

Selectmen's Meeting
September 10, 2014
Selectmen's Meeting Room – 9:50 p.m.
Executive Session

The Selectmen's Meeting was called to order by roll call vote at 9:50 p.m. for the following purposes:

1. To discuss the deployment of security personnel or devices, or strategies with respect thereto.
2. To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property which the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body – Clapp Road.

Shawn Harris aye

Marty O'Toole aye

Tony Vegnani aye

John Danehey aye

Also present was W. Michael Stewart, Chief of Police and Patricia Vinchesi.

Public Safety and Security Issues relative to Harbormaster Operations

Chief Stewart reviewed with members his memorandum outlining the reasons why he believed the operation of the Harbormaster's Office should come under the purview of the police department. With the retirement of the Harbormaster an opportunity existed to reorganize. He described specific police response instances where having a greater police presence in the Harbor would have led to more timely response and averted further problems. The Harbormaster was not able, or perhaps inclined, to devote the necessary time to law enforcement issues. The lack of a patrol boat in the water was also problematic when issues arise and also for proactive law enforcement. Safety, drinking, and increasing issues around drug distribution and transient visitors to the Harbor were growing concerns. Transient boaters are unknown to the community and this Harbormaster staff would be defenseless if someone was armed. Chief Stewart also indicated that the Town of Scituate is known to be the place to go for "fun" because the lack of enforcement is widely known.

Selectman Harris inquired of the chief if he had another Town that he would role model any new operations around. Chief Stewart replied that Marshfield would be the model wherein the Harbormaster is a police officer reporting to the Chief of Police.

Ms. Vinchesi supported Chief Stewart's desire to increase enforcement and have the staff of the Harbormaster be trained and outfitted to enforce the law. She also noted criminal instances where the staff could have been potentially at risk and there was no enforcement at all now. However, she stated that she was concerned about this becoming the main focus under any new reorganization and did not want to lose all the other important aspects of the Harbormaster's operations such as the budget, CPC projects, dredging and working closely with the Waterways Commission.

All Board members were in agreement that it made sense for the operations to have greater law enforcement abilities including police powers for the Harbormaster. Ms. Vinchesi and Chief Stewart will work out the details.

Clapp Road Land Exchange

Chairman John Danehey recused himself from the Clapp Road discussion and left the room.

Ms. Vinchesi updated members on her discussions with Jack Livingstone and Steve Callahan who were interested in developing approximately 200 rental units in the Clapp Road area owned by Mr. Livingstone. It would be a 40B project. The developers have made inquiries about a possible land swap and she had met with them informally to discuss the reasons why. The developers would like the Town to swap about an acre of land located on Route 3A to provide better egress to the project. The project already has access at Booth Hill and Clapp Roads. However, Mr. Callahan and Mr. Livingstone believe that the traffic impacts through these two areas would not be advantageous and access from Route 3A would be more preferable. They have proposed replicating that land with a greater amount of land in the interior portion of the proposed development area. Ms. Vinchesi showed members a mock up map provided by Mr. Callahan delineating the land the developers were proposing to give the Town. The land proposed to be swapped was conservation land and would require an Article 97 of the State Constitution disposition.

Board members had a number of questions and comments. The delineation of what the Town would get was not clear on the map so the Board could not judge if the value of the property was advantageous. Selectman Vegnani observed that the land appeared to be all wetlands and that was no value to the Town. Land that was useable for other town purposes was desirable as there had been many acquisitions of conservation land in the West End in recent years. Members directed Ms. Vinchesi to go back to the developers to convey the Board's concerns and request a much more detailed map. Ms. Vinchesi stated that the developers were interested in reaching an agreement with the Town and placing an article on the warrant for the Fall Town Meeting. She noted that at some point that Board members needed to discuss this with Mr. Livingstone and Mr. Callahan directly as she could not speak for the Board definitively on the matter.

The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 p.m.

Patricia Vinchesi
Recorder