

Minutes Accepted and filed with the Town Clerk on 3/8/2016 by a vote of 4-0 -

(Selectman Maynard absent)

7:00 p.m. – February 16, 2016

Sutton Town Hall, Selectmen's Meeting Room

Members in Attendance:

Chairman David Hall, Vice Chair John Hebert, Selectmen Paul Maynard, Jesse Limanek & Michael Kenney
Town Administrator James Smith & Debbie Jacques, secretary

Chairman Hall calls the meeting to order at 7:00pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice Chair Hebert motions to accept as presented minutes from the 02/02/2016 BOS meeting; Selectman Maynard 2nds passes 5-0

****Public Hearing**** Blackstone National Golf Course Liquor Lic: Public Hearing advertised in the Feb. 1, 2016 T&G and read by Selectman Maynard. Present is Golf Club owner Michael Gordon 227 Putnam Hill Road, Sutton MA. TA Smith says this is to expand their current liquor license to encompass additional areas (outside 2nd floor deck, snack shack, Beverage Carts and the seasonal function tent) it is more of a housekeeping issue. Abutters have been notified. Vice Chair Hebert says Mike Gordon runs a very nice ship, beverage carts on the course are a compliment to the business. Selectman Maynard says they run a clean operation and have always complied with town departments. Selectman Limanek has no issues, he says it is a wonderful facility and thinks the additional areas on the course are excellent. Selectman Kenney says the beverage carts on the course are wonderful and agrees it is housekeeping. Chairman Hall says this is standard operating procedure and appreciates Mike Gordon commenting on the help he has always gotten from town employees. Selectman Limanek motions to close the public hearing Vice-Chair Hebert seconds passes 5-0. Selectman Limanek motions to approve the request from Blackstone National Golf Course to expand their liquor license to cover additional areas on the premises, Selectman Maynard seconds passes 5-0.

FY17 Budget Presentation: TA Smith states per Sutton Bylaw 20.1 he has to present the budget 90 days before town meeting. The FY17 total budget is \$30,097,468. which is an increase of \$290,298. from FY16 or .97%. A positive for the FY17 Budget is the debt exclusion roll off of \$338,000. Currently the FY7 budget has a deficit of \$113,000. A brief review of the overall changes includes dept. changes (wages), employee benefit increases & educational increases (appropriated \$400,000. more to school then last fiscal year). Some of the unknowns at this time are the increases in health care and the number of students going to BVT. We should have these numbers in about a month. Our goal continues to be to reduce our reliance on use of free cash with the goal of eliminating completely. Local property tax is up 1.59%, State Aid (Chapter 70) is up .5%, new growth is budgeted at \$225,000, this is a conservative but reasonable figure. Our local receipts have increased due to innovative projects such as the lease at Manchug Library to Puckihuddle, SRECS from net metering (Solar Panels) and IMA's for nursing services. To keep the insurance premiums down we may look in to making plan design changes as well as an opt out choice. This would pay an individual that may have had a family plan \$3,000. and a single person \$1,500. The Finance Committee along with TA Smith has had discussions on a Special Ed. Stabilization fund. This would be funded with \$200,000. from free cash and would be available for unforeseeable costs (out of district placement). This would have to be approved at Town Meeting by 2/3rds vote. The Enterprise Funds (Trans Station & Sewer) have healthy retained earnings. The Capital Plan for FY17 is \$979,000. Some of the areas this includes is \$180,000. for the 9 year cyclical evaluation (Assessors), school dept. \$358,000. for technology, a new walk in cooler at the ELC, a new driveway at the ELC, Highway dept. \$211,500. for a new truck. We have a solid stabilization fund (almost 2 million) we continue to fund OPEB and have a 5 year capital plan. The School Dept. is closer to a sustainable budget and class sizes are at a very good size. Vice-Chair Hebert asks if a letter could be drafted to BVT in unison with the other 12 towns that are in the regional school district. TA Smith says that he does not think he would get all the towns to sign the letter, each town has a different number of students that attend, and therefore the yearly contributions are different. This year the Town of Sutton has 12 additional students attending (this year's 8th grade class is known as the bubble class). Vice-Chair Hebert says after hearing this he does not recommend a letter. Selectman Maynard says great job to Jim and Tim for the FY17 budget, great that there is only a \$113,000. deficit. As far as BVT, Paul states he was a trade school student, these schools are important for students to learn a trade and stay with the trade. TA Smith replies the Sutton schools are now competing with another college prep school (BVT). Most of the kids go on to a 2 or 4 year college from BVT. Selectman Limanek is a beneficiary of services provided to students by BVT, it is our students seeing the benefits, we pay for it on both sides, increased number of students going to BVT increases what we pay out, but reduces the class size in Sutton. Jesses also asks if besides BVT and the Health insurance were there any areas of surprise; TA Smith replies the revenue picture surprised him with less than 1% increase from last year's budget. The lack of Dept. increases due to increase in retires and miner increases helped the budget. Debt roll off overall was almost \$600,000. Jesse states he would like to applaud that as that is planning, he goes on to say it is phenomenal. Selectman Kenney says it is amazing to see less than a 1% increase from last year's budget; it is great to see debt roll off. In regards to BVT, growing up in the region BVT was an alternative to college, now it is harder to get into BVT for kids that want to learn a trade, they cannot get in. Kids are now using it as a stepping stone to get into college. Mike asks what the cost is per student at BVT; TA Smith replies \$15,000-\$16,000. Sutton it is around \$10,500. per pupil. Chairman Hall appreciates TA Smith getting the budget to them early. In regards to the health insurance and the

relationship between the unions and TA Smith it is important to have open discussions versus bullying into changes. The plan design changes are a benefit to the town. Dave likes the effort as well as the direction and the cooperative manner. Dave also feels the use of free cash to start the Special Ed Stabilization fund is an excellent creative thought. TA Smith thanks Tim Harrison and the financial team for assisting with the budget process.

Request to overspend Snow & Ice budget FY16: TA Smith begins by saying per MGL Chap. 44 section 31D, the Town can vote to overspend the FY16 snow & ice appropriation. Fin Com will vote on this tomorrow as well. We have not overspent yet but as the bills come in from the last storm we will likely overspend. Selectman Limanek states that with the freak little storms we have had we need to be able to get the trucks out, Selectman Kenney says we need to keep people safe, Chairman Hall states this is an annual event. Selectman Kenney motions to authorize the overspending of the Snow & Ice budget FY16, Selectman Limanek second's passes 5-0

LWCF Grant Authorization-Goddard Lodge: TA Smith says this is for a \$150,000. Grant application for renovation to Goddard lodge, the lakeside trail and to establish a woodland trail. This would go to Town Meeting to restrict the use of land to recreational in perpetuity. This grant does require the town to match the \$150,000. Which we do have an account with over \$150,000. from private donations. This grant can only be used for recreation. Vice Chair Hebert thanks Jen Hager for all the work she has put into Marion's Camp, John also would like to thank Congressman McGovern in advance in hopes we do get the \$150,000. as was discussed a few months ago when Cong. McGovern attended a tour of Whittier Farm and the Selectmen were present. John also wishes to thank the BOS and Jim Smith for always being so supportive of Marion's Camp. Selectman Maynard says Jen Hager has done a wonderful job, Paul thanks John Hebert for his continued work on this project. Selectman Limanek says Jen Hager gave a fantastic presentation last week and had several of the Campfire attendees at the meeting. This is truly an asset to the town; it is important if we can get funding to maintain this for future generations. Selectman Kenney recommends all to go back and watch the meeting from last week, Jen gave an excellent presentation. Chairman Hall feels that by the full BOS being present at the presentation last week it shows the commitment as a group. Early on in the project Dave did not know what an asset Marion's camp would be to the town, Vice Chair Hebert recognized what an asset this location was. The effort to preserve open space really resonated with the campfire alumni. Vice Chair Hebert motions to authorize the submittal of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant (LWCF) application which will include an article presented at the Town Meeting and to authorize the Town Administrator to execute any related contracts including the grant and work to be completed through the grant, Selectman Maynard seconds passes 5-0.

TA Update:

Village of Manchaug to the National Historic places-meeting held on Feb. 9th led by Jen Hager.

Annual Report Dedication: Dual dedication this year for Ron Annis and Anne Licopoli

The BOS all agree with the dual dedication

Land And Water Conservation Fund (discussed this in agenda item prior to this update)

Announcements/Round Table/ Correspondence/Business Topics:

Selectman Maynard reads the list of needed supplies at the Mike Chizy Food Pantry

Selectman Limanek would like to thank St. Marks for a recent Food Drive that was donated to the Sutton Food Pantry.

Selectman Limanek congratulates high school Jr Samantha Wolf for participating in the Lions Club speech contest.

Jesse states she did a fantastic job; she did go on to the regional level but did not win. Jesse states if this is indicative of our teachers and school we are in good shape.

Selectman Kenney thanks the Fire Dept for assisting him with the ice rink on Saturday, unfortunately it was too windy and they had to call it quits.

Selectman Kenney asks about the sidewalk from the school to Shaw Farm is this Chapter 90 money. TA Smith replies no it is in the environmental bond bill which has not yet been released.

Chairman Hall agrees in regards to Samantha Wolf. The fact that she lost in the 2nd round is a testament to our school, she represented the town very well

8:25 pm Selectman Maynard motions to adjourn Selectman Limanek 2nds passes 5-0