

**SELECTBOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2016  
SELECTBOARD MEETING ROOM – 7 P.M.  
MINUTES**

Present were Members: Chair Francis J. DeToma, Vice Chair Ira J. Brezinsky, Sarah Etelman, Bruce C. Forcier and John R. Hine; Town Administrator Michael J. Sullivan.

Chair DeToma called the meeting to order at 7 p.m., noting that all members were present.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Selectboard members deferred approval of the minutes of the February 2, 2016 Selectboard meeting since they were not yet available.

**2. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

SB Member Etelman reminded residents that the deadline for submitting nomination papers for positions on the April 12, 2016 Annual Town Election ballot is Tuesday, February 23, 2016. (The deadline for Town Meeting members to return postcards confirming their interest in re-election was today, she added.) She listed offices and boards with openings. With inclement weather at hand, Ms. Etelman also reminded those who have not yet signed up for Civic Ready to please do so.

Chair DeToma publicly announced that a coalition of departments, community organizations and businesses are actively working to transform South Hadley into a dementia-friendly community. The Dementia Friendly Communities Coalition of South Hadley will host a series of lectures and workshops on planning for families and individuals living with a dementia diagnosis. The first, to be held at Loomis Village on Tuesday, March 1, 2016 at 7 p.m., is entitled “Diagnosis and Care Planning for Dementia Patients” and will feature speakers from the Baystate Memory Disorders Program, O’Connell Care at Home, Loomis House Nursing Center and the Alzheimer’s Association. He advised anyone seeking more information to contact Carol Constant at Loomis Village at #(413) 588-5184.

SB Member Brezinsky read a press release from Music and Arts South Hadley (MASH), the non-profit organization that coordinates FallsFest. The bulletin announced the decision of the FallsFest organizing committee to take a one-year hiatus from coordinating the annual music festival in 2016 to insure the long-term viability of the event. The reason for the hiatus is that several key volunteers have significant issues going on in their lives that preclude their more active participation, Mr. Brezinsky explained. In a short period of time, the event has outgrown the capacity of the committee, he observed. Last year’s budget was \$50,000, with the majority coming from business sponsors. Organizers want to maintain the top-notch caliber of the event and make sure everything goes off without a hitch.

He announced the following upcoming MASH events: CraftFest, an artisan’s craft fair, will be held Saturday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the new Plains Elementary School. Coordinators are seeking interested artists to participate. Vendors can contact Donna Roy at #(413) 883-3367 or Carol Constant at #(413) 222-1761. In addition, on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, MASH will hold the third annual FestForward in the Town Hall auditorium featuring Moose and the Hightops. Both events are intended to support local artists and provide financial support for future events.

**3. REQUEST TO POST “PICK UP AFTER YOUR PETS” SIGN**

Mr. Sullivan showed members the proposed sign. The Board of Health would like Selectboard permission to put the sign on public properties and public ways to remind people of the importance of picking up after their pets. Town officials continue to receive complaints about dog owners who fail to clean up after their animals and are hoping this encourages pet owners to be more responsible. Town officials are looking into the possibility of installing bag stations such as are found in other communities but there is a greater cost to this device. If approved, the signs will start to appear around Town Hall and other problem-areas.

**SB Member Brezinsky moved to allow the signs to be posted. SB Member Hine seconded.**

Members asked questions and offered comments. Chair DeToma asked if signs would be posted at BATTERY BROOK PARK, but **Linda Young of 48 Westbrook Road** brought to members' attention that there are signs there saying, "No dogs."

Mrs. Young asked if signs could be put on the sidewalk next to Central Tire and Auto, since dog owners there do not respond to peer pressure. Mr. Sullivan acknowledged that this is an area he has heard complaints about and said he believed Mr. Dinn had given the town permission to put a sign on his property.

**The motion passed unanimously 5:0.**

**4. HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN**

The Planning Board recently held a public forum to gather input on the town's updated Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Selectboard will hold a second public hearing March 8, 2016, Mr. Sullivan advised. Emergency Management Director (EMD) Sharon Hart has taken the lead in updating the plan for submittal to the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). He expressed appreciation for the high level of cooperation and collaboration from the water and fire districts, Police Department, SHELd, Conservation Commission, Planning Department and DPW and for the assistance of Jamie Kaplan, consultant for the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC). Communities with plans in place are eligible for 75% reimbursement in the event of a disaster declaration, so it is well worth the effort for a community to create and maintain an approved plan. The plan is posted to the town's website, he confirmed.

**5. JUNK DEALER'S LICENSE**

The applicant, Christopher Terrell Clark, was not present, and Mrs. Krutzler advised members that Mr. Clark had stated his intention to attend to present the application. He was informed of the date and time of the meeting, she confirmed.

**SB Member Etelman moved to table the item until Mr. Clark could be present. SB Member Forcier seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5:0.**

**6. LEDGES 2016 RATE**

At its regular meeting last Monday attended by himself and Mr. Forcier, the Golf Commission voted unanimously to continue the rates from 2016, Chair DeToma reported. There was a good discussion about how the rates compare to other courses in the area. Commissioners are hoping for another big season and hoping to open at the beginning of March if the weather cooperates, he said.

**Chair DeToma moved to accept the 2015 rates for 2016. SB Member Forcier seconded.** SB Member Brezinsky said he went on line and compared the Ledges' rates to those of other courses in the area. They are in line with surrounding courses and "quite competitive," he asserted. **The motion passed unanimously 5:0.**

**7. SHELd PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES (PILOT) UPDATE**

Chair DeToma reminded members that he had been asked to contact the chair of the Municipal Light Board (MLB) to arrange a meeting to begin negotiation of the SHELd PILOT. MLB Chair Anne Awad was unable to attend tonight's meeting but responded by letter, which he read aloud. In her letter, Ms. Awad stated that the electric light board is working with a consultant with extensive experience researching and recommending PILOT's and other reimbursement methods to municipal utilities. The consultant has recommended a "reimbursement of services received" model which the MLB would like to adopt. The model complies with the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU) regulations regarding what types of payment are allowed. The full board would like to meet with the Selectboard to discuss its work with the consultant and its thoughts about establishing a fair and transparent system for providing predictable payments going forward, the letter continued. The consultant's report will be available in late April.

The model proposed by the SHELD board is based on direct services received from town departments such as the Collector's office and accounting, not indirect benefits such as the use of roads and police protection, Mr. Sullivan clarified. His observation is that other communities are moving toward having the municipal utility recognize the need to invest in the community and to provide a way for ratepayers to invest in the community. At the end of the day, the intent is to invest in the community and to create more customers and more opportunities for both SHELD and the citizens of South Hadley. Taxation is essentially a communal contribution to make the community better, he suggested.

Members discussed next steps. In her letter, Ms. Awad proposed a joint meeting of the two boards as the next logical action. SB Member Brezinsky strongly advocated for an initial business meeting between the chief administrative officers of the parties and the chairs, sharing his opinion that this would be potentially more productive than a more philosophical discussion involving the full boards. Members agreed with this approach but reached a consensus that a meeting of the two boards would also be appropriate and useful as an opportunity for the parties to present their respective perspectives.

SB Member Hine suggested holding a joint meeting in March, prior to the release of the consultant's report. Chair DeToma stated his intention to respond to the MLB accepting its proposal for a joint meeting. Mr. Brezinsky voiced his hope and expectation that, in the meantime, there would be discussions among the professional managers of the two departments in preparation for the joint meeting.

Mr. Sullivan stressed his keen appreciation for the SHELD board for having taken the initiative to open negotiations over the PILOT, which in years past has been prescribed rather than negotiated as required. He also voiced strong disagreement with the contention that an increase in the PILOT will necessarily translate into higher rates. That is not necessarily so, he insisted. He referred to the alternative possibility of increasing revenue/saving money through the use of the fiber optic network or increasing the efficiency of financial operations. He pointed to the example of the Littleton Electric Light Department (LELD) whose PILOT is \$780,000 but whose rates are lower than SHELD's.

There were no questions or comments on the Town Administrator's report.

#### **8. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chair DeToma updated members on community activities aimed at fostering an entrepreneurial spirit and ventures in South Hadley. Representatives of various entities involved in promoting entrepreneurial enterprises met this afternoon on the Mount Holyoke College (MHC) campus, including MHC Director of Government and Community Relations Kevin McCaffrey, Farid Khelfaoui, Executive Director of the Holyoke SPARK program, Meghan Godorov, Associate Director for Alumnae and Community Engagement and Kathy Anderson and Dale Johnston from the Holyoke and South Hadley/Granby Chambers of Commerce. The group is planning to host a one-day workshop in late April at either MHC or Town Hall to encourage increased communication among the participants. MHC is very much interested in fostering redevelopment of the falls as a gateway to the greater South Hadley community and is willing to contribute by providing internships and developing additional courses for entrepreneurs, he related.

The Selectboard will meet March 8<sup>th</sup> and March 22<sup>nd</sup>, Mr. Sullivan reminded, with the March 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting to be held at the Senior Center on Dayton Street. A number of issues relevant to seniors will be on the agenda, including discussion of making South Hadley an age-friendly and dementia-friendly community and of the need for a new senior center.

**Ms. Etelman/Mr. Forcier moved to adjourn. The motion carried 5:0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.**

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,**

**LAURA KRUTZLER  
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY**

**EXHIBIT A**

List of Documents Reviewed at February 16, 2016 Selectboard Meeting:

1. February 16, 2016 Agenda.
2. Letter from Carol Constant, Director of Community Engagement for the Loomis Communities, re: Request to Designate April 2016 as Dementia Awareness Month.
3. General License Application from Christopher Terrell Clark to “obtain a junk dealer license to facilitate purchase and selling of old metals as a private dealer” at 171 Newton Street.
4. E-mail from Town Planner Richard Harris re: Junk Dealer’s License Application.
5. Ledges Golf Course 2015 Rate Sheet.
6. 2016 Annual Pass Renewal Letter.
7. Letter from Anne Awad, Chair of the Municipal Light Board re: SHELD PILOT Payment.
8. Town Administrator Report dated February 8, 2016.