

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND SEWER COMMISIONER'S MEETING**

**December 5, 2016  
Acton Town Hall  
Room 204**

Present: Peter J. Berry, Janet K. Adachi, Franny Osman, Katie Green, Chingsung Chang, Town Manager Steve Ledoux, and Lisa Tomyl, Recording Secretary

Mr. Berry led the audience with the pledge of Allegiance to honor our servicemen and women and to honor a recent passing of an outstanding leader in this community James Norton. James was a boy scout leader and a member of the Acton Minuteman, and passed just after Veterans' Day during a boy scout retreat and hike.

**Citizen's Concerns**

None

**Chairman's Update/ Operational Update**

Mr. Berry - UA is holding its community needs forum this Wednesday, forum on suicide prevention during forum, quiet time of year, budget comes out next week, town government works very hard with it's employees servicing the Town of Acton from the Police and Fire Department, to Planning, Building, Finance, Town Clerk, Assessors, Collectors, Land Use, Council on Aging, Nursing Services, Social Services Coordinator, Town Manager's Office, DPW, Engineering, Municipal Properties, about 200 employees work day and night servicing the citizens of the Town and would like to acknowledge and recognize them.

Mr. Ledoux – He will be signing the lease for 30 Sudbury Road for the Senior Center. Had another underage service at Red White and Brew. Recreation Department working on new Master Plan to be presented to the Board in mid to late January.

**Public Hearings and Appointments**

Liquor License Transfer, Wine Cask Cellar to Acton Liquor, Corporation – Mr. Berry read the public hearing notice. Ms. Osman inquired about how did you (the applicant) decide to come to Acton and noted a past service to a minor in the application to the ABCC. The applicant has a package store in Westford and have been working there for 2 years and (the business) is very successful. The underage service was a fake ID and he transacted he purchase to a minor, had a public hearing regarding the violation and have taken steps to ensure not to have a repeat. All employees are TIPS certified.

Ms. Green moved to approve the liquor license transfer, Ms. Adachi second. All Ayes (5-0).

FY18 Tax Classification - Brian McMullen, Chief Assessor, presented the recommendation of the Board of Assessors Tax Classification recommendation.

Ms. Adachi move to adopt a residential factor of 1.0 resulting in a Uniform Tax Rate of \$19.06, Ms. Green seconded. All Ayes (5-0)

Ms. Adachi moved to not grant an Open Space Discount, Ms. Osman seconded. All Ayes (5-0)

Ms. Adachi moved to not adopt a Residential Exemption, Ms. Osman seconded. All Ayes (5-0)

Ms. Adachi moved to not adopt a Small Commercial Exemption, Ms. Osman seconded. All Ayes (5-0)

#### **Selectmen Business**

Natural Gas Alternatives Jim Snyder-Grant and Debra Symes Co-Presidents of Green Acton presented natural gas reduction and alternatives in Acton. CC – there is a pretty severe penalty to not allow natural gas vs. alternative heating and cooling options – this would take some time to introduce as an option.

Ms. Green commented that we (the town) are limited as to offer alternatives at the time of the street cut permits from Eversource. Perhaps Eversource can work with Town Staff and Boards and committees to have information to homeowners and developers (new properties) to have this alternative form of heating and cooling available and encouraged early on in the permitting process.

Ms. Osman inquired about how many (internal/external) units a homeowner would have to have (pumping units) in a house. Ms. Symes commented that it depends on what the need of the house was and configuration.

Terra Freidrichs, Wright Hill - Is reducing the carbon footprint a main goal for BOS for their main goals for the year, Ms. Green replied no. Town Counsel letter – was the questions in regards to when we can say no and when we can't say no. Ms. Green responded that it was more about what guidelines we need to go by what our options are. Ms. Freidrichs comments on suggesting raising our construction rates and lowering them for non-fossil fuel options during construction we (the Town) can use our municipal rights. In terms of using our municipal rights and leveraging them on the houses that are built and commented on large pipeline construction regarding the companies' stating the need is high due to housing construction.

Ms. Green recommends meeting with town staff as to what policies and educational materials are available (to contractors) and any options, and follow up on the advisory board to work on reducing the carbon footprint (in the Town of Acton).

Dog Park Committee Discussion – Cathy Fochtman gave an overview about putting together a dog park committee and also potential locations and has worked with Selby and interested members of the community. Ms. Fochtman has looked at several properties and considered the size that would be needed and or desired. Many communities have been building them varying in size (due to land availability) . Ms. Green stated that it seems like the recreation commission has worked on the greater aspect of this project. Wondered if the Recreation Commission would be willing to work with this vs. creating a committee. Ms. Fochtman stated that it may be more beneficial for outreach rather than the Recreation Commission.

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**Approved by Board of Selectmen as is,**

Ms. Fochtman discussed Great Hill as a conservation and active recreation and is currently being used as a “de-facto” dog park. It would take much discussion if the dog park idea was turned away from Great Hill.

Mr. Berry stated that he Animal Control Officer did not recommend having a dog parking in the town. Betsy Krystl, Arlington Street – working on dog park issue and has been persistent – had idea about having a dog park on Great Hill because it is the best location for a dog park. Commented on some of the other comments and felt they are ill-informed. Dog owners at dog parks are resilient about cleaning up after their dogs. AKC recommends a minimum of 2 acres. Stated that dogs needs to be socialized.

Karen Sonner – thinks it's important that there be a committee formed and to say no to a committee would be an unfruitful thing to do. Feel if the answer (to form a committee) is no, then it's no, if it's yes, it's yes, but a committee makes that decision.

Adrian , Liberty Street – owns 4 small dogs and cannot take them on a trail – has visited Thorndike Field in Arlington. You need to have the input from owners of dogs. Small dogs need to be in a confined space. Has photos of Thorndike Field but did not produce them for the Board tonight. Stated that it would be really nice to bring one to Acton – there are rules and regulations at all dog parks and virtually no issues as owners pick up after their dogs.

Clair Siska, Stow Street – owner of a pet sitting/ pet business. Gave list of how many licensed dogs and owners in the Town of Acton. Her clients had no idea that this has been in discussion for the past couple of months. Dog parks are a community and it has to come from the community. Submitted to the BOS a list of suggestions on who should be part of the committee and there are so many questions. Dog parks increase property values and bring people to the Town. Stanton Foundation will commit 90% of the infrastructure costs and maintenance funds.

Betsy Krystl – tried to make a dog park committee without the town backing – people were hesitant to be involved without the town backing.

Claire Siska – upset that did not see the list of suggested properties prior to the meeting.

Ms. Osman agrees having all the different members on the committee would be appropriate, and is supportive of it. Ms. Adachi is interested in forming a committee. Has researched other dog parks in different areas all have dog park committees. Ms. Green stated the question was about forming a dog committee and still believes that we need a dog park committee. First focus on the need of a dog park and the second on the formation of the dog park. Mr Chang stated if a committee is formed it would largely be driven by the committee and community. Seems to be a reasonable justification to form a

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dog park committee. Mr. Berry was in agreement with everyone. Ms. Osman volunteered to write a charge for a dog park committee.

Arlington Street Conservation Restriction – Mr. Berry stated that the property was purchased in 1962 for potential future school usage. Also proposed site for the new Senior Center. With some neighbor opposition, the site was relocated. The Board received an email from a resident that was interested in making a conservation restriction on the property. Got an email from Tom Tidman, his recommendation was that it would be good to restrict, and restrict the wetlands portion and restrict the uplands for active recreation such as Frisbee golf park. Would still maintain the forested area and keep it open any possible town building that may come up in the future. Mr. Berry recommended to the citizen to see the Town Clerk about a citizen petition for Annual Town Meeting, and assist the language of the potential citizen petition article with staff input and town counsel review. Ms. Adachi questioned why  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the land is wetland and why have a conservation restriction put on it when the buildable land would really need it. Ms. Adachi questioned if you protect the property, do you make it for passive recreation (i.e. trails) and make it open to the public, then thinking about parking areas for it. Ms. Osman met with Mr. Tidman regarding the parcel being accessible to the public would mean putting a parking area on it – residents requesting the petition were open to that idea. Ms. Green thought it was worth sending Tom's comments to the people creating the petition and they can work with Mr. Tidman and Town Counsel creating the petition. It would be treated like any other article and take a position on it at a later date. Mr. Berry directed to send Mr. Tidman's comments to the petitioner, and have it reviewed by Town Counsel.

Withdrawl from CMERA - ProEMS has been providing the ALS intercepts for the Town of Acton known as Emerson ALS. Sudbury and Wayland have withdrawn from the service and have gone full town ALS service. Ms. Adachi inquired if all we need is the Boards approval for Town Meeting – yes. Ms. Green inquired if the town (FD) still on track to go full ALS by July 1, 2017 Chief Hart stated yes and working very hard to be on track and has an agreement with ProEMS. Ms. Adachi moved to withdraw from CMERA by December 31, 2016, Ms. Green seconded. All Ayes 5-0

**Consent Agenda**

Ms. Green moved to approve consent items 7-16, Mr. Chang seconded. All Ayes 5-0 Ms. Adachi moved to adjourn, Ms. Osman seconded, All Ayes 5-0 Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Lisa Tomyl, Recording Secretary

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Franny Osman, Clerk