

Stoneham Board of Selectmen – Minutes of Meeting of March 3, 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 Robert W. Sweeney, Selectman Frank Vallarelli, Town Administrator David Ragucci and Town Counsel William H. Solomon.

Pledge of Allegiance

Library Update/Mary Todd

Mary Todd Director of the Stoneham Public Library. Mary Todd spoke on the issues such as the decrease in hours of operation, decrease in staff, decrease in custodial hours, computer and internet accessibility for the residents and the use of the reserves fund over the past 10 years. She states that the library put out a survey and the two highest requests were that the library increase their hours and provide more programs. Selectwoman O’Neill asked Mary Todd what she does need with how short her budget is. What would it take to get you up to the minimal? Ms. Todd stated she did not have those answers but will look into it. Mary Todd states that the FY16 budget is enough to get the library certified which is their main concern. Selectman Sweeney asked Mary Todd what the \$10,000 dollars that was set aside at Town Meeting is being used for. Mary Todd states it will be used for new computers, new printers, new scanners and software. Selectman Sweeney asked if any of these devices are coin operated. Mary Todd states there are fees charged that cover paper and ink. Selectman Sweeney states Mary Todd and staff are doing a super job. Chairman Boussy asks Mary Todd where the 10 hours were cut. Mary Todd states they lost 4 hours on Wednesday nights, ½ of Saturday and all day on Sunday. Chairman Boussy asks what the programs are that residents are requesting. Mary Todd states the most popular are the Murder Mystery Night, Adult Paint Night, Food Night, Wine Tasting Night and a lot of the children’s programs. Chairman Boussy asks Mary Todd if these programs offset the cost and make a few bucks. Mary Todd states most programs they do not charge for. The Murder Mystery Night did generate money. Selectwoman O’Neill asks if we are still planning on painting the trim and the cupola in the spring. Mr. Ragucci states yes. Mary Todd states there are capital expenses that need to be addressed. The Board thanks Mary Todd for coming.

Authorization to file Statement of Interest with MSBA/Dr. Les Olson

Dr. Les Olson acknowledged the work of the DPW. He states what they have done this winter to keep us open. He states they only lost 6 snow days where many towns around us who have lost twice that number. He states they have done a fantastic job at keeping us open and keep the kids and staff in school. He thanks DPW for their support. Dr. Olson presents the Board with this Resolution for the third time. He asks the Board approve the Authorization to file Statement of Interest with MSBA. He states that the School Committee and Board of Selectmen need to approve this resolution.

RESOLUTION TO BE VOTED BY BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Resolved: Having convened in an open meeting on March 3, 2015, prior to the closing date, the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Stoneham, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest dated April 2015 for the Stoneham High School, located at 149 Franklin Street, Stoneham, Massachusetts which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority categories for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future:

Priority 5 – including but not limited to the need to renovate and/or replace the following building systems to improve energy efficiency and ensure the continued long-term use of the building: exterior window walls; boilers and related pumps and motors; unit ventilators and other air handling units; and all associated energy controls and management systems; and

Priority 7 – to renovate or replace all of the science laboratories to incorporate more flexible learning designs, safety precautions and systems, storage and preparation areas, and to convert the current laboratories into additional classroom spaces; and hereby further specifically acknowledge that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the City/Town/Regional School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

Selectman DePinto makes a motion that the Board of Selectmen vote on the following resolution, seconded by Selectwoman O’Neill:

Voting in Favor:

- Selectman DePinto
- Selectwoman O’Neill
- Selectman Sweeney
- Selectman Vallarelli
- Chairman Boussy

Motion was unanimously voted (5-0).

Vietnam Plaque Discussion/James Devlin

Veterans Agent James Devlin updated the Board on the Vietnam Plaque. He states he has 30 additional names than what is on the monument outside. Mr. Devlin discussed the prices of the plaques with the Board. Mr. Devlin feels that Veterans Day would be a good day to dedicate the plaque. Selectman DePinto made a motion to approve the purchase of this plaque, seconded by Selectman Vallarelli and **unanimously voted (5-0).**

Request for Special Municipal Employee Status for Charles F. Houghton Member of the 2nd Sheet of Ice Committee

Selectman Sweeney made a motion to approve the request for Special Municipal Employee Status for the Members of the 2nd Sheet of Ice Committee, seconded by Selectman DePinto. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting in Favor:

Selectman DePinto
Selectwoman O'Neill
Selectman Sweeney
Selectman Vallarelli
Chairman Boussy

Motion was unanimously voted (5-0).

Update on Town Center Action Plan/Rachel Meredith Warren

Rachel Meredith Warren gave the Board an update on the Stoneham Square Action Plan. She would like to talk about three points: One is the process that went on to produce the plan, second is the major content categories of the plan and third is about the Board of Selectmen and whether they feel they are getting the level of participation that you need in preparing plan and then the implementation phase so that you feel you getting the right involvement level. Selectwoman O'Neill states she knows the group is working really hard and she catches up after the fact where their meetings are all during the day. Chairman Boussy is impressed with the information exchange and the progress. He stated that Rachel is doing a great job at laying down what needs to be done and moving the meetings forward. He states a lot is getting done. Selectwoman O'Neill states that there is a lot of buzz around the walking and more accessible to different places. She states this is real exciting. Selectwoman O'Neill asks if this is available online. Mrs. Warren states that they will give it to Erin once it is condensed. Selectman Vallarelli asks what could be controversial. Mrs. Warren states she is not sure anything could be controversial.

Presentation from Good Energy

John O'Rourke was present to go over who Good Energy is, what they do and the benefits to the community. Good Energy is the nation's leading aggregation consultant and represents municipalities across the Commonwealth. The residents and businesses on the Basic Service with Eversource have recently experienced a dramatic increase in electricity rates. The municipal officials of Stoneham are concerned about the impact of this increase on our residents and businesses. Based on Massachusetts General Law Chapter 164, Section 134(a), the municipal officials of Stoneham are considering the possibility of developing and implementing a municipal aggregation plan that would allow the Town to aggregate the electricity loads of residents and businesses that are on the Basic Service with Eversource. The objective of a municipal aggregation plan is to form a buying group to gain greater buying power for residents and businesses to enter the competitive electricity market to lower electricity rates, stabilize rates for longer terms and provide more options to purchase renewable energy. Stoneham may join with other municipalities to form a larger buying group to gain greater buying power. The procedure to develop and implement a municipal aggregation plan goes through a very strict and comprehensive consultation and approval process taking 6 to 9 months with the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) and the Department of Public Utilities (DPU). Good Energy will perform all of the grunt work and municipal officials will make the decisions. There will be minimum impact on staff time and resources. Good Energy is one of the leading energy aggregation consultants in the country serving with over 150 municipal electricity aggregations serving over 2,000,000 residents. The selection of a consultant to guide Stoneham through the municipal aggregation process is an energy-related service that is exempt from the Chapter 30B UNIFORM PROCUREMENT ACT. Our Energy-Related Services Agreement provides for the brokering of electricity through a competitive procurement process and is exempt from Chapter 30B. On February 12, 2015, Good Energy submitted aggregation plans for 13 municipalities with over 250,000 people and over 100,000 households including a neighbor of Stoneham, the City of Melrose. Due to the length of the DOER / DPU consultation and approval process and that the first step in the approval process is a vote by town residents, time is of the essence. A placeholder for a municipal aggregation warrant article for the warrant for the Stoneham Annual Town meeting on May 4, 2015 that closes on February 23, 2015 would allow the Board of Selectmen to consider a warrant article for municipal aggregation at their meeting on March 3, 2015. Suggested language for a municipal aggregation warrant article is as follows: *To see if the Town will vote to grant the Board of Selectmen authority to research, develop and participate in a contract, or contracts, to aggregate the electricity load of the residents and businesses in the Town and for other related services, independently, or in joint action with other municipalities, retaining the right of individual residents and businesses to opt-out of the aggregation, or take any other action relative thereto.* Comment: The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, by enacting Chapter 164 of the Acts of 1997, has established a competitive marketplace through deregulation and restructuring of the electric utility industry. The residents and businesses of our Town have substantial economic, environmental, and social interests at stake and are interested in reducing their electricity rates. If an aggregation of electricity load is implemented in our Town, individual residents and businesses would retain the right to opt-out of the aggregation with no penalty and to choose any other competitive supplier or stay with the default utility. Passing this warrant article at Town meeting does not commit the Town or Board of Selectmen to anything. It simply gives the Board of Selectmen to lower the electricity cost for their residents and businesses. Mr. O'Rourke states this an opt out program. Chairman Boussy asks if we will still get one bill. Mr. O'Rourke states yes the will be an added line of who the supplier is. Selectman Sweeney asks if individual homeowners join this program or does it have to be by a group. Mr. O'Rourke states this anyone is enrolled with Eversource as a source is automatically enrolled. Good Energy will have a public outreach and education regarding the program. Mr. O'Rourke states the opt out rated is usually around

5%. Chairman Boussy asks how easy is it to opt out of the program. Mr. O'Rourke states this will all part of the information that residents receive. No penalties and terminations for the life of the contract. Selectwoman O'Neill asks what happens when someone moves to town. Mr. O'Rourke states when a new resident moves to town they will get an opt out letter. Selectwoman O'Neill asks if someone opts out then wants back in in 6 months would they be able to do that. Mr. O'Rourke states that this would be decided by the Municipality. He states you do want to see people playing the game of opting in and out. He states DPU frowns upon this. The town could enforce that the resident is allowed to come back into the program once. Selectwoman O'Neill wants to know if there a place consumers can go to see what their options are. Mr. O'Rourke states there is a website that will be available to the consumers of the community while we go through the process. He states it is an informational site not a marketing site. Selectmen DePinto asks if there is an enrollment period. Mr. O'Rourke states no. Selectman Vallarelli asks how they get paid. Mr. O'Rourke states they get paid from the supplier. The warrant article that has been submitted is to look at the concept. Selectman O'Neill explains that she feels this is to research the process and not commit. Selectman DePinto made a motion that two selectmen, as a committee with Dave and Bill to come back to the Board with a recommendation, seconded by Selectman Vallarelli and **unanimously voted (5-0)**.

Accept as Numbered Warrant Articles

Selectman DePinto moved to accept the articles as proposed #1-20, seconded by Selectman Vallarelli and **unanimously voted (5-0)**.

Sign Warrant

Selectman DePinto moved to sign the Warrant for the May Town Meeting, seconded by Selectwoman O'Neill **was unanimously voted (5-0)**.

Upgrade CodeRed/Town Administrator

Mr. Ragucci states we have exceeded out minutes of non-emergency calls. He is requesting we upgrade to unlimited and resource the BJ's account for these funds. Selectman DePinto made a motion to approve this request, seconded by Selectwoman O'Neill and **unanimously voted (5-0)**.

Reappointment of Town Counsel

Chairman Boussy states Attorney Solomon is doing a fantastic job. Selectman DePinto moved to reappoint Bill Solomon as Town Counsel, seconded by Selectwoman O'Neill and **unanimously voted (5-0)**. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting in Favor:

Selectman DePinto
Selectwoman O'Neill
S3electman Sweeney
Selectman Vallarelli
Chairman Boussy

Motion was unanimously voted (5-0).

Approve Minutes

Selectman DePinto made motion to approve minutes of February 17, 2015, seconded by Selectwoman O'Neill and **unanimously voted (5-0)**.

Stockwell Fund

Attorney Solomon states he would like to have a meeting with Mellon Bank along with the Selectmen to discuss the process in which Mellon Bank is disbursing from the Fund. The Board discussed moving forward how they would like the money disbursed and agreed they should setup a meeting to discuss this with Mellon Bank. Selectwoman O'Neill made a motion for Attorney Solomon to draft a letter and invite them out, seconded by Selectman DePinto and **unanimously voted (5-0)**.

Town Administrator

Town Administrator Ragucci states that the snow & ice deficit is around \$600,000 and growing. He states that most of Arena roof is shoveled off and he will be sending another crew there tomorrow. The Town Hall and Fire Department have been cleared. He states that with the cold nights there are crews going out every night to salt and sand. Mr. Ragucci notifies the Board that a movie company has reached out to use the Arena parking lot for parking from 12am-6am. Mr. Ragucci states this is a revenue for the Town and he will be meeting with them on Thursday. Mr. Ragucci states that the Governor's Budget will be out tomorrow. Mr. Ragucci states he is looking to increase Chapter 70 by a little less than 3% as well as unrestricted government aid again with an increase of 3% maybe even greater than 3%. Mr. Ragucci would caution on hearing that the MBTA is going to get 128 million. That 128 million could be coming from the assessments placed on cities and towns. Mr. Ragucci states we may see an increase in our local aid the net increase might not be as much because of the assessment side of it. Representative Day confirms he is hearing the same. Representative Day states that the next meeting he attends they will also have the house budget to discuss with the Board of Selectmen. Selectman DePinto asks what the GIC number is. Mr. Ragucci respond that is coming out tomorrow also. Chairman Boussy asks what Representative Day has heard about that. Representative Day responds not good but no details. Mr. Ragucci states he is anticipating 9%.

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Miscellaneous Correspondence

Selectwoman O'Neill asks Mr. Ragucci about the extra payment. Mr. Ragucci stated the 2012 payment was taken off. Mr. Ragucci states that according to Mr. Grover and Mr. Florino it was taken off. Selectwoman O'Neill stated that she could not see if under open checkbook. Mr. Ragucci states it could be under 2012. Selectwoman O'Neill understands that the DPW is busy and nothing is slowing down for them but she states that we are coming up to our rainy season and she is thinking flooding. She asks if there is a plan to Mr. Ragucci knowledge to uncover some of the sewer grates. Mr. Ragucci states they have already started in the known flooding areas. Selectman DePinto asks Attorney Solomon if the Comcast check was okay. Attorney Solomon states he is going to look into it and let him know at the next meeting. Selectman DePinto asks Mr. Ragucci about the job in the Assessor's Office going to a non-Stoneham resident. Mr. Ragucci states that the Board of Assessors and the Assessor goes through the process. Mr. Ragucci has no part in that hiring. Mr. Ragucci states they hired someone from Methuen.

Executive Session

Selectman DePinto moved to go into executive session, pursuant to Chapter 30A Section 21 (6) of the General Laws to consider the exchange real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect of the negotiating position of the public body. Chairman Boussy states that he declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiation position of the public body. As Chairman he did not reasonably anticipate this matter at the time the notice for this meeting was filed with the Town Clerk, since the meeting between the Town consultants and John M. Corcoran and Co. which the Board is updated about occurred yesterday, Monday, March 2, 2015 and not to return as the Board of Selectmen. Motion was seconded by Selectman Vallarelli. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting in Favor:

Selectman DePinto
Selectman O'Neill
Selectwoman Sweeney
Selectman Vallarelli
Chairman Boussy

Meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Erin Sinclair