

**HAMPTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
February 14, 2005 7:00 PM**

PRESENT: William Sullivan, Chairman, Virginia Bridle-Russell,
James Workman, Cliff Pratt, Rick Griffin
James Barrington, Town Manager
Karen Anderson, Administrative Assistant

I. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Jim Workman led the audience in the salute to the flag.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Pratt congratulated Town Manager Barrington on the birth of his 6th grandchild. Cari and Rob Thompson welcomed daughter, Kaelynn Jenise.

Mr. Sullivan congratulated his wife on their 36th wedding anniversary tomorrow.

III. APPOINTMENTS

1. Mr. Charlie Preston, Re: Ashworth Avenue

Mr. Preston asked about Article 32, the proposal to trade Ashworth Avenue for Ocean Boulevard with the State. He asked if there is a final plan for the reconstruction of Ashworth Avenue showing the intersections, lane widths and sidewalks. He noted that long-time residents have come before the Board for relief from the sidewalk/curbcuts. Mr. Preston asked how the bridge or future bridge fits into this picture. He added that it is his opinion that Ashworth Avenue will not accommodate a three-lane road and he asked that the Board of Selectmen consider just a two-lane road. Mr. Preston said that he believes that the Board of Selectmen's attempt to make travel flow smooth could compact the problems with a center turning lane. He said that his speculation is that there would not be an emergency lane at all if cars were utilizing the turning lane. On the south end, a rotary would make things worse. Mr. Preston asked if the town loses control of Ashworth Avenue if the transfer of property takes place. He said that the two-lane draw bridge is the root of the problem. The compromise he would suggest is a two-lane road with live load/unload areas or bike lanes. Cars would have areas to pull over to make room for emergency vehicles and businesses would benefit with the loading areas for deliveries. He asked the Board not to rush and avoid legal proceedings. Mr. Preston asked if the old shed could be removed at the municipal lot; he noted that last year it was not taken down because of the default budget. Mr. Sullivan said that the FST plan does have three lanes proposed and the plans are available for review at the town office.

Mrs. Bridle said that Mr. Preston brings up a lot of things for the Board to consider. Mrs. Bridle asked how the swap of Ocean Boulevard and Ashworth Avenue will affect the use of the parking meters. Mr. Barrington said that has not been discussed at this stage.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

Town Manager's Report

Police Facility

The demolition of the old police station began Thursday and it was a pile of rubble by Friday morning. The cleanup will involve separation of materials by type for recycling, reclamation, and disposal and it is expected to be finished within two weeks.

Brown Avenue Properties

Mr. Barrington reported that he has received a verbal request from Dennis Royal concerning his desire to purchase the land at the Town's Basketball court and the former Silver Wave parking lot area on Brown Avenue. These are probably two separate questions, since the parking lot area is leased land while the basketball court has a history of being used by the Town. Dana Anderson followed up with me this afternoon, adding that they would be interested in leasing their existing building, or the land they own there, to the Town for a community center.

District Court

After Attorney Gearreald and the Town Manager toured the American Legion Hall with Post Commander Ralph Fatello and others, they invited Peter Goodwin to come and look at the property. Mr. Goodwin visited today, and indicated that he felt there were possibilities there. There were questions asked back and forth between Mr. Goodwin and Commander Fatello. There was agreement that they would seek to answer each other's questions and have further discussions.

Northern Utilities

Mr. Barrington told the Board that the town hosted a meeting with Northern Utilities on Monday of this week to discuss ways to improve communications from the gas company concerning the depth of their gas lines. Also in attendance at that meeting, were representatives of the State Fire Marshal and the PUC, along with Fire Chief Lipe, Public Works Director Hangen, and Attorney Gearreald. In my opinion, while the gas company expressed willingness to discuss greater cooperation, the result of the discussion was far less than satisfactory. Mr. Randall Knepper, the Director of the Safety Division of the Public Utility Commission was in attendance at our meeting, and was most helpful. Attorney Gearreald and I had further discussions with Mr. Knepper by phone on Friday morning. We intend to further pursue the safety issues we have with the gas company to insure that their actions mirror their words.

On a related note, Public Works Director John Hangen is sending a letter to the water and gas utilities to discuss their plans for making sure that they do not develop the need to cut our new streets shortly after they are paved. The town has an ordinance that severely limits the ability for a utility to cut a new road within five years of its paving.

Infrastructure Schedule

In a meeting with Peter Howe, of FST, and Stan Carter, of Zoppo, last week, the subject of the schedule was discussed. Due to a variety of circumstances, construction is not as far along as any of the parties would like. Zoppo has been exploring potential options for summer work in the beach area, either west of Ashworth Avenue or in the White's Island area, to try to get back on target for a spring 2006 completion. The Town Manager will keep the Board posted of their findings and any further discussions that are had along those lines. We are all sensitive to the congestion and short duration of the summer season, but if viable options exist they are worth exploring.

Tax Deeds

Mr. Barrington reported that the Tax Collector passed forward two deeds for marshland. The properties are being deeded to the town for non-payment of taxes and the Board of Selectmen will need to vote to accept the deeds.

Deliberative Session

Mr. Barrington asked the Board what they would like to do in regard to the re-broadcast of the Deliberative Session. The session was taped to a computer hard drive and it will need to be transferred onto at least 3 DVD's to be played.

Coastal Program Grant

Mr. Barrington told the Board that Faye, Spofford & Thorndike has been working on a grant application through the coastal program to assist with the cost of some of the drainage work. An application has been

put together and a public hearing would be required if the Board has an interest. The grant is a 50/50 split, however, existing project money can be used. Some of the scenarios that are being considered are vortex cleaning devices to separate the grit, a vacuum truck to clean drainage systems, and back-flow preventers. With the required notice, a public hearing could be held on February 28th.

Sun Valley Beach Erosion

Mr. Barrington explained to the Board that there is some serious beach erosion happening at Sun Valley, behind the half-tide jetty, and he has met with a couple of residents about this. The residents are very concerned. Several of the stairways that lead to the beach have already been washed out. Mr. Barrington said that he has contacted Dr. Richardson about this problem and he will forward some pictures to the Board.

President's Day

With next Monday being President's Day, Mr. Barrington asked if the Board intended to hold a Selectmen's Meeting.

Parking Lot Leases

The Finance Department is preparing to send out the bills for the parking lot leases for the upcoming season and have asked if the Board intends to change the rates. The current rates are \$585 for Ashworth Avenue, \$575 for Island Path and \$355 for Church Street. These rates continue to be below the market rates and he wanted to know if the Board wanted to adjust them this year.

Questions for the Manager

Mr. Griffin asked where the town basketball court is. Mr. Barrington said that it is located behind the beach fire station.

Mr. Griffin asked about the potential of the District Court using the Legion Hall. Mr. Barrington said that they do appear to be interested and the Legion is willing to work with them for the space that they need.

Mr. Griffin said that he did not think this is the best year to increase the fees on the parking lots. Mrs. Bridle agreed, noting that many businesses have been inconvenienced from the construction.

Mrs. Bridle said that she did not know how a community center would go over at the beach, however it would qualify for CDBG funding grants at that location.

Mr. Pratt said that he was very concerned with the gas line break at the beach. Mr. Barrington said that it is his understanding that the gas line went over a particular line, rather than under the line as had been thought. The gas line was sleeved, which indicated that it was at a depth other than what was standard for a gas line. The gas company has fallen back on the Dig Safe law regarding the depth of the lines. Mr. Sullivan said that there was some mention that something happened when the Sands Contel was built. Mr. Barrington said that the gas company is extremely concerned with liability and portions of the law make them more liable if they admit there are shallow lines. While he would like them to come forward and be open with the town., they can't be offered immunity on that. The PUC has been helpful and he believes that they understand that we all have a problem here.

Mr. Pratt said that people would like to see the Deliberative Session rebroadcast.

Mr. Workman said that the Town should use whatever leverage they can with Northern Utilities. He said that for safety sake, it is important that they be cooperative.

Mr. Workman agreed with the other members of the Board that this is not the year to increase the parking fees.

Mr. Workman MOTIONED that the Board of Selectmen hold a public hearing on February 28, 2005 to take comments on a grant application with the Department of Environmental Services Coastal Program to obtain funding for assistance on Hampton Beach drainage improvements.

Mr. Pratt SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Opening Roads

Mr. Sullivan said that the town just paved Drakeside Road for example, and if new buildings are put in there, the road will be opened up again. He said that while the town does have a stringent policy, it would be unfair to hold developers to that rule if the Board is trying to encourage development at the beach.

Mr. Sullivan agreed that the Board of Selectmen should forgoe meeting on Presidents Day.

Mr. Sullivan asked if dredging material is going in on Sun Valley where they are having the problems. Mr. Barrington said that he did not believe they were doing that, but after having looked at what is going on over there it should be a high priority.

Mr. Sullivan said that he has concerns with Zoppo working during the summer, maybe allowing no more than a couple weeks into June. Mr. Workman agreed, explaining that the Board is trying to avoid impacting the daily lives of the residents.

Beach Renourishment Program

Mr. Workman MOTIONED that the Board of Selectmen authorize the Town Manager to sign the paperwork associated with the Beach Renourishment Program.

Mr. Pratt SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

LCD – Trim Program

Mr. Pratt MOTIONED to authorize the Town Manager to sign the Trim Program application with the Local Government Center.

Mr. Workman SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

The Insurance Committee will be brought together for a meeting with Mr. Barrington to understand this new program.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Exeter Road Bridge

Mr. Barrington told the Board that the State is ready to move forward with repair work to the Exeter Road bridge. The work will require that the bridge be closed to all traffic for approximately a three-week period. The State has suggested the time period right after Columbus Day would be the most appropriate. Mr. Sullivan said that the work has to be done. Mr. Workman said that it is long overdue. Mrs. Bridle said that she does not want to see three weeks turn into 6 weeks. The Board agreed that this will put a lot of traffic onto Drakeside Road and Route 101 but that the time frame suggested was the most appropriate. Mr. Barrington noted that the Fire Department is currently working out a temporary emergency access to use during that period.

Hurd Farm

Mr. Pratt asked about the Hurd Farm schedule. Mr. Barrington said that the Hurd's attorney has some issues with the easements and at this point the tentative closing date is between March 1st and 7th.

Crosswalk Light Controls

Mr. Workman asked the Town Manager if someone can look at the crosswalk control at the traffic at Lafayette and High Street because the push button is not working. He told the Manager that the Lafayette/Stickney Terrace controller needs to be plowed out in order for pedestrians to be able to reach the button.

GASB 34

Mr. Workman pointed out that the audit report casts a disparaging comment on the town because of the non-compliance with GASB 34. Mr. Barrington said that originally there was a big push towards town's coming into compliance with GASB 34, based on expected repercussions, but the reality has been that the bond rating agencies and the Federal government have not had any concerns. He explained that if the town were to come into compliance with those reports, the audit will cost more. There is good to be derived from GASB 34, it does tend to treat government accounting more like traditional private sector accounting. Mr. Barrington said that it is something that the town would like to move towards, but it is not a major concern.

VI. MINUTES

The minutes of January 31, 2005 were accepted as written.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Hawkers & Peddlers Permit – Seaside Crafts
2. Acceptance of Tax Deed – Map 289-023 and Map 289-030 (marshland)

Mr. Workman MOTIONED that the Board of Selectmen approve the consent agenda.

Mrs. Bridle SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Richard Reniere, 29 Highland Avenue noted that the Precinct had a public hearing tonight about a warrant article being proposed to raise and appropriate a sum of money for the procurement and installation of lighting along Ashworth Avenue and the lettered streets. In the course of the discussion there was some discrepancy in what is going to be done as part of the town's infrastructure project. Mr. Barrington said that the plans call for 5' sidewalks on both sides of Ashworth and the lettered streets. In a few limited areas where the right-of-way is too narrow the sidewalk will be narrowed.

Mr. Reniere asked about the rates for parking lot leases. He noted that the Church Street lot is adjacent to the lot that has been reserved for resident parking, which is being used by Zoppo. He asked if the residents are going to be able to recover the use of the lot when the construction ceases. Mr. Barrington said that it will be restored at the conclusion of the construction, but it will not be available during this summer. Mr. Sullivan asked if the lot across the street could accommodate the residents. Mr. Barrington said that it could if that is what the Board wanted to allow. Mr. Barrington pointed out that the town leases that lot for a fee and the revenue offsets that cost.

Mr. Fred Rice, 15 Heather Lane said that he was present to comment on some of what Mr. Preston spoke about. He said that all of Mr. Preston's questions have been answered in the final beach study report and it is too late to question the width of the road after the construction has already started. Mr. Rice said that this is not a 'willy nilly' project and it has been designed professionally. Mr. Rice compared the project to that of Route 1 and how everyone worked to make everyone happy and that the project was a success. Mr. Rice said that the road will be wide enough and if people are not allowed to keep using land that they have been using illegally for years, he does not have sympathy for them. Mr. Rice said that the town is not taking any private land.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Workman MOTIONED that the meeting be adjourned. (8:17 PM)

Mrs. Bridle SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Chairman

