

IN BOARD OF SUDBURY SELECTMEN

TUESDAY, JULY 23, 2019

Present: Chairman Daniel E. Carty, Vice-Chairman Patricia A. Brown, Selectman Janie Dretler, Selectman Jennifer Roberts, Selectman William Schineller and Town Manager Melissa Rodrigues.

The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, the meeting was convened at approximately 11:35 a.m. at the Flynn Building – Silva Room. Chairman Carty called the meeting to order.

Discuss Town Forum and Potential Dates

Chairman Carty acknowledged that a yearly Public Forum was required according to bylaw. He mentioned the Board had considered a State of the Town Meeting and suggested that the two public meetings might be combined.

Vice-Chairman Brown confirmed that in accordance with Town bylaw, a Town Forum type meeting must be conducted sometime this year. She detailed that consideration had been given to holding such a Forum on a Saturday. She informed the Board that the LS Auditorium is available on Saturday, November 9th (Veteran's Day weekend) and she was not sure of the availability on November 16. Town Manager Rodrigues commented that a previous Saturday Town Forum was not well-attended. She added that the topic of that Forum was Town Budget.

Selectman Schineller queried about past Town Forums that were successful.

Town Manager Rodrigues mentioned a Town Forum held at the Library on a November evening four years ago had good turnout and the topic was Town projects.

Selectman Schineller queried if the topic had something to with increased attendance. Selectman Dretler noted that the subject of Town projects might have been of particular interest at the time. Town Manager replied that the Loring Parsonage was one of the Town projects highlighted at that meeting.

Vice-Chairman Brown stated that she would find out what Town locations might be available for a Saturday, November 23rd meeting. She stated that the previous Town Forum regarding the budget, took place at Town Hall. She recalled that there was a major march in Washington which could have affected attendance at that Budget Town Forum.

Selectman Roberts mentioned the possibility of an evening Town Forum. Vice-Chairman Brown agreed that an evening Town forum could be an option and she detailed the evening Town Forum whose topic was Marijuana. That meeting was attended by some 30 people at Town Hall. Chairman Carty mentioned that it was a snowy night when the Marijuana Town Forum took place.

Vice-Chairman Brown stated that the Fairbank Center would be her first choice of topic for the Forum and the Master Plan topic would be the second choice of topic. Selectman Schineller mentioned the State of the Town idea and inquired about the planning needed for such a State of the Town meeting. Selectman Dretler explained that she and Vice-Chairman Brown met last week and discussed potential topics to be included in a proposed State of the Town presentation:

- Bylaw Section which might include inclusionary zoning and bylaw changes
- Capital Section to include two or three current capital items.
- Public Discussion/Comment
- Potential inclusion of a speaker to address a specific topic

Selectman Dretler reiterated that such a meeting would have an organized agenda with provision for public comment. She mentioned that a new Town Manager might be in place by the time of such a State of the Town

presentation, which could also include an introduction to the Town Manager, as well as, covering any key issues/challenges and dissemination of related information.

Vice-Chairman Brown commented that a State of the Town presentation means different things to different people and indicated that residents of Lincoln indicated that a State of the Town presentation meant that the Town is providing information prior to Town Meeting. She maintained one of the reasons a State of the Town would not be scheduled in November was the fact that Town Meeting articles would not be known, or necessarily established, nor a preliminary budget. She stressed that a March or April timeframe would be more likely for such a State of the Town meeting.

Selectman Schineller asked Town Manager Rodrigues if she agreed with combining a Town Forum with a State of the Town event. Town Manager Rodrigues stated that the two concepts could be combined in one meeting. She detailed that the bylaw indicates that Town Forum could include the agenda-type that Selectman Dretler suggested.

Chairman Carty commented that he liked the idea of a State of the Town Meeting but did not want it scheduled too early and also not just a couple of days before Town Meeting. He suggested late February as a possible date.

Selectman Roberts inquired if other presented Town Forums were conducted with a Fall Town Meeting. Chairman Carty responded positively. Selectman Roberts stressed that some topic for Town Forum must be chosen. Town Manager Rodrigues suggested having the Town Forum close to the time of Town Meeting (with topics fresh in peoples' minds) and presentation of the most updated information needed was a positive aspect. She suggested scheduling a Town Forum for the beginning of April.

Selectman Roberts mentioned that updates regarding the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail project would be a pertinent topic to include. Chairman Carty commented that a State of the Town Meeting reflects more than individual projects.

Selectman Schineller asked Selectman Dretler if her proposed agenda was disconnected from Town Meeting. Selectman Dretler responded the meeting could be concerned with upcoming items prior to May Town Meeting, but not necessarily topics that the Board has established positions on. She emphasized that such State of the Town Meeting is a means of informing residents and hearing what residents have to say about certain items. She suggested that perhaps the DLS recommendations might be included in such an agenda, and the meeting did not necessarily have to be scheduled close to the May Town Meeting date.

Selectman Schineller indicated that a Master Plan Forum topic could be addressed with subcategories such as the Fairbank Center and stated that he associated the Master Plan topic with the State of the Town meeting.

Selectman Dretler suggested that the Fairbank Center topic should include more definitive planning before being presented as a primary topic for Town Forum.

Selectman Roberts inquired about the process status of the Fairbank project. Selectman Dretler responded that cost estimates would likely not be presented before the end of September.

Town Manager Rodrigues asked if the Board might consider a more holistic visioning session similar to a charrette event with possible inclusion of Broadacres and the Town Center parcel. Selectman Dretler agreed with such a visioning session and asked if the Town Center land situation would advance by the time of such meeting. Town Manager Rodrigues replied more related information would be presented tomorrow, but was unsure if the land would be officially purchased by the Town by that time.

Selectman Dretler stated that a State of the Town Meeting is more of a vision to be shared with residents. Chairman Carty stated that his impression of the State of the Town is totally different and is more financial-based to include Town debt, population trends, and depicts where the Town has been and where it is going.

Selectman Schineller commented that the most valuable aspect is Master Plan-focused to include goals and not be specific-project orientated. He suggested user conferences.

Selectman Roberts asked if presenting such items (without specific answers) might promote resident frustration. Town Manager Rodrigues responded that if a project is not at a near complete stage, it could cause resident dissatisfaction/frustration and suggested a visioning session which Horsley Witten might present, especially in consideration of a Town Manager not being in place.

Selectman Roberts commented that the formation of a Master Plan Open Space Conservation Working Group would be important and felt a Master Plan Forum might be the best idea. Town Manager Rodrigues commented that the Master Plan aspect is futuristic at this point and stressed that topics that are near ready could be addressed and the Forum could also be treated as an update on the sewer, the dam, Landham Road intersection project, the fuel island and other projects that the Town is currently working on.

Selectman Dretler suggested a Rail Trail/Broadacres/Town Land meeting topic since the Rail Trail abuts those areas.

Vice-Chairman Brown commented that her understanding from the last Fairbank Task Force meeting was the architect would present his findings, the Task Force would present findings to Town Boards/Committees for input and then start the education phase. Selectman Dretler added that the Fairbank Working Group is anticipating having meetings and presenting update to Boards/Committees by the end of September and would then commence with public education. Vice-Chairman Brown responded that by November, the Fairbank Task Force would be into the public education phase. Selectman Dretler responded that she hoped that would be the case but noted that the Board would not have taken positions on certain articles at that point.

Selectman Dretler commented that various Boards will weigh in on these aspects throughout October, November and December into the next year and thought that a Fairbank Forum could take place after the New Year. Related discussion took place.

Chairman Carty concurred that November is probably not the right time for a Fairbank Forum. Vice-Chairman Brown stressed that according to bylaw, some public meeting must take place.

Selectman Roberts stated that in regard to a Broadacres/Town Center Land/Rail Trail Forum, she would like to know what the Planning Board might be interested in. Selectman Dretler agreed with Selectman Roberts.

Selectman Schineller stated that the results of the Sewataro RFP would soon be presented and could be included in a Broadacres/Town Center Land/Rail Trail Forum. Selectman Roberts suggested presenting a broader recreation update. Selectman Schineller emphasized that including a Camp Sewataro status update would be important.

Chairman Carty stated that Vice-Chairman Brown would be determining what would be discussed at the Town Forum and stated that the Board has brought forth solid ideas/input today.

Vice-Chairman Brown commented that the Forum did not have to be held on a Saturday and she would determine a location and schedule which could accommodate approximately 100 people. She affirmed that Broadacres/ adjoining lands and other recreational activities would be the focus of the proposed Town Forum.

Selectman Dretler asked if the open space and recreational plan was complete. Town Manager Rodrigues responded it was almost complete and is now awaiting feedback from ConCom (Conservation Commission) in order to conduct a related public meeting.

Selectman Roberts commented that an interesting umbrella to this topic could be the future of open space and recreation in Sudbury and planning is still ongoing.

Selectman Schineller motioned to adjourn the open meeting. Vice-Chairman Brown seconded the motion.
There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

Attest: _____

Melissa Murphy-Rodrigues
Town Manager-Clerk