

TOWN OF STERLING
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
October 8, 2014

<i>MEETING:</i>	Roll Call: Selectman Cutler - Present. Selectman Patacchiola – Present. Selectman Kilcoyne – Present. At 7:02 pm, Chairman Patacchiola called the meeting to order.
Minutes:	VOTE: Selectman Kilcoyne moved to accept the Board of Selectmen Minutes for September 24, 2014. Selectman Cutler 2nd. Selectman Cutler- Aye Selectman Kilcoyne - Aye Chairman Patacchiola – Aye. Motion Carried. Chairman Patacchiola requested that the September 29, 2014 be held for approval until the next meeting, as he has not had time to review them.
Tax Title Sales	Mr. Bill Cowin of Tallage Inc. reported to the Selectmen regarding tax title assignment sales. If the Town should choose to sell its tax liens, an auction would be held and Tallage might be one of the companies that bids on the liens. The way tax liens work: Tax liens are placed on real estate property, if the property owner is delinquent in paying their taxes. Once a tax lien is filed, it cannot be released until it is paid off. If the Town so chooses, companies or individuals may bid on Tax liens and then buy them from the Town. (The Town receives 100% of the back taxes and fees that are owed and is guaranteed that the future taxes will be paid on the property by either the property owner or the tax lien investor) In exchange for paying the back property taxes and fees, the investor gets a tax lien certificate. The certificate gives him two rights. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The first legally requires him to be paid interest on the money he invested.2. The investor also has the right to ultimately foreclose on the property if he is not reimbursed the principal and the interest. At the end of the one- to three-year redemption period, the investor has the "right to foreclose the tax lien and take title to the property if the lien is not paid," The investor files the necessary paperwork with the county and pays the filing fee. Once the owner is notified that the property is in foreclosure, he still has time to pay back what he owes before losing ownership. If the owner doesn't pay, the foreclosure goes through and the investor now owns the property. The Board requests that the Treasurer report back to them on the recent tax takings within the Town and also with a proposal on which properties may be considered for tax title assignment sales in the immediate future.
Use of Town Property for Model Airplane Club	Mr. Al Dean and Mr. John Carbone represented the Wachusett RC Flyers. Their club is an organization of people who fly model aircraft. They are members of the Academy of Model Aircraft, a fully insured, national organization. They addressed the Board, in order to request permission to consider using the old Sterling landfill area, as a home base for flying their model aircraft. The consensus of the Board is that the club should be given the opportunity to further consider this piece of property. Mr. Dean and Mr. Carbone will walk the property and if it is suitable for their purpose, they are encouraged to return to the Board with a detailed proposal.
1835 Town Hall	After discussion regarding the 1835 Town Hall, the Board decided that they would like to further examine the following issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Optimal use of the 1835 Town Hall Building• Expenditure of all money, in regard to the 1835 Town Hall Building.• Approval of all maintenance and building improvements• Laying out a process for using the funds that are generated, through Recreational Programming and rental of space within the 1835 Town Hall building The Board requests that the 1835 Town Hall Committee and Facilities Technician, Tom Rutherford, be invited to a future meeting in order to discuss the issues.

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Fair Review

Mr. Doug Downey, Chairman of the Fair Committee, reported that the 2014 Sterling fair was a success. They have managed to extend the offerings at the fair to include Ninja dancers, a longer parade, pony rides and dunk tanks, with Selectmen as the victims, which were all popular. The accounting problem with the issuance of prize checks was solved by issuing vouchers that are redeemable within the Town Hall. Mr. Downey reported that there were no injuries and he publicly thanked the masses of volunteers and public workers who helped make the Fair run smoothly. The Board also thanked everyone and congratulated the Fair committee on all their efforts.

Senior Center Building Com. Charge

After discussion: **VOTE:** Selectman Kilcoyne moved that the Board adopt the proposed Charge for the Senior Center Building Committee. (See attached) Selectman Cutler 2nd. Chairman Patacchiola – Aye Selectman Kilcoyne – Aye. Selectman Cutler – abstained. Motion carried.

Business and Correspondence

Town Administrator's Review

Town Administrator, Jeff Ritter, was evaluated by the Board, on the following aspects of his performance. A rating system that was used with possible scores of 1 – 5, ("1" meaning unsatisfactory and "5" meaning outstanding. Total accumulated points per topic are bolded in parenthesis:

- Budgetary/Financial Administration (**12.5**)
- Interaction with the Board (**12**)
- Public Relations(**11**)
- Personnel Supervision (**10**)
- Employee and Labor Relations (**13**)
- Staff Development (**9**)
- Intergovernmental Involvement (**11**)
- Goal/Performance Attainment (**10**)

Mr. Ritter thanked the Board and reported that he is especially proud to have been recently recognized as the 5th administrator in the Commonwealth, to be awarded the Small Town Administrators of Massachusetts (STAM) award. (STAM provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and information among small town administrators in municipal management, in order to address the group's specific and unique interests. The organization provides an opportunity for professional self-improvement, advancement of the municipal management profession, and increased communication within the profession.)

Town Administrator Update

Usage of Legal Counsel

The Town Administrator publicly reminded everyone and will reiterate at the next Department Head meeting, that it is the policy of the Select Board that ANYONE who wishes to consult with Town Counsel must do so through the Town Administrator or Board of Selectmen. The purpose of this policy is to control legal fees. The Board may wish to formerly adopt a "request for permission form".

Road Closing

The church notified the Board that Meetinghouse Hill Road will be closed on Saturday, October 18, 2014 from 9:00am – 3:30 pm to assure safety during the Church Fair. **VOTE:** Selectman Cutler moved that Meetinghouse Hill Road be closed on Saturday, October 18, 2014 from 9:00am – 3:30 pm. Selectman Kilcoyne 2nd. Selectman Kilcoyne –Aye. Selectman Cutler – Aye. Chairman Patacchiola –Aye. Motion Passed.

Foundation Budget Review Commission

Representative Kim Ferguson has been appointed to the FBRC for the State. As such she will have input with the State regarding the State Educational Financing System, especially Chapter 70 and the foundation formula. Therefore, it is hoped that she will be able to facilitate Chapter 70 reform and armed with facts and new ideas, she may be able to make the argument for a more favorable formula for the Wachusett Regional School District budget. The school committee will be included in the efforts

to support Ms Ferguson's quest for getting more State funding for rural area school systems.

Hunger Awareness Month

November has been declared "Hunger Awareness Month". Residents and businesses are encouraged to get involved, in order to help fight against hunger. For more information, contact Donna Jarvis at WHEAT (978)365-6349, ext 4942 or Donna.Jarvis@uwotc.org or Jan Gottesman, (978)368-0176 ext. 4790 or Clintonitem@yahoo.com

Special Town Meeting

The Sterling Municipal Lighting Plant has requested that the Select Board approve of a Special Town Meeting, in order for them to have the required second Special Town Meeting, regarding the possibility of a gas line for the Town. The Town administrator has asked that the Board consider holding two Special Town Meetings on the Evening of November 12, 2014 at the Chocksett School gym. One will be used for the Required Light Department Meeting and the other will be used to present some articles of Town business that should be addressed prior to the Annual Town Meeting. On October 22, 2014 the Board will be asked to vote upon a November 12th date and to approve the warrant.

Update on Senior Center

Maureen Cranson, Chairman of the Senior Center Building Committee, reported to the Board:

Senior Center Update - Hired our Project managers (ACG) early August

- Advertised for Architects (in accordance with our State Mandates)
- Received submissions (8) on September 23rd
- Completed interviews (4) as of October 3rd/ chose top 2 (will choose preferred architect on Oct. 9 and will negotiate contract in order to get top choice to Board of Selectmen for final approval.
- The site on Muddy Pond/Boutelle has been staked and wetlands flagged.
- Committee is working with the DPW with regards to Tree removal on the property

Ms Cranson encouraged all Boards to participate in the design phase. Her next update will be Nov. 5th. She also publicly thanked Selectman Kilcoyne and Town Administrator Jeff Ritter for their active participation in the Senior Center Building Committee meetings.

Chocksett Road Intersection

The Town Administrator attended a recent Montachusett Regional Planning Commission meeting and reports that the State construction project for the Chocksett Road Intersection, that was slated for the Spring of 2015, has been reassigned to FY18. Mr. Ritter reiterated that the Town of Sterling desperately needs representation at all of the MRPC and MJTC meetings so that this type of thing doesn't happen. He stated that without representation, the Town of Sterling will not be seriously considered when Federal funds are allocated for road work. Therefore, he publicly encouraged the Planning Board to immediately appoint someone to the task, as it is their Board's legal responsibility to do so.

The Devens Profile

Mayor Dean Mazarella, Mayor of Leominster has asked Sterling and other towns to join forces, in order to demonstrate the adverse impact that the State funded Devens Project continues to have upon surrounding communities. He asks that the Town of Sterling Board of Selectmen sign his letter that asks for a "comprehensive study which would, at a minimum, qualify the impact that Devens reuse and now the re use plan has had on the region, determine the impact Devens will have on our communities given the new comprehensive community development project moving forward at Devens, analyze the amount of money being spent on marketing Devens and determine an appropriate impact fee for surrounding communities to level the playing field particularly with attracting companies to our communities, and any other factors having a negative economic/financial effect on the Devens impact area."

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The Town Administrator stated that the impact for Sterling can be felt with the impending loss of SMC Ltd., located at 16 and 32 Chocksett Road. The Town cannot compete with State subsidized industrial rental property at Devens and each business that leaves town, to move into Devens, negatively impacts the Town's tax base. The consensus of the Board was that it would behoove the Town to at least have the Town Administrator get in touch with the mayor and to have a discussion on what can be done. This may include hiring a firm to assess the negative economic impact that Devens continues to have on the community and thereby encourage the State to make financial restitution to the Towns.

Public Session

No one came forth with concerns during Public Session.

Adjourn

VOTE: Chairman Patacchiola moved to adjourn at 9:10pm. Selectman Kilcoyne 2nd. Selectman Cutler-Aye Selectman Kilcoyne - Aye Chairman Patacchiola – Aye. Motion Carried

materials list: 2014 9 24 minutes, 2014 9 29 minutes, Tallage Handout, Wachusett Flyers handouts, 1835 building costs, SCBC charge, performance eval. TA handouts



Response to BOS regarding SCBC Charge:

1. All proposed expenditures are to be approved by the BOS as stated in Warrant Article. Jeffrey Ritter is the appointed procurement officer and will represent the BOS.
2. Regular written and verbal updates will be provided monthly (if not more) by the SCBC (and ACG) to the BOS.
3. The BOS will be involved with ACG and SCBC when the architects initial design features are developed. Goal is to insure that Senior Center design would be able to mesh with possible 'community usage' design.
4. SCBC will be responsible for the management and approval of duties of the OPM (ACG).
5. ACG will ensure all permits are obtained.
6. SCBC and ACG will approve the selection of general contractor while being cognizant of State mandates and laws.
7. Final design approval will be made by the SCBC.
8. MR. Ritter and OPM will ensure full compliance with Federal State and Town acquisition/purchasing laws and requirements.
9. Abutters to Senior Center site will be fully informed and apprised during the entire process.

The BOS charge in general: Construct a fully functioning Senior Center, with community usage in mind, while adhering to all Federal, State and Local mandates. Accomplish this project in a timely fashion at/or under budget and with the BOS and community being continuously informed.