

**Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
9/8/08**

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, Ellen Barlow and Town Administrator David Colton

Corona called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

One day liquor license request – Eleanor Martinez -Proctor

Applicant Eleanor Martinez-Proctor was present and requested a one day all alcohol license for a wedding reception to be held at the Oakes Ames Memorial Hall as follows:

September 20, 2008 from 4pm – 11:30pm.

The Police Department has requested one detail for this event.

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

One day liquor license request – Easton Health Group, LLC dba Southeast Rehabilitation and Skilled Care Center

Ms. Sandy Fleet was present and explained the one day beer and wine license requested for the open house event to be held at the Southeast Rehabilitation and Skilled Care Center – 184 Lincoln Street as follows:

September 25, 2008 from 4-7pm.

Corona noted the work done at the Center with respect to renovations. Fleet referenced the recent renovations which include new air conditioning and recreation rooms. Everything in the facility has been renovated including the floors and walls.

Colton noted that they installed a sewerage treatment plant similar to what is proposed for the Queset Commons project.

It was noted that the Police Department has requested one detail for this event.

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

Corona thanked Fleet and the others at Southeast Rehabilitation for allowing the baseball program to continue to operate at their location. Fleet spoke highly of the baseball program and noted that Southeast Rehabilitation is very community oriented. She also offered the use of their meeting room if needed.

Senator Brian Joyce's Office Hours at the Easton Town Offices

Colton announced that Senator Joyce will be holding office hours in the Mary Connolly Meeting Room at the Easton Town Offices on Wednesday, September 24th from 10am-11am. If anyone has an issue they would like to discuss with the Senator, please feel free to stop by the Town Hall. No appointment is necessary.

Trash program update

Colton updated the Board on the town sponsored trash program. A flier recently went out with the trash bills announcing the single stream recycling. People using Waste Management, the town's trash program, can place all their recycling in one container together without having to sort cardboard from plastic and glass, etc. One large barrel can be used for recycling or they can continue to use the bins provided by Waste Management.

Corona asked about the likelihood of a fee increase. Colton confirmed that there is no increase proposed for this year. He noted the huge increase in recycling since the town's program began. He stated that the people in the

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town's program recycle at three times the rate of those using other vendors. Waste Management really emphasizes recycling and people that participate have been surprised by how much they can recycle. He hopes that more people will participate and further help the recycling effort in the Town of Easton.

Barlow asked if the price will stay the same next year or if we will need to increase participation to keep the price the low. Colton encouraged more participants; this is the best way to keep the prices down. He encouraged the participants to tell their friends and neighbors about the program.

King noted that he has gone around town to see how the program was working. He referenced a letter previously submitted from someone that stated that Waste Management was dumping recycling in with the regular trash. King confirmed that this is not the case; they do pick up the recycling separately. Colton clarified that they pick up the recycling and then it is brought somewhere else for separating.

Corona noted that it is amazing that we have not seen an increase in cost to date. She also reiterated the need to have others join the town's trash program.

Proposed sewer connection to Mansfield Municipal Sewer System

Colton noted that he was contacted by State Representative Jay Barrows who is working with the Towns of Mansfield, Norton and Foxboro on the expansion of their sewer treatment facility (regional sewer treatment district). They have reserved a minimum of 100,000 gallons per day of treatment capacity for the Town of Easton to buy and connect to. This would only be cost effective in certain parts of town. For the Five Corners needs area, it seems like a viable option at approximately \$2million. As a result of this proposal, Colton asked Camp Dresser & McKee to provide information. See the enclosed report. Also attached is an excerpt from the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan which outlines the cost of constructing a sewer collection and transportation system in the Five Corners area. The next step is to identify the major property owners in town and see what their level of interest is. We need to let Mansfield, Norton and Foxboro know if we have interest in buying this in the near future.

Corona referenced the Wastewater Management Study Report and the five major areas of concern. Five Corners is one of these areas. The DEP told us at the time the study was done that we need to find an in-house solution. This proposal would seem to cost less than what the Wastewater Management Study predicted a few years ago. She asked about low interest loans/grants. Colton confirmed yes, there are low interest loans. Often times the capital costs are assessed to betterments to users over a long period of time, 15-20 years, and the costs not absorbed in the general fund.

Cohen asked about the cost to the individual homeowners. Colton noted that a betterment would be cheaper than the replacement of a septic system.

Barlow asked about putting this into context about putting sewerage into town. She questioned how many other areas could be considered for something like this. Colton suggested if we provide sewer to the North Easton Village with the Quset Commons Project and the Five Corners area with the Mansfield proposal, that leaves the Southeast area which may be a viable option going the other way with Brockton. Colton suggested that chipping away with a few sections at a time is a good option.

King suggested that preliminarily, he is in favor. He asked about the 100,000 gallons and if we would be putting ourselves in danger of overbuilding in this section of town. Colton suggested that there is no danger of overbuilding and 100,000 is really not a lot. A large new user would have to be permitted by the Mansfield, Norton and Foxboro authorities for permission to hook up.

The Board agreed that this is something worth investigating.

Review of Selectmen's Policy #82 – Processing of Constable Application Policy

Colton referred the proposed amended policy and noted that this is a result of review and clean up of the prior policy. The Town Clerk, Police Chief and the Collector's Office will be reviewing the applications prior to the Board's approval. ID's will be given to each Constable. Corona noted that policy is in line with state law.

On King's motion, seconded by Haederle, the Board voted unanimously to amend the policy as submitted.

Appointment of Election Workers

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Colton referenced the request of the Town Clerk to appoint three election workers for the September 16th Primary Election.

Jean Harney, 61 Central Street-Clerk Precinct 4; David Devore, 36 Short Street - Clerk Precinct 2; Wilfred Roberge, 30 Western Ave - Warden Precinct 1 (slate)

On Barlow's motion, seconded by King, the Board voted unanimously by roll call to appoint the slate. Cohen slate; Haederle slate; Corona slate; King slate; Barlow slate.

Budget update

Colton distributed a General Fund Revenue/Expenditure Projection spreadsheet for review. The Town Accountant has been working very hard on closing the books for FY 2008 and together, they have been working on a projection through FY 2012. See the attached information. He spoke of the adjusted surplus amount for FY 2008 which is slightly less than what we have had in the adjust surplus in the previous year. Real Estate collections for FY 2008 were about \$200,000 less than what they were budgeted for. This is attributable to the general economy.

Barlow asked why we are not very concerned as we built this fiscal year's budget around the different figures. Colton noted we did better in some other areas such as licenses, fees, excise, permits, etc. Overall, revenue projections were very strong. The problem is that if real estate trends continue, eventually the excise will fall. People will not be buying new vehicles. Corona noted that building permits are way down this year. Colton agreed and spoke of the lack of new growth. We are only going to see about half the new growth in FY 2009 and this is going to be a challenge going forward.

King noted there seems to be a spike in real estate taxation than the previous area. Colton spoke of the override and how this has helped the budget.

Corona summarized that for the public's information, the issue of delinquent taxpayer issue is growing. Growth is slowing. She noted that we are planning for the future and will continue to look at data like this to help plan when moving forward with the upcoming budget years. Colton did speak of large building issues such as Stonehill Science Center which has helped the permitting fee revenue.

Colton noted that she has read the recent quarterly report online and suggested that the information is very informative. Colton noted that for FY 2010 we are looking at a \$2 million deficit. He suggested that at this point in time, looking at the FY 2010 budget, a \$2 million deficit is not too bad. When planning, we try to be very conservative with the revenue projections and we tend to be more generous on the expense portion; this gives us some room to trim on the expense side if necessary.

Haederle asked about the Employee Benefits & Insurance and the energy cost portion of the budget projection. He asked if the figures our town wide. Colton confirmed yes, the biggest place to see increases is the School Department; they use most of the energy and have the most employees. With respect to energy costs, Colton spoke of signing the new gas contract; this will help to stable the natural gas portion of the energy budget. Colton suggested that the biggest question is gasoline and diesel fuel for the trucks now. This is a bid item through SERSG and it has not been bid yet. The cost of asphalt and almost all manufactured materials has an energy component. Again, the natural gas bid was timed just right and should help control some of the energy costs.

Barlow asked about the task of doing the 5 year projection, specifically if this is helpful with planning the budget. Colton stated yes, it's definitely worth doing. With the projection, you can red flag certain items and ask the Department Heads to look closely at some of the projection figures. He spoke of the projected increases by department and the realistic approach of budgeting accordingly.

Fence Viewer Appointment

Corona noted the need for one additional Fence Viewer and since the fence issues often involve zoning, it would make sense to appoint the Building Inspector to this position. Mark Trivett has agreed to serve in this capacity.

On Corona's motion, seconded by Barlow, the Board voted unanimously to appoint the Building Inspector, Mark Trivett as a Fence Viewer.

Minutes

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On Haederle's motion, seconded by King, the Board voted 3-0-1 to approve general minutes dated 8/25/08. Barlow abstained.

On Corona's motion, seconded by Haederle, the Board voted 3-0-1 to approve executive session minutes dated 8/25/08. Barlow abstained.

Town Administrator's notes

Colton noted changes to the town's website. You can go online and email a question or complaint. The question or complaint is received by the staff in the Selectmen's Office for a response. He thanked Kit Minsky in this effort. He noted the many town applications are available on the town's website. The Town Clerk has extended the passport hours to include six additional hours per week and are the most available passport agency in the area.

Colton also encouraged people to sign up for the Town Crier online. Through this subscription, you will be notified of all new things coming up. Colton noted that we are in the process of updating the town's website, making it more efficient and user friendly.

King asked for update on the Central Street Bridge project. Colton noted the project is being held up because of the need to move the utility poles. The State will not open the street until the poles are moved. We continue to complain to the proper officials but to no avail. Corona noted the similar issue on Depot Street and how the need to move utility poles slows the whole project down.

Press notes

None

Selectmen's notes

Corona thanked the Easton Garden Club for the work on window boxes on Main Street, helping with the recent Rockery Cleaning Day, making improvements to the gardens at the Town Offices and all the other work done throughout town.

Public participation

None

Executive Session

On Corona's motion, seconded by Barlow, the Board voted unanimously by roll call to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing labor negotiations, not to return to open session. (7:45pm)

Haederle yes; Corona yes; King yes; Barlow yes; Cohen yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Southworth