

SPECIAL SELECTBOARD MEETING
(held jointly with the Westford School Board)
May 1, 2017

Present: Casey Mathieu Allison Weinhagen (arrived at 7:37 p.m.)
Dave Tilton Nanette Rogers

Guests: See attached list

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

CHANGES TO AGENDA

There were no changes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

OPEN QUESTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Mark Drapa advised that the previous meeting did not generate items that needed to be addressed for this meeting. Items discussed were getting in touch with Gerry Shepherd for boundary information, creating an inventory for school property on parcels 2 and 3 and establishing a calendar to be maintained for both school and town activities. Other comments were directed for the liaisons to discuss with the attorney.

UPDATED TIMELINE

An updated timeline was circulated. The timeline was reviewed by the Boards.

EASEMENT DEED – SECOND DRAFT

The attorney submitted a second draft of the Easement Deed based on his meeting with Mark and Allison. The Boards reviewed the second draft. New items to the Easement Deed included Access for Agricultural Purposes and a section for Town Meetings.

The agricultural easement will allow the areas currently being hayed by a local farmer to be continued. The Boards are not aware of any written agreement with the farmer. Gerry Shepherd will be consulted.

The easement for Town Meeting was to address the need to use the building for annual and special town meetings. It was noted that the language should be amended to include local, state and federal elections because some of these elections are not tied to an annual or special town meeting. Certain events, such as annual town and school meetings, state primary elections and general elections are dates that are mandated by law and have no flexibility of when to hold them.

Reference to a map showing the location of recreation trails, parking lots, emergency generator, etc. was also added. Other changes made to the Easement Deed were a result of the Boards' comments from the last meeting as well as suggestions made by Sarah Pinto and Melissa Manka.

The attorney advised that the language under the emergency generator section is typical when there is a shared cost, therefore the language was not removed. The language was clarified to reflect costs being split when acquiring a new generator.

The language for the emergency shelter was amended to include trainings or drills for emergency preparedness.

Language permitting the Town to construct new trails was added and is solely for the purpose of connecting existing trails, such as the trails on the school property to the trails on the Jackson Farm & Forest.

Comments from this meeting will be submitted to the attorney for another draft. If the Boards approve of the next draft, then it will be ready for formal acceptance.

SUMMARY OF ATTORNEY MEETING WITH LAISONS

Mark and Allison provided the Boards with a summary of their meeting with the attorney. They both felt the meeting went very well and progress was made. The discussion evolved mostly around the use agreement and what the goals are. The attorney plans to propose multiple options for the Boards to discuss.

One topic that was discussed is the ability to reflect the cost of maintenance for the lands used by the School and Town, such as the sports fields and recreation trails. This is an important piece that needs to be addressed to ensure that both entities are in compliance with State law. Allison and Mark provided the attorney with scenarios to help him better understand what needs to be accomplished. The attorney suggested in-kind donations whenever possible, however it is unclear if this will be in compliance with the law. It was also suggested that a committee be formed to meet at least annually to discuss priorities and determine a schedule for the sports fields and the use of school building.

A significant amount of time was spent discussing firearms. The School's policy prohibits carrying a firearm on school property. Towns cannot prohibit anyone from carrying a firearm on town property. It was noted that the School's policy can be extended 1,000 feet from the boundary of their property. The Town has two options to address the concerns of firearms on parcel #2 and parcel #3. The Town could post the property for no hunting, fishing or trapping however this would not prevent an individual from carrying a firearm on the properties. Another option is for the Town to adopt an ordinance regulating firearms. Although the ordinance could not prohibit an individual from carrying a firearm, it can prevent the firearm from being displayed. This issue is solely a Selectboard topic that will need to be addressed at a future Selectboard meeting.

LOCAL EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN (LEOP)

Nanette explained that every year, municipalities are required to update their LEOP and submit it to their Regional Planning Commission by May 1st. Nanette updated the 2016 plan with names and contact information. She advised that Joshua Smith, the Emergency Program Coordinator, is working on detailed plans for emergency events that will become part of the plan.

Allison Weinhagen made a motion to adopt the 2017 Local Emergency Operations Plan as presented, seconded by Dave Tilton. Motion passed: 3-0.

Special Selectboard Meeting
May 1, 2017
Page 3

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Casey Mathieu, Chair
Selectboard

Nanette Rogers
Town Administrator

TOWN OF WESTFORD
SPECIAL SELECTBOARD MEETING
GUEST LIST

Date: May 1, 2017

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