



## LANCASTER BOARD OF SELECTMEN REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 25, 2016

### I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Stanley B. Starr, Jr. called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen to Order at 6:00 P.M. in the Dexter Room in the Thayer Memorial Library, 717 Main Street, Lancaster, Massachusetts. Present was Selectman Walter F. Sendrowski.

Also present: Ryan McNutt, Town Administrator; and Kathleen Rocco, Executive Assistant.

#### *On Behalf of the Town Government and Board of Selectmen:*

*Chairman Stanley B. Starr, Jr. and Selectman Walter F. Sendrowski offer condolences to the friends and family of Selectman Eugene C. Christoph, who passed away January 6, 2016. Chairman requests one minute of silence to remember Selectman Christoph.*

### II. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD -NONE

6:00 P.M. Opportunity for public to address their concerns, make comment and offer suggestions on operations or programs, except personnel matters. Complaints or criticism directed at staff, volunteers, or other officials shall not be permitted.

### III. SCHEDULED APPEARANCES & PUBLIC HEARING

6:15 P.M. Chairman Starr opened the Joint meeting between the Board of Selectmen and Lancaster Finance Committee to discuss and take action on the Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles. He noted that the Special Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 9, 2016 at 7:00pm at the Mary Rowlandson Elementary School Auditorium.

Finance Committee Members present: Jay Riley, Chair; D. Susan Thompson, Vice Chair; David Ditullio, Member; Michelle Vasquez, Clerk and Cheryl Gariepy, Finance Director.

Chairman Starr asked Town Administrator McNutt to read the First Article of the STM Warrant:

*Article 1. To see if the Town will vote, consistent with Section VII of the existing "Agreement With Respect to the Establishment of a Technical and Vocational Regional School District" for the Minuteman Regional Vocational School District, to accept the Amendments to said Agreement which have been initiated and approved by a vote of*

*the Regional School Committee on December 21, 2015, and which have been submitted as a restated "Regional Agreement" bearing the date of December 21, 2015 to the Board of Selectmen in each member Town, said Regional Agreement as is on file in the Office of the Town Clerk; or act in any manner relating thereto.*

Discussion:

Finance Committee Chairman Jay Riley stated that Minuteman Regional is going through restructuring of the way member towns are being assessed. He noted that the new agreement is a much better financial option for the residents of the Town of Lancaster.

Jennifer Leone, Lancaster's Representative for Minuteman, gave a specific breakdown on the percentages regarding the assessments.

1. Town of Lancaster sends 40 children to Minuteman
2. Current agreement has a 5 student minimum (this does not affect Lancaster's bottom line)
3. The new Assessment formula would benefit the Town of Lancaster
  - 50% assessed student population
  - 1% Straight fee on the capital
  - 49% ability to pay

Ms Leone stated that the Town of Lancaster's ability to pay is significantly less than other Towns, (i.e. Dover, Weston, Carlisle and Belmont).

Further discussion on some of the member towns requesting to withdraw from Minuteman Regional. Mr. Riley pointed out that this proposed Agreement must pass in all member Towns; in order for any town to be allowed to withdraw.

Mr. Riley noted that Finance Committee has discussed this Minuteman's Agreement and are in favor of Article 1.

Chairman Starr stated that he sees no downside for the Town of Lancaster regarding Minuteman's new Regional Agreement.

Seeing no further discussion Mr. McNutt read Article 2 of the Special Town Meeting Warrant.

*Article 2. To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow the sum of \$1,000,000 (One Million Dollars), more or less, for renovations and repairs, including design thereof, to the Prescott Building, also referred to as the Old Center School; to authorize the Board of Selectmen to take any action and execute any agreements necessary to effectuate such renovations and repairs; and that to meet this appropriation, the Treasurer-Collector with the approval of the Board of Selectmen is hereby authorized to borrow said sum pursuant to the provision of G.L. c.44, Section 7, or any other enabling authority, and to issue bonds or notes of the Town therefor, said funds to be expended under the direction of the Board of Selectmen; or act in any manner relating thereto.*

Finance Chair Jay Riley pointed out that the new proposed sum has changed from \$1 Million to \$1,293,317. With the increase, Finance Committee has a few questions regarding the renovation of the Prescott Building and the escalating cost associated with the project.

1. What would the "build out" be with adding the additional costs? And
2. What is the cost to complete the Project.

Lynne Spencer of Spencer & Vogt, LLC and Mary Bulso, Operation Project Manager of Lamoureux-Pagano were present to answer any questions that the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee may have.

Ms Spencer stated that the original amount of \$3.2 Million would allow a first floor fit out with a vertical lift for the first floor, but not an elevator. Ms. Spencer gave a brief history of the project, stating that the original intent was to have the Historical Commission on the second floor and tenant based occupancy on the first floor. She further noted that the project designed changed when it was decided that the Town Employees from Town Hall should be moved into the building. Ms Spencer commented that part of the increase was due to change in building codes, energy codes and increased costs in materials as well as labor.

Chairman Starr asked about the soft costs and if they have increased. Both Ms Spencer and Ms Bulso commented that the soft costs have increased from \$400K to \$475K. Chairman Starr estimated that the new total for the Prescott Building is \$4,493,317 Million.

Both Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen stated they strongly feel that there is a need to get the Town Employees out of the Town Hall and into the Prescott Building.

Selectman Sendrowski stated that he wants the final figure tonight, "no ifs, ands or buts". Chairman Starr stressed that this project needs to move forward not backwards. Chairman Starr asked Finance Director Cheryl Garipey with the additional \$1,291,317 what does this mean to the taxpayer. Ms Garipey estimated that for a \$300,000 home value, the additional cost would be approximately \$39 a year, in addition to the \$120 per year on the original borrowing of \$3.2 Million. The total impact for the homeowner with a \$300 home, would be \$160 per year for the Prescott Building Project.

Finance Committee Vice-Chair, D. Sue Thompson is in full support to have this project completed; however this project has creditability issues, and believes this may be a hard sell to the townspeople. She noted that this has to be final number, the numbers cannot creep up again, and there cannot be another 4 year delay.

Historical Commission Member Joan Richards reminded the Selectmen and Finance Committee that \$450,000 has already been invested in this building.

Historical Commission's Chair, Michael Sczerzen gave the Selectmen and Finance Committee a handout which is a synopsis of what has happened over the past three years regarding this project.

Mr. Riley asked that when writing Article 2, to have the exact figure to get this project completed and remove the words "more or less". Town Administrator McNutt noted that phrase "more or less" was recommended by Town Counsel.

It was suggested that both architect Lynne Spencer and Historical Commission present at the Special Town Meeting. Mr. Riley suggest to the Historical Commission to explain to the townspeople what they are going to get for their money. Chairman Starr commented that the Historical Commission explain their part in the building project and Town Administrator McNutt will explain the move of the town employees from Town Hall.

Selectman Sendrowski asked that any presentations should be done in the positive.

Town Administrator McNutt further stated that the Town has already borrowed \$3.2 Million for the Prescott Building Project

Chairman Starr stressed there are deadlines on the expenditures and need to move forward. He commented that this is up to the voters at Special Town Meeting; further stating that you got to educate, you got to encourage and you got to attend these meetings.

Mr. Sczerzen asked if there is anyway the Town can consider using money from free cash or stabilization to reduce this amount. Mr. Riley stated that originally Finance Committee had approved \$100,000 be awarded to this project.

Chairman Starr asked what sort of borrowing impact would be on the Town. Finance Director Cheryl Gariepy stated that borrowing would be fine, however, taking money from stabilization would not. She further noted that currently there is \$414,000 in free cash and that number will be re-certified this week.

Seeing no further discussion, Mr. McNutt read Article 3.

#### Article 3

*Article 3.: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept the donation of a perpetual easement in, through, under, upon, and above the private ways shown as Mary Catherine Drive, Nicholas Drive, Lindsey Way, and Shannon Way on a plan of land entitled "Definitive Subdivision Plan, Eagle Ridge Estates, Lancaster, Massachusetts, prepared for New Birchwood III Corp., Property of Rowlandson Estates Realty Trust, prepared by Seltec Engineering Inc. dated July 17, 1998", and recorded with Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Plan Book 767, Plan 1 (Sheets 1-26), for all purposes for which public ways are used in the Town of Lancaster, together with the right to use the sidewalks and paths shown on said plan, and to enter into all agreements and take all related actions necessary or appropriate to carry out this acceptance, or act in any manner related thereto.*

Discussion: Mr. McNutt noted that this Article was crafted by Town Counsel and working in conjunction with the Town Planner. Chairman Starr asked if this article was for private ways to become public ways. Mr. McNutt answered in the affirmative.

#### IV. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT - None

#### V. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

On Motion by Mr. Sendrowski, seconded by Mr. Starr, to approve and accept the Regular Meeting Minutes of January 4, 2016. Walter F. Sendrowski vote Aye, and Stanley B. Starr, Jr., vote Aye. 2-0

**VI. APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS -None**

**VII. ADMINISTRATION, BUDGET, AND POLICY**

Review and Take Action on the Special Town Meeting Warrant for February 9, 2016 at 7:00pm to be held at the Mary Rowlandson Elementary School Auditorium.

On Motion by Mr. Sendrowski and seconded by Mr. Starr to accept all three (3) articles for the Special Town Meeting on February 9, 2016 as presented, discussed and amended. Walter F. Sendrowski vote Aye and Stanley B. Starr, Jr. vote Aye. 2-0

**VIII. LICENSES AND PERMITS - None**

**IX. COMMUNICATIONS**

Next Board of Selectmen's Meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 1, 2016, at the Lancaster Community Center.

**X. OTHER BUSINESS - None**


**XI. NEW BUSINESS - None**

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

Seeing no further business, on Motion by Mr. Sendrowski, seconded by Mr. Starr, it was unanimously voted the Board of Selectmen adjourned at 6:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted

Kathleen Rocco  
Executive Assistant

  
Walter F. Sendrowski, Clerk  
Approved and accepted: 2/1/2016