

Selectmen's Meeting
Tuesday, February 1, 2000
2nd Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall, Main St., Ayer, MA

Open Session

The Board met with Chairman Bresnahan, Selectman Sullivan and Selectman Pena.

Town Crier: Chairman Bresnahan read the announcements presented on the Agenda of 2-1-00 with the following additions:

1. Chairman Bresnahan introduced Representative Robert Hargraves to the meeting advising Ayer residents to Rep. Hargraves being present this evening for Office Hours in the Town Hall from 7-8pm. Representative Hargraves announced his Homestead Act Forum, sponsored by the Middlesex Registry of Deeds to be conducted at the Groton Senior Ctr. on Thursday, Feb. 3, 2000 from 2-4pm advising residents the cost for services by attorneys present \$10.00 for homes and \$30.00 to register land-- this documentation provides legal protection up to \$200,000 on their homes urging all residents to attend this very important forum. The Board thanked Representative Hargraves for attending this evening's meeting and urged all Town of Ayer residents who haven't registered their homes under this Act to consider attending this forum.
2. Chairman Bresnahan took this opportunity to thank Town of Ayer businesses and Town Departments for participating in Shadow Day, sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce for students attending local tech schools, Job Corp., and Ayer High.
3. Chairman Bresnahan urged all residents to keep their sidewalks clear during this winter season.
4. Chairman Bresnahan read into the record a letter the Selectmen's Office received on 1-5-00 from Calvin Moore offering to donate materials and labor to build a concession stand at Pirone Park, contingent upon no Federal Labor hiring laws be made part of donation, Chairman Bresnahan to forward letter to Park Dept. for their consideration.
5. The Board sent their condolence along to Supt. Gary Girouard upon the recent loss of his father.

Public Input: Chairman Bresnahan requested if there was anyone present wishing to meet with the Selectmen.

1. William Oelfke-Meeting Room space (conference room in former Police Station) for Planning Board. Advising of room being so small for meetings due to large map files and cabinets in room. A very lengthy discussion was conducted re: practically of refurbishing the old station with the Town Hall restoration project commencing. Cost to rehabilitate area was estimated to be between \$10,000.00-\$20,000.00 i.e plumbing, wiring, sheet rock, paint, rugs & furniture, as well as accommodating space needs request from the Board of Health also looking for room in this area. Funding options were presented by Mr. Kreidler from the funds remaining in the new Police Dept appropriation being available and allowable for use advising expenditure from original debt can be spent to rehabilitate unusable-usable space. Selectman Sullivan urging action be taken to eliminate the diesel fumes at the new Police Station which is currently creating health risk to neighbors on Brook St. prior to approving funds for rehabilitation of the former station if funding is remaining in the new Police Station appropriation. The Board discussed utilization of Library & new Police Station conference rooms and also availability of the Pleasant St. School for meeting areas.

The Board requested to get "real minimum cost" to rehabilitate the former Police area in the Town Hall into a meeting room assuming it will be eliminated in two or three years. Motion made by Selectman Pena, 2nd by Selectman Sullivan, VOTE: unanimous, so moved. Selectman Pena to meet with Building Inspector Gabe Vellante to evaluate bare essential needs to rehabilitate area.

2. Frank Maxant stated he was before the Selectmen this evening to request written documentation of what the Selectmen wish the Historical Commission is to respond to re: Town Counsel's letter dated 11-29-99 re: authority of the Historical Commission to lease town-owned property, the Pleasant St. School. The Board requested the Historical Commission respond to the following:
 1. Acknowledge receipt of Town Counsel's letter dated 11-29-99 re: authority of the Historical Commission to lease Town owned property.
 2. Acknowledge your agreement with Counsel's conclusions, or if you do not agree, please explain what the basis is for your disagreement.

BOSMIN2-1-00-P/2.

Chairman Bresnahan called for a motion to approve the Agenda as amended. Selectman Sullivan moved the Board approve the Agenda as amended, 2nd by Selectman Pena, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Advisory Board, re: Town Fees

The Board met with Advisory Board members Mary Spinner and James Carrington. Advisory Board members updated the Board to their activity since meeting with the Selectmen on 1-18-00. Ms. Spinner stated a meeting was conducted with the Supt. of Public Works re: review of water/sewer rate increases dating back to 1981, with water rates not being increased since 93. The Water Dept. runs a heavy deficit, projected to lose approximately \$552,000 this year. With increases there will still be a deficit but smaller. With this said Ms. Spinner advised the Board to recommendation of the Advisory Board being \$0.45 increase for water and \$0.45 increase for sewer. The Advisory Board also recommended increases to Alcohol rates which have not been increased since 1985. The price of doing business has gone up but the rates have not. Recommendations for All Alcohol increased from \$2,250.00 to \$4,000.00 and Beer & Wine from \$1,250.00 to \$2,500.00 reasoning behind this increase being regional average of surrounding towns and years since fee increase. The Board also recommended Building Dept. fees be increased \$0.55 per 1,000 sq. ft. again advising fees not being raised since 1989. Inspectors (Wiring, Gas, Plumb.) in the Building Dept. have not had salary increases since 89 due to rates not being increased. Zoning fees do not cover the cost presently to cover costs associated with publication, certified mailings and administrative costs, running \$100.00 deficit per applicant. Other departments that need to raise rates include the Board of Health re: transfer station stickers stating the Town's Transfer Station is currently losing money, and the Planning Board fees re: new sub-divisions should consider restructuring their fee schedule to cover their administrative costs. Fire Department ambulance fees were recommended to be increase by 25% to bring them up to parity for basic and advanced life support. The Town needs to generate more revenue advising to some departments continually run deficits and layoffs may happen if proposed fees/rates aren't increased soon. The Selectmen thanked the members of the Advisory Board for all their research and effort and moved to schedule a Public Hearing on February 10, 2000 at 7:00pm at the Ayer Town Hall. Motion made by Selectman Sullivan 2nd by Selectman Pena VOTE: unanimous, so moved. The Board requested a consistent format be prepared for distribution at the Hearing.

2. Economic Development Director's Report

The Board met with Shaun Suhoski. Present for the discussion was Philip O'Brien of J.Stewart Roberts & Assoc. architect for the Town Hall Exterior renovation project. The Board moved to award the contract for the exterior rehabilitation of the Ayer Town Hall to Consigli Construction Co., Inc. in the amount of \$443,400 for the base bid work including masonry repointing, painting, slate roof repair and cupula restoration and Alternate #1 the replacement of windows in the head house (front offices) of Town Hall with wood windows and instructed Mr. Suhoski to request an amendment to the Town's Agreement with Massachusetts Historical Commission to increase the State's reimbursement by an additional \$50,000.00 as allowed under MPPF guidelines, 2nd by Selectman Pena, VOTE: unanimous, so moved. This additional \$50,000.00 to replace the remaining windows in the Town Hall.

On the earlier matter taken up re: rehabilitation of the former police area in the Town Hall Mr. O'Brien advised the Board not to spend any money in that area stating any money spent there will be lost. Mr. O'Brien suggested petitioning off the large meeting hall. The Board expressed their concern re: privacy and noise factors being problematic with that idea.

INFORMATIONAL UPDATE:

1. The Board was reminded to site visit by being conducted DCAM on 2-8-99 re: proposed parking lot.
2. The Board was advised to Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce Legislative Conference on Devens 2-9-00 at 7pm
3. The Board was updated to Nashua River Rail Trail Forum being conducted on 3-8-00 @7pm at the Groton Country Club with State reps. being invited.

4. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

1. Mr. Kreidler read into the record a letter from Building Inspector Gabe Vellante re: violations of Camper's Inn located on Littleton Rd., Ayer, Ma Class I License exceeding their limit of motor vehicles on site. Mr. Vellante's letter sited years of non-compliance of this restriction to his license calling it a cat and mouse situation. The Board moved to approve Camper's Inn license for one month that being February, 2000 and to conduct a Public Hearing on February 29, 2000 to hear and take action up to possible revocation of their license if they continue to fail to comply with the license conditions. Motion made by Selectman Sullivan, 2nd by Selectman Pena, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.
2. Mr. Kreidler updated the Board to Norwood Ave. being determined by Town Counsel not a paper street but Town owned land. Town Counsel will be responding with what is appropriate use.
3. The Board was updated to next JBOS Steering Committee Meeting on 2-2-00 @4:30pm
4. The Board was updated to the next regular JBOS Meeting scheduled for 2-9-00 @7pm. Mr. Kreidler advised the Board to written support being submitted to Devens re: Ayer's unanimous support of Devens to receive and process septic at the Devens Wastewater facility.
5. The Board unanimously voted to indefinitely postpone taking any action and to reject the Town's RFP proposal to locate a cell Town on the Town of Ayer's Water Storage Tank on Washington St. Motion made by Selectman Sullivan, 2nd by Selectman Pena, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.
6. Mr. Kreidler updated the Board to the Massachusetts Municipal Associations Meeting highlights.

Selectman Sullivan moved the Board adjourn the meeting, 2nd by Selectman Pena, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

9:35p.m. Open Meeting adjourned

DATE: _____
Cornelius F. Sullivan, Clerk