

ROCKINGHAM SELECTBOARD SPECIAL MEETING
Tuesday, May 24, 2016

Present: Lamont Barnett, Peter Golec, Ann DiBernardo, Stefan Golec, Joshua Hearne

Also Present: Willis Stearns, II, Municipal Manager; Kerry Bennett, Recording Clerk; BFDDA Executive Director Mary Helen Hawthorne; Ralph Meima, Green Lantern; Youth Services - Russell Bradbury-Carlin, Executive Director; Lauren Higbee, Youth Development Director; Janice Berube, Emergency Housing Coordinator; Michelle Sacco, Greater Falls Transitional Living Program Manager; Rockingham Fire Chief Denis Jeffrey; Rockingham Fire Department Staff – Wade Masure & Kevin Kingsbury; Sam Haskins; Colin James; Deborah Wright; Christine Cole; Gary Fox

Press: Joey Powers, FACT8; Tory Jones Bonenfant, Eagle Times; Joel Slutsky, The Shopper; Madi Shaw, Brattleboro Reformer

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman Lamont Barnett

Additions to the Agenda for Routine Administrative Matters and/or Pressing Matters that will require ratification at a future meeting: None

Approve Minutes of May 3, 2016: *Stefan Golec made the motion to approve the minutes of May 3, 2016 as printed. Motion was seconded by Ann DiBernardo. Motion passed.*

Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda (3 minutes per person):

- Sam Haskins, Versam Investments, was present representing Jeremy Haskins from J&H Hardware. Haskins stated that the Development Office had always assisted J&H with the application process for historic tax credits for the building. An application is due July 1 and Haskins is here requesting assistance with this application. After discussion, Mary Helen Hawthorne, Executive Director of the Bellows Falls Downtown Development Alliance, offered to assist Haskins with the application.
- Christine Cole, resident of 10 Birch Street, was present to request information on the property at 12 Birch Street that the Town had acquired in tax sale. Stearns stated that this issue will be discussed in executive session later in the meeting.
- Colin James asked the Selectboard who authorized the \$1200 in attorney fees for an investigation of the Municipal Manager. Barnett stated that this was a personnel matter and that it was not appropriate to discuss at this time.

Manager's Report:

- 269 letters have been sent as the first step in the tax sale process by the Town Agent. Stearns stated that if anyone receives one of these letters they should contact the Town Office by June 24 or their property will continue in the tax sale process.
- The property owner at 12 Laurel Avenue is concerned about the condition of the street, particularly around the catch basin. Stearns stated that he and the Highway Superintendent have inspected the area and there are no issues at this time.

- Forester Tim Morton will be sending out a prospectus for the forest located in Grafton owned by the Town of Rockingham. This may be done as early as this summer.
- Green Mountain Power has informed us of a scheduled power interruption beginning on Saturday, June 5 at midnight. Those affected will be School Street, Church Street and the west side of the Square. The rain date is one week later on June 12 at the same time.
- The newest estimate for the Bridge Street Bridge repair has come in at \$318,000. The Board recently authorized the transfer of \$50,000 from the unexpended funds from the Averill's Bridge in Saxtons River but it may be necessary to utilize fund balance to finish this project. The consensus of the Board was to move forward with the project with the State.
- The alley between the Town Hall and People's United Bank is complete at a cost of \$64,992.49. This was paid for out of this year's budget and borrowing in FY2017 for this project will not be necessary.

Agenda:

1. Green Lantern – Ralph Meima, Project Director, was present to give the Board a presentation and ask for approval of the project. The proposed location for the solar array is in the Route 103 Gravel Pit owned by the Town. Meima presented a letter outlining the responsibilities of the Town and the Green Lantern project and a map showing the proposed area on 3.9 acres of the property. Peter Golec noted that the Board had discussed this in the past and the Board was looking at developing the site as an industrial area and this still needs to be discussed at the Board level. After discussion the following action was taken. *Ann DiBernardo made the motion to authorize the Municipal Manager to negotiate an Option to Lease agreement with Green Lantern for the proposed solar array in the Route 103 Gravel Pit. Motion was seconded by Stefan Golec. Motion passed with Hearne abstaining due to his late arrival at the meeting.*
2. Youth Services Presentation – Local Government Support for Grant Application: Russell Bradbury-Carlin, Executive Director, was present along with Youth Development Director Lauren Higbee, Emergency Housing Coordinator Janice Berube, and Greater Falls Transitional Living Program Manager Michelle Sacco, to request that the Board sign the Certification of Local Government Approval for a grant for Youth Services. Bradbury-Carlin noted that this grant would be used for transitional housing for 16 to 22 year olds and 18 to 24 year olds at 4-6 Barker Street in Bellows Falls. Stefan Golec noted that there was a lot of public concern over the Justice Center project and asked if this was similar. Higbee stated that it was not, that the main issue was a lack of stable housing and not many of these individuals have passed through the court system. *Ann DiBernardo made the motion to authorize the Selectboard Chair to sign the Certification of Local Government Approval on behalf of the Board. Motion was seconded by Peter Golec. Motion passed.*

3. Selectboard Items

- a) Approve Downtown Designation Renewal Capital Improvement Plan:
- b) Approve Letter of Support for Downtown Designation Renewal: These 2 items were handled together. The Capital Improvement Plan & the letter of support were included in the Board packets for review and approval. *Stefan Golec made the motion that the Board approves the Town of Rockingham Downtown Designation Renewal Capital Improvement Plan and authorizes the Selectboard Chair to sign the Letter of Support for Downtown Designation Renewal as presented. Motion was seconded by Joshua Hearne. Motion passed.*
- c) Approve Basic Emergency Operations Plan Update: Stearns noted that an updated Local Emergency Operations Plan was distributed tonight. The LEOP replaces the Basic Emergency Operations Plan. *Stefan Golec made the motion that the Board approves the Local Emergency Operations Plan as presented and authorize the Municipal Manager to sign the document. Motion was seconded by Joshua Hearne. Motion passed.*
- d) Approve Purchase of Fire Apparatus: Stearns stated that Rockingham Fire Chief Denis Jeffrey (present), and Saxtons River Fire Chief Art Smith have done extensive research and met with numerous vendors for the purchase of fire vehicles. The lowest price is from E-One for \$278,537 for Rockingham and \$255,079 for Saxtons River. Stearns noted that the voters authorized borrowing up to \$500,000 and the difference could be made up by Board authorization. Hearne asked Jeffrey if there was a trade option. Jeffrey stated that there was but doesn't have the figure at this time. Jeffrey also noted that the cost of a cab and chassis would be increasing July 1. After discussion it was decided to send this to the Joint Fire Committee for discussion and recommendation.
- e) Recreation Center: Stearns noted that with the reconstruction of the alley between Town Hall and People's United Bank being paid for out of this year's budget, this leaves the \$250,000 authorized at Town Meeting available for repair of the Rec Center. Stearns noted that specs have been done by Ingram Construction but have not been reviewed by a structural engineer yet. Stearns explained what the contractors have come up with for a plan to repair the damage done by termites around the entire perimeter of the building. It was the consensus of the Board to authorize the Manager to get the specs and a structural engineer opinion and come back to the Board with a recommendation.
- f) Update on Development Office Feedback: Barnett stated that he has received a few recommendations for the Development Office, all of which have been discussed previously, and the Board needs to have a serious discussion on what type of Development Office it wants. Gary Fox asked if there was a job description done yet. DiBernardo stated that the Board needed to decide if it wanted an Economic Development Director or a Community Development Director. Peter Golec stated that the Board needed a reality check and to be serious about what projects were feasible and what were not. Fox stated that a Community Economic Development Director would be

good. Deborah Wright asked if the Selectboard had done an assessment of the Development Office. Barnett stated that he felt he was aware of ongoing projects. This item will be placed on a future agenda for further discussion.

- g) Ratify Local Government Support for Greater Falls Warming Shelter & Our Place Drop-In Center: Barnett stated that Louise Luring had come to him at the eleventh hour asking for Board support for grants for the warming shelter and for Our Place and he had signed both. *Ann DiBernardo made the motion that the Board ratify the Local Government Support documents for Greater Falls Warming Shelter and Our Place Drop-In Center. Motion was seconded by Joshua Hearne.* Peter Golec stated that Barnett's signing these documents was a violation of State statute, that no one person could take action on behalf of a board without authorization to do so. DiBernardo agreed and stated that going forward this should not be done. *Barnett called for a vote on the motion.* Wright asked what the emergency was. Barnett stated that the grant was due the next day. Stefan Golec stated that he felt Barnett was new to the Board and this would not happen again. Barnett stated that he would do this again but would ask the person not to put him in that position again. *Vote was 3 in favor, 1 opposed.*

Review Overtime & Comp Time Report: No comments or concerns.

Review Agenda Items for Next Meeting – June 7, 2016:

- Fire Committee Recommendation for Equipment Purchase
- Revolving Loan Fund Policies
- FY2016 Budget Status

Review Agenda Items for Joint Board Meeting - May 31, 2016:

- Board Training – Attorney Ray Massucco
- BFDDA Update – Mary Helen Hawthorne - Approve & Sign Community Reinvestment Agreement
- Discuss Derelict Buildings
- Sidewalk Repairs/Markings Discussion
- Award Fuel & Propane Bids
- Personnel Rules Change Discussion
- Discuss Manager's Review

Barnett noted that there would then be a Tri-Board Meeting with the Selectboard, Trustees and the Walpole Selectboard

- Wastewater Contract – Walpole/BF Trustees
- Vilas Bridge Discussion

Review & Approve Orders, Bills & Warrants: Barnett asked if it was necessary to get copies of these. The Board discussed this briefly and the practice will continue. There was no motion to approve.

Other Business:

- Barnett asked about the sign in the parking lot between Vermont Pretzel and the Legion reserved for the Development Director. Stearns stated that this is being removed and the Zoning Administrator would be parking there. Barnett stated that he was not in favor of reserved parking for Town Hall staff.
- Deborah Wright asked that the ceramic signs in Town Hall either include the Trustees or the Selectmen's sign be removed. Apparently the Trustee portion of this sign was broken at some point and never replaced.

Executive Session: *Peter Golec made the motion that the Board enter executive session at 8:55 p.m. to discuss the negotiating or securing real estate purchase or lease options, 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3) and invite the Municipal Manager to attend. Motion was seconded by Joshua Hearne. Motion passed.*

The Board came out of executive session at 9:10 p.m. and the following action was taken.

Peter Golec made the motion to accept the offer of \$11,000.00 for the 12 Birch Street Property from Christine Cole and proceed with the 30 day notice. Motion was seconded by Ann DiBernardo. Motion passed.

Peter Golec made the motion to proceed with the eviction process of 456 Rockingham Road, Parcel #115000450.001 formerly owned by Michael Emerson. Motion was seconded by Joshua Hearne. Motion passed.

Adjourn: *Ann DiBernardo made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m. Motion was seconded by Peter Golec. Motion passed.*

Attest: _____
Kerry Bennett, Recording Clerk