

**Regular Session Minutes – Selectmen’s Meeting**  
**Selectmen’s Meeting Room, Town Hall**  
**Monday, November 17, 2014, 7:30 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Margot R. Fleischman, Chair, William S. Moonan, Caroline Fedele, Michael A. Rosenberg, Mark Siegenthaler, and Town Manager Richard T. Reed

**ALSO PRESENT:** Board of Assessors Members Ronald Cordes and John Murphy; Stephen Poulos Associate Assessor; Alyssa Sandoval, Economic Development Coordinator; Town Engineer Adrienne St. John; Finance Director Victor Garofalo; James Shea; Meredith McCullough and Mary McBride, Press Representatives; Brian Dorrington, Bedford TV.

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**Chair Fleischman called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.**

**15-113 Public Hearing FY15 Property Tax Allocation Among Classifications**

**Mr. Siegenthaler made a motion to open the Public Hearing to discuss the FY15 Property Tax Allocation among Classifications. Mr. Rosenberg seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

Town Manager Richard Reed addressed the Selectmen before the Assessors’ presentation. Mr. Reed alerted the Selectmen to a slight change in the amount calculated for excess tax levy. Mr. Reed stated that there is a rounding process within the system that needed to be adjusted slightly. Therefore, the excess tax levy is \$2,178,678. Mr. Reed also mentioned that the Finance Director prepared a document illustrating the impact of having different tax levy shifts. Mr. Reed indicated that this document was informational only and not a recommendation.

Associate Assessor Stephen Poulos informed the Selectmen that the Board of Assessors unanimously voted on the changes to the Property Tax Allocation Classifications for Fiscal Year 2015. Mr. Poulos stated that the valuations on Residential property increased by 7.6% from Fiscal Year 2014. Mr. Poulos indicated that this number does not factor in new growth. Open Space showed a decrease in valuation of 9.2%. Mr. Poulos said this was due to wetland discounts being applied. There were no new parcels that received the Open Space discount. There was significant valuation growth in the categories of Commercial and Industrial properties: 9.6% and 11.5% respectively.

Mr. Poulos presented the proposed new tax rates for Fiscal Year 2015.

|                   |         |                         |
|-------------------|---------|-------------------------|
| Residential       | \$14.62 | 6.9% decrease from FY14 |
| Open Space        | \$10.96 | 7% decrease from FY14   |
| Commercial        | \$32.12 | 5.6% decrease from FY14 |
| Industrial        | \$32.12 | 5.6% decrease from FY14 |
| Personal Property | \$32.12 | 5.6% decrease from FY14 |

Board of Assessors Member Ron Cordes spoke to the Selectmen. Mr. Cordes stated that the Board of Assessors have assumed a shift rate of 175% historically and felt it appropriate to stay at that rate. Mr. Cordes indicated that for the past few decades, the tax burden has been borne by the residential taxpayers. However, due to the increased new commercial growth in the Town, the tax burden is shifting toward commercial and industrial taxpayers. Mr. Poulos indicated that the significant new growth in commercial is largely due to Oracle coming into Bedford.

Chair Fleischman opened up the discussion to the public. There were no questions at the time.

**Mr. Rosenberg made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Mr. Moonan seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

**Mr. Moonan made a motion to establish a residential factor so as to effect a 175% allocation of the tax burden from the Residential/Open Space property classes to the Commercial/Industrial/Personal Property classes.**

**On the matter of an Open Space discount:**

**\*To grant an Open Space discount of 25%.**

**On the matter of a Residential Exemption:**

**\*Not to grant a Residential Exemption, so as not shift the tax burden within the residential class from residents to non-residents; or from certain low-valuation owner-occupied properties to high-valuation properties**

**On the matter of a Small Commercial Exemption:**

**\*Not to grant Small Business Exemption, so as not to shift the tax burden within the Commercial/Industrial/Personal Property classes from certain small commercial properties to other commercial and industrial properties.**

**Ms. Fedele seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

**15-114            Change of Officers  
                      Sergeant Fred H. Sullivan V.F.W. Post #1628**

Mr. Reed asked the Selectmen to approve a change of officers at the Sergeant Fred H. Sullivan V.F.W. Post #1628. Mr. Reed indicated that the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC) requested the submission of current Directors and Officers to the Local Licensing Authority and the ABCC.

**Mr. Rosenberg made a motion that the Selectmen approve the Change of Officers at Sergeant Fred H. Sullivan V.F.W. #1628 as listed in the November 5, 2014 letter from James Burton. Mr. Moonan seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

**15-115            Proposed Grant Application  
                      Massachusetts Downtown Initiative FY15  
                      Technical Assistance Program  
                      Bedford Signage and Wayfinding Study**

Economic Development Coordinator Alyssa Sandoval presented the Selectmen with a grant proposal for a Wayfinding Study. The grant is a Downtown Technical Assistance application from the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative through the Department of Housing and Community Development. Ms. Sandoval indicated that the purpose of this grant would be to provide greater cohesion and visibility for the Bedford business community. Ms. Sandoval has received important feedback from local business stating that there is neither adequate nor clear signage for visitors to the Town. Ms. Sandoval noted that the 2014 Comprehensive Plan is in favor of such a Wayfinding study to help with this issue.

Mr. Siegenthaler stated that he would not be participating in the discussion because the grant application goes to the agency that he works for and the program he recently managed.

The grant in question would have a maximum allowance of \$10,000 and can be used in a variety of ways such as more signage and information kiosks. Ms. Sandoval asked the Selectmen for their feedback on the proposed grant application.

Chair Fleischman and Mr. Moonan both expressed concern about increased signage within the Town. Chair Fleischman stated that this was an area of concern for many within the Town that are worried about the aesthetics of more signs throughout Bedford.

Ms. Sandoval stated that she could add language to her grant proposal that would address this issue and suggested having updated, more user-friendly signs.

Ms. Fedele asked if it would be beneficial to add a member of the Cultural Council to the Wayfinding Study Working Group. Chair Fleischman agreed that it would be helpful so as to address the aesthetics issue of more signage. Ms. Sandoval indicated that she

would reach out to the Cultural Council to see if one of its members would be interested in participating in the Wayfinding Study Working Group.

Ms. Sandoval asked Chair Fleischman if she would write a letter indicating the Selectmen's support for this grant proposal. Chair Fleischman agreed to draft such a letter.

**15-116           Great Road/Bedford Street Sewer Force Main  
                  Rehabilitation Design – Phase II  
                  Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. – Peabody, MA**

Town Engineer Adrienne St. John asked the Selectmen to approve a design contract to reline the entire force main from the Main Sewer Station to the Westview Cemetery and west of Eldred Road to North Hancock Street. Ms. St. John informed the Selectmen that the current project to rehabilitate the Town's sewer force main along Bedford Street in Lexington was near completion. Unfortunately, the Town experienced another major break in the force main due to external corrosion a few weeks ago. This break occurred near the highway off ramp swale. Ms. St. John stated that there are 8,180 linear feet to be repaired. The price for the design is \$109,500. Ms. St. John said that Hanscom Air Force Base would cover 20% of the project cost but not the section that is in the Town of Bedford. The Town does have funding for this project available from sewer Article 15/15.

After a lengthy discussion, it was decided that the project was necessary and the Town had the financial resources to pay for it.

**Mr. Rosenberg made a motion to approve the contract with Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. in the amount of \$109,500 for Phase II of the design to rehabilitate the Town's sewer force main along Bedford Street in Lexington. Mr. Siegenthaler seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

**15-117           Minutes  
                  Regular Session Minutes – October 20, 2014, November 3, 2014 and  
                  November 6, 2014**

**Mr. Moonan made a motion to approve the Regular Session Minutes of October 20, 2014 as amended. Mr. Rosenberg seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

**Executive Session Minutes – October 20, 2014**

**Mr. Rosenberg made a motion to approve the Executive Session minutes from October 20, 2014 as amended. Mr. Siegenthaler seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed 4-0-1. Ms. Fedele abstained.**

**Mr. Moonan made a motion to approve the Regular Session Minutes of November 3, 2014 as amended. Ms. Fedele seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

**Mr. Rosenberg made a motion to approve the Regular Session Minutes of November 6, 2014 as written. Mr. Moonan seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

### **15-118      Town Manager's Report**

Mr. Reed did not have any updates for the Selectmen at this time.

### **15-119      Open Discussion and Selectmen Liaison Reports**

Mr. Moonan inquired about who was exploring the bikeway extension behind the businesses on Railroad Avenue. Mr. Reed stated that staff was looking to set up a meeting with the three business owners. Mr. Reed said he would be talking with Public Works Director Roy Sorenson about the issue.

Mr. Moonan asked what the status was on the Volunteer Coordinating Committee (VCC) memo regarding the Trails Committee. Mr. Reed stated that the Trails Committee was formed many years ago as an offshoot of the Conservation Committee. There was never a formal 'charge' to create this Committee and thus their members have not undergone the VCC application process. Mr. Reed said that the Town Charter states that the Selectmen appoint committee members for the Town. Mr. Reed and the Selectmen agreed that Ms. Fedele would meet with the Chairs from the Trails Committee and the Conservation Committee to develop a formal 'charge' for the Trails Committee.

Mr. Rosenberg stated that there would be a Public Hearing of the Restoration Advisory Board on November 19<sup>th</sup> to discuss the Naval Weapons Industrial Reserve Plant on Hartwell Road. Mr. Rosenberg asked Mr. Reed if he had read the Restoration Advisory Board's report. Mr. Reed stated that he had not read the report and that Don Corey represented the Town at these meetings. Mr. Corey occasionally gives updates to the Selectmen on the cleanup project at the Reserve Plant. Mr. Rosenberg asked if the cleanup project was almost finished. Mr. Reed said it was a long term project that would take years to complete.

Chair Fleischman said that the MAPC met recently to outline the application process for their grant. The grant gives local technical assistance to Town projects such as transportation, economic development and Smart Growth development. The MAPC will be reviewing the grants on a rolling basis starting November 1<sup>st</sup> and will continue until all the funding is allocated. Mr. Reed reminded the Selectmen that this would be an allocation of resources toward completing a Town's project, not an allocation of funds. Chair Fleischman said that she would keep the Planning Board informed of the MAPC grant as they might have a project that could benefit from MAPC assistance.

Chair Fleishman said the Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan workshop was very well attended. Toole Design encouraged the public to provide comments soon as the Wiki Map would only be open until the end of the week. Chair Fleischman asked the Selectmen to visit the site and add their comments and encourage the members of their committees to do so as well.

Chair Fleischman concluded by informing the Selectmen that the Public Works Department was working on new signage and safety measures as part of the Pedestrian/Bicycle Infrastructure Plan. These measures are first steps in the overall Minuteman Bike Path Extension project. There will be signs as well as crossing paths in the Reformatory Branches that cross Concord Road near Bedford Children's Center as well as the Reformatory Branch that crosses Hartwell Road near Chip-In Farm.

**Mr. Moonan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Fedele seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.