

IN BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2005

Present: Chairman Lawrence W. O'Brien, Selectmen William J. Keller, Jr., and John C. Drobinski.

The statutory requirement for notice having been met, the meeting was convened at 7:30 p.m. in the Lower Town Hall, 322 Concord Road.

**Opening Remarks**

Chairman O'Brien expressed thanks to the Park and Recreation Department for excellent programs this summer, including the music and movie nights at Haskell Field.

Chairman O'Brien announced the following: (1) traffic signboards will now be placed on roadways to warn motorists of emergency roadway situations or detours; (2) Town staff is being trained on the Reverse 911 equipment; and (3) blood supplies are low in the Northeast Region and Chairman O'Brien encouraged residents to donate blood at blood drives held in the area.

**Meeting with NStar – Power Outages and Brownouts**

Present: Joanne O'Leary, Community Relations Representative; Dick Tobin, Operations Manager; Neil Fitzpatrick, Lead Engineer, NStar.

Ms. Joanne O'Leary, Community Relations Representative, NStar, introduced Mr. Dick Tobin, Operations Manager, and Neil Fitzpatrick, Lead Engineer, and stated they would collectively present a summary of events that have contributed to recent power outages and brownouts in Sudbury.

Chairman O'Brien expressed concern for numerous lengthy power outages in town since Memorial Day. Town Manager Valente gave Ms. O'Leary a summarized list of power outages reported to the Selectmen's Office.

Mr. Tobin stated power outage in the Dutton Road/Hudson Road area is sometimes caused because as this area is at the edge of town and the edge of the NStar coverage area, the power sometimes fails due to excessive load, and additional power cannot be secured from any other source.

Mr. Tobin stated another cause of one outage was due to a storm that occurred during an NSTAR work stoppage. Another time, a tree was down on Hudson Road, pulling the lines completely down. Lastly, another outage was caused by equipment failure caused by a tree down, squirrel, or other unknown factor, which blew the fuse. Mr. Tobin stated that, in these instances, the broken fuses were replaced with a piece of equipment known as a "closer" which cycles every 30 seconds and limits the outage to just a few seconds.

Mr. Fitzpatrick stated the circuit in the Fairbank Road and Maynard Road area services 1,000 people, and will be getting new equipment {the closer} will significantly improve reliability.

Chairman O'Brien asked what the term "tree down" meant. Mr. Tobin responded it means a limb has fallen to pull the wire down but has not broken the wire nor pulled it from the transformer.

Referring to the outage summary, Mr. Tobin stated the incident on July 22 was an emergency situation. He stated a work crew saw a problem, reported it, and bad equipment was replaced. He stated further this actually prevented a serious failure at an inopportune time.

Chairman O'Brien asked if NStar had some sort of notification system similar to a reverse 911 where NStar could notify residents of anticipated work or repairs in progress. Ms. O'Leary responded that customer notification can be accomplished through the NStar call center, noting that a resident phones into the center and a greeting will indicate communities where outages have already been reported. In addition, a customer can actually speak to a call center representative if necessary. Mr. Tobin stated a typical outage generates an automatic response at the call center, meaning it will indicate repairs are expected to be complete within two hours. He stated further that if the repair lasts longer, the outgoing message is updated.

Regarding a system like reverse 911, Ms. O'Leary stated the call center would be unable to filter outgoing calls with regard to time of day, i.e., early morning or very late at night, and this would be disruptive to consumers. Today technology helps pinpoint outage locations and potential causes.

Chairman O'Brien stated that when power outages occur the Town gets many phone calls. Ms. O'Leary clarified that callers should phone NStar's 800 number at 800-592-2000 for any type of customer inquiry, and to follow the automatic menu when the call is answered. She stated the system's menu will help guide the caller to the appropriate spot.

Selectman Keller asked if residents should immediately call when their power goes out or just wait. Mr. Tobin responded that calls should come in as soon as the power cuts off, as this information helps to pinpoint the problem area and manage repair crews. He noted that a group of calls from an affected area helps to locate the problem.

Mr. Fitzpatrick stated that additional information such as "I heard a bang", or "a tree hit the pole" is tremendously helpful to NStar in determining what kind of repair will be necessary and sending the appropriate crew. Chairman O'Brien asked if the message center would allow a lengthy message. Mr. Tobin responded that, in cases like that, the menu allows the caller to speak to a live person to leave specific information.

Selectman Drobinski asked about the "end of the line" areas and whether power could be pulled from an adjacent community. Mr. Tobin stated that neighboring communities that border those areas are serviced by National Grid/Mass. Electric, and power cannot be drawn from them. He stated further that, in those areas, there is a finite number of switches that can be thrown in order to attempt repair, causing longer power outage as no additional power is available.

Mr. Tobin stated some preventative measures that have been taken include equipment replacement in the past few years, i.e., new fuses in transformers, plus crews actually walking the lines to check if the "animal guards" are still in place.

Chairman O'Brien asked if larger homes cause a larger pull on power and if NStar can adjust for increased loads created by new homes. Mr. Fitzpatrick responded transformers are checked if problems are noticed, and sometimes NStar will replace one transformer with a larger one, or install an additional transformer along the line. He stated also that sometimes larger cables are installed from the street to the home, allowing extra current. He added that additional factors such as central air upgraded from window air conditioners, or more window/room air conditioners in a home causes problems. A common problem can be when an addition such as a second story or family room increases the electric power usage of that home.

Mr. Fitzpatrick stated residents should also report incidents where the lights just flicker but do not go completely out. This will help to determine if a potential problem is brewing.

Michael Berkowitz, 61 Oakwood Avenue, stated he works out of his home and asked if another feed can be run out to this area. He stated further he did not consider power usage when purchasing his home. Mr. Tobin responded that recent upgrades should help, noting the "closer" equipment. Mr. Berkowitz stated there has been no problem for the past two weeks. Chairman O'Brien clarified that homes in that area used to be summer cottages years ago and have since been enlarged/renovated for year-round use, and original power needs may not have been upgraded.

Chairman O'Brien asked if NStar was continuing with its tree trimming efforts. Mr. Tobin responded that the Morse Road/Mossman Road/Concord Road areas are scheduled to be done this year. He stated further that tree trimming work will be increased if power outages continue.

The Board thanked NStar for attending the meeting and responding to the Town's concerns.

#### **Heartsafe Community Designation – Metropolitan Boston Emergency Medical Services Council**

Present: John Guidara, Executive Director, Metropolitan Boston Emergency Medical Services Council; Ken MacLean, Fire Chief.

Fire Chief Kenneth MacLean recounted the many steps the Sudbury Fire Department has taken to provide improved cardiac emergency response to Sudbury residents, including using defibrillators to enhance CPR efforts, and now each emergency vehicle in the Fire Department carries a defibrillator as do all police cruisers, thus qualifying the Town for the Heartsafe designation.

Mr. John Guidara presented a brief overview of the Heartsafe Community program and stated that 200,000 people are saved annually from sudden cardiac arrest. At this time he presented Chief MacLean a certificate stating the certification plus two signs for posting at entryways to the Town of Sudbury.

#### **Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Presentation**

Present: Feng Yang, GIS Consultant and GIS Manager, Town of Brookline; Mark Thompson, Technology Administrator; Lyn MacLean, Historical Commission, Joe Bausk, Council on Aging.

Ms. Feng Yang, stated she is presently employed as the GIS Manager for the Town of Brookline. She stated she has been in the field for 12 years, including teaching at UMass-Boston and assisting other communities in developing GIS Strategic Plans.

Ms. Yang made a power point presentation describing what a Geographic Information System (GIS) is and how it can be used in a community. She stated a typical system is comprised of layers of data, such as population and age or income demographics, engineering, land use, and environmental concerns. A system can be designed to display any type of information the client desires, based on the data entered. Ms. Yang used the Wayside Inn as an example, showing residences/buildings, lot lines, utilities, waterways, etc., and depicted each in its own layer of information.

Ms. Yang stated GIS analysis can help in data analysis to notify affected areas in times of emergency, such as noting the best route for the fire truck, building entrances, children or elderly in affected

buildings or notifying homeowners of a water main break. She stated atlas maps can be digitized to show information such as comparable sales in an area, tax exempt properties, historic districts and changes in those lines, and proximity to schools and other area interests.

Ms. Yang stated the system can be tailored for residents' use as well, featuring local areas of interest, including schools, bus routes, public buildings, museums, things to do, voter precincts, etc.

Examples of data that can be featured include:

- redistricting voter precincts
- intersections (DPW)
- recording of historic land plans
- tree planting – record species and track growth/disease
- health complaints – rodents and cross reference with rubbish violations
- liquor licenses
- building heights (a 3D function)
- zoning – residential land use versus development opportunities
- capital improvements
- planning/permitting – shows buffers and pertinent districts
- distribution of school children and bus routes
- 911 dispatch

Responding to a question from the Board, Ms. Yang stated her initial goal would be to evaluate the Town's current system, collect information on how the various Town staff and departments would use GIS, and develop a master plan, including plans for FY07. She noted her initial recommendation would include establishing an implementation plan for the advancement of any future GIS strategies.

Selectman Drobinski complimented Ms. Yang on her presentation and recommended the Town Manager review how current budgets might allow for the expense. Ms. Yang stated the Town of Brookline has had a GIS system for nine years, and the cost of operation is approximately \$150,000 per year. She stated the initial data input was done by an outside group, and her in-house group now maintains the system.

Town Manager Valente asked if the system can track traffic violations in a particular area of town or by intersection. Ms. Yang responded it can, and web cams can be installed so that live action can be viewed at a particular intersection, if that kind of data would be of interest.

Ms. Lyn MacLean opined this system would be very helpful in recognizing historic districts as well as tracking changes in ownership over the years.

Town Manager Valente stated interested boards and committees can contact her for a copy of the presentation and then contact Mark Thompson, Technology Administrator, about ideas on how it could be used for specific purposes.

**Agricultural Commission – Interviews**

Present: Laura Bartlett Abrams, Jennifer B. Churchill, Karen L. Hodder, Henry W. Noer, Elizabeth M. Sulkowski, Meghan P. Taylor, Stephen Verrill, Candidates.

Chairman O'Brien reminded candidates that, by vote at Annual Town Meeting, the Board is limited to appointing five persons to this commission. He stated the Board had received the applications of all persons interested in serving on this commission as well as recommendations from the Steering Committee for the Agricultural Commission, but he did not reveal those recommendations.

Selectman Keller asked applicants, "What can you bring to the commission?"

Ms. Hodder – She stated her belief agriculture should not be lost in Sudbury where she and her husband have farmed for over 30 years. She stated she is a former teacher, and agriculture is a part of Sudbury's history, and the community and schools need to be involved.

Ms. Abrams – She stated she works within a family agricultural business, and is active with the Mass. Farm Bureau. She encouraged anyone not appointed to attend meetings anyway to stay involved for future openings.

Ms. Churchill – She stated she knows the experience of building a farming business as she has lived in Sudbury only eight years. Her business is that of horse breeding.

Ms. Taylor – She stated she is a middle school science teacher, and is more of a hobby farmer. She stated her concern for education of children and adults in agricultural topics. She stated further she knows what to expect when people interested in agriculture move to town.

Mr. Verrill – He stated he is a long time landowner and farmer and opined the commission would be good for mediating disputes between neighbors. He also expressed concern for conservation issues.

Mr. Noer – He stated he grew up in an agricultural family and currently resides at the Walker farm in Sudbury. He expressed concern for losing valuable agricultural resources and suggested the commission focus on sponsoring a Farmers Day, a website, brochures about Sudbury farmers and what they do, and to basically preserve the agricultural history.

Selectman Drobinski asked applicants to indicate any critical issues they felt were facing the Town and the commission in working together.

Mr. Noer – He felt the commission would establish a voice in the community, and reiterated activities.

Mr. Verrill – He stated the commission should first get established, then work toward preservation of open space, stress the importance of fresh food and recreation to create a harmony within the community.

Ms. Taylor – She stated the commission should create a presence, help to mediate disputes, educate the public and promote farming, and used Drumlin Farm as an example of an agricultural hub that actually brings revenue to the community.

Ms. Sulkowski – She opined an important question is to define what is a farm and not a farm. She stated the preceding GIS presentation could be very useful in tracking agricultural entities in Town. She stated the commission should work to improve attitudes of residents about farming to better represent the town to potential residents to avoid disputes with agricultural concerns.

Ms. Churchill – She stated it is important to know local and state laws, to help boards talk to each other, mediate disputes and share information as a board.

Ms. Abrams – She stated agriculture has lost its voice in recent years and now there is a resurgence of interest. She opined the commission would be very helpful in liaising with other boards.

Ms. Hodder – She opined the commission would be useful in sharing information with both the community and other boards and commissions. She opined its main function would be as a “listening board” and not policy making.

Selectman Keller asked if anyone knew where Mr. John Donovan was and why he was absent. Ms. Abrams stated that his son was getting married in Canada but did not know if this was why Mr. Donovan was absent this evening. Mr. Keller asked the Steering Committee members about Mr. Donovan’s qualifications. Ms. Abrams stated Mr. Donovan was one of the first people to become interested in the Agricultural Commission. She stated he also helps people with their gardens and has time and interest to keep agriculture alive, though he does not make a living at it.

The Board asked which candidates made a living from their agricultural endeavors.

Ms. Abrams stated her greenhouse business includes every aspect of farming, large and small.

Mr. Noer stated his current experience is more of a stewardship situation, presenting ideas.

Ms. Taylor stated her efforts are limited to growing a small amount of food for family and friends.

Ms. Sulkowski stated she garners little income from her efforts, and that her son may have sold some cheese and goat’s milk.

Mr. Verrill stated he earns his living through agriculture. He said he also hosts tours for pre-school children at his farm. He opined there may also be learning opportunities not yet explored, as well as agricultural classroom teaching.

Ms. Churchill stated her horse breeding business does not completely support the family as her husband is employed in another profession.

When asked about the commission’s intent, several responses included minimizing the stigma attached to farming, promoting the image, organization of agricultural programs in college should expand, community education, helping teachers with pertinent lesson plans and information necessary to secure grants for school projects, centralized information source for demonstrations on how animals interact with each other, and comments that early education may help solidify high school programs.

Chairman O’Brien suggested the present “Bridges” program with the Senior Center could be a model for a similar agricultural education program.

Chairman O'Brien asked candidates what accomplishments they would like to see this commission have under its belt five years from now.

Ms. Taylor – A presence in the community, agriculture more present in the classroom, specialized curriculums at least in the elementary schools.

Ms. Sulkowski – Recognition, just knowing the number of farms here, a history of farming in Sudbury, and something of an outreach program which would include field trips to local farms.

Ms. Churchill – sees farms getting smaller and expressed concern for a need to provide information to potential new owners.

Ms. Abrams – Hopes all farms will still exist and that new homeowners of residential homes do not put farmers out of business after disputes.

Ms. Hodder – Hopes farms can be maintained so that the U.S. does not have to depend on other countries for our food.

Mr. Verrill – Show the benefits of fresh food versus organic food and eating seasonal foods instead of foods grown in other countries year round at high price, keeping business compatible with farming interests, and understanding of zoning laws helping young farmers get established.

Mr. Noer – That the farming community knows that the commission is there to help, develop pamphlets describing farming enterprises so that students know farming is important to Sudbury.

Town Manager Valente suggested the Board could appoint two Associate members in addition to the original five.

After discussion, the Board asked Ms. Valente to arrange an interview with Mr. Donovan for the Selectmen's meeting on September 6. It was agreed that appointments would be made that evening whether or not Mr. Donovan had been interviewed. The Board thanked the candidates for their time and for coming forward to serve on this commission.

### **Minutes**

It was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the regular session of July 26, 2005 and special meeting of July 27, 2005.

### **Discretionary/Charity Trust Fund Interest Account**

It was on motion unanimously

VOTED: Acting as Co-Trustees of Town Donations, to approve an allocation of \$6,500 from the Discretionary/Charity Trust Fund Interest Account for expenditure in Fiscal Year 2006.

**Mass. Dept. of Public Health – Grant**

It was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To accept a grant of \$1,000 from the Mass. Dept. of Public Health, as a result of Sudbury's participation in a Statewide Ambulance Task Force Mobilization Plan, and to authorize its expenditure for its intended purpose of purchasing equipment in support of ambulance operations.

**Council on Aging – Appointment**

It was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Barbara Bahlkow to the Council on Aging for a term to expire April 30, 2008, filling the position held by Morton Brond.

**Election Officers – Appointments**

It was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Jo Susan Travers as a Democratic Election Officer – Emergency Inspector, and to appoint Thomas S. Travers as an Unenrolled Election Officer – Emergency inspector, for the 2005-06 Election Year commencing August 15, 2005.

**United Nations Day**

It was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To proclaim October 24, 2005 as United Nations Day in the Town of Sudbury and to urge all residents to participate in related United Nations Day activities.

**Bullfinch's – Sunday Entertainment License**

It was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To approve renewal of a Sunday Entertainment License for Bullfinch's restaurant, 730 Boston Post Road, for a live jazz trio from 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for the period of September 11, 2005 through September 3, 2006.

**Juniper Farms – Hawker's and Pedler's License**

It was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To renew a Hawker's and Pedler's License for the purpose of operating ice cream trucks within the Town of Sudbury, to Juniper Farms, Hudson, MA, for a one-year period expiring August 10, 2006, subject to issuance of driver identification cards by the Police Department as necessary throughout the year, issuance of a permit from the Board of Health, and further subject to the condition that the parking of ice cream trucks on Town-owned recreation land is prohibited during the times concessions stands are in operation at that location.



### **Town Centre Traffic Improvements**

The Board reviewed a memo, dated August 16, 2005, from the Town Planner, revised from one previously distributed, in which Ms. Kablack outlines the process on formulating an RFP for the Town Centre project, and formation of a Steering Committee. The Board also reviewed a draft mission statement including membership, responsibilities and membership criteria.

After discussion, it was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To dissolve the Sudbury Centre Steering Committee and to thank members for their service, and

VOTED: To establish the Sudbury Centre Improvement Advisory Committee (SCIAC) in accordance with an organizational statement dated August 16, 2005, as drafted by the Town Manager, and further

VOTED: To approve steps set forth in a memorandum dated August 16, 2005 (revised) and accompanying timeline prepared by the Town Planner for implementation of Town Centre Traffic Improvements.

### **Electric Power Regulatory Proposal**

Town Manager Valente asked the Board to approve a draft letter to U.S. elected representatives expressing opposition to a regulatory proposal of ISO New England to increase the cost of electric generating capacity. She reported she had spoken with numerous area Town Managers who were unaware this change was proposed. She stated further she would not have known if the Town's consultant had not notified her, referring to a memo, dated July 20, 2005, from Bay State Consultants.

After discussion, it was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To approve and send a letter to U.S. Representative Martin Meehan and Senators Kennedy and Kerry expressing opposition to a regulatory proposal of ISO New England to increase the cost to New England consumers of electric generating capacity.

### **Board of Selectmen Budget Policies, 2006**

The Board reviewed highlighted sections indicating wording changes proposed by the Town Manager. Ms. Valente asked the Board to study the document in its new entirety and forward comments to her. She will update it with suggestions and bring back to the Board for review.

### **Rail Trail Concerns**

Chairman O'Brien stated he had received a communication from Pat Brown, co-chair of the Rail Trail Conversion Advisory Committee, with continued discussion of the RTCAC's perceived need to have an abutter to the trail appointed to the Committee.

Selectman Drobinski opined the Board should not bend to outside influence as the committee was formed from interested residents who came forward at the time. He reminded the Board a direct abutter was appointed to the group and later resigned, stating he wished to participate from outside the group.

Chairman O'Brien stated that all committee meetings are open to the public and encouraged the Rail Trail Conversion Advisory Committee to allow time for public input at those meetings.

Selectman Drobinski stated that committees should be comprised of objective individuals who are interested in what's good for the entire community, whether or not those individuals are directly impacted by the group's area of concern.

#### **League of Women Voters**

Town Manager Valente stated the League of Women Voters would like to focus on development projects for their Fall Forum, as indicated in an email, dated August 12, 2005, from Nancy Brumback, Sudbury League of Women Voters. Ms. Valente asked for the Board's thoughts on this suggestion.

Selectman Drobinski opined the topic of development projects to be premature for any kind of public forum. It was suggested that such a discussion would need to be coordinated with the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board.

Selectman Keller suggested the topic be "vision for Sudbury" and expected direction, without discussing any particular projects that may or may not come to fruition.

Ms. Valente will forward the Board's comments to the League.

#### **Proposed Cable Franchise**

Town Manager Valente reported that Town Counsel is working to get a proposal from special counsel Peter Epstein, who typically works with the Cable Television Committee on matters relative to cable television in Sudbury. She will keep the Board informed of progress in this matter.

#### **Site Plan 03-371 -- Omnipoint Wireless Facility, 163 Boston Post Road**

The Board reviewed a memo, dated August 16, 2005, from the Town Planner, in which she stated that all conditions for issuance of a building permit relative to Site Plan 03-371 of Omnipoint have been complied with, and toward that end, urged the Board to sign the mylar plans at its earliest convenience. The Board signed the site plan.

#### **DPW Vehicles – Purchase/Lease-Purchase**

It was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To authorize the Town Manager to contract for purchase or lease-purchase of vehicles for the Public Works Department funded under Article 10, Capital budget, of the 2005 Annual Town Meeting, without further approval by the Board of Selectmen.

**Executive Session**

At 11:00 p.m. it was on motion by roll call

VOTED: To go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing distribution from the Discretionary/Charity Fund, real estate negotiations and litigation. (Chairman O'Brien, aye, Selectman Keller, aye, Selectman Drobinski, aye).

Chairman O'Brien announced regular session would not reconvene following Executive Session.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 p.m.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Maureen G. Valente  
Town Manager-Clerk