



Town of Paxton
Board of Selectmen
697 Pleasant Street, Paxton, MA 01612
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Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 18, 2012

Meeting Location: John Bauer Senior Center 17 West Street, Paxton, MA 01612

Members Present: Peter Bogren, Jr., Chairman
John F. Malone, Vice Chair

Carol L. Riches, Town Administrator

Attendees: Attendee List

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

CMRPC

- Trish Settles was present to discuss the Central Thirteen Prioritization Project. She stated that their objective is to create a shared framework for identifying regional and local priorities for growth, development, higher education and land preservation, as well as transportation and other infrastructure investments. Mass Works will start using our priority projects to see what needs to be funded. Current priorities for Paxton area. Village Center, road repair for Route 56 and 31. Culvert work, and water and sewer upgrades.
- **(JM)** Due to budget restraints updates to our town buildings is a need as well.
- Neil Bagdis added that perhaps Green Power should be looked at.
- **(PB)** Routes 31 and 56 are going to be priorities, along with water repairs. These are needs that are immediate. How does a town like Paxton fit into the regional 13?
- Trish Settles remarked that all of these communities share a lot in common. They want to maintain a rural appearance.

FY13 budget discussion

- **(PB)** We are allowed by State Ethics and Campaign Finance to vote as a board to either support or not support the override and give our managers some direction on how we feel. In general I do not favor overrides. People are stepping up against it to stop the school. In my opinion this is not just to stop the school. Should this not pass it will affect our town's services much more than the school. The Finance Committee has suggested a 6.6% cut across the board. This would

be devastating to town services such as the Police, Fire and DPW. So I do support the override.

- **(JM)** Most overrides do not pass in Paxton. I am against overrides. We need to live within our means. It is our problem not just the schools. I am looking at the long range issues. What do we do next year? 7.4% increase for the school this year, but the way we are going about funding the school needs to change. We need to balance the budget. Do we tax more or loose services? I don't feel I can support the override. We don't have the revenue. My suggestion is that we need our ambulance, police and fire. I think that the overall direction we are going in is wrong.
- **(PB)** Jack, you stated that we are at bare bones, so what do you suggest we eliminate?
- **(JM)** Cut out the library, recreation and the lights, and put these funds back into the departments with public safety.
- **(PB)** Yes, I agree with the library and recreation and street lights, but I am concerned about public safety.
- **(JM)** We look at budgets that do not affect the health and welfare of our residents.
- **(PB)** Should the override not pass then we need to cut \$140, 000, and I agree with those cuts if needed. Mr. Goodrich has also informed us that he would not support an override. **Motion (PB) seconded (JM) to not support the override. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Charles Eisenberg

- Requesting to continue his work as Project manager with JK Scanlan now that PHP is done.
- **(PB)** Peter Dawson thinks that there is a conflict, but I would need to investigate further.
- Charles Eisenberg stated that he could not think of what that would be.
- **(PB)** Our legal budget is low so we have not yet asked town counsel to go any further.
- **(JM)** Could you be objective during this project?
- Charles Eisenberg stated that I'm not on both sides because PHP is out.
- **(JM)** You stated that there is no more consulting for PHP.
- Charles Eisenberg replied, yes they are done.
- **(PB)** How would this benefit the town for you to come back on?
- Charles Eisenberg replied that it would bring the financing and equity part of the project together.
- **(CR)** suggested that if we had Town Counsel look at it then have Mr. Eisenberg cover the legal fees.
- Mr. Eisenberg would like an estimate of the cost. Carol will contact Peter Dawson.
- **(PB)** Mr. Eisenberg to return to the July 2nd meeting if any further information is available.

Emergency Managers Position.

- Mr. Fofana spoke of his interest in the Emergency Managers position. He explained that he has been a resident of Paxton for 12 years. He is currently a professor at WPI, and feels his leadership experience would be beneficial to this position.
- **(PB)** Do you have a background in Emergency Response?
- Mr. Fofana, No, but there are standards in place for all departments both on the local, state and federal levels. I feel security is essential. People need to be aware of what services are in place. There needs to be a better effort to communicate to the town, so people know what to do in an emergency.
- **(PB)** There is training that goes with this position. Would you have time to dedicate to that?
- Mr. Fofana stated that he would utilize technology to communicate and it will be a community effort.
- **(JM)** We have some strong personalities with our department heads. Would you be able to work with that?
- Mr. Fofana stated that I will listen. I may not agree, but I will find a means to better communicate. At times we have to work with what we have.

Tallage

- Bill Cowen from Tallage LLC was present along with the Town Treasurer, Deirdre Malone, to speak about taking over the town's receivable from properties that have gone into tax title.
- Deirdre Malone stated that as of today we have \$360,832.51 in outstanding receivables.
- Bill Cowen explained that when tax receivables are sold to a private investor they keep the taxes current until the property is cleared. It helps take administrative duties off of the Treasurer as well.
- **(PB)** So you make your money on the interest and fees?
- Bill Cowen – Yes.
- Deirdre Malone state that some of our properties have been in tax title since the 1990's.
- **(JM)** Could you explain the auction process?
- Mr. Cowen state that first notices are placed, which takes care of some items because people don't want it to go past that. Any premium goes directly to the town.
- **(PB)** Is there a cost to the town for running an auction?
- Mr. Cowen stated only the publication fee.
- **Motion (JM) seconded (PB) to allow the Town Treasurer to move forward in working with Tallage. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Emergency Manager position continued

- **(PB)** It was unfair to have a board members opinion given without you present. I want to apologize in public for the way it was handled. I should have stopped the conversation sooner, and I apologize for that. Moving on to discuss the Emergency Managers position I am both enthusiastic and have some reservations.

Enthusiastic about Mike taking the position, but I have a reservation about moving the position to the Fire Department. The Emergency Manager is responsible for working with all departments and is under the supervision of the Select Board. Why should we move it to the Fire Department?

- Mike Pingitore stated that for continuity, because we can cross train to have someone else cover if I am not there, and the fire department is usually the first one there in an emergency. We know how to assess damage. We work well with the Police, DPW and Light Department. We would bring in volunteers. I would still answer to the board but replacement would be easier, and I have the resources needed. I would not rely solely on the Fire Department.
- **(JM)** The Emergency Manager answers to the Board, but in the past when the ice storm occurred we had a situation where the Emergency manager pushed things too far.
- Jay Conte replied the Emergency Manager is for the entire town. The Selectmen's position in this is really financial. It's not to oversee as a board, but just one person as the liaison.
- **(JM)** You work with and for Jay, and the town. How would you handle working with strong personalities?
- Mike Pingitore replied that you focus on what is best for the town, and get the job done. You need to sit down at the end of each incident and critic it.
- **(PB)** This needs to go beyond the current personalities. We will discuss this further with Fred.
- Jay Conte has received 2 quotes for the repair work to the ambulance and is waiting on a third. The two current quotes are for \$11,000 and \$13,000 to do the body work only. This is not to restore or do any mechanical work. This will get us through the next two years. If you would allow us to use this estimate I could use some current budget money to do this work.
- **(PB)** We will put this on the July 2nd agenda and hopefully make a decision.

Muir Meadow

- Collin Novik was present to present the Board of Selectmen with the Conservation Restriction that needed the Boards signatures in order to move forward. He informed the Board that there was an addition cost of \$50,000 for the purchasing of the land which the City of Worcester and the Greater Worcester Land Trust covered. **Motion (JM) seconded (PB) to approve and sign the Conservation Restriction for the property at Muir Meadow. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Meeting Minutes

- **Motion (JM) seconded (PB) to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from June 4, 2012. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Anita Fenton resignation

- Anita Fenton presented a letter on May 25, 2012 in which she submitted her resignation from the Paxton Housing Partnership to be effective immediately.
Motion (PB) seconded (JM) to accept the resignation of Anita Fenton from the Paxton Housing Partnership. Unanimous, all in favor.

Paxton Days Banner

- **Motion (JM) seconded (PB) to allow a banner for the Paxton Days to be hung up on the common. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Town Administrators update

1. In appreciation of supervising a recent Intern, Anna Maria College was generous in offering a three credit course to the Town. I have transferred this course to the AMC Scholarship Committee to add to the pool of scholarships for award in the upcoming year.
2. The Paxton Center School windows under the Green Project are due to be completed by the end of June, there were a few delays due to weather but this work is moving along. The Town Accountant has submitted three requests to the MSBA for reimbursement which have resulted in \$503,954 of the \$970,568 expended.
3. The FY13 bids for road materials were opened June 8th and Mike Putnam, DPW Superintendent is recommending that the following contracts should be awarded to the lowest bidders:
 - Mass Broken Stone – Bituminous Concrete
 - Bond Construction – Sand Stone and Gravel
 - Murray Paving – Full Dept Reclaiming
4. You may be aware that Chapter 90 funding has yet to be released. The enclosed State House News Service notice indicates that the bill was cleared in the House and Senate but it held up in the Conference Committee which is due to meet on June 19th. The DPW relies heavily on this money for road improvements. Fiscal year 2012 the Blacktop account was cut to \$50,000 and fiscal year 2013 the request for \$150,000 was completely cut from the budget.

Paxton Land Trust

- **Motion (PB) seconded (JM) to waive the \$10.00 raffle fee for the Paxton Land Trust. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Other Business

- (JM) requested that the minutes from the June 6th Department Head meeting be provided to the Board.

- One day licenses for Whisk where signed through the end of this year.

Next meeting scheduled for Monday July 2, 2012, at 7:00pm.

Adjourned Meeting at 9:00pm, Unanimous all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Graf-Parsons, Administrative Assistant

Documents filed with Meeting Minutes:

Agenda

Attendance list

Documents from the Meeting filed in BOS office:

Town Administrators Update

Peter Bogren, Jr.
Chairman

John F. Malone
Vice Chairman

Frederick G. Goodrich
Clerk