

**Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
8/25/08**

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, Irwin Cohen and Town Administrator David Colton

Members not present: Ellen Barlow

Corona called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

Recognition: Family of Lance Corporal Ryan Walsh

Mr. & Mrs. James Walsh and other family members were present. Corona referenced Lance Corporal Ryan Walsh' ambush attack and his rehabilitation to date. Mr. & Mrs. Walsh gave the update on their son Ryan's status. Currently, Ryan is at the Veterans Hospital in Richmond, VA. He will have a review of his surgery with the surgeons tomorrow. He is able to walk on a limited basis. Overall, he is very fortunate and they are hoping to have him home by the end of September. Nine months to one year of rehabilitation is anticipated.

Chief Kominsky, Officer Nunes and Officer Healey were present representing the Easton Police Department and the Oliver Ames High School Lacrosse Team. Officer Nunes represented a check to the Walsh family from the Police Association. Officer Healey presented a gift on behalf of the Lacrosse Team and suggested that they hope to see him in at an Alumni game.

Chief Stone and Fire Union President Brendan McCarthy were present. Stone spoke of the sacrifices Ryan made and thanked the Walsh family for what Ryan has done for the country. Chief Stone noted the other members of the Fire Department present, all wearing red polo shirts with the Support our Troops Ribbon, showing support for those serving our country. Members of the department will be wearing the shirts on Fridays. A shirt was given to the family for Ryan as well.

VFW Quarter Master Ernie Camara was present. Camara spoke of Ryan's injury and stated that the VFW sent a telephone card with 600 minutes for Ryan to call home. When Ryan runs out of minutes, the VFW will send more. Camara noted that he is a Marine as well and hopes to see him soon.

American Legion Commander Lee Williams was present. Williams noted that the Legion has been in touch with Ryan to offer their support. The American Legion will pay his dues and offered any other assistance that may be needed.

Veterans Agent Steve Nolan was present. Nolan spoke of the proud community and thanked the town department heads, employees and residents who have been sending packages to our troops who have been serving our country over the years. He thanked the town and the Board of Selectmen for all their support.

Mr. Walsh spoke of the great Veterans Association here in town. He spoke of the veterans' meal for the graduating seniors preparing to go into the military in 2005. They were impressed at how much the veterans cared; the family appreciates all the support.

Corona reiterated how much this community supports Ryan. Corona gave the address to send letters as follows:
Marine Lance Corporal Ryan Walsh
McGuire VA Medical Center,
1201 Broad Rock Boulevard
Richmond, VA 23249

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Mr. Walsh spoke of the cards and mail received to date. He personally thanked everyone in town for all their support.

Introduction of Town Clerk Jeremy Gillis

Town Clerk Jeremy Gillis was welcomed by the Board of Selectmen. Colton introduced Gillis to the Board. Gillis noted that was the Assistant City Clerk in Gloucester prior to coming to Easton and is the father of two four month old boys. Gillis noted that he will be moving to Stoughton in the next few months and looks forward to working with the Board and the citizens of the town. The Board welcomed Gillis as the new Town Clerk. Corona commented that she has always considered the Town Clerk's position important because it is the gateway to the town.

VFW dedication of the Vietnam Memorial

Colton announced the dedication of the Vietnam Memorial on Sunday, September 28, 2008 at 1pm – Veteran's Memorial Park.

Request for fee waivers – Natural Resources Trust of Easton

The Selectmen reviewed the request to waive tent and temporary sign permits for the NRT's Annual Harvest and Craft Fair scheduled for Sunday, October 5th from 10am – 5pm.

On King's motion, seconded by Corona, the Board voted 3-0-1 to approve the fee waivers as requested. Haederle abstained.

Application for Junk Dealers License – Gaby Hajnasr dba NASR Jewelers

Applicant Gaby Hajnasr and Ms. Miller were present. Colton referenced the conditions that should be considered if the license is approved. Haederle asked if the recent requests for Junk Dealers Licenses are a sign of the economy. Ms. Miller spoke on Hajnasr's behalf and suggested yes, people cannot afford to buy new so this is a good alternative. Colton noted the price of gold has gone up.

Cohen arrived at this point of the meeting. (7:20pm)

On Haederle's motion, seconded by King, the Board voted unanimously to approve the license subject to the following conditions:

- *The dealer must maintain a 14 day holding period on all transactions; (Police Dept.)
- *Photo copies of picture identification shall be taken for all those who sell any item; (Police Dept.)
- *A list of all transactions shall be submitted to the Easton Police Detective Bureau within one week of the transaction; (Police Dept.)
- *Premises is zoned business and the bylaw prohibits any "exterior" storage, sales or display of materials, therefore, the license is for indoor only (Inspectional Services Department)

One day liquor license/fee waiver request – Friends of Borderland, Inc.

Friends of Borderland Members Robert Bent, Laida Tracey-Clifta and Norma Urban were present representing the Friends of Borderland one day liquor license/fee waiver request. The event is scheduled for September 20, 2008 from 7-10pm at the Ames Mansion at Borderland State Park. Bent explained the competition and the reception. Refreshments and wine are served free of charge. Corona noted that she has attended in the past and stated it was a beautiful event and a great opportunity to see the mansion. Colton stated that no Easton police detail is required for this event.

On King's motion, seconded by Haederle, the Board voted unanimously to approve the one day license as requested.

On King's motion, seconded by Haederle, the Board voted unanimously to waive the fee.

One day liquor license request - Sodexo at Stonehill College

Colton summarized the request for a one day beer and wine license for a dinner at the Martin Institute on August 26, 2008 from 5- 8pm. No detail is required by the Easton Police Department.

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On King's motion, seconded by Haederle, the Board **voted unanimously** to approve the one day license as requested.

Public participation

Priscilla Almquist Olsen of 59 Seaver Street was present and noted that her father was the Chair of the Board of Selectmen many years ago. She spoke of how much her family has contributed to the town. She referred to the 40B developments and spoke of the recent article in the Boston Globe. She spoke of the problems associated with the developments and suggested that her concern is the same as the ones expressed in the article. She feels that the developments promote too much density and in some cases the developments are proposed in the wrong place. She spoke off the recent tea bag campaign started by the Town of Norwell. She asked if the Board was aware of this campaign. Corona stated they were aware of the protest campaign. She stated that the Town of Hanover is proposing a forum for local communities in Plymouth County to discuss the issues of 40B developments. She urged Easton to make an effort to attend this forum. She also suggested that the Board form a Subcommittee, made up of citizens and a member or two of the Board of Selectmen, to address issues with the 40B law. Olsen asked if the Board had seen a recent article concerning abuses under 40B. Corona and Haederle stated the Board was aware of the article, and the abuses sited. Olsen stated that Easton has always been a community that was concerned for the Ames properties and Historical communities like Borderland, and she would like that to continue. In that spirit, she urged the Selectmen to participate in the Grassroots effort to repeal 40B. She spoke of the many abuses by the developers because of the lack of local oversight. She hopes that the community can participate and come back and make a report to this community.

Corona spoke of the current issues with the 40B law. Corona stated that, as a member of the Massachusetts Municipal Association and the Massachusetts Selectmen's Association, she works on these issues at the state level now. Corona suggested that it is a tough road, as there have been only a handful of appeals have been successful. Corona clarified for the record that Easton currently only has one 40B development built. We have several proposed but only one built. She spoke of the perception that there are many more 40B developments currently in Easton.

Olsen asked about Developer Mirrione's recent proposal and the Shovel Shop proposal coming before the town boards. Corona stated they were proposed, but not built at this time. In light of that, there is a concern of what's coming down the road.

Haederle stated that the Board clearly recognizes the issues with 40B. Haederle noted that the entire board is aware of the issue, and we clearly see the flaws of 40B; the law has been abused by a lot of developers to get what they want. He is concerned with the waivers granted. We would like to see changes to the law, and we make our opinions known whenever possible, but at the same time we need to meet the town's affordable housing goals.

In closing, Olsen suggested that she would like to see this Board start a committee including citizens to study the law and see what changes might be proposed to benefit Easton. Corona noted that the Board would not make a decision to do this tonight but it could be discussed further. Corona expressed interest in attending the Hanover meeting. Olsen volunteered her services if a subcommittee is formed.

Bid award – Air Cleaning Specialists of New England, Inc. - vehicle exhaust system for the Fire Department

Fire Chief Tom Stone was present. Since the year 2000, there was only funding for a partial system. Stone explained the bid process and the request to award the contract. The vehicle exhaust system was approved in the capital budget back in 2007. They obtained a grant in 2007 and town meeting appropriated \$10,100.00. During the process, two bid protests were filed. Since that time, he has been working with Town Counsel and the Attorney General's Office. This issue has been resolved. The low bidder was Air Cleaning Specialists, the company that installed the original system.

On Haederle's motion, seconded by King, the Board **voted unanimously** to approve the bid award to Air Cleaning Specialists of New England, Inc (\$78,914).

Traffic Safety Committee's request to authorize a stop sign Beaver Dam Rd/Poquanticut Ave- Amend the Traffic Rules and Regulations

Chief Stone referred to the Traffic Safety Committee's request to approve a stop sign on Beaver Dam Road at Poquanticut Ave. Corona noted that each approval requires an amendment to the Town Code.

On Haederle's motion, seconded by King, the Board **voted unanimously** to approve the stop sign request.

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Authorization to move forward with SoftRight financial software proposal

Town Accountant Wendy Nightingale was present. Corona referenced Nightingale's memo promoting the SoftRight proposal. Nightingale explained the original request to fund a software proposal at the Annual Town Meeting but then it was decided to hold off in order to do further research and to get some additional pricing. A group consisting of the Town Accountant, Collector/Treasurer, Assistant Town Accountant, School Business Manager, School Payroll Coordinator reviewed demonstrations from three different vendors and of the three, it was unanimous that SoftRight would best serve the needs of the Town of Easton. She noted the need to go before the Capital Planning Committee with hopes of approving the funding at a Special Town Meeting later this year. In order to effectively move forward to change payroll as of January 1, 2009, we need to start proceeding now. Nightingale spoke of the proposal created by SoftRight. She further noted that if the proposal is not approved at the Special Town Meeting, the town will not have to pay for the services.

Corona asked about the School Department and if this software will replace the Southeastern Regional School System's software they are currently using. Nightingale confirmed yes and stated the new software will save us money. Corona asked about triggering reports. Nightingale noted that it will be much easier and the new software provides increased functionality. Colton noted that everyone in town will be going on the system.

Cohen asked about updates in the future. Nightingale noted it's included in the annual maintenance fee.

King noted he is on the Audit Committee and the committee's concern that there was only one person with the ability to maintain the current software programs.

Nightingale noted that the users as proposed in the SoftRight program are unlimited, we can add others. King asked if there is an increase in security risk with having so many others on the system. Nightingale assured the Board that this will not be a problem.

Corona noted that since she started on the Board six years ago, it has bothered her that there has been inability to have everyone on one system. Corona asked if the other towns currently using SoftRight are happy with the product. Nightingale confirmed yes, and each community is thrilled with the product.

Colton noted that we want a preliminary approval to move forward with their relationship with SoftRight leading into the next step in the process including a warrant article for town meeting.

On Haederle's motion, seconded by King, the Board voted unanimously to move forward with the SoftRight proposal.

Meeting with Cable Advisory Committee to discuss the status of contract negotiations

Cable Advisory Chairman Paul DiNicola was present. DiNicola gave an update since the last meeting with the Selectmen. Corona summarized the need for a new contract. DiNicola noted that the town currently gets the studio from Comcast and Comcast has not agreed to do so in the new contract negotiations. They do not offer financing for the town to put the good product together. We had an additional meeting with Comcast to continue dialogue but nothing changed with the exception of ½ percent and no capital; Capital is very important.

DiNicola referenced the recent meeting with Verizon. The Issuing Authority Report (IAR) was issued similar to RFP went out and we expect a response by 9/17/08. Verizon wants to get into the community and begin to offer their services.

Corona referenced the recent emails from citizens asking for Verizon. The fiber is currently being installed. DiNicola suggested that by December, Verizon should have everything installed. They will want to move forward by that date. He expects to see a contract finalized by October or November so that things can be finalized by the beginning of the year. The Bank of Easton has some potential real estate that they may want to work with for the studio. DiNicola agreed to continue to update the Board as things move forward.

Corona thanked the committee for all their hard work. DiNicola thanked the Town Administrator's staff for their assistance. Corona summarized the goal to have a free standing public access station and to very soon have Verizon come into town.

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Contract amendment #26 – Easton Middle School Project

Corona noted that the project remains on budget.

On Cohen's motion, seconded by Haederle, the Board **voted unanimously** to approve the contract amendment in the amount of \$84,319.84.

Contract amendments #37, #38 – OAHS Project

#37

On Cohen's motion, seconded by Haederle, the Board voted unanimously to approve the contract amendment in the amount of \$106,319.25 (credit)

#38

On Haederle's motion, seconded by King, the Board **voted unanimously** to approve the contract amendment in the amount of \$116,952.16

Approval of School Department surplus items

Colton referenced the surplus list submitted by the School Department for approval.

Corona noted that under MGL, the items need to go out for bid.

Library Shelving (metal units)	8
Bookcases	10
File Cabinets (various sizes)	85
Teacher Desks	13
Student Desks w/Cross Arm Brace	490
Student Desks (elementary level)	205
Student Chairs	288
Tables (various sizes)	70

On Haederle's motion, seconded by King, the Board **voted unanimously** to approve the items surplus.

Contract with MHQ Municipal Vehicles – police cruiser

Colton referenced the contract for a police cruiser. The cruiser was approved as part of the Capital Budget at the annual town meeting held in May. The total amount of the contract is proposed not to exceed \$29,999.

On Haederle's motion, seconded by King, the Board **voted unanimously** to approve the contract with MHQ Municipal Vehicles.

Historical Commission resignation – Mary Fitzgerald

Colton referenced Ms. Fitzgerald's resignation from the Historical Commission. A certificate of appreciation has been prepared for the Board's signature.

On Haederle's motion, seconded by King, the Board **voted unanimously** to accept the resignation. Corona thanked Mary Fitzgerald for her work on the Commission.

Minutes

On Haederle's motion, seconded by King, the Board **voted 3-0-1** to approve general minutes dated 6/30/08.

Corona abstained.

On Haederle's motion, seconded by King, the Board **voted 3-0-1** to approve general minutes dated 7/28/08.

Corona abstained.

On Haederle's motion, seconded by King, the Board **voted 3-0-1** to approve executive session minutes dated 7/28/08. **Corona abstained.**

Town Administrator's notes

Colton noted the great work of the Fire and Police Departments in responding to the plane crash at the Hannaford Plaza a few weeks ago. Our first responders were there on the scene; this was not an easy thing to confront. Colton noted that they do an excellent job every day. Corona noted the horrible scene and the fact that it had to have been very difficult to respond to.

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Press notes

None

Selectmen's notes

Corona noted that School Superintendent Dr. William Simmons has resigned as of August, 2009. Corona stated that he has done an amazing job and it's been wonderful working with him.

On Corona's motion, seconded by Haederle, the Board voted unanimously by roll call to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing real estate negotiations and collective bargaining, not to return to open session. (8:05pm).

Haederle yes; Corona yes; King yes; Cohen yes

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Southworth