

Aquinnah Board of Selectmen
Minutes of Meeting 12/06/2011
Aquinnah Town Hall Selectmen's Mtg Room

Members present: Jim Newman, Chairman, Beverly Wright, Spencer Booker*

*Arrived after minutes approval.

Also present: Adam Wilson, Town Administrator; Accountant Margie Spitz; Elise LeBovit, Mike Hebert, Derrill Bazy, Richard Andre, President of Vineyard Power, Paul Pimental, Chairman of Vineyard Power, Ken Wentworth, Liz Witham, Issac Taylor, Maureen Williams, Simon Boliver, Jay Smalley, Berta Welch, Chief Randhi Belain, Sgt Paul Manning

The meeting began at 5:30 pm

1st on the agenda was a review of the minutes from 11-15. Beverly made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, Jim seconded.

The Board voted 2 – 0. the motion passed.

1st on the agenda was an informational session for those attending on the proposed solar photovoltaic array system at the Town Landfill. Jim stated information about the proposal that would be funded fully by Vineyard Power, the lease arrangement for ten years and the purchase of electricity from VP instead of NStar a background on the solar array project to be done at the Town Landfill. Richard talked about the two agreements that must be signed in order for it to go through; a ground lease and the power purchase agreement. He said that the Town would pay less for their current municipal use. He also said that the lease would accrue money owed to the Town that after ten years could be used to purchase the array. There was discussion about what interest would accrue. He stated that if Aquinnah does not buy the array then another lease would fall into place because the system is still fully functional and the solar panels have warranties extending another 15 – 20 years. There was discussion about the option to buy being at fair market value. Maureen Williams asked how long the PV last. Paul Pimentel said it can be anywhere from 20 – 35 years. He said they diminish gradually. Maureen asked if there will be more panels create more energy than what the town needs. Paul said it's designed for the amount requested in the RFP the town put out. She asked about noise. Paul said they don't make any noise and they don't need much maintenance. There was discussion about the charge per hour. Richard said it would be discounted 10% less than whatever the NStar rate is.

-Elise asked where the panels are made and if any toxic materials are used in their construction. Paul said he believed the panels were manufactured in the US (*At the Town Meeting the next night it was stated that they are made in California*) Paul stated that the materials are silicon and the frames aluminum. Different types of manufacturing metals were discussed. There was discussion about the carbon footprint to make the solar panels and how long it takes to make that neutral to the energy they provide. There was discussion about other towns doing the same type of projects as well as panels on residential homes.

-Barbara asked about the ground lease agreement. Richard said it would be \$300 - \$400 a month, which would be held on to by the Co-Op. There was discussion about any extra energy going into the grid under the net metering law and then given back to the Town as a credit. There was discussion about the disposal of the panels at the end of their life and the expense involved. There was discussion about the current fencing situation at the dump and how much more may be needed. Richard and Paul talked to the group about the necessary permit needed from the DEP to use the capped landfill for the array.

-Derrill showed everyone in the room the site plan where the array would go. He showed the south facing system with a 30 degree slope. He said each panel is 32 X 64”s. He talked about the rack system and the concrete footings the panels would be on top of. Ken asked about hurricane winds. Derrill said the racks has to have a building permit to that is approved to sustain 110 mph winds.

-Richard said that solar arrays on top of landfill’s are good uses of “disturbed” land that can’t be used for anything else. There was discussion about the 20 acres of farmland that Edgartown is proposing to use for a large solar array. There was discussion about the amount of C02 needed to create the system and 3 years to pay it back.

-The discussion moved onto the cost to build the system and financing. Richard said it was \$342,000 to bring the system to the point of turning it on. Paul said the system is costs effective for private investors who pay for the system and get tax credits for a loss. Richard said there’s one family in Edgartown and a loan from a local bank who are providing funding. He said the family are supporters of V. Power and community owned reusable energy systems.

-Paul talked about solar renewable credits (ESRECS) that utility companies pay for to companies for creating renewable energy sources. There was discussion about ESRECS becoming RECS in 10 years. There was discussion about the renewal/purchase option at the end of ten years. Paul and Richard stated that the lease agreement at the end of ten years would have to have a clause so that if the Town did not want to buy the system, they have the option to enter into another lease. They said if the only option to not having the Town buy the system is removal, they would probably reject the agreement. There was discussion about the system’s value at the end of 10 & 20 years. There was discussion about how the fair market value was determined between the town and V. Power.

-Ken asked about the actual production of the energy and how it handles a steady load. Paul said for every hour that a pv generates a Kw Hour, it’s less for a conventional power source to generate the same energy. Margie asked about billing. Richard said the array gets built and the town meters would be tied in.

Vineyard Power gets a bill from NSTAR and passes it along to the town -10%. If there is any recorded energy over what the town used, it comes back to the town as a future credit or as a check. The group briefly talked about securing the system from the public and the Town’s deer population.

Richard and Paul talked about the organizational make-up of Vineyard Power. There was discussion about compensation for the officers. Richard said the company does get \$25K payment to offset certain development costs.

-Next on the agenda was Berta Welch asking about the parking situation at the Aquinnah Cultural Center during the summer. She said because of other activities at the cliffs and the Vineyard Museum’s promotional tours of the lighthouse and the parking lot for the beach being often full there is little or no parking for patrons of the ACC. She thought there are areas on town property that can accommodate 4 – 5 cars. Jim asked if that’s the number of spots she’s looking for. Berta said it was. Jim said a site visit with Randhi (Belain, police chief), Jay (Smalley, Highway Supt), to look at the vegetative areas to be cleared as potential parking spaces. There was discussion about a preservation project that was to clear an area abutting the Homestead that has stalled because of procurement issues. The Board and Berta discussed several areas in proximity to the ACC that could accommodate parking and what type of signage would be needed to alert the public that the spaces are reserved for the Vanderhoop homestead.

Adam said he would coordinate a site visit within the next couple of weeks to look for potential parking at the Homestead.

-Next on the agenda was the discussion about the fire chief job description. Adam talked about how he came about drafting the description using jd’s from other towns. There was discussion about the position

described as being full time. Simon talked about the draft being for someone the department would like to have in the future. He said it's not the right description for where the Fire Department is right now in having the recent chief retire and the current acting chief wanting to retire as well at the end of December. He said that no one currently on the fire department can apply for the position based on the drafted job description and the qualifications required. He asked if the training needed to get the preferred qualifications would be paid for by the Town.

-Beverly asked if any of the reviewed F-C JD's came from island towns. Adam said no and that requests to West Tisbury and Chilmark didn't yield any JD's from those towns. Simon said that perhaps some of the other town fire chiefs may be able to help clarify what the JD should actually have. Jim said that the Board should sit down with other town chiefs and seek their counsel. There was discussion about there was ever a description for the Aquinnah fire chief and who has been chief in the past. Adam clarified that any training costs would be paid for by the Town.

-Beverly asked who is going to be in charge? There was discussion about who can serve the role of interim fire chief. Jim said the conundrum is that if Jay or Simon are the only ones qualified to fill in, they are then "off the line" in the event of a fire. Simon stated that the reality is there currently isn't a fire department in the Town. You can't fight a fire with two people. You can't run any of the trucks with just two people. He said that there has to be mutual aid from other towns in the event of a fire. The question was asked if it is legal for one town chief to do the same job in another town. Simon said he's the only one with the proper training and certification to fight fires but doesn't have the back-up people to help. There was discussion about having the necessary paperwork to show who's qualified. Simon said he's a captain in the department but doesn't have the paperwork documenting he's certified in firefighter I & II. He did state that he's been to all the classes and done the training. Simon talked about the different ways people can step up and serve. Distance from the firehouse should not be a factor. The Board discussed having someone serve. There was discussion about the department having only 5 firemen but that there are officially 9 on the roster. Many have not been active. Adam said it's more important to get someone to serve on an interim basis, at least the administrative aspects could be addressed. The Board said they would take up further discussion about getting either Jay or Simon to volunteer as the new acting chief. There was discussion about the certification needed and year long basic training to be able to join any fire department.

-Next on the agenda was the Aquinnah Police Department taking over the E- 911 call system from the fire department. Randhi wants to work with Assessor Angela Cwyinksi on assignment of street addresses. He said that the problem is that split house lots can no longer have street addresses such as 9 & 9A. He also said that streets already have designated low numbers and can't go any lower.

The Board, by consensus, agreed that the police department be responsible for the E-911 call system.

-The Selectmen signed off on the ABCC forms for the Aquinnah Shop and The Outermost Inn.

-The Board took up the reappointment of Nancy Benoit to the MV Cultural Council for 3 years.

Beverly made a motion to reappoint Nancy Benoit for 3 years to the MV Cultural Council. Spencer seconded.

The Board voted 3 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

-The Board moved onto the revised Tri-Town ambulance agreement. There was discussion about how a legal review has changed certain parts of the agreement. Beverly said page 4, #5. She quoted the language of appointment process for chief that gives Chilmark the final hiring say. Spencer said that everyone on Tri-Town is under Chilmark's personnel by-laws. Beverly expressed concerns that the oversight committee's powers to hire and fire are usurped. Jim said that there should be another meeting

of the three selectmen boards to go over the agreement once again and get consensus from everyone. There was discussion about how the newly defined oversight committee, consisting of one selectman from each board, having the same responsibilities as the police chiefs that used to be on the oversight committee. There was discussion about how the service's financials are reported in the current year and not just once at the end of a fiscal year.

-Adam talked to the Board about the ad for a fire chief scheduled to go into Thursday's paper. He wanted to know if it should be pulled. The Board discussed who on the island already qualifies. Jim said the ad should run but to modify it so that the preferred qualifications are not included in the advertisement.

There was consensus to not release the job description but to advertise. There was discussion about short term solutions for current administrative responsibilities but to advertise so that people can apply, the Town can see who has applied and potentially adjust the job description accordingly.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn.

The Board voted 3 – 0. The motion passed.

The meeting ended at 7:45 pm.