

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Working Session
Minutes of February 8, 2010

Chairman Martha Morrison called the meeting to order at 4:32PM. Board members present in addition to Chairman Morrison were Richard Gandt, Nancy Luther, Karen Dow and Laura Powers. Of the Selectmen's staff, Town Administrator Virginia Wilder and Board Secretary Donna Rich were in attendance. Other persons present during all or part of the meeting were Kim Sherwood, president Topsfield Beach Association, Sabina Peterson and Richard Denton, candidates for the Agricultural Commission, Peter Mulholland, member of the Agricultural Commission, and Liz Mulholland, resident.

Chairman Morrison announced that the Board would go into Executive Session at the end of Open Session to discuss a Police Officer medical legal issue and would not return to Open Session.

Topsfield Beach Association: Chairman Morrison welcomed Kim Sherwood, President of the Topsfield Beach Association (TBA), and thanked the TBA Board for their efforts at bringing the Beach Association into the 21st century. Ms. Wilder explained that town counsel, Kopelman & Paige LLC, has urged the Town to obtain a formal use agreement between the Town and the TBA. In addition the Town's insurer has strongly recommended that the Town not have the TBA as a named insured on the Town's general liability policy. Therefore, Ms. Wilder has advised Ms. Sherwood that she has recommended that the Town cease this practice and not include the Beach Association on its policy as of July 1, 2010. Kim Sherwood gave a historical overview of the TBA's activities since the 1950's. In 1958 the TBA obtained a grant to have the road made and in the 1980's there were 350-400 town residents signed up as members. Presently, there are 250 members with about half representing Topsfield residents. The Association has a \$50,000 budget each year which primarily pays for life guards and swimming instructions. Ms. Sherwood explained that for liability insurance estimates are between \$4,000 and \$8,000. There was some discussion on how other towns with similar town-owned beaches have responded to the liability/insurance coverage issue. Ms. Sherwood explained that new volunteers have stepped forward to be on the TBA Board and will assist in the management of the beach. Their next meeting is to be held on February 23, 2010. Ways to publicize the availability of beach memberships were discussed.

Agricultural Commission Candidates: Sabina Peterson was introduced and welcomed. Ms. Peterson began by explaining she is interested in serving on the Commission because she is passionate about the future of food and believes in supporting the local farmers as much as possible. The Farmer's Market and development of a Community Garden are two items that she wishes to work on while on the Commission.

Richard Denton was introduced and welcomed. Mr. Denton began by explaining that he wishes to work toward what the Town sees as the mandate of the Agricultural Commission. He stated he is a *process* person looking to assist in developing an annual plan that the commission could follow, and he would like to see the Board of Selectmen take part in a strategy planning session. Finally, he is interested in educating grade school age children in the agricultural history of the Town.

List of Warrant Articles: Chairman Morrison requested and the Board agreed that Selectman Gandt would work with Ms. Wilder on the order of warrant articles for the Annual Town Meeting.

Parking Clerk Budget: Ms. Wilder asked if there were any objections to moving the Parking Clerk budget (one line item of \$50) to the Selectmen’s Special: Other budget for FY2011, as the Parking Clerk payments depend on the number of tickets issued. This can be unpredictable, and necessitates a small reserve fund transfer if the number of tickets exceeds the budgeted amount. The Board had no objections.

Dog Hearing: Ms. Wilder updated the Board on what the Scannells of 31 Candlewood Drive have done following the hearing on their dog named Finn. Ms. Wilder reported she sent a letter to the Scannells explaining the actions the Board requested of them in restraining Finn. The gates are in place and the Scannells are working on installing the fence around the yard. The Animal Control Officer will be notified to inspect the control devices. Ms Wilder noted that a letter was received from the Reinekes.

Warrants: The Selectmen signed and approved warrants in the amount of \$ **656,063.55**. The breakdown is as follows:

Warrant #FY10:	
065T	\$ 75,742.25
065School	\$ 203,451.81
066	\$ 376,869.49

At 6:00 PM, Selectmen Dow made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss a Police Officer medical legal issue; seconded by Selectman Powers. In a roll call vote, a yes vote was recorded for Chairman Morrison, Selectman Gandt, Selectman Luther, Selectman Dow and Selectman Powers. The Board would not return to open session.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Rich, Secretary
Selectmen’s Office

Approved as amended at the March 1, 2010 Board of Selectmen’s meeting.

Pursuant to the 'Open Meeting Law,' G.L. 39, § 23B, the approval of these minutes by the Board constitutes a certification of the date, time and place of the meeting, the members present and absent, and the actions taken at the meeting. Any other description of statements made by any person, or the summary of the discussion of any matter, is included for the purpose of context only, and no certification, express or implied, is made by the Board as to the completeness or accuracy of such statements.
