

Aquinnah Board of Selectmen  
Minutes of Meeting 2/05/2013  
Aquinnah Town Hall Selectmen's Mtg Room

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

Also present: Town Administrator Adam Wilson, Town Moderator Mike Hebert, Chief Randhi Belain, Sgt Paul Manning, Asst Assessor Angela Cywinski, Liz Witham, Elise Lebovit, Richard Skidmore, Anne Vanderhoop, Kathy Newman, Jim San Filippo, Elaine Vanderhoop, Harbormaster Brian Vanderhoop, Len Butler and Betsey Mayhew,

-The meeting began at 5:06 pm

-1<sup>st</sup> on the agenda under Old Business was a review of minutes from the 1- 22 Selectmen's meeting.

-Jim made a motion to accept the minutes from January 8th. Beverly seconded.

**The Board voted 3 - 0 in favor. The motion passed.**

-1<sup>st</sup> item under new business was a request from two Aquinnah residents wanting to join the Gay Head Lighthouse Advisory Committee. Kathy Newman and Ken Wentworth submitted correspondence to Adam indicating their interest to serve. Elise said everyone is welcome to join but their roles will probably be delegated to subcommittee's being formed handling the different aspects of saving the lighthouse.

Beverly made a motion to appoint Kathy Newman to the Lighthouse Committee. Spencer seconded.

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

Jim made a motion to appoint Ken Wentworth to the Lighthouse Committee. Beverly seconded.

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

-Next on the agenda was a report from Gay Head lighthouse Committee Chairman Elise Lebovit. She said the committee has not yet approved a mission statement but is still working on it. She stated there has been a 5 person subcommittee created with to deal with the aspect of fundraising. She said the goals they have come up with so far are:

1. Ownership;
2. Site identification;
3. Geology;
4. Movers;
5. Fundraising and Grants;
6. Establishment of a 501C-3 Non-profit group;
7. Restoration;
8. Maintenance and operation of the lighthouse after it has been moved;

-Elise said the committee has met twice and had other meetings with International Chimney, a possible mover, and one fundraising meeting with another one scheduled for Feb 7<sup>th</sup>. She said she's had discussions with the Sconset Trust, an organization that was in charge of moving the Sankaty Lighthouse on Nantucket.

-Elise stated that Adam will be doing the ownership application and has a copy of the recent Edgartown application for their lighthouse acquisition. She said the last meeting of the GHLC dealt with Site location and important criteria. The criteria established is:

1. To get as far from the cliff area as possible – hope to gain a 100 year window before having to move again;
2. Orientation of the Lighthouse so that it is still seen from various points on the island and across the Vineyard Sound;
3. Cost analysis for different locations;

4. Elevation Drop – keeping it as close as possible to the current elevation;
5. Continued use as a maritime beacon;
6. Geology and the strongest area of clay to relocate.

-The Board was shown a visual of the different properties that are available for acquisition (see attached). The 1<sup>st</sup> was Lot 23, which directly abuts the Gov't land the Lighthouse is located on. She said that part of Helen Manning's house is on the lot and she has an easement to it. This property would allow the structure to be moved 160' from its current location and 230' away from the cliff side. The property is valued at \$16,300. The elevation drop would be approximately 6'.

-Elise moved onto Lots 25.1 & 25.2, the Manning/Murray properties. A move there would distance the lighthouse 195' from current location and 260' from the cliff side and have an elevation drop of approximately 12'. Those properties are for sale with an asking price of \$989,000 and a valuation of 1,000,806.

-Elise then talked about moving the lighthouse into the Aquinnah Circle (Lot 17). She said the distance from current location would be 234' and 315' from the cliff side and there would be an elevation drop of approximately 20'.

-The last lot for consideration would be Lot 24. She said the Manning/Murray guest house is on the lot.

-Elise made the case for lot 23 being the best option because it's closest and has the least elevation drop. She stated options for the other lots that had structures and what could be done with them besides moving the lighthouse to the lot. She made the case that moving to the circle was the least favorable option, including an overall greater cost.

-The presentation moved onto the pricing to do engineering work. Elise said 3 off island firms would bid to do the borings and analysis in a price range from \$18K – 28K. There was discussion about creating a 501C-3 that could alleviate the public procurement process. Elise talked about International Chimney's successful track record moving other lighthouses and that they are currently working on Chappy moving a house there. She talked about a time frame in October to start the moving process. It takes 3 months to set everything up, a few days for the move and then another 6 months to put everything back together.

-Elise said that anticipated cost would be somewhere around 2 million for everything. She said buying property will be the deciding factor as to how much it will cost. She said there will also be some grant money opportunities and to ask the island CPC's for historic preservation money similar to what the County has done with every town and the courthouse window restoration project. Elise spoke of different fundraising activities that could be planned. She said there's a web site domain name called "Friends of the Gay Head Light" and the Committee's name is "Save the Gay Head Light."

-Elise said the committee has done a straw poll and they favor lot 23 as the lot to move the lighthouse to.

-There was discussion about acquiring more than one lot for ancillary purposes. Jim said there shouldn't be a consideration for additional parking; the Town wants to fully utilize its pay parking lot. Elise stated that acquiring both 23 & 24 would be beneficial in the long run. There was discussion of the circle's road already being close to the cliff drop off and a time will come when it will have to be moved back.

-Jim asked if there's access to lot 23. Elise said there's an easement but the Manning house is on it as well. She said if the house isn't removed, there won't be room for the lighthouse.

-Spencer asked if the committee is thinking about recommending purchasing Lot 23, 25.1 & 25.2. Elise said, "and I think eventually 24 or possibly having the Land Bank purchase it because it could in the future connect to their loop trail. But I think 24 is part of this whole vision." Elise said she thought all the properties could be obtained for \$800K and she figured that into the overall 2 million dollar cost.

-There was discussion about who would buy the land. Board members wanted to ensure the town maintains control. There was a discussion about having a separate entity so that donors can specifically give to its cause. Jim asked the status of the Marsh Hawk Trust. Elise said its use will end once there is an establishment of a lighthouse trust fund for people to put their money into. Spencer thanked Elise for her presentation.

-Next on the agenda was a meeting with TJ Hegarty and his review of the County Integrated Pest Control Program. He said the program has now fully shifted its cost to each of the towns since it has become a non-mandated program. The proposed budget for rodent control island wide is \$95K. Of that, TJ does private business that brings in \$28k in revenue and gets the remaining funds from each town acting as their rodent control officer. Of the \$67K due, Aquinnah's share is 2.84% or \$1,903.40. He said last year he received a ½ dozen calls from the town. There was discussion about the rodent problem that has recently been reported at the library.

-There was discussion about the mosquito trapping program and the loss of funding from the state. He said each Board of Health has to request the program and pay its share. Richard Skidmore reported that the Town did not approve the program last year because they did not receive information on the program and its costs from TJ, just a proposed bill.

-Next on the agenda was the request from Philip Weinstein of 5 Sandcastle Ln to buy a town owned piece of land that abuts his property. Jim said this one piece of property has been agreed in the past to be sold at its assessed value. There is an opinion from Town Counsel on the matter of the town selling this parcel of land. There was discussion about the Weinstein's coming to the town for this request. Questions were asked as to who, besides the Weinstein's, could bid on the parcel. There was discussion as to what the town would do with the revenue from the sale. Adam was asked to follow up with Rappaport's office as to how to establish a price and how to advertise the parcel's availability.

-In the Town Administrator's report Adam let the Board know that the Town had received a gift from the Aquinnah/Gay Head Community Association of a new conference call machine. The device is timely because the Board had just passed a remote participation by-law and the machine allows people to listen in on meetings clearly and effectively.

Jim made a motion to accept the gift of a Panasonic conference call telephone on behalf of the Town of Aquinnah. Beverly seconded.

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

-Adam had a thank you letter prepared and Beverly, Jim and Spencer signed it.

-Adam next showed an amendment page to the recently ratified Library Director's contract. He said the contract had to be amended because benefits that is in the Town's personnel by-laws (bereavement, family sick and maternity leave), were not included in the contract.

Beverly made a motion to ratify the amended changes to Lisa Sherman's personal services contract. Jim seconded.

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

-Adam asked that if the Town votes later in the evening the warrant article to support acquiring, renovating and moving the lighthouse, should he seek a nomination of the structure as an Endangered Historic Places List.

By consensus, the Board agreed to pursue the option should the town vote to save the Gay Head Light.

-Adam told everyone that there's a meeting at the Tribal Administration building with the Army Corps of Engineers next Tuesday at 3:00 pm to discuss the technical service they are now providing with a new grant the Tribe has secured for the resource enhancement and protection of Squibby, Stonewall and Menemsha Ponds.

-In Selectmen's Other Business, it was announced that Richard Skidmore resigned as BOH representative to the Land Bank Advisory Committee. Spencer thanked Richard for his many years of service. Jim said he had been seeking someone to replace him on the committee and had gotten word that Woody Vanderhoop had permission from the Tribe to become a member. Jim said because of Richard's resignation, he would stay on the committee.

-Jimmy San Fillippo made a statement that all people who are on the waiting list for the Menemsha lease lots be informed when a lot becomes available. Board members informed Jimmy that the 1<sup>st</sup> person on the waiting list was

informed that a lot had become available. Brian Vanderhoop's letter from 2000 asking to put on a waiting list was the 1<sup>st</sup> one received after all the lots had been taken. Brian asked if the northern most lot (Lot A) had become available, why didn't he get it. It was explained that Wendy (Swolinzky) was acquiring the shed that was part of Lot A and that it made sense for her to slide her operation over and have Lot B become the available lot. Brian asked why the lot lines were being changed. Jim said it was because Lot A only had 35' of water frontage and Wendy's two docks measure 65' in total length. Brian asked if the Selectmen are allowed to move the lot lines. -There was discussion about the existing survey of the creek area owned by the Town and the lot lines put on them. Angela said it was done by Scofield, Barbini & Hoehn 20 years ago but it was never recorded at the Registry of Deeds. Brian said he would prefer Lot A because it was easier to dock in a heavy tide. Jim pointed out that Brian, as Harbormaster, has always enjoyed being able to tie up his boat to the town dock over at West Basin. Brian said it would be a hardship for him to have only 35 feet to work with in Lot B. He asked that the Selectmen, if town counsel advises that a new survey be done for all the lots, consider splitting right down the middle the frontage lot lines for A & B. That way he would have enough room for a dock big enough to handle his operation. The Board took the request under advisement.

-Spencer asked if any Board Member or those in the audience had any other business to discuss. Hearing none...

Beverly made a motion to adjourn. Jim seconded.

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

The meeting ended at 7:00 pm.