

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING  
MONDAY, JANUARY 28, 2008**

#04

#05-08, 06-08

Meeting was opened at 7:00 PM in the Upstairs Meeting Room. Present were Selectpersons Allen Ross, Patricia Pruitt, Patricia Allen, Town Administrator Frank Abbondanzio, Lew Collins, Reggie Stevens, Tim Selivanoff, Don Parda, Mike Borden, Bob Sear, Paul Hardy and Ed Sirum, Deb Bourbeau, John Anctil, Arn Albertini, Hugh Massey.

**Liquor License Hearing**

Pruitt reads hearing notice into the record

Lewis B. Collins: I am here to finally not to ask for an outdoor permit, but for the rights to purchase the place.

Allen: So you have a buy and sell agreement.

Lewis B. Collins: The purchase and sale agreement has been signed by all three parties involved; Ron Layham, Mike McLaughlin are the M & L Enterprises, and myself, Between the Uprights.

Allen: How come it says Between the Uprights, LLC and then Between the Uprights, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

Lewis B. Collins: Between the Uprights, LLC is the LLC Company, name that I am going to have, but I will be changing the name to Between the Uprights at 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, where it lets me keep a little past with the actual name of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

*Ross made a motion that we approve the transfer of the Alcoholic Beverage License for retail sales from the previous M & L Enterprises, LLC to the Between the Uprights LLC d/b/a Between the Uprights at 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. The manager of record of both is Lewis B. Collins. Motion seconded by Pruitt. Approved unanimously by Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye, Allen – Aye.*

**Registration for Assembly**

Ross: Art Gilmore, the Chairperson of the Trustees Soldiers Memorial sent a letter requesting permission to hold a parade on Monday, May 26, 2008 to honor all the veterans who have given their lives for our country. The parade will form at 10:00 AM at the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, and Avenue A. Step off will be 10:15, proceed down Avenue A to the Memorial where the ceremony will take place. He anticipates that everything should be over at 11:00 AM following the Montague Lodge of Elks 11<sup>th</sup> Hour Ceremony.

*Ross makes a motion to approve this request for a public demonstration as described, although the times are somewhat defined, I make a motion that we approve the assembly time from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM and that would proceed in the area of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street down Avenue A to the Memorial. It will include about 150 people and at least three cars. Seconded by Pruitt. Approved unanimously by Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye, Allen – Aye.*

**Town Administrator's Report**

**Status of paper removal at Strathmore**

We have six trucks that have taken paper out, which is good news. We awarded two bids last week for the roof work on building one and building eleven. We got three bids; one that was very low, but probably not responsive because they didn't take into consideration everything that they needed to. We awarded the bid to the next lowest bidder which was Renaissance Builders. The total including two alternates was \$69,778.

That bid was considerably lower than the initial estimates that we were given back in November. Building Eleven which is the flat roof building – that bid was awarded to Mowry & Schmidt – that was \$8,915. That work is proceeding. Both of those companies are going to start doing construction the end of this week. The sprinkler work was just about wrapped up and the Fire Chief is going to be going in there and doing an inspection of that work. We are pretty well within the budget. We do have to put plastic on all the windows that are open to the elements. So that project is moving along well.

Allen: It would be good for either Dave or you to check with Jerry and ask him how many trucks are coming this week.

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**5 Year Plan RFP**

Abbondanzio: The 5 year Plan was approved by Town Meeting in October for a \$10,000 appropriation. I've been working with the 5-year plan committee and prepared a request for proposals which was sent out last Friday. We sent it out to about a dozen or fifteen vendors who do that kind of work. It is a study of the municipal and school finance situation in the Towns of Montague and Gill and in the Gill-Montague School District. Basically we are asking a consultant to come up with some ideas and scenarios in the next five years of how we can meet our financial problems; challenges that we face right now. We will be receiving proposals until February 7<sup>th</sup> and then we allowed five weeks for the consultants to do the work. We should have the report by the end of March.

Ross: To have some documentation from outside vendors regarding the impending financial squeeze with the school overflow, the police station and a still unclear future with the Strathmore situation will be very helpful. Dealing with the budget crunch is a major issue and this will hopefully help us and give us a time line and help scope out at least what they see the needs that we are going to have to come forward with.

Allen: It was nice to hear that our friends in Gill found enough money and they will not to need the override this year.

Abbondanzio: Right – new growth numbers came in – about \$80-90,000 higher than what they anticipated. There were a lot of things that hadn't been taxed.

**Updates**

Abbondanzio: The Superintendent of Schools is going to give a presentation on Wednesday morning explaining their experience on how the Gill-Montague Regional School District joined the GIC and basically sold the program to the staff. I met with our Insurance Advisory Committee last week and they are hoping that the Town is going to proceed and have a study done by an outside insurance group. They would come in and do an objective study of just what the savings are to the Town; looking at both the Town side and the employee's side. and what the cost and the benefits would be. I contacted the Boston Benefits Group who worked on a study for the Mass Teachers Association, which made it very easy for the schools to convert to GIC. The Teachers Union hired the Boston Benefits Group to do all the network marketing for them. I'll have a recommendation once I get some numbers, but I do think that it would be a good idea to have them come in.

Allen: I agree. It doesn't sound as though it would cost a huge amount of money.

**Other**

Allen: The annual Turners Falls Fire District Meeting will be held at the Hillcrest School at 7 PM on Tuesday evening. Anyone who lives in the Turners Falls Fire District can go and vote.

Allen: It is now 7:15 and we will proceed with the Liquor License Hearing as scheduled on our agenda.

**Liquor License Hearing (Reggie Stevens, President of St. Kaz; Tim Selivanoff, Bar Manager; Don Parda, Financial Secretary and Mike Borden, Treasurer)**

Stevens: We built a smoking porch and all we are looking for is for permission for the members to sit out there and bring their alcoholic beverages with them during the summer months. They want to have a drink and a smoke.

Allen: Frank and I have noticed that the area has actually been closed in.

Stevens: I have put plexi-glass out there, just for the winter.

Allen: Is that a problem with the smoking?

Stevens: No, it is not. it is from the railing up. It is mostly to cut the wind. We are planning to screen in that area in the summer. Nothing can go outside and neither can anything come back into that smoking area.

Allen: I know the guidelines for the State say that they prefer outdoor areas where alcohol is served to patrons who are seated at tables and where food is available.

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Stevens: There is a table out there and three benches, where they can sit and have their cigarettes, read the newspaper, read a magazine. Being a confined smoking area, we kind of built it, where food would not be a perfect place for something like this.

Allen: I'm looking at adequate EXITS. I assume you have run this by Dave Jensen.

Stevens: Yes

Allen: It is contiguous. Can you see the outside from the inside?

Stevens: Yes, we have two windows that you keep an eye on people who are out in the smoking area, from within inside.

*Ross made a motion to approve the proposed amendment for the St. Kazimierz Society of alcohol beverage liquor license space to include the porch area located on the front of the building as described and constructed. Motion seconded by Pruitt. Approved unanimously by Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye, Allen – Aye..*

### **Updates**

#### **Community Development Grant Application**

Abbondanzio: The Community Development Grant application is moving along. We had a long list of thirty one items that had to be in by this afternoon to the Regional Housing Authority for inclusion in the grant. I received an e-mail from them requesting additional information. It does look like we are on schedule. Everyone is teaming up and working very diligently to get all the requirements for this grant.

#### **Airport Discussion**

Ross: Wanted to follow up on the airport discussions looking at guidelines and appointments. I feel we should write a letter to the people who have shown an interest in the appointments. The letter would say that until we can clarify exactly what criteria we are looking for, we do appreciate their interest and will respond to them at a later date.

Discussion followed regarding the letter, policies. Allen: Asked if we heard from Mr. Welch?

Abbondanzio: I'll call him again, but we are looking at a meeting set for February 25<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Railroad Salvage**

Allen: Since more bricks fell off of Railroad Salvage, I think we need to ask David.

Jensen: All talks, discussions and negotiations with Mr. Kosuda have failed. He seems incapable of comprehending this place. He is clearly not in a position with a plan to do anything about this. Even though we have told him to rectify the situation, we have not seen any results. We need the Court to tell him.

Allen: I think we all agree that we need to do something.

Jensen: We tried two Court judgments for him to do certain things. I don't even know if he has completed anything. On the list to do was: If you cannot accomplish these tasks, one of the alternatives in Court was the sale or demolition of the property. I am not sure he is capable of wanting the demolition.

Allen: It seems with more bricks falling down, it just fortifies our concern of the safety for the neighborhood and emergency vehicles.

Jensen: It is not like it wasn't unpredictable. It was just a matter of when.

Allen: Maybe next Monday, we might have more information

Jensen: I have to have an in-depth discussion with the attorney. It will probably be a contempt of court motion

Ross: Suggested taking more aggressive stand that we can take regarding this on-going problem.

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**Landfill Proposal**

Allen: We should create a committee to look at the landfill proposal.

**Liquor License Hearing, Change of Manager at the Millers Falls Rd & Gun Club, Bob Sear, Paul Hardy and Ed Sirum**

Paul Hardy is the person that we want to become the new manager of the Rod & Gun Club, because the previous manager died. That is the reason for this request for a new manager.

*Ross makes a motion to approve the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission formality for change in the manger of the serving of liquor at the Millers Falls Rd & Gun Club, Inc. Discussion followed regarding Mr.Hardy's experience . It was recommended that Mr. Hardy take the "tips for serving" course and he agreed that he would. Mr. Hardy's, Jonathon, is the Bar Manager. Approved unanimously by Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye, Allen – Aye.*

**Polling Location Petition**

Jeff Singleton: Basically as it says on the petition, I think we recognize that there is a problem in the location. We feel it is a big radical step with some big negative consequences to move it all the way up to the Montague Center Fire Station. For one thing, a lot of people, particularly in the town elections see people going in and out of there, and are reminded of it. So by moving the polling place, this could reduce the voter turnout. The town should try to solve space problems at the library and move polling back there for the spring elections.

Bourbeau: Last Friday I had the Secretary of State and the Assistant Director of Elections in my office and it wasn't for that particular reason, Precinct One polling place; it was for an update on a ADA Voting Machine and a couple of up-grades that we are making. While they were here I took the opportunity to discuss the dilemma that we are in and told them our situation. I measured the library. It is an 18 ft x 14 ft. section of the room that we use compared to the new Fire Station that is 18 ft x 48 ft. That gives us an additional 612 square feet to work with in addition to the fact that it is a lot more room. Sure there is a ramp in the library to be used for easy wheelchair access. The problem is when they actually get into the doorway. We are working with an 18 ft. x 14 ft. space and it even gets smaller once you put the polling booths in, the ballot box, the ADA loading machine and set up the two tables for check in and check out. The wheelchair should be able to come into the library and have easy access, independently, without anyone's help getting to the ADA machine. The ADA machine is suppose to be positioned so that it faces the wall so that the voter has complete privacy and that just can't happen in that small space. Since we have a new Fire Station out in Montague Center, that is ADA compliable and much bigger, they highly suggested that we go for the new improved space.

Allen: Pat read the letter received from Susan SanSoucie, Library Director, in which Ms. SanSoucie supported the move of the polling location to the fire station.

Discussion regarding the issues of voting at the library followed. There are state rules and regulations, which have to be enforced, especially regarding the ADA voting machine. Deb will put signs up to help direct people to the fire station.

Allen: Yes, the Grange would be another polling location if it were handicapped accessible. We are going to go with this election where it is to take place. Ultimately it is the Town Clerk's and State's decision as where the polling locations will be.

Bourbeau: I have to be in compliance with the state regulations and with the library being so small, it doesn't meet up to their regulations. Montague Center has the most registered voters and we are also working with the smallest polling place. Everybody else's polling place is at least three times the size of what you have. If we could get the Grange to be handicapped accessible, that would be the best thing.

Allen: Thank you all for your input tonight and we will continue with this after this election.

**Other**

John Anctil: We took a tour earlier today of St. Anne's. We are going to do a folk menu, music, possibly blues and jazz; very similar to Club Pacine in Cambridge. I have made arrangements with Tim Mason who does booking for

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Club Passin. It is a good soft venue music. We are going to explore the different offerings to see if there is an attraction out in this neck of the woods. We are going to start in the basement and offer artists out of New York and Boston and the rest of the area an opportunity to come to a facility and have a demo tape made and possibly a demo recording. Then they could further advertise themselves and promote themselves to get some traction. We are looking to do something similar to veggie planet that Club Passin does. We think it will be fun, exciting and good for the community for economic development prospective.

Allen: After you finish your deed at the end of next month, you were going to come and ask for an entertainment license, which you would need for doing something like that.

John Anctil: Correct. We have also been exploring and thinking of offering some high end smoothie kind of drinks, non-alcohol and explore that as an option, looking at the possibility of a beer and wine to help support the venue. For national acts, if we find that there is an attraction with this smaller offering then go onto a larger offering in the upstairs portion of the church which would be more of a national act kind of prospective, where relatively high end; tickets in the \$30-\$50 range. We think that with the very high end sound system and music recording system that we may be able to attract artists that would be interested in coming out to Swift River Live. We are modeling ourselves a little after Austin City Limits or Mountain Stage; some of the material you might see on PBS. We are looking at an internet distribution model so that folks could log on and down load a video. A lot of it is to primarily support new artists.

Allen: There is a lot of space in the rectory.

John Anctil: We are looking at being able to offer a nice package to artists so that they could potentially stay at the rectory and then play/perform and perhaps look at linking the Town Common and bringing very new artists and offer a free concert on the Town Common. Then folks could come and wander through town. The plan is to try and be within our brand so looking for change and lyrics that are addressing some of our concerns about our planet, community and well being.

John Reynolds: How does that impact your plan to work on the Strathmore?

John Anctil: With the church we were thinking of using it as the base camp, as part of the campus. It is a good symbol. It is a great building even though it is a de-commissioned church. We are at a P & S stage with the church that we think getting traction with the church will be a good step forward to getting traction with the Strathmore.

Discussion followed regarding the details of the St. Anne's Church becoming a sort of a community arts center, and its' effect upon the community.

Allen: Sounds like an excellent project. We are looking forward to after the end of February, right when you own the building?

John Anctil: We are looking to close after February. We could have a 720 seat capacity inside the upstairs. We are looking to have some table arrangements and offer a dinner environment and then other situations where there might be no tables and a sort of stadium seating kind of arrangement. We are looking to make the church very flexible so that it could be converted from one space to another space. Any lighting that we do inside can be taken down and the church can look like it 's original form, so everything has to be interchangeable and cross useable, so we could change it back into a church and not have anything disturbed. So if we brought in that many cars, is there concern to traffic and flow into town?

Dave Jensen: Usually the Zoning Board regulates traffic, but if it is in the central zoning district, you do not have to provide off-street parking for their customers. They do have to provide off-street parking for their employees. Any business that can't find parking is going to have a problem, so it is in their best interest that they seek out and find a solution.

Tape #2

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John Anctil: February 29<sup>th</sup> is the close, and barring a few things that we have to work out in terms of windows and what not, but everything seems to be pretty good. The big meeting has been gone through and we discussed all the uses of the church and the delicacy of beer and wine. They were very supportive. We want to find any kind of re-direction that the town/Select Board has and we would take definitely, without any problem.

*Ross made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Pruitt. Approved unanimously by Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye, Allen – Aye.*