

TOWN OF TOPSHAM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING  
DECEMBER 3, 2015 - 7:00 P.M.

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MEMBERS PRESENT: David Douglass  
Marie Brilliant  
Ruth Lyons  
William Thompson  
Roland Tufts

MEMBER(S) ABSENT: All present

STAFF PRESENT: Town Manager, Richard Roedner

A meeting of the Topsham Board of Selectmen was held on Thursday, December 3, 2015, in the Donald A. Russell Meeting Room, at the Municipal Building, 100 Main Street, Topsham, Maine.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Douglass called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/ROLL CALL** - All present were invited to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. The recording secretary took the roll call and noted that all Selectmen were present.

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

We have been in touch with the DOT Project Manager for the Frank Wood Bridge Project, and the project review is still ongoing with no decisions made yet. They are still planning on a January, 2016 public meeting to present their proposed project.

Likewise, we have also been in touch with the DOT Project Manager for the Route 196 Traffic Light Replacement Project. There has been poor communication between DOT and the contractor, and the contractor has not presented a schedule as of yet. The deadline is still December 31.

One of our older DPW trucks, a 1997 Top Kick, is down with a bad alternator. This unit has been re-built in the past. Unfortunately, there are no longer after-market parts available for this, either to replace the alternator or to rebuild it again. Dennis is continuing to seek alternative sources for old parts. We will keep you posted.

A bit of good news. One of our cruisers has been delivered, and is now in the shop for the equipment installation. We hope to have it on the road within the next two weeks. On a related topic, we are still waiting to hear from our insurance carrier about how much we will be reimbursed for the cost of the cruiser that recently burned and for the equipment that was lost.

Solarize MidCoast Maine, a cooperative effort to get quantity pricing for installing individual business or residential solar systems, is up and running. This program, which is being coordinated by the MidCoast Economic Development District and the City of Bath, is open to Topsham residents and business who are interested in solar options. For information or to register, you can go to [cityofbath.com/solarizemidcoastmaine](http://cityofbath.com/solarizemidcoastmaine), or you can call MCEDD at 370-6045, or Bath at 443-8372.

A friendly reminder from Linda Dumont, our Town Clerk, that it is time to register your dogs. Current licenses expire on December 31, and failure to register them by Jan. 31 will incur a \$25 late fee.

Lastly, one of our officer candidates appears to be headed to another agency. Our other candidate is moving through the final steps of the process. If all goes well, this person could be on board in time to make it into the January academy class. We will look at options for the remaining position, but will probably have to re-start the hiring process with a new advertisement.

### **BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES**

**MRRA** - Steve Levesque, Director of the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority (MRRA) presented an annual update on MRRA's activities both in Brunswick and Topsham, including:

- Mr. Levesque said the former Annex, Topsham Commerce Park, is doing quite well and overall the redevelopment effort has been successful.
- Two properties sold - the former commissary as well as the former fire station at the former Topsham Navy Annex.
- Firehouse Tumbling now occupies the former fire station.
- Former Army recruiting building not seen as a viable business venture. General contractor says it would cost well over \$1 million to put in shape and would sell in the area of \$250,000. Plans are to demolish the building next summer.
- Demolition of the old foundation at the former Marine site is nearing completion with approximately 7,500 tons of earth having to be removed from the site due to petroleum contamination. Plans are to eventually turn the area into green space.
- SAD 75 is interested in acquiring a grassy area near the Middle School and, after the legal process is complete, MRRA will convey that area to the District at no cost.
- Former Base Housing now run by Affordable Midcoast Housing is almost at full capacity.
- Approximately 150 buildings (some of them small) have been demolished.
- Determination will be made if the old water tower is needed. If not needed, it will be taken down.
- Sewer system is a problem in Brunswick because of water leakage coming into the system. Currently spend about \$20,000 more a month than should because of the problem. Water is coming in through the old pipes, manholes, drains from some buildings and airfield.
- Hired an engineering firm to do a water system sewer study.
- Have a 17 mile electric grid system on the property which is part of a micro grid system for energy distribution. The Village Green Venture Anaerobic Digester project will take wastewater sludge; put it through an anaerobic process that will generate methane gas.
- Airport is beginning to be lucrative.
- Approximately 900 students attend classes at Southern Maine Community College and University Collage.
- Between Topsham and Brunswick, approximately 800 people are currently employed. The

original goal set by MRRA for this time frame was only 425. When the Navy was active in the two locations, only 700 people were employed.

- Next goal will be to equal the economic value from when the base was fully operational. Such a turnaround is anticipated to take between 10 to 30 years, depending on the location of the former base.

Mr. Levesque extended a thank you to Rich Roedner and John Shattuck for their assistance with MRRA.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** - Senator Linda Baker reported that she has spoken with two of the 11 towns in District 23 who are concerned with a municipality's inability to prohibit fire arms on municipal property and/or at public meetings. She said the Town of Woolwich recently passed an ordinance but cannot enforce it because state law cannot be superseded. Senator Baker suggested a workshop with the Board of Selectmen to receive feedback on this issue. A meeting with the Board was scheduled for 6:15 on December 17, prior to the regularly scheduled Board meeting.

**CORRESPONDENCE** - None noted.

**ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA** - None noted.

### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

#### **1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SELECTMENS MEETING OF NOVEMBER 19, 2015**

Motion was made by Selectman Tufts, seconded by Selectman Lyons, and it was unanimously

#### **VOTED**

To approve the Consent Calendar, approving minutes of the November 19, 2015 meeting.

**PUBLIC HEARING** - None noted.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS** - None noted.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **15-74 CONSIDERATION AND ANY APPROPRIATE ACTION FOR THE PLANNING OFFICE TO SEEK CONSULTING SERVICES TO CONDUCT A MASTER TRANSPORTATION PLANNING EFFORT AT THE TOPSHAM FAIR MALL ROAD**

This item was on the agenda at the last Board of Selectmen meeting. Before taking any action, the Board requested additional information, including available funds and the ability to spend. A memo from the Town Manager dated November 23, 2015, RE: Economic Reserve Funds, answering the Boards questions was included in the Board package and is filed with these minutes.

The Municipal TIF Economic Development Reserve account has \$124,970. The Downtown TIF Economic Development Reserve account has \$95,077 and the Affordable Housing TIF Economic Development Reserve account has \$0 funds.

Following a discussion and review of the 11/23/15 memo, the Board agreed that based on the Town Meeting vote to raise, appropriate and spend language for General Government, the Board has the ability to spend those funds on eligible projects such as a Transportation Master Plan.

Chairman Douglass said, while he supports spending the money for this project, the Board needs to spend time over the next several months to adopt a policy on how an item such as this will be handled in the future. He said that although this is a very worthwhile project, at some point there will be a project that comes before the Board that will not be as clearly viewed. Chairman Douglass said we have the opportunity to set some future guidelines for the Board. Town Manager Roedner said he will start working on a policy to bring back before the Board.

Motion was made by Selectman Lyons, seconded by Selectman Tufts, and it was unanimously

**VOTED**

To fund up to \$50,000 for consulting services to conduct a Master Transportation Plan for the Town of Topsham through the bid process.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**15-75 CONSIDERATION AND ANY APPROPRIATE ACTION ON APPROVAL TO APPLY FOR AARP MAINE AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION**

Motion was made by Selectman Thompson, seconded by Selectman Lyons, and it was unanimously

**VOTED**

To table Item 15-75 and bring forward Agenda Items 15-76 and 15-77.

**15-76 CONSIDERATION AND ANY APPROPRIATE ACTION TO APPROVE APPLYING FOR PROJCT CANOPY GRANT APPLICATION**

Assistant Planner Eyerman reviewed the request from the Tree Committee for approval to apply for a 2015 Project Canopy Grant Application saying this is an annual process. A draft application, budget, location aerial and a project narrative was included in the Board package for review.

The application would seek \$7,990 in funds from the Project Canopy Program, to be matched at with \$8,000 in local resources (in kind donation in terms of equipment, materials and labor from Public Works). The grant funds would go to pay for several different types of canopy trees for areas along Route 196 and the Topsham Fair Mall Road. A local match of \$1,200 would cover additional trees, such as some flowering trees.

During discussion, Selectman Lyons inquired if the Public Works Director would be in favor of flowering trees and Ms. Eyerman responded that he was and that there currently are some flowering trees in place.

Chairman Douglass questioned if it made sense to plant trees on the Topsham Fair Mall Road which may be revamped in the spring. The Planner, Rod Melanson, responded that the planting plan is flexible and the trees could wait to be planted or be placed in other areas where needed.

Motion was made by Selectman Thompson, seconded by Selectman Tufts, and it was unanimously

**VOTED**

That we give approval to the Planning Department to apply for the Project Canopy Grant Application.

**15-77 CONSIDERATION AND ANY APPROPRIATE ACTION FOR STREET TREE INVENTORY UPDATE AND REQUEST FROM THE TREE COMMITTEE TO PURSUE TREECITY USA DESIGNATION**

Assistant Planner Eyerman said she worked with the summer intern from Bowdoin College to update the 2013 Street Tree Inventory for the town. A list of concerns and recommendations were developed and shared with the Tree Committee and the Public Works Department. A memo from Ms. Eyerman to the Town Manager and Board of Selectmen dated November 19, 2015 is filed with these minutes and gives a complete explanation of TreeCity USA Designation. A list of the 18 TreeCity USA communities in Maine is included in the memo.

There are four qualifying criteria for TreeCity USA, as follows:

1. Must have a Tree Board or Department. *(Topsham already has a Tree Committee.)*
2. Need a Community Tree Ordinance. *(Could work on an ordinance for the 2016 Town Meeting.)*
3. Need a Community Forestry Program with an annual budget of at least \$2 per capita. Based on Topsham's population of 8,750, approximately \$17,500 would be required. *(Public Works Director said we currently expend approximately \$5,000 to \$6,000, but a more accurate accounting may increase that amount.)*
4. Need to observe and have a proclamation for Arbor Day. *(The official national observance is the last Friday in April each year and we could use it as Topsham's observance day.)*

Ms. Eyerman noted that Jean Danforth, Chair of the Tree Committee was present at the meeting and could answer any questions the Board might have. Selectman Lyons said she supports the Tree Committee and Arbor Day, but has a concern with adding the \$1,750 to next year's budget. Ms. Eyerman suggested the Public Works Director could fine tune the figures spent on trees and bring back to the Board. Chairman Douglass said this is an on-going application and he would like to get an ordinance set up for Town Meeting, have it pass and have the budget go through the Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen.

Motion was made by Chairman Douglass, seconded by Selectman Lyons, and it was unanimously

**VOTED**

That we allow the Tree Committee to start pursuing designation of TreeCity USA, working on Step 2, Community Tree Ordinance to be passed at 2016 Town Meeting, and Step 3, to have a fully broken outline within the Public Works Department of actual cost of the forestry program within town.

**15-75 CONSIDERATION AND ANY APPROPRIATE ACTION ON APPROVAL TO APPLY FOR AARP MAINE AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION**

Agenda item 15-75 was put back on the table. Assistant Planner Carol Eyerman reviewed a project proposal from Spectrum Generations who has asked the town to be a partner in a survey project that will assess and report on the needs of older adults in Topsham. The survey will assess quality of life issues, such as outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication and information, and community support and health services. Spectrum Generations has some resources to participate in the survey but additional resources are necessary for additional workshops, analysis and a more comprehensive report with action steps. The project is schedule to begin in January, 2016, with a final report given to the Board of Selectmen in June, 2016. Ms. Eyerman asked for approval to submit for an \$8,000 grant on the town's behalf. She said the grant for a consultant as well as the partnership with Spectrum Generations will be sufficient to complete the project. The grant requires that the town focus on low to moderate income older people and does not require a dollar match.

Suggested budget:

	<b>Donated Time</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>
Contracted Services		\$3,600	
Staff costs, if any	\$2,060		At least 3 people for a total of 60 hours; not including all staff and meeting time
Office materials and supplies, if any (envelopes, \$40 and paper \$125)		\$165	
Survey mailing (1,700 @ \$0.49)		\$833	
Advertising Workshops/focus groups (3 @ \$50)		\$150	
<b>TOTAL GRANT \$ REQUESTED</b>		<b>\$4,748</b>	
Matching funds or services planning	\$2,060		

Following a general discussion, motion was made by Selectman Lyons, seconded by Selectman Tufts, and it was unanimously

**VOTED**

To authorize the Planning Department to apply for the AARP Maine Age Friendly Community Grant.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** - None noted.

**ADJOURN**

Motion was made by Selectman Tufts, seconded by Selectman Lyons, and it was unanimously

**VOTED**

To adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Patty Williams, Recording Secretary