

TOWN OF STERLING
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
November 6, 2013

MEETING

Chairman Furmaniuk called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Roll call established that Selectman Furmaniuk, Selectman Cutler and Selectman Patacchiola were all present.

At 6:32 pm Chairman Furmaniuk declared that the Board would be convening into executive session for the purpose of discussing strategy with the Personnel Board in regard to salary adjustments, under Chapter 30A Section 21 (A) Reason # 2. - To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.

The Chairman further declared that a discussion in open session may have a detrimental impact on the Town's bargaining position. He then announced that the Board would be reconvening in open session at the conclusion of the executive session.

VOTE: Selectman Cutler moved the motion that the Board convene in executive session with the Personnel Board, for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to preparation for negotiations under Chapter 30A Section 21 (A) Reason # 2, and that the Board would reconvene in open session at the conclusion of the Executive Session. The Chairman 2nd the motion. Roll Call VOTE: Chairman Furmaniuk – Aye. Selectman Cutler – Aye.

The Board convened in Executive session at 6:32 pm and reconvened in Public session at 7:04 pm.

*Appoint Officer
Craig Pomeroy to
Police Sergeant*

Chief Gary Chamberland addressed the Board and reported that he confidently recommended Officer Craig Pomeroy to be appointed as Sergeant, within the ranks of the Sterling Police Dept. Further he reported that Officer Pomeroy scored highest on the written and oral exams and that he has been one of the most productive and dedicated officers during his 15 years of service to the Town of Sterling. VOTE: Selectman Patacchiola moved the motion to approve the promotion. Selectman Cutler 2nd. All in favor. Town Clerk, Dawn Michanowicz, conducted the swearing-in. Sergeant Pomeroy's wife, Lane, did the honors of pinning the badge.

*Discuss
Intersection of Rte
12 and Chocksett*

Andrew Paul, designing engineer for the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, addressed the Board in order to update them on the State's involvement in the hazardous intersection at Chocksett Road and the section of the Rte 12 corridor. He reported the following;

- The State has collected data that will be necessary in the final determination on the design of the reconstruction
- A road safety audit was recently triggered by a fatality at the Chocksett intersection
- Preliminary phases of design are being considered
- Stop lights are being considered but data indicates that stop lights often times results in more rear end collisions and increased severity of the crashes if drivers "run" the light. Also the lights require maintenance
- A rotary or roundabout is currently being considered as the best safety option.
- The geometry, of roundabouts, slows traffic, resulting in fewer collisions and fatalities
- The entire corridor of Rte 12, in that area, is being considered in the reconstruction plans, with decreased speed being implemented as part of the design
- There will be a technical meeting of the Massachusetts DOT on November 19th, in Worcester, concerning the options of reconstruction and modifications of the Rte. 12/Chocksett Rd intersection. Chairman Furmaniuk and Town Administrator Terri Ackerman will attend this meeting, along with the DPW Superintendent, the Fire Chief and the Police Chief.
- The funding for this project is proposed for Fiscal Year 2015

*Discuss impacts of
proposed slots
parlor*

Joe Weinberg, CEO of Cordish Companies addressed the Board to give an overview of the intentions and plans for the slots parlor that is proposed for Jungle Road in Lancaster. Mr. Weinberg reported the following;

- The facility will house 1250 slot machines, 3 restaurants and an entertainment venue
- The proposed facility is intended to be environmentally sound
- The slots parlor was approved by 62% of the Leominster voters
- The intent of the company is to hire local people and to support local industry and businesses
- The company is aware of Sterling's concerns that the company will adversely impact the Town
- The company is working toward developing a "formula" that would compensate the Town of Sterling for the additional costs of safety responses caused by the slots parlor patrons
- Cordish Company wishes to continue to work toward an agreement with the Town of Sterling.

The Town of Sterling continues in the negotiation process however, the appropriate petition has been filed with the State, in order to be formally designated as a surrounding Community.

*Discuss Financial
strategy*

Chairman, Bob Brown gave an update of the Finance and Capital Committees.

- Sterling's Financial state is strong.
- Governor Patrick signed a special Act for a new Sterling Capital Investment policy
- The Capital Fund has decreased in value while the fund was used to maintain buildings, replace vehicles and equipment during the recession
- The Finance and Capital Committees will revisit their recent policies for expenditures, with the notion that perhaps it would be more prudent to raise and appropriate funds for some items that have previously been funded by the capital fund
- The Finance and Capital Committees will continue to keep the Board and the citizens informed of the decisions that are being made regarding the Towns finances

The consensus of the Board was that they would like to see the following articles included in the next Town Meeting warrant, in order to give the townspeople the opportunity to decide whether or not they would like to adopt these changes.

- Amend Bylaws to Include and Define All Boards and Committees

(The Town Administrator reported that this article will include more committees and/or boards than the previous warrant listed.)

- Special Legislation – Earth Removal/Planning Board
- Amend Bylaws – Earth Removal/Planning Board

*Discuss
Government Study
recommendations*

The Board gave their opinions on the firms that were interviewed on October 27th. The firms being considered are Kopelman and Paige, Robert Hennigan and Collins & Weinberg. Chairman Furmaniuk suggested that the Board members take their colleagues thoughts, on the matter, into consideration and that they make a final decision at their November 20th meeting. Selectmen Cutler and Patacchiola agreed to this course of action.

*Deliberate legal
services contract*

Reportedly, three candidates will be considered, for the position of Town Administrator. The Town Administrator Search Committee has not released the names of the candidates as the background checks have not been completed. The Board hopes to receive this information early next week and has set the time of 6:00 pm on Thursday, November 14th for the interview process to commence.

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*Discuss Town
Administrator
Search*

Terri Ackerman has agreed to work until December 31, 2013, and the Board agreed, with the understanding that she will remain on the payroll in early January, in order to use up accrued vacation time. During this period, she has agreed to be "on call" should the Board or the new Town Administrator require her assistance.

On December 3, 2013 from 4 – 6 pm at the Leominster City Hall, there will be a Public Hearing regarding the proposed Slots parlor in Leominster. The public is invited to participate.

*Town
Administrator
Update*

Department Heads have been sent reminders as to the process for engaging assistance from legal counsel. All requests for legal counsel must be channeled through the Town Administrator. Following these guidelines will pare back legal service fees.

The 1835 Old Town Hall masonry project is well underway. Tom Rutherford, the Facilities Technician, reports that Sterling Masonry is doing a good job and that they will probably be finished ahead of schedule.

The Planet Aid Donation box is located in the DPW parking lot. A portion of the proceeds is donated each quarter to the Sterling Neighbor to Neighbor fund. This quarter, over \$125.00 was donated.

CIC Stormwater State Grant

*Business and
Correspondence*

Once again, area Municipalities are joining together to apply for the Community Innovation Challenge Grant. This grant is divided between the participating towns. The program provides one time funding for start-up and transition costs to develop and implement projects that can serve as models for other interested municipalities. Sterling participated last year. **VOTE:** Selectman Patacchiola moved the motion that Sterling participate in this program, again this year. Selectman Cutler 2nd. All in favor. Chairman Furmaniuk will sign the application.

MRPC Impact Study

After discussion, the consensus of the Board was that Sterling needs to protect its interests regarding the proposed slots proposal. They are in agreement that in order for the Town to make headway in the arbitration process, the Town must have it's own independent and impartial impact study on traffic. For this reason the following **VOTE** was taken: Selectman Patacchiola moved a motion to engage the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission for Sterling in order to conduct an impact study regarding the Leominster slots parlor and to allow Terri to apply for reimbursement from the State Gaming Commission. Selectman Cutler 2nd. All in favor.

Adjourned:

The Town Administrator will request a reserve fund transfer from the Finance Committee to fund this study, prior to reimbursement.

Selectman Cutler moved a motion to adjourn at 9:12. Selectman Patacchiola 2nd. All in favor.