquire the old historic dams. Fitzgerald suggested that we would end up with a better water supply. We would have a place for people to ice skate and perhaps even canoe. He also spoke of Monte's Pond in that area. He feels that most of the dams are historic and suggested that using historic money to repair these dams could be an option. Corona noted that these dams are privately owned. Fitzgerald spoke of Flyaway Pond as an example.

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes 7 13 09

Haederle asked about the historic buildings in town and asked if he thinks it would be appropriate for CPA Committee to facilitate development of historical properties.

Fitzgerald explained that there are construction and then management opportunities. He would be in favor of using CPA funds to assist the retention and improvement. He is not against spending town money on private property but feels that town owned property should be first.

Corona referenced Fitzgerald's comment that a developer threatens 40B and then the town buys the property to preserve it; she cannot think of an example where the town has done this. Fitzgerald used the Dean Street property as an example. His larger objective is to accomplish the goal of affordable housing rather than a reaction to the threat of development.

Cohen asked if Fitzgerald is looking for a diversion of the CPA philosophy. Fitzgerald felt that their Philosophy is fine but he'd like to see a different view. He is looking at this for an Assessors point of view.

Interview for the CPA Committee - Gregory Strange

Strange introduced himself to the Board. He moved to Easton 25 years ago and finds that he has time to give back to the community. He has experience on the Planning Board and the Capital Planning Committee as well as experience as a Builder and a Landscape Designer. Strange suggested that he has not always agreed with the decisions of the CPA Committee. He feels that his experience and passion can bring something of experience and value. Corona asked for an example of what he doesn't agree with on the CPA Committee. Strange suggested that he tends to be more open than the CPA Committee and likes to work toward a common goal. He feels that CPA Committee is a little more tight lipped than it needs to be. Strange suggested that it is our duty to be open and suggested that a different approach or fresh blood may be good. We need to look at ways to research a way to figure out the best ways to create affordable housing, recreation, etc.

Haederle asked Strange what type of skill set he would bring to the CPA Committee. He spoke of his experience with Babe Ruth Baseball and the field issue, specifically not having a good set up for the older kids in town to play baseball. Strange suggested that there must be other opportunities in town to explore.

Barlow asked about his role on the Planning Board and the Capital Planning Committee, specifically if appointed if he would continue on these committees. Corona noted that she asked for an opinion from Town Counsel about serving on these committees and after reviewing the bylaw, Town Counsel has ruled that this is not an issue. Strange addressed Barlow's question and stated that the Capital Planning Committee doesn't required a lot of time and he feels that the Planning Board commitment is manageable. Strange noted that he is applying to serve on the CPA Committee as a resident, not a member of the Planning Board. Haederle confirmed that the vacancy is the At Large open seat.

In closing, Strange suggested that he would like to see more joint meetings within town and he feels we need to consolidate ideas.

It was noted that there is one more candidate to interview at the next meeting and no appointment will be made at this time.

DEP Public Water System Award

DPW Director Wayne Southworth was present. Corona congratulated Southworth and the Water Department for this award. Southworth spoke briefly of the award and expressed appreciation for the members of the Easton Water Division.

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes 7 13 09

Contract for environmental monitoring and flare operation and maintenance at the landfill – Camp Dresser & McKee, Inc.

Southworth explained the contract proposal in the amount of \$32,000 for a six month period. We are asking the DEP to lessen the required testing.

Voted: (Haederle/Barlow) voted unanimously to approve the contract

Order of taking – reconstruction of Foundry and Depot Streets

Voted: (Barlow/King) voted unanimously to approve the order of taking as printed in the plans provided by Vanesse, Hangen, Brustlin, Inc.

Southeastern Regional School – request for fee waivers

Colton explained the request for fee waiver relating to the summer 2009 projects.

Voted: (Haederle/King) voted unanimously to approve the waiver of Building permit fees for the 2009 summer projects

One day liquor license request – Richard Hudson

Voted: (Barlow/King) voted unanimously to approve a one day beer and wine license for a family reunion on July 25, 2009 from 6-10 at the Oakes Ames Memorial Hall

Special Act Charter Committee's request to extend completion date

Chairman Steve Merlin was present.

Merlin explained the request to extend the timeframe for the completion date of the committee's charge. Citizens have requested the committee to hold another public hearing and the committee would like to meet with the Board of Selectmen some time in August and then a month later the committee would put out a first draft of a proposed charter; hold a public hearing and then a final draft in November or so. He is recommending a preliminary report by September 30th and then a final by November 30th. The Board agreed with the request to extend the time frame.

Voted: (Haederle/Barlow) voted unanimously to extend the deadline for completion of the charter to December 31st, 2009

Proposed Gift of Land – 360 Purchase Street

Voted: (Barlow/Haederle) voted unanimously to approve the gift of land to the Conservation Commission located at 360 Purchase Street in Easton

Appointment to the Green Communities Committee

Corona suggested that Patricia Haederle has volunteered to serve as a Selectmen designee to the Green Communities Committee. Haederle is currently doing this type of work with her job as Massachusetts Port Authority.

The Board agreed with appointing Haederle as the Selectmen's designee.

Voted: (King/Cohen) voted unanimously by roll call to appoint Patricia Haederle of 214 Purchase Street as the Selectmen's designee to the Green Communities Committee

Cohen-Haederle; Haederle-Haederle; Corona-Haederle; King-Haederle; Barlow-Haederle

Registrar appointment

Voted: (Cohen/Haederle) voted unanimously by roll call to appoint Patricia Locke of 161 Norton Ave to the Board of Registrars.

Cohen-Locke; Haederle-Locke; Corona-Locke; King-Locke; Barlow-Locke

Discussion re: proposed Verizon legislation

The Board agreed to send the attached draft letter to our Legislators.

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes 7 13 09

Discussion re: proposed slots at Raynham Dog Track

Corona referenced the discussion at the state level to allow the legalization of slots at existing dog tracks throughout Massachusetts. West Bridgewater submitted a copy of their letter they sent to the Legislature. The Board agreed with submitting a similar letter. Barlow asked about the slots mitigation formula and questioned if this is fair and if it has worked for communities. Colton suggested that in general it works.

Discussion re: letter to legislators concerning subsidized housing inventory (SHI)

See the attached letter submitted by the Town of Norton requesting a change in the calculation of SHI. The Board supported sending a similar letter.

Scheduling of Town Administrator evaluation

Corona noted that this item has been delayed due to town meeting and budget. Corona will send out the template for the evaluation and asked that the Board complete this in a week so that it can be placed on an upcoming agenda.

Constable reappointment – William Scharnick

Voted: (Cohen/Barlow) voted unanimously by roll call to reappoint William Scharnick as constable for the Town of Easton

Cohen-Scharnick; Haederle-Scharnick; Corona-Scharnick; King-Scharnick; Barlow-Scharnick

PPO change for retirees

Colton explained that Labor Counsel advised him that the change must be made to the retiree health plans as they were made to the other employees; they must get the same premium as the employees. The retirees have been notified and the town has seen quite a shift from the PPO to the HMO. Other options are available for the retirees. If they choose to stay on the PPO, the premium will increase.

Voted: (Corona/King) voted unanimously that the premium contribution rates for the retiree PPO Plan will be adjusted, effective July 1, 2009, so that the Town's premium will be the actual cost equivalency to the HMO Plan premium offered by the Town. This premium rate will be adjusted each July 1, in order to maintain this equivalency.

Minutes

Voted: (Barlow/King) voted unanimously to approve general minutes dated 4/17/09

Voted: (Barlow/Cohen) voted unanimously to approve general minutes dated 7/1/09

Selectmen's notes

Corona noted that Easton has been voted the 37th Best Place to Live according to CNN Money Magazine's list of best small towns to live in the country.

Corona congratulated Easton resident Katie Vataloro as she has been named Miss Teen Massachusetts and will be competing for Miss Teen USA title.

Town Administrator's notes

None

Press notes

None

Public participation

None

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes 7 13 09

Voted: (Corona/Cohen) voted unanimously to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing potential real estate acquisition, not to return to open session (8:45pm)

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Southworth