

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING
MONDAY, February 8, 2010
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM
AGENDA**

#05-10

#5

Meeting was opened at 7:00 PM in the Upstairs Meeting Room. Present were Selectpersons Patricia Pruitt ; Patricia Allen, Mark Fairbrother, Town Administrator, Frank Abbondanzio; Administrative Secretary, Wendy Bogusz; Carolyn Olsen, Town Accountant, Deb Bourbeau, Town Clerk, Doug Macintosh, Assessing Technician, Patricia Dion, Treasurer/Collector, Cheryl Clark, Treasury and Collections Specialist, Bill Drake, Montague Reporter;

Recommendation from Website Committee on new Website

Abbondanzio: The Website Group completed its evaluation of the two website alternatives under consideration (Virtual Town Hall and Montague Web Works) and voted unanimously to recommend the Virtual Town Hall Alternative. Goes over particulars as written in the memo to BOS dated February 4, 2010.

Allen makes the motion to hire Virtual Town Hall as the Towns web site development team at the set up price of \$4,000 and a yearly maintenance fee of \$2750. Seconded by Fairbrother, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Pruitt – Aye

Town Administrators Report

Vote Green Communities Action Plan

Allen makes the motion that the Town of Montague adopts the Green Communities Action Plan as presented by Chris Mason and the Montague Energy Committee. Seconded by Fairbrother, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Pruitt – Aye

Mason drops off a book showing what you can apply for if you become a green community.

Allen asks if lighting district could be any part of this? Mason replies that he believes in order to become a green community, we need to have a baseline energy use of all town energy use, and he thinks the lighting districts are going to be part of that. In order to be part of a Green Community, you have to have a plan to reduce energy use by 20% over 5 years. Not sure of the in and outs of the districts, but this can be looked into.

J. Reynolds expresses his opinion that this is a perfect example of why the districts should be peeled out of that district concept and put into a town system. Right now the “districts” are a big thorn financially and every other way.

Discussion

Vote on Greenfield Road Railroad Crossing

Allen: We had that meeting on January 29th with all the players and at least to me it became clear that they were marching along thinking we had settled this 6 years ago. Obviously, as the Selectboard changes sometimes there are different thoughts. I would say on principle, I suspect we all feel we absolutely should reopen that road because it wasn't our fault and they should be doing something. Being pragmatic and practical, I would have to say that I still feel we made the right decision in going with the updated plan of doglegging Hatchery Road and using whatever bridge we can get as pedestrian, bike bridge with access for emergency vehicles. I know they told us we could have the big old bridge in 40 – 60 years but we would be responsible for liability and everything else.

Fairbrother: The latest proposal was a grade crossing.

Allen: This had been brought up before. Again, I didn't say to our legislatures, but I must admit, none of them will go there. It has lowered my estimation a bit of our administration, legislatures and all, they just plain give a blanket No. I have a feeling that's because you can't; there is no where they'll go. For whatever reason, the Railroad does its thing.

Allen makes the motion to reconfirm the proposal for Greenfield Road that uses Hatchery Road over to Turners Falls Road and makes a new pedestrian, bike bridge with a access for emergency vehicles, like police and ambulance but not fire. The southern leg of Greenfield Road would be upgraded, paved and drainage issues would be addressed at State costs. Hatchery Road would have to be then widened to be appropriate and also recognizing

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that the Randall Road intersection has changed a bit in how it will be treated. Seconded by Fairbrother for discussion:

Abbondanzio: The design exception is on file with the Mass. Dept. of Transportation that they felt if it has changed enough; they will do another meeting out in the community to explain exactly what the change is. Basically, the road is going to be a little bit narrower to avoid the prime agricultural land and the problems with the APR.

Allen: Part of the issue is it looks as though we are in a position to actually get some funding now and if we don't move along, we may not get funding for 30 years, if that.

Fairbrother: You're kidding yourself if you think you are going to get any kind of bridge at that location. They came down at that meeting and talked about a bike bridge or bridge for emergency vehicles, but you're kidding yourself if you think that is going to happen. It's not.

Pruitt: They've been saying that since we went to that first meeting in Boston.

Allen: Are you saying that because of the hydrology of the situation?

Fairbrother: Right. They are not going to touch that. The feller in the meeting from Mass. Highway said exactly what I figured he would say. I wasn't the least bit surprised by what he said.

Allen: You don't think they are going to be able to construct it?

Fairbrother: They don't want to. I think we were getting lip service basically.

Allen: I guess I haven't felt that way in the last 4, 5, 6 years, however long its actually been.

Fairbrother: I'll be delighted to be proved wrong. It's kind of farcical as far as I'm concerned that they can't put a bridge out there, but they can put a bridge out there that will support an ambulance or police cruiser, the two just don't go together. You can put a bridge there or you can't.

Allen: I understand what you are saying. One of the things that was mentioned was it would not be a two vehicle wide bridge.

Further discussion

Abbondanzio: I'm pretty sure they already have it out to contract for design on the pedestrian bridge, and the letter we have from Mass. Highway actually does mention the emergency vehicles. So technically, they have committed themselves in writing.

Allen makes the motion to reconfirm the proposal for Greenfield Road that uses Hatchery Road over to Turners Falls Road and makes a new pedestrian, bike bridge with a access for emergency vehicles, like police and ambulance but not fire. The southern leg of Greenfield Road would be upgraded, paved and drainage issues would be addressed at State costs. Hatchery Road would have to be then widened to be appropriate and also recognizing that the Randall Road intersection has changed a bit in how it will be treated. Seconded by Fairbrother, approved 2 - 1. Allen - Aye, Pruitt - Aye, Fairbrother - Opposed

New Business:

Allen makes the motion to authorize the chairman to sign the John and Abigail Adams Grant for RiverCulture in the amount of \$36,000 for the coming year. Seconded by Fairbrother, approved unanimously. Allen - Aye, Fairbrother - Aye, Pruitt - Aye

-The Capital Improvements Committee will be holding a meeting on the Montague Center School reuse project on Thursday, February 18, 2009 at 7:00 PM

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-Collective Bargaining Sessions are scheduled: Police Negotiations will be held on Tuesday at 2:30 (Pat Allen) as well as TOMEA (Patricia Pruitt) at 4:00 PM. UE (Mark Fairbrother) will be held on Thursday at 3:30 PM.

-I am working on a request for proposals for the Montague Center School Building and are gathering data for preparation of an RFP for the Strathmore building which we are scheduled to take possession of on February 16th.

-Pruitt: We have a dog in Montague Center who has been invited to the Westminster Dog Show next week at Madison Square Garden in New York City. She is going there as having been picked as best in show on the West Coast by some American Kennel Club. Her home name is Emily, but she is known professionally as Shadigee Caught Red Handed and is an Irish Setter.

-It will be decide on Thursday if the Board will be meeting next Tuesday.

Allen makes the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 PM. Seconded by Fairbrother, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Fairbrother – Aye, Pruitt – Aye.