

Aquinnah Board of Selectmen
Minutes of Meeting 10/06/2015
Aquinnah Town Hall Selectmen's Mtg Room

Members present: Spencer Booker Chairman, Jim Newman, Julianne Vanderhoop
Also present: Town Administrator Adam Wilson, Gazette Reporter Alex Elvin, Sgt Paul Manning, DPW Director Jay Smalley, ConCom Chairman Sarah Thulin, Land Bank Representative Julie Russell, CPC Chairman Derrill Bazy, ATC – Phoenix Rep Craig Watson, Berta Welch, Carla Cuch, Adrienne Ignacio

The meeting began at 5:34 pm.

-1st on the agenda under Old Business was a review of minutes from the September 15th meeting.

Jim made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Spencer seconded.

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

-1st on the agenda under New Business was a meeting with CPC Chairman Derrill Bazy to discuss a proposal from Eversource to bury the overhead wires at the Aquinnah Circle. He showed Board members the plan for taking out the poles up at the Circle and burying the wires. The past history of the project was talked about. He said Eversource will do all the work as a complete package for \$135K. He said the town will be responsible for permitting and taking care of environmental considerations. Also, burying the line at the Seafood Shack would be the Town's responsibility as well, costing an estimated \$5K. He said there is state funding available as this project would qualify under grants established during the Patrick Administration for towns to do pre-emptive storm readiness projects.

-There was discussion about having a 5kw solar array just to power the lighthouse as part of the state funding proposal. The only power pole in the circle area will be right in front of the Manning property with ground based transformer's put along the rest of the way. Derrill suggested that the solar panels could go on top of the old restaurant (#9 Aquinnah Circle).

-Derrill said the idea for burying the wires has been ongoing for many years, starting with the acquisition of the Homestead. Jay and Derrill talked about the work all being done on the uphill side of the Circle Road. There was discussion about other places where the solar panels could go. There was discussion about having the CPC as the lead committee to bring the project to fruition.

The Board, by consensus, approved the proposed plan as presented and having the CPC go forward with the next steps.

-Next on the agenda was a meeting with Conservation Committee (ConCom) Chairman Sarah Thulin and Land Bank Botanist Julie Russell to discuss the conservation restriction management permit for the Broad Tinkers Weed.

-Sarah talked about the management plan that is going into place and the conservation restriction (CR) that will be under the purview of the ConCom.

-Sarah said that Julie has done yeoman's work in identifying the endangered species and the survey that produces a management report to preserve the species on land put aside by the town as a result of the taking that occurred to relocate the lighthouse.

Julie talked about the endangered species and the mitigation it needs to grow. She talked about the mowing that is supposed to be done in the CR areas for the benefit of the plant. Her report details where landscape management can and should occur. Julie said that 82 plants per acre are needed. She recommended that Polly Hill Arboretum be contracted to do the seeding. A total of 182 plants are needed to satisfy the NHESP program.

-Julie had concerns that the land put into conservation may not be enough to allow the species to effectively proliferate. She had inquired if there could be a swap with Land Bank owned property and also if control of invasives could go beyond the reserved areas so that there is enough room for the endangered species to proliferate.

-There was discussion about different indigenous species of plants being reduced, cut or eliminated from the designated areas. Julie said the proposal to utilize Land Bank property in a CR swap for the weed's benefit is what stopped her from continuing with the survey.

There was discussion about doing the management plan in stages. Sarah said outside consulting maybe needed.

Julie said a permit for seeding has to be obtained from the Division of Wildlife/Fisheries. She estimated that the Polly Hill plugs will take a year to properly germinate.

Sarah said there will be contracting needed for the overall management. A timeline was talked about. There was discussion about ConCom and Public Works having increased money in its budget next year for the additional costs to manage the CR lands.

-Next on the agenda was a meeting with Jay Smalley to look at the new proposal from American Tower to bury conduit along 2,500' along Lighthouse Road. Craig Watson from Phoenix Communications had two sets of plans to show how the underground cable will run along the road and pop up at the existing electric poles. No additional poles will be needed.

Jim made a motion to approve the proposed plan as presented. Julianne seconded.

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

-In Selectmen's Other Business, Jim talked about a questionnaire being mailed soon to Aquinnah residents from the Healthy Aging Task Force to inquire about the needs and services for the aging population on the island. He encouraged anyone over 55 to take the survey and mail in their responses.

-In Other Business Jim brought up the recently acquired property on Moshup's Trail from the Land Court and transferring it to the Vineyard Conservation Society to be put into permanent conservation. Adam said he'd work with the VCS to get all the necessary paperwork together so that when it is voted on at the annual town meeting and approved, everything will be on place to make the transfer.

-In Other Business there was discussion about the late season tourist bus service to the Aquinnah Circle. Berta said other transportation services that tie in with the bus service have fielded complaints from visitors about the sightseeing bus service not providing what they advertise. Berta said that the All-Island BOS should be made aware of the lack of service. Juli asked if Aquinnah is promoted enough? The upcoming arts district designation was discussed. Spencer said he'd get the subject on the agenda for the next AIBOS.

-In Other Business, Jay submitted an estimate for 4 speed bumps to be put down Church Street. Spencer asked if this was fully supported by everyone on the street or did it just come from one resident. There was discussion about how many children live on the street. Adam asked about the engineering for the run off and who will bear the cost. Jim made a motion to approve the requested 4 speed bumps to be installed on Church Street, subject to approval for its cost as an appropriation article at the annual town meeting in May. Juli seconded.

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

-In Other Business, Elise Lebovit talked about the Lighthouse Advisory Board and who is taking up the different tasks in overseeing the lighthouse restoration and operation. She asked if she can take over coordinating a computer generating plan for the whole area. She talked about seashell pathways. She asked if she can chart her help in the design of the picture of what the circle will look like going forward. She said the Land Bank can help with pathways. She talked about changing where the bathrooms currently are.

-Elise talked about her vision for the Manning Property. The Selectmen talked about getting ideas together for the property. Spencer said if Elise wants to work on other aspects of the greater vision for the area she can do that instead of working with the Lighthouse Advisory Board.

There was discussion about the Board getting more involved in a timeline for all projects dealing with the Circle.

-Spencer asked if there was anything else to come before the Board.

Hearing none, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn.

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

-The meeting ended at 7:03 pm.