



Town of Bridgewater, Massachusetts

Community Preservation Committee

Minutes

Official meeting—May 18, 2006

Senior Center

Recorded by

In attendance:

Dan Buron—appointee from the Recreation Commission

—appointee from Master Plan Implementation Committee

Stephen Elliott—appointee from the Planning Board

Marilee Kenney Hunt—Citizen member, appointed by the Board of Selectmen

David Moore—appointee from Housing Partnership

Max Reed—appointee from the Capital Planning Committee

Bob Vazza—appointee from the Housing Authority

Carlton Hunt—visitor from Master Plan Implementation Committee

Meeting was called to order at 6:40

Funding request from tax collector's office

Marilee showed the Committee a requisition for \$6,000 from JoAnn O'Donnell. Apparently the town spent \$6,000 in November of 2005 to purchase software for the collection of the local Community Preservation surcharge. A receipt was present to our treasurer, Bob Vazza, with a request for reimbursement from the local Community Preservation Fund (CPF). Bob checked with the Department of Revenue and Pete with the Community Preservation Coalition and both received clear responses that CPF money can not be used for tax collection. Marilee handed out print-outs of email between Bob and Gary Blau, attorney for the Department of Revenue (DOR) and between Pete and Kathy Roth of the Coalition.

Marilee then reviewed the process by which funds can be disbursed from the CPF: 1) the CPC recommends a warrant article to town meeting recommending disbursement from the CPF for a specific purpose as allowed by-law; 2) town meeting can elect only to approve, deny or reduce the amount of money requested.

The Committee unanimously agreed that we could not legally fund the request for reimbursement to the town. Steve moved to take no action. The Committee agreed unanimously to do so. Marilee will write a letter to Doug Dorr and JoAnn O'Donnell informing them of our decision.

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Dan Buron
Recreation Commission

Peter Colombotos,
Vice Chair/Secretary
Master Plan Implementation
Committee

Steve Elliott
Planning Board

Judith Gabriel
Historic District Commission

Marilee Kenney Hunt, Chair
Citizen at large

Rick Kranes
Conservation Commission

David Moore
Housing Partnership

Max Reed
Capital Planning Committee

Bob Vazza, Treasurer
Housing Authority

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Housing Partnership representative

Marilee introduced David Moore to the Committee. He was recently appointed by the Housing Partnership as its representative.

Meeting with town finance officials

Marilee indicated that it would be helpful to have Paul Sullivan, Doug Dorr and JoAnn O'Donnell attend one of our meetings to clarify the handling of CPF money in the future, irrespective of the tax collection software issue. She invited Doug, JoAnn and Paul to come to this meeting. Paul was busy with a meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Neither Doug nor JoAnn responded to the invitation. She will call them again to arrange a time for them to attend our next meeting. It will be important that all three attend at the same time.

Committee composition

David Moore indicated that although he is the chair of the Historical Commission, he represents the Housing Partnership on this Committee. David said that Marybeth Lawton will soon try to change Committee composition by having a member of the Historical Commission, not the Historic District Commission (HDC) send a representative.. He said that it was Marybeth's understanding that there was a technical error in the drafting of the November 14, 2005 town meeting warrant article that originally created the Community Preservation Committee. Discussion was tabled until later in the meeting.

Timeline

The Committee discussed the timeline that we formulated at our meeting of April 25th [see "Statement to Town Meeting 5/1/06]. Steve made a motion that we formally accept the timeline. The motion passed unanimously.

Subcommittees

Public Information Subcommittee—Dan, Pete and Steve

The subcommittee has not met yet. Pete handed out memo, "Preliminary comments." It included an outline of tasks related to ongoing outreach and a rough schedule. Pete cited a document the Committee received from Kathy Roth of the Community Preservation Coalition entitled, "Community Preservation Fund Budgeting and Finance Issues." Published by the DOR Division of Local Services, it provides a wealth of valuable information for the Committee. David volunteered to join the subcommittee.

Application Creation Committee—Judith, Marilee and Bob

Max volunteered to join the subcommittee. Pete will resign from the subcommittee. Marilee handed out a draft of the "Project Funding Pre-Application" and Project Proposal Submission forms. This will allow the Committee to screen projects for suitability and guide applicants through the application process.

Both subcommittees will gather after adjournment this evening to elect chairs.

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Financial processes

Marilee expressed concern that the Committee needs to learn the logistics of dispersing funds. How do we set up accounts for the various uses required by law? Can we administer bank accounts? How do we assure progress on awarded projects? Bob will contact the DOR to try to get answers to these and other pertinent questions.

Recording secretary

Jennifer Mangleson is the secretary for both the Housing Partnership and Capital Planning. Max said she does a good job. David and Pete volunteered to arrange for the hiring of a secretary. They will contact Paul Sullivan to see what is required.

Committee operating expenses

The Committee discussed the need to set aside funds for Committee overhead and expenses. The law allows us to spend up to 5% of each year's funds. Pete volunteered to draft article for next available town meeting. There was some question as to whether it is common for a local Community Preservation Committee to set aside the full 5% initially and return any unused balance to the CPF at the end of each year. Pete believes that we have a strong need for consultants to help us investigate needs and set priorities. He stressed that the DOR requirements of this Committee seem quite complex. Moreover, because the town lacks both an open space plan and a historic preservation plan, we would be well-served to commission such plans. David mentioned that the town does indeed have an open space plan. Pete responded that it is over ten years old and much has changed since. David and others expressed reluctance at setting a percentage figure for operating expenses. They thought it would be more credible to suggest a hard figure to town meeting instead. Max moved that we recommend to town meeting a set-aside of \$15,000 (less than 50% of what the Committee would be allowed to request) for this Committee's administrative expenses. Marilee reminded the Committee that Kathy Roth recommended that we take the full 5% we are allowed under the law since any un-used money could easily be returned to the general CPA account. All but Pete voted in the affirmative. Pete abstained. Dan moved to authorize David and Pete to begin the hiring process for Jennifer as recording secretary contingent upon funding by town meeting. Approval was unanimous.

Committee composition

David said that while the Bridgewater CPA bylaw indicates that the HDC shall be represented on the Committee, state law indicates that the Historical Commission should be represented. Pete indicated that he was a member of the Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC) when it drafted the article and that the MPIC expressly intended to have the HDC, not the Historical Commission, represented. David said that because the HDC's jurisdiction is limited to just one part of town, the HDC does not represent the full range of historic interests in the town. Pete responded that the majority of the town's historic features are encompassed by the

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Central Square Historic District. David mentioned that Marybeth or somebody else will be sponsoring a warrant article to change the composition of the Committee. Marilee recommended that we table the issue until Judith Gabriel (HDC representative) is present for the discussion.

There was some discussion about whether the Community Preservation Committee is limited to nine members. Pete indicated that the state statute specifically says that the CPC shall be composed of at least 5 but not more than 9 members. Therefore, we do not have the option of merely adding the Historical Commission to the current Board. Thus adding a new member will require replacement of one of the current members.

There are certain entities whose representation on the CPC is required by the Bridgewater bylaw and the state statute. Other than the Historic District Commission (which is required by the bylaw but not by the statute) the only currently represented entity that is not required by either the bylaw or statute is the Housing Partnership.

These issues will be discussed at the CPC's next meeting in June. Marilee will invite Bill Smith, Chair of the Historic District Commission, to attend that meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM