

## **Stoneham Board of Selectmen – Minutes of Meeting of January 20, 2015**

Chairman Thomas Boussy called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Also present were Selectman John F. DePinto, Selectwoman Ann Marie O'Neill, Selectman Frank Vallarelli, Town Counsel William H. Solomon and Town Administrator David Ragucci. Selectman Robert W. Sweeney was not present.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

### **Bi-Board Meeting/Board of Selectmen/School Committee**

Chair, Jeanne Craigie called the School Committee to order at 7:02 p.m. Also present were S. McCarthy, M. Christie, S. MacNeill, D. Maurer and Superintendent of School Les Olson. Superintendent Les Olson presented the Board of Selectmen with the following to discuss regarding a High School renovation project. Chair Jeanne Craigie lead this discussion: *Beyond the need for a general refurbishment of a 47-year old building, there are the following issues:*

- *A heating plant that only has one fully operational boiler. The second boiler has a cracked header and can only be used on an emergency basis;*
- *The desire by many citizens to see a turf field(s) installed at the High School. A recent survey has confirmed a cost of \$1 - \$1.3 million for the football field and \$1.5 million for the baseball field. Due to subsurface conditions it is not feasible to consider the soccer fields;*
- *The need to rebuild (not just resurface) a rapidly deteriorating parking lot;*
- *The need to provide modern learning spaces for specialized areas such as the science and technology labs.*

*While the School Committee and administration would like to move ahead immediately on these issues, it is not prudent to do so without considering the potential 50% - 60% reimbursement from the MSBA for general facility renovations. The field and parking lot renovations would probably be excluded from MSBA reimbursement, even though it would make most sense to wrap everything together into one package. Thus, speaking in very broad terms, if we are seeking of \$25 million total package, state reimbursement may be in the range of \$10 million as the fields and site work would be excluded.*

*We are also uncertain how long it makes sense to operate with only one fully functioning boiler. While the MSBA does have an Accelerate Repair program for boiler replacement (with an application window that closes on February 13), an application to the Accelerated program would preclude a second application for the core/comprehensive program.*

*The best option seems to be to proceed with another core/comprehensive application for a general renovation project (application deadline in April, response anticipated in December) with the understanding that:*

- a) *We need to proceed to ensure back-up boiler service in the short-term; and*

*We may need to consider moving ahead in December without state reimbursement if we are rejected in this third application.*

Chairman Boussy asks if the Committee looked into Park Grants. Selectman Vallarelli asked the Committee if the driveway was the original driveway. The response was yes. The discussion began on how to fund the 150 thousand needed for the temporary boilers at the High School. Chair Jeanne Craigie asks Town Administrator Ragucci how much is in Capital Stabilization. Mr. Ragucci states 500 thousand and he has sale of property money set aside for the feasibility study needed at the High School. He states between the two 1.1 million. Selectman Vallarelli asks if this is money we can bond at Town Meeting. Mr. Ragucci states you wouldn't want to do that for leasing equipment. He states you would look at Capital to fund a temporary expense. Selectwoman O'Neill asks if we were not to get the money next year for the reconstruction of the High School is there a plan B in place. Chair Jeanne Craigie states that would be go out for the debt exclusion. Chairman Boussy asks if there is a downside for being a Town compared to a City. Mr. Ragucci states yes he thinks there is a different treatment in this situation.

Town Administrator David Ragucci presented the budget. Mr. Ragucci went over the FY2014 vs FY2015 Revenue Summary for July through December, FY2016 Estimated Local Receipts and 4 Year Estimated Revenue Analysis. Mr. Ragucci states one of the big questions is local aid. He states he level funded local aid. Mr. Ragucci states the Governor's budget should be available in March and that will give us that number to plug in. He is hoping that Chapter 70 will be increased due to the funding the full day kindergarten program. Mr. Ragucci states that there is 1,238,467 to spend additionally than in FY15. He states that the retirement pension liability is going up 500,000 and a 3% increase in Health Insurance is 250,000 which leave 450,000 to fund schools and department operating. There is not a spending issue it is

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that the revenue is not keeping up. Mr. Ragucci states over the years we have lost significant dollars in local aid. Mr. Ragucci is looking to present the budget in March. Selectmen DePinto added with the Governor placing hiring freezes this may bring us more money in FY16 because they are saving dollars in their budget. There was a discussion on Chapter 70. Selectwoman O'Neill states that this is the first year schools did not self-report for the ranking. She states it says a lot about the school system. It's a real powerful tool to catch and retain the kids. There was a discussion on advocating in a more positive way on our town, schools and assets that we have. Selectwoman O'Neill states that now that we have a town planner is work closer with our resources. There was discussion on streets and sidewalks and those repairs being done with money not from the budget. Mr. Ragucci states he is setting up a public meeting held by the MWRA within the next two months. The public was notified that Northshore Magazine will be coming July 2015 to do a piece on Stoneham. Shelly MacNeill would like to give a brief update on the Coalition. There will be an SSAC meeting on January 27<sup>th</sup> at 7pm at the High School which is a night anyone can come to hear speakers. There will be a town hall forum on January 31<sup>st</sup> from 9-11 in the Auditorium this is more of an open discussion on substance abuse and how it effects our community. They are working on a DFC grant that needs to be submitted by March 18<sup>th</sup>. She states this will hopefully get us some funding to put in a coordinator to help run the program. Tri Town race March 21<sup>st</sup> in Stoneham. All proceeds with benefit the Coalition. This information is on the Coalitions website.

The School Committee adjourned their meeting at 8:06 p.m.

Selectmen DePinto made a motion to move to one miscellaneous item up and **unanimously voted (4-0)**.

#### **Miscellaneous Correspondence**

Jeanne Craigie, 53 Dunklee Ave, Stoneham Co-Chairman of Light It up Blue Stoneham asked the Board to support the lighting of the gazebo blue for the month of April 2015. The Event will kick off on Sunday, April 26, 2014 from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Selectman DePinto makes motion to set April 26<sup>th</sup> to support Light it up Blue, seconded by Selectwoman O'Neill. **Motion was unanimously voted (4-0)**. Mrs. Craigie states they are looking for donations of big blue bulbs. Selectman DePinto asks who donations should be written to. Mrs. Craigie stated Stoneham Light it up Blue.

Selectman DePinto made a motion to go back to regular order of business.

#### **Present Certificate to Robert Columbus**

The Board of Selectmen and The School Committee presented a certificate to Robert Columbus for his outstanding efforts in getting over 250 signatures on a petition supporting the Bikepath warrant article on the January 12, 2015 Special Town Meeting.

#### **Set Open & Close Dates for the Annual Town Meeting Warrant**

Selectman DePinto made motion to open the Annual Town Meeting Warrant on February 2, 2015 and close on February 23, 2015, seconded by Selectwoman O'Neill. **Motion was unanimously voted (4-0)**.

#### **Approve Minutes**

Selectwoman O'Neill made motion to approve minutes of January 6, 2015, seconded by Selectman DePinto and **unanimously voted (4-0)**. Selectwoman O'Neill made motion to approve minutes of January 12, 2015, seconded by Selectman DePinto and **unanimously voted (4-0)**.

#### **Approve Stockwell**

Chairman Boussy notifies the public that Stockwell is to help with medical bills for people that qualify. Selectman DePinto made a motion to approve one request for payments total of \$212.00 subject to Attorney Solomon making sure these bills were not already paid, seconded by Selectwoman O'Neill and **unanimously voted (4-0)**.

#### **Town Administrator**

Town Administrator Ragucci states that he has been working on the budget and will continue to do so and he plans on presenting a balance budget recommendation. Scott LeBeau, 55 Pleasant Street asks about the Chapter 90 money that was discussed earlier. Chapter 90 is the gas tax dollars and is very specific purpose which is just roadways and sidewalks etc. He states you cannot use it in operating budget. Mr. Ragucci clarified there no cuts made. Selectwoman O'Neill asks about the plan for when the Town Accountant retires. Mr. Ragucci states that his recommendation will be to put in a position for assistant TA/Fiscal

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Director which is where Mr. Florino would step down into that slot and we will hire a Town Accountant. When Ron retires we cut the position from the budget. Chairman Boussy asks the Board if they would all be available to have an executive session meeting on Tuesday, January 27 at 6 p.m. to have the consultants come in and discuss the costs, values etc., regarding the Weiss Farm/Oaks land swap.

Selectman DePinto made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Selectman Vallarelli and **unanimously voted (4-0)**.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Erin Sinclair*