



## LANCASTER BOARD OF SELECTMEN REGULAR MEETING MINUTES DECEMBER 5, 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 Lancaster Community Center, 39 Harvard Road, Lancaster, Massachusetts. Present were Selectmen Walter F. Sendrowski, Mark A. Grasso, Jr., Town Administrator Ryan McNutt and Executive Assistant Kathleen Rocco.

### II. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

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.

Selectman Grasso read the following into the minutes:

*After much deliberation, thought, and introspection, and out of deep seated respect for the citizens of our community, I chose on Friday to bring a resolution to the proceedings against me. I agreed to this avenue in a genuine desire to put this incident behind me, behind the community, and to move forward with the good work of our Town. I take it as a sincere privilege and honor to serve the Town of Lancaster, and in no way does this affect my ability to execute my duties as a member of the Board of Selectmen. I appreciate the continued support I have received from the citizens of this great community and I sincerely regret the embarrassment this has caused anyone. I look forward to putting this incident behind me, learning from it, and continuing to serve the Town with genuine, altruistic leadership.*

### III. SCHEDULED APPEARANCES & PUBLIC HEARING

6:05P.M. Tax Classification Hearing Fiscal Year 2017:

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING  
TOWN OF LANCASTER  
TAX CLASSIFICATION

*In accordance with G.L. c.40, §56, the Board of Selectmen will conduct a Public Hearing on the question of adoption of percentages of the total tax levy to be borne by each class of real property (residential, commercial, industrial, open space) and personal property for Fiscal Year 2017. The Hearing will be held in the Meeting Room, Lancaster Community Center, 33 Harvard Road, Lancaster, MA on Monday, December 5, 2016, at 6:00P.M. All interested parties are invited to attend and be heard. – Board of Selectmen*

Present: George Bourgault, Associate Regional Tax Assessor  
Debra Sanders, Principal Assessor and Member Lancaster Board of Assessors  
Michael Burke, Sr., Co-Chair of the Board of Assessors

Mr. Bourgault stated that the purpose of the Public Hearing is to receive input in order to determine whether to set a single uniform tax rate for all classes of property, or to split the rate by setting a higher tax rate for commercial and industrial property.

Municipalities with a large commercial/industrial tax base often see fit to shift the tax burden to help maintain lower residential taxes. Lancaster, like most small Massachusetts towns has, in the past, chosen not to shift taxes.

The goal of recent classification hearings has been to maintain a uniform tax rate across all classes of property. The Board of Assessors recommends that the Selectmen continue this practice. Historically, the Board of Assessors has determined that a two-tier tax rate is inappropriate for Lancaster

**The Fiscal Year 2017 Levy Limit and Amount to be Raised:**

The following is a calculation of Lancaster's estimated levy for fiscal year 2017.

Fiscal Year 2016 Levy	\$15,756,435
Levy Increase allowed under Prop. 2 ½	393,911
New growth revenue (estimated)	321,052
Debt excluded under Prop. 2 ½	1,129,202
Fiscal Year 2017 Levy Limit	17,600,600
Levy Ceiling	21,733,882
<b>Levy to be raised (rounded by tax rate)</b>	<b>17,291,476</b>

**Valuations by Class Before Tax Shift**

<u>Major Property Class</u>	<u>Valuation</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Res vs CIP%</u>
Residential	\$741,483,079	85.2923%	85.2923%
Commercial	\$ 64,979,425	7.4738%	
Industrial	\$ 37,538,944	4.3177%	14.7077%
Personal Property	\$ 25,353,851	2.9162%	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$869,355,299</b>	<b>100.0000%</b>	

**Tax Rates**

Based on the shift factors, the Board of Assessors has calculated the following tax rate needed to raise the tax levy:

<u>Property Class</u>	<u>FY2017</u>	<u>FY2016</u>
Residential	\$19.89	\$19.55
Commercial	\$19.89	\$19.55
Industrial	\$19.89	\$19.55
Personal Property	\$19.89	\$19.55

***The Assessors noted that the Fiscal Year 2017 rate is an estimate and may change upon the Department of Revenue review.***

**Tax Impacts**

With a few exceptions, Fiscal Year 2017 residential valuations have increased by 3% compared to assessed values from last year, reflecting a healthy real estate market.

The average residential tax bill calculation will change as follows:

FY2016 Average Single Family Valuation	\$296,151
Taxes at \$19.55 per thousand	\$ 5,790
FY2017 Average Single Family Valuation	\$ 305,340
Taxes at \$19.89 per thousand	\$ 6,073
 Average Tax Increase	 \$ 283

Selectman Sendrowski moved that in accordance with M.G.L. C.40, §56, as amended, the percentage of local tax levy which will be borne by each class of real and personal property, relative to setting the FY2017 tax rates and set the Residential Tax Factor of 1.0000, with a corresponding CIP shift of 1.0000, pending certification of the Town's annual tax recap by the Mass. Department of Revenue. Selectman Grasso Seconded. Walter F. Sendrowski vote Aye, Mark A. Grasso, Jr., vote Aye, Stanley B. Starr, Jr. vote Aye. 3-0

6:15 P.M.      **Nashua Wild and Scenic River Study Status Report**

The Selectmen were updated on the status of the Nashua Wild and Scenic River designation by Nashua River Watershed Association members: Mr. Al Futterman, NRWA, Land Programs and Outreach Director, Mr. Robert Pontbriand, Ayer Town Administrator and Lancaster's Representative to the Study, Bill Flynn. The three year study began in 2014 with eight towns (Ayer, Shirley, Groton, Dunstable, Harvard, Lancaster, Townsend and Pepperell), which are contiguous to the Nashua River. The Nashua River Wild and Scenic Study will take steps toward protecting the Nashua River, authorizing the National Park Service to advance the process for giving the Nashua River and two of the tributaries, the Squannacook and Nissitissit Rivers, federal protection designation.

Mr. Futterman commented that the main focus is to draft a management plan that all eight towns can agree upon. He noted that they have to show the remarkable values such as historical, environmental, and recreational. The advantages and benefits of the process include the creation of a regional management plan by local towns, which must garner approvals at town meetings; public and private property rights stay the same; there will be no mandated access to the river; hunting and fishing resources stay the same; funding for the management plan is available from the state and federal government; and no dams will be built on the river.

6:30 P.M.      **Update on Prescott Building Renovation**

Prescott Building Manager Mary Bulso updated the Board of Selectmen on the Prescott Building Renovation. She noted that the filed sub-bids were received and opened on November 9<sup>th</sup> and the filed General bids were received and opened on November 30<sup>th</sup>. She stated that there was one formal protest filed by the seconded lowest bidder in regarding the HVAC. A hearing is scheduled for December 8<sup>th</sup> at the Attorney General's office in Boston. Both she and Town Counsel will be in attendance. Ms Bulso further noted that she expects construction to begin in early January with a 15 month schedule.

<b>IV. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT</b>
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Town Administrator Ryan McNutt updated the Board on the status of current projects pending before the Board:

Town Hall Employees Christmas Tree:

Tree #10 "Harry Potter" Sponsored by the Town Hall Employees won most creative last Friday evening at the Lancaster 4-H Annual Tree Lighting. Town Administrator McNutt thanked all the employees who contributed to the tree and the 4-H for the event.

Memorial School Reuse:

The Town of Lancaster seeks to expand membership of the Memorial School Building Re-use Committee and invite interested citizens to send their information and interest to the Town Administrator at [rmcnutt@lancasterma.net](mailto:rmcnutt@lancasterma.net) or to 695 Main Street, Suite 1, Lancaster MA. 01523. McNutt explained that the Committee shall be responsible for gathering input from citizens, users and potential users, reviewing conceptual designs, making recommendations and acting in an advisory capacity for the former Memorial School. The Committee should include by not be limited to the following:

- ~ Identify realistic options for maintaining the building to stabilize the structure and reserve its historic value while serving the Town's needs. This shall include discussion of its current condition.
- ~ Develop and recommend a plan to the Board of Selectmen that maximizes the best uses of the building for the long term (next 20+ years). Recommendations should be based on a complete analysis of available options and demonstrate fiscal responsibility and include both public and private options.

North Lancaster Water:

Lancaster was a recent recipient of a \$341,000 Massworks Grant to cover engineering and design costs. Town Administrator McNutt noted that the Town is seeking to match this amount with a Federal Economic Development Assistance Grant. Additionally, the Lunenburg Water District and the Lancaster DPW are working on components to the Inter-Municipal Agreement.

Sterling Road Sewer:

Mr. McNutt reported that this project is being funded by a \$950,000 Massworks Grant that the Town submitted and received last year. Construction will be completed and final paving will take place in the Spring.

Route 117/70 Intersection:

Town Administrator McNutt stated that they have the recommended designs back from the MassDOT and they have recommended traffic light signals at each intersection. The value of the design work from the state was about \$200,000 that the Town will not have to cover towards the project. The Town Planner is currently reviewing proposals and the Town has issued an RFP for the final design work with the expectation of getting the two projects on the state Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for 2020.

Green Communities:

The Town Planner submitted the Green Community Annual Report for Calendar Year 2015. McNutt noted that the Town realized a 11.7% decrease in energy consumption compared with the 2008 baseline year. The breakdown by category is as follows:

- Buildings – A 16.8% decrease over 2008 with decreases in all areas – electricity, oil and propane.
- Water Pumping – 0.06% decrease over 2008.
- Vehicles – A 10.4% decrease over 2008.
- Street Lights – A 12.7% increase over 2008. However the Town should see a difference next year with the LED streetlights being installed at the roundabout in 2016.

McNutt commented that overall, this is the best decrease they have seen since the start of the program in 2010. He thanked the Lancaster Energy Commission and the Town Employees.

## **V. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

Selectman Grasso moved to approve and accept the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 21, 2016. Selectman Sendrowski Seconded. Walter F. Sendrowski vote Aye, Mark A. Grasso, Jr. vote Aye and Stanley B. Starr, Jr., vote Aye. 3-0

## **VI. APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS -**

### Appointments

#### *Historical Commission:*

Selectman Sendrowski moved to appoint Jay Moody, 144 Seven Bridge Road, as Full Member to the term to expire June 30, 2016, and Marcia Jakubowicz, 500 Hill Top Road, as Associate Member, term to expire June 30, 2016. Selectman Grasso Seconded. Walter F. Sendrowski vote Aye, Mark A. Grasso, Jr. vote Aye and Stanley B. Starr vote Aye. 3-0

### Resignations

#### *Audit Advisory Committee:*

Selectman Sendrowski moved to accept the resignation of Finance Director Cheryl Gariepy, effective immediately. Selectman Grasso Seconded. Walter F. Sendrowski vote Aye, Mark A. Grasso, Jr., vote Aye and Stanley B. Starr, Jr. vote Aye. 3-0

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

Review and take action on the following request to use Town Hall Great Hall for Troop 1 Lancaster – Court of Honor on December 21, 2016 from 6:00pm to 9:00pm.

Selectman Grasso moved to approve the request to use the Town Hall Great Hall for Troop 1 Lancaster – Court of Honor on December 21, 2016 from 6:00pm to 9:00pm. Selectman Sendrowski Seconded. Walter F. Sendrowski vote Aye, Mark A. Grasso, Jr. vote Aye and Stanley B. Starr, Jr., vote Aye. 3-0

## **VIII. LICENSES AND PERMITS**

Review and take action on the following Renewal License Applications for 2017:

Selectman Sendrowski moved to accept the following Renewal Licenses Applications for 2017:

1. AMR Auto dba Prime Toyota – Class I & Common Victualler
2. Crawford Truck Sales, Inc. – Class II
3. F.J.S. Auto, Inc. – Class II
4. J.C. Madigan, Inc. – Class II
5. Nationwide Auto Recycling, Inc. – Class III and Collector & Dealer of Junk
6. Padula Bros., Inc. – Class I
7. RBI Motors – Class II
8. Ron Bouchard Auto Sales, Inc. - Honda – Class I and Class II
9. Ron Bouchard Dodge, LLC – KIA – Class I and Class II
10. Ron Bouchard Auto Sales, Inc. - Nissan – Class I and Class II
11. Route 117 Used Auto Parts, Inc. – Class II, Class III and Collector & Dealer of Junk

Selectman Grasso Seconded. Walter F. Sendrowski vote Aye, Mark A. Grasso, Jr. vote Aye and Stanley B. Starr, Jr. vote Aye. 3-0

**IX. COMMUNICATIONS**

Next Board of Selectmen's Meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 19, 2016 in the Meeting Room of the Lancaster Community Center, 34 Harvard Road, Lancaster.

**X. OTHER BUSINESS**

Chairman Starr moved to go into Executive Session, pursuant to MGL, C. 30A, §21(a) #2 to conduct strategy session in preparation for contract negotiations with non-union personnel, specifically the Fire Chief and may reconvene in open session. Seconded. Walter F. Sendrowski vote Aye, Mark A. Grasso vote Aye and Stanley B. Starr, Jr. vote Aye.

**XI. NEW BUSINESS**

Selectman Grasso asked should the Selectboard appoint an Assistant Town Clock Winder. Town Administrator explained that his office is still doing some research regarding this issue.

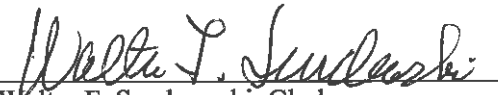
Selectman Grasso discussed having the Town Department Heads come to a Board of Selectmen's meeting on a quarterly basis, to update the Selectmen on their departments. He further indicated that he would like to see this begin in January 2017.

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

Seeing no further business, on Motion by Mr. Sendrowski, seconded by Mr. Grasso, it was unanimously voted the Board of Selectmen adjourned at 7:07 P.M.

Respectfully submitted

Kathleen Rocco  
Executive Assistant

  
Walter F. Sendrowski, Clerk  
Approved and accepted: Dec 19, 2016