

Aquinnah Board of Selectmen
Minutes of Meeting 10/16/2012
Aquinnah Town Hall Selectmen's Mtg Room

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

Also present: Adam Wilson, Town Administrator; Sgt Paul Manning, Elise LeBovit, Liz Witham, Berta Welch, Sarah Thulin, Gary Robinson

The meeting began at 5:05 pm

-1st on the agenda was a review of minutes from the 9-18 and 10-2 Selectmen's meetings

Spencer made a motion to accept the minutes from September 18th. Beverly seconded.

The Board voted 2 – 0 - 1 in favor. The motion passed.

Beverly made a motion to accept the minutes from October 2nd. Jim seconded.

The Board voted 2 – 0 - 1 in favor. The motion passed.

-Next on the agenda was a meeting with Elise LeBovit and a project she's been working on for two years involving the Gay Head Lighthouse. She said she became involved when she read an article that stated the Vineyard Museum was not concerned with the lighthouse's structural status in relation to the cliff. She said she represents Helen Manning as a real estate agent and the location of the abutting Manning property in relation to the lighthouse. She said she wants to save the lighthouse. She's requesting support from the Board in creating a town committee to save the lighthouse.

-She talked about the current situation in Edgartown where the lighthouse there was advertised as being for sale and the steps their town administrator is now taking to prevent the structure from transferring into private ownership. She said her current group is interested in being part of the requested town committee to help fundraise, collect history and help with the many components available in securing the lighthouse for the town.

-Elise suggested that Spencer be a part of the committee representing the Board. Elise commented that most of the facts she has acquired come from Richard [Skidmore]. She talked about different fundraising activities Edgartown has done to fundraise the restoration effort of their lighthouse. Elise said that "International Chimney" has been contacted and done a preliminary site visit to propose options in how the lighthouse can be moved. They said they need a 3 year leeway in order to make a move based on the current status of the structure in relation to the cliff.

-Jim asked about the process Edgartown is going through to acquire their lighthouse. Elise said there are 3 different agencies involved: Park Service, Coast Guard and the Federal Historical Society. She said the town has a decent track record, through the CPC, of showing a financial commitment to preserving the lighthouse.

-Beverly asked when the Coast Guard plans to put the lighthouse out to bid. Elise said it would be in a year. The 1st option is for it to be transferred to a municipality or not for profit agency. She cited two other lighthouses on the mainland that have been sold to private entities. There was discussion about what Edgartown is currently doing in its application for their lighthouse. Beverly stated that if the government is bidding out its excess property, the Tribe may have right of 1st refusal. She said the town can take the lead once the criteria is established and form a committee with all interested parties, including the Tribe.

-Elise asked that there be an executive session so she could discuss what real estate options there are. There was discussion about owning the structure before moving it. Jim asked about a geological study. Elise said when you know where you're going to move the structure to a study can then be done. She said the Land Bank has done a

few studies already and there are different opinions and a few choices. Elise said she has received info from another town who went through the process of moving a waterworks chimney and who used the same company that did a site visit here. Elise said there are several companies that can do the work.

-Spencer asked about the rules and regulations of decommissioning a lighthouse and the guidelines the gov't gives out so they can be acquired by the town. Adam had a copy of the Dept. of Interior's application to do just that. Elise said Aquinnah can just copy Edgartown's application. She said there needs to be a committee formed now to start the process. There was discussion about Richard's role in getting people involved in the situation and his employment with the MV Museum as the Lighthouse Keeper.

-Beverly said the Town can create an ad hoc committee and recruit townspeople to serve on it. There was discussion about how many people will be on it. Jim asked if it should be limited to just Aquinnah residents since the lighthouse is an "island" iconic structure. Beverly thought that could happen. Spencer was opposed to the idea. He said if the town ends up as owners then townspeople only should be involved. Jim said there may be individuals with money wanting to preserve lighthouses who don't live in Aquinnah.

-There was discussion about how the Board goes into executive session and how it can only occur when the Town has gotten to the point that it wants to negotiate a real estate transaction. Beverly said when the times come to make a decision as to where the lighthouse can go, and if that property is what Elise represents, then there can be a private discussion about what the sale would entail.

-There was discussion about who Elise has talked to on the legal issues relevant to acquiring and moving the lighthouse. Board members talked about how to process forming a committee. Elise said she and the group she's been working with would want to be on the committee. She said she has five people and if Spencer were to serve it would be six. She suggested anyone else wishing to work on the project could be designated for subcommittee assignment. Liz Witham talked about how a committee can start out small and then expand as needed. She said there can be a proposal of how the committee could form and then act. Beverly said if it's access property, the Tribe should be eligible and may decide to take up the cause. There was consensus that the Tribe should be contacted and asked what position they want to take on the acquisition and moving of the lighthouse. Berta said the issue could be discussed at Town Meeting on November 15th. Spencer asked that there needs to be a document stating the parameters of what the committee will be. Elise handed Spencer the names of those who have already invested time on the issue and who want to continue to serve. Spencer said the Board will also want letters of interest as well and will still advertise to the public about the formation of the lighthouse committee.

Beverly made a motion for the Board to establish a Lighthouse Committee. Jim seconded.

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

-Next on the agenda was a meeting with Emergency Management Director Gary Robinson. He 1st thanked the Board for passing the NIMS resolution and then talked about the grants the Town has received recouping expenses from TS Irene, \$750 in MEMA grant money for emergency readymade meals and \$2,200 for pet housing at the Old Town Hall shelter. Gary said Nimcast is all set for the next two years and Code Red is also paid for and available to use in case of an emergency. There was discussion about the CR system and who can use it and for what emergency purpose.

-Gary said he's been talking with members of the Tribal Rangers and Chilmark officials about combining grant applications to target larger safety equipment that all 3 entities could use. He specifically mentioned the recent use of a Umabog over-the-sand vehicle that has been rented for use with the two fishing boat beachings. He said with more money, more types of situations can be addressed and handled.

-Jim complimented the Tribe's response to the recent strandings. Gary talked some more about having the Old Town Hall ready in case the bridge running through the Quitsa Creek washes out and residents can't move out of town.

-Jim asked that a letter of commendation be written to Chip [Vanderhoop] and Steve [Mathias] for their rescue effort two weeks ago out on Menemsha Pond of a family in an overturned sailboat. Adam said he'd take care of it.

-Next on the agenda was a review of the Town Warrant for November 15th. Adam discussed the articles, most of which deal with prior fiscal year bills. There was discussion about the CPC request to do maintenance work at the cattle pound. Jim asked if CPC money can be used for private property. It was determined that the pound belonged to Paul McCusker and that Adam will write a letter to Paul stating that the Town wishes to spend CPC funds to rehabilitate the pound.

-Adam also showed that the Town needs to draw from the stabilization fund 16K for the Mass estuaries project. He also talked about a prior bill needing to be paid for the cable contract lawyer. He also explained the warrant article that establishes a new type of fund for paying remaining sick days and other retirement payments.

-Jim asked for a meeting with the Finance Team to discuss the management points from the 2010 audit.

-It was determined that the next meeting of the BOS after October 30th will be November 13th. The Board does not plan to meet on the 20th.

-Beverly asked about boat trailers that are parked at West Basin. Paul said there is one on each side of the road. Adam said there is no signage indicating that overnight parking is not allowed. Beverly said that it needs to be addressed.

-In the Town Administrator's report, Adam handed out a work document that follows up from the strategic planning meeting in August. He asked that the Selectmen look over the document and begin the process of prioritizing the goals the town wants to achieve in the next 5 years.

-Adam read an e-mail from Fire Chief Simon Bollin stating the following:

"Just wanted to keep everyone up to date I have been in contact with the Tribe we are working on a date for the tour I will advise of the dates in case anyone from the board wants to come. I'm also working with the Chiefs from West Tisbury and Chilmark to include them also since any major calls in there we will be calling them and just so they can be familiarized with the property and layout. And I've also been doing some research about the tribe town agreement and I've been waiting till we take the tour before I come up with the changes I think we need just don't want to jump into making changes before we see the property in case there's something we see that needs to be addressed in the agreement. So I will let you know as soon as we make the plan to tour."

-Adam asked that the Outermost Inn can have permission to use the circle for a Frisbee golf tournament Saturday.

The Board by consensus agreed.

-Adam handed out a work sheet following up to the meeting to improve the Circle Area. The tasks were divvied up as follows:

1. Work on overall better informational signage (You Are Here) – Beverly;
2. Increase free parking time to 1.5 hours – Jim
3. Possible increase in # of parking spaces – Adam/Jim
4. Review of trash removal policy for lessees and other user groups – Spencer
5. Proper signage of town road usage – Beverly
6. New Picnic Tables – Adam
7. Path maintenance/ landscaping to the bathrooms – Spencer
8. Informational signage for the restrooms – Beverly
9. Informational signage for the Pay Parking lot - Jim

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. **The Board voted 3 – 0 in favor.** The meeting ended at 6:30 pm.