

**MINUTES**  
**SELECT BOARD**  
**TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH**  
Tuesday, March 3, 2015 – 5:30pm  
1 Grove Street, Peterborough, New Hampshire

**Present:** Barbara Miller, Liz Thomas, Tyler Ward

Roland Patten, Leslie Lewis, Ron MacIntire, Bob Lambert, Steve Jones, Ed Henault, Don Parkhurst

**Also Present:** Pamela Brenner, Rodney Bartlett, Ed Walker, Nicole MacStay

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Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 5:34pm.

**Appointment of Anne & Joel Huberman to the Open Space Committee**

Mr. Huberman said that they both have a strong interest in Open Space, which is why they moved to Peterborough. Ms. Huberman said that her grandfather was Carl Keyes, and that she has always felt a strong connection to Peterborough.

**Motion:**

Chair Miller made a motion to appoint Anne and Joel Huberman to the Open Space Committee; Ms. Thomas seconded.

**Vote:**

Chair Miller, Ms. Thomas and Mr. Ward voted in favor of the motion; the motion carried.

**Alcohol and Drug Testing Policy**

Mr. Bartlett explained that the original policy was adopted in February of 1996 in response to federal regulation. The changes before the board were in response to changes in regulation that have been enacted since that time. Mr. Bartlett then reviewed the two most significant changes to the policy:

1. All new hires will be tested for drugs and alcohol, regardless of the position they are being hired into.
2. The Town Administrator has the authority to identify positions as "safety sensitive." Employees whose positions are considered "safety sensitive" will be part of the random drug and alcohol testing pool.

Ms. Miller asked if seasonal positions were included; Mr. Bartlett said that there has been some discussion about returning employees that has not yet been resolved. Pat Neery, resident of Cheney Avenue, asked if this applies to school bus drivers; Mr. Bartlett said that the School District is responsible for the transportation of students, but that this would apply to Recreation Department employees.

**Motion:**

Mr. Ward made a motion to adopt the Alcohol and Drug Testing Policy as presented for inclusion in the Town of Peterborough Employee Manual; Ms. Thomas seconded.

**Vote:**

Mr. Ward, Ms. Thomas and Chair Miller voted in favor of the motion; the motion carried.

**Upcoming Town Meeting Dates**

Chair Miller announced that the 2015 Deliberative Session would be held on April 7<sup>th</sup>, the Ballot Session will be May 12<sup>th</sup> and the Open Session will be held on May 13<sup>th</sup>. Andrew Dunbar, resident of Summer Street, asked if there would be any publicity for the Deliberative Session, or if there would be a banner on the Town House; Ms. Brenner said that the Town always publicizes the Deliberative Session, and said that they would look into getting a banner made and hung. As there was no further business, the Board recessed until 6:00pm.

**6:00pm – Public Hearing on the Modification of the 2012 Greater Downtown Tax Increment Finance District**

At 6:00pm Chair Miller opened the Public Hearing. Mr. Bartlett explained that the last time the Greater Downtown Tax Increment Finance District (GDTIF) was modified was in 2012 when some of the boundaries were changed including adding the Fire Department, and allowed the reconstruction of the Fire Department parking lot to be paid for entirely out of the GDTIF revenue. The purpose of this modification is to include 44-46 Grove Street in the GDTIF. We are looking for this modification as a result of last year's public hearing on downtown parking and the 2014 Town Meeting vote to support the permitting and design of a parking lot across the Nubanusit River from Depot Square the land which was formerly a railroad corridor. One of the challenges faced was how to gain access to the site, and as a result we approached the owners of this property, and they have shown an interest in participating in this project. It appears that in the past there was once an access to the railroad corridor along the southern boundary of the property, which is where we propose to access the parking lot, and allows us to look at additional parking spaces. This concept was brought to both the GDTIF Advisory Board and the Economic Development Authority who supported the proposal, and voted in favor of the area modification to include this parcel in the GDTIF.

Mr. Bartlett continued, explaining that this Public Hearing is to discuss the proposed warrant article, which would modify the boundaries as described, and to look at extending the expiration date of the GDTIF to 2025. Without this change, we would not be able to use TIF revenue to construct the access road or any of the parking that would be located on this lot. The next Public Hearing deals with the proposed bond article to construct the parking lot.

As there were no questions or comments from the Board, Chair Miller asked if there were any questions or comments from those present. Mr. Dunbar asked what are the financial aspects of the TIF district; Mr. Bartlett reviewed how a TIF district is implemented and functions.

John Patterson asked if the TIF District is continuing to generate revenue and how it is expended; Mr. Bartlett reviewed a schedule of GDTIF revenues since 2004, explained that sidewalks are the most common expenditures from the district, and last year \$80,000 was appropriated by Town Meeting to explore the feasibility of this proposed parking lot.

Jo-Ann Carr of Summer Street said that her concern about the process for the change of the plan from the GDTIF Advisory Committee and EDA, and that she had not seen anything on the website about the parking studies. The latest plan for the GDTIF is from 2012 and talks about parking, but does not specify construction; she felt that the Town is jumping into changing the plan. Ms. MacStay explained that the EDA and GDTIF Advisory Committee minutes are now updated on the website, and explained that due to limits on server space on the website some of the documents related to the parking lot that was put up prior to the 2014 Town Meeting had to be removed, but the various parking studies were still posted on the website, as was the proposed change to the GDTIF district that is being proposed at this Public Hearing. Mr. Bartlett added that at the boundary modification went to the Select Board on January 15<sup>th</sup> with the understanding that it would be presented to the GDTIF Advisory Committee and the EDA later that month. Both of those boards voted in favor of the boundary modification. Chair Miller said that the Board feels comfortable that they have gone through the correct process to get to this point.

Ms. Lewis asked if there would be any changes to the timed parking in the downtown; Ms. Brenner said that that proposal to change the timed parking in the municipal lot started the Select Board and staff down the road that lead to this process. Ms. Lewis noted that some expense had been taken to improve the parking at the Fire Station, but it still goes under-used and asked what would be done to make sure that people are aware of those options; Ms. Brenner said that the change in the timed parking will move those seeking all-day parking to the other lots. Chair Miller said that business owners will need to encourage their staff to park in those lots.

Mr. Dunbar said that it is human nature for people to park as close as they can to their destination. There followed some conversation about parking habits and time-limited parking.

Mr. Lambert said that one complaint that he often hears this time of year that there isn't enough lighting from the Summer Street parking lot to the downtown.

Ms. Carr said that employees don't like parking in the Summer Street parking lot because it feels far away, and that something should be done with the Summer Street/Main Street intersection so that it feels more inviting.

Ms. Thomas asked Chief Guinard if anyone had ever been mugged or harmed on Summer Street; Chief Guinard said that they have not.

Ms. Lewis said that many of the improvements to that intersection would be rolled into the Main Street Bridge process.

Chair Miller said that the Select Board will take everything said in these hearings under advisement, and will use all of the input that people give to make the best decision possible. Chair Miller closed the public hearing at 6:35pm.

### **6:35pm – Public Hearing on the Grove Street Parking Lot Bond - \$1,143,562**

Chair Miller opened the public hearing. Mr. Bartlett said that at the 2014 Town Meeting voters passed an article to appropriate \$80,000 from the GDTIF to study the site of the proposed parking lot behind 44-46 Grove Street, Peterson Realty and the GAR Hall. Hoyle Tanner and Associates was hired to do the work, and we brought on a wetlands scientist immediately who did not identify any issues. We had conversations with DES with regards to the setback from the river, and as a result, what you see here is a concept which shows the maximum possible of impact. We developed cost estimates, a grading plan, storm water detention and treatment under the parking lot which will also treat the storm water collected from a portion of Grove Street. The cost estimates also include a footbridge over the Nubanusit Brook, the construction of a pathway to follow the railroad corridor as a continuation of the Common Pathway and a modest landscaping plan. The bond includes the purchase price of the two parcels, the pedestrian bridge, and the construction of a sixty space parking lot with a 20% contingency, at a total of \$1,143,562. He noted that the estimates that we had looked at in the workshop held in February 2014 turned out to be relatively close. The Select Board reviewed this proposal at their January 20<sup>th</sup> meeting and decided to go with a sixty space parking lot. The bond would be 100% supported by GDTIF funding, and the payment would be approximately \$74,000 a year.

John Patterson asked who would own the riverbank between the lot and the river, and would it be a park; Mr. Bartlett said that the Town would end up with the ownership. As part of the Common Pathway it would be landscaped in a way consistent with Depot Park.

Peggy Shaunassey said that she understood that some of the money for the bridge would come from the sale of the GAR Hall; Mr. Bartlett said that during the court proceedings we proposed using the proceeds for the footbridge and streetscaping; both the representative from the Attorney General's Office and the judge said that it would be an appropriate allocation. We propose to use those proceeds to offset the cost of the bond.

Mr. Dunbar said that he has a number of concerns:

1. There would be an increase in traffic down Grove Street
2. There would be negative effects on the value of the adjoining properties and the people living there
3. Maintenance costs
4. Negative impact on the flood plain and those down the river
5. If the lot isn't visible from the street then questionable activity may occur there
6. The cost of the lot

He said that there may be a better plan to bring people downtown, rather than vehicles.

Ms. Carr said that she is concerned about paving a green space, and she is not convinced that all the options for parking in the downtown have been exhausted. She said that she fully respects that the businesses need to have their shops accessible to their customers, but this parking is away from the shops. She added that with regards to the permitting from DES, she said that she sits on the Conservation Commission, and this has not yet been brought to them, and they are concerned about the flood plain impact and wetland impact. Mr. Bartlett responded that they have gone far enough with the conceptual design to generate cost estimates, and are now at the stage where they will go forward into the permitting process. He said that they felt that it would have been shortsighted to spend dollars on a design that may not be funded, but that he has committed to bring the plan to the Conservation Commission throughout the design process. Ms. Carr asked what impact the proposed bond payment would have on other GDTIF funded projects; Mr. Bartlett said that it would be the largest project proposed and funded, and at present funding levels, would leave approximately \$25,000 a year. The most common expenditure has been \$20,000 towards sidewalks, and the next plan would be the street scape from the Main Street Bridge to Grove Street, and added that there is a lot to address in association with the bridge.

Debbie Keiser said that in other meetings that you have spoken with DES, and asked if it would be timely to get permitting before proceeding; Mr. Bartlett said that when he and HTA set down with DES they were most concerned with the abutments of the bridge. He said that they know that the railroad corridor is an impacted area. He said that they want to make sure that the project has support before going any further with DES.

Steve Lord asked if Mr. Bartlett could address the pathway; Mr. Bartlett said that the goal would be to redefine the Common Pathway along the riverbank and then connect it back up to Grove Street so that it becomes a true structure through the town.

Ms. Lewis asked if it is part of the plan to talk about the yearly maintenance; Mr. Bartlett said that there certainly will be costs associated with plowing, sweeping, painting, cleaning basins and landscape maintenance.

As there were no further questions, Chair Miller closed the public hearing at 7:07pm.

#### **7:00pm – Public Hearing on the Proposed Fiscal Year 2016 Budget**

Chair Patten said that after five months of work this budget came in better than expected. He said that Ms. Brenner did a great job, and she will be missed next year, and that this is a budget that the Select Board and Department Directors will be proud of. The Operating Budget is up 2.3%. The most significant increases are in Peterborough Fire and Rescue, in part for planning associated with a future fire station. It takes \$576,000 to run the fire station, but \$140,000 will be spent on repairs this year, and noted that the fire station is in sad disrepair. The Police Department has a big increase in salaries, \$60,000, which includes an increase in the hours of a part-time officer, the first staffing increase in years. He said that the Budget Committee is proud to present this 2.3% increase to the Town.

Ms. Carr asked if the town has a building maintenance capital reserve account; Ms. Lewis said that we do not have a building capital reserve per se – we have some individual accounts for vehicles. Buildings are dealt with by circumstance.

Chair Patten said that as you may know, we have a budget we are working on this year, and with all the snow, we have been asked where we are at. Mr. Bartlett said that if we get two more storms we will be \$50,000 over budget. If it comes to that, the money would come out of the highway maintenance, which is used to fix roads in the summer. He added that this is one of the toughest winters he can remember. Ms. Brenner said that she would like to applaud the crews who are exhausted, but have done such a great job. Chair Miller said that she would also like to thank the tax payers for being so understanding.

As there were no further questions or comments, Chair Patten closed the public hearing on the budget at 7:25pm.

**Motion:**

Chair Patten made a motion to support the proposed \$1,143,562 bond for the design, planning, engineering and construction of a parking lot and associated landscaping and footbridge off of Grove Street; Mr. Parkhurst seconded.

**Vote:**

Chair Patten, Mr. Parkhurst, Mr. MacIntire, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Jones and Mr. Henault voted in favor of the motion; Ms. Lewis voted against; the motion carried.

As there was no other business, the meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Nicole MacStay, Assistant Town Administrator

PETERBOROUGH  
SELECT BOARD:

  
Barbara A. Miller, Chair

  
Elizabeth M. Thomas

  
Tyler Ward

**ACTION ITEM PENDING LIST**

1.