



Town of Southwick
454 COLLEGE HIGHWAY, SOUTHWICK, MA 01077
Community Preservation Committee
Telephone (413) 569-6056 - Fax (413) 569-5284
Town Web Site: www.southwickma.org



Minutes

April 3, 2019

ATTENDANCE: Bob Horacek, Chairman
Chris Pratt, Vice Chair
David Gunn
Karen DeMaio
David Sutton
Sue Fox

Absent: John Whalley III
Joanne Horacek
Maria Seddon

Mr. Horacek opened the meeting at 7:00 P.M.

Mr. Horacek stated that the Town Clerk requested that the committee vote for a Vice Chair, but the committee does not have the majority this evening. Mr. Horacek decided that the committee should delete and postpone this vote since it is so close to the reorganization of the Board.
(Vote was unanimous to postpone)

Mr. Horacek brought up the following warrant articles that need to be voted on.

The first one is for the Playscape, to see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$140,000 towards it. A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Gunn and seconded by Mrs. Fox to approve \$140,000.
(Vote was unanimous)

The second one is for the Old Cemetery restoration of Head Stones. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$40,000 towards the restoration article as amended. A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Sutton and seconded by Mr. Pratt to approve \$40,000.
(Vote was unanimous)

The third one is the McLaughlin property. Mr. Horacek reviewed the history behind why McLaughlin is requesting this money. Mr. Horacek noted that he has spoken to Ms. Hobson and Mr. Haul. They have gone to the Federal Agency and asked if any more funds were available for this property that has not matriculated as of yet. Mr. Horacek wanted to remind the committee that at the last meeting, Council recommended that to increase an article on the floor is problematic. But to decrease an article is not. Mr. Horacek suggested to the committee to change the original \$115,000 that was voted on, to \$230,000, in case Ms. Hobson is not successful with getting the extra funds needed from the Federal Agency.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Horacek to increase the funding to \$230,000. It was not seconded.

Discussion: Mrs. Fox asked if the committee increased to \$230,000, yet he was able to get the funding from other sources, is the committee still committed? Mr. Horacek answered no, it would be amended on the floor.

Mrs. DeMaio asked Mr. Horacek if the committee didn't increase it to \$230,000 and McLaughlin didn't get his funds, what happens then? Mr. Horacek stated that he doesn't think that McLaughlin would accept the \$115,000 that the committee approved.

Mr. Pratt jumped in and stated that Mr. McLaughlin may get the funds from other sources.

Mr. Gunn added that Mr. McLaughlin could potentially mortgage the \$115,000 on his own against the property.

Mr. Horacek wanted to add that if we don't get the funds needed from the Federal Agency, we could potentially lose the agricultural property. That's why the committee should consider changing the number to be \$230,000.

Mr. Gunn asked if the \$230,000 is available. Mr. Horacek stated that he believes we will after we get the \$350,000.

Mrs. DeMaio asked about the original \$44,500 that was approved last year come out of the balance? She added that the \$115,000 is on top of the already \$44,500? Mr. Horacek answered, that is correct, as he reads it.

Mr. Gunn added that this property is still private ownership. That the only thing to be preserved is the view, it wouldn't be open to the public and utilized for recreational purposes. Mr. Horacek stated that is correct. It is an Agricultural protection restriction. The land couldn't be used for anything other than agriculture. It can be sold by the owner, but it has to be sold as an agricultural property.

Mrs. DeMaio added that the original amount approved which was \$44,500 is now \$270,000 plus. Mr. Horacek stated that is correct.

Mrs. Fox stated that it is a big jump and the committee agreed.

Mrs. Demaio also added that with all the development in town right now, who's to say he doesn't have developers knocking on his door.

Mr. Gunn noted that he would feel much more comfortable if McLaughlin put more of his own money towards this project, rather than the committee coming up with the whole \$230,000.

Mr. Pratt added that on a Conservation stand point, the land didn't get developed next door and doesn't have much connectivity to any other open areas, as far as wildlife habitat. But Mr. Pratt would like to see the Agricultural part of town to stay that way, yet it's a lot of money.

Mr. Gunn stated that he thought that \$4,000/acre is a lot of money to ask for farm land.

(No action taken for \$230,000.)

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Pratt to keep the agreed amount of \$115,000 and seconded by Mrs. DeMaio. (Vote was unanimous)

Mr. Horacek stated that Article 15 and Article 17 are housekeeping Articles.

It discusses the split based on our projections that we receive from the state.

A **MOTION** was made by Mrs. Fox and seconded by Mr. Gunn to approve both Articles (Vote was unanimous)

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Pratt and seconded by Mrs. Fox to accept the amended March 18th minutes.

(Vote was unanimous)

Mr. Horacek went on to the next item on the Agenda. To approve the Community Coalition Program bill for dues.

Discussion: Mr. Horacek asked the committee to shed any light as to what the committee is getting for being a member. Mr. Pratt answered that they are at the statehouse level and let us know if there are any extra funds available throughout the year. Every year the committee has received extra funds above what the committee usually receives. Mr. Horacek asked if that is where the second and third round comes from. Mr. Pratt said yes, they give us a lot of advice and how we can utilize our money. They are a great wealth of information when the committee needs it. Mr. Pratt has dealt with Mr. Saginor many times and he has always gotten back to him in short order.

Mrs. DeMaio also brought up about the dredging of the canal. The committee was asking for clarification on rehabilitation vs. maintenance. They helped the committee out there, as well. A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Pratt and seconded by Mrs. Fox to approve the payment of the Community Coalition bill.

(Vote was unanimous)

Mr. Gunn wanted to talk about meeting protocol.

Discussion: At the last meeting of March 18th, after the votes were taken, the meeting just got dissipated. He felt the committee didn't maintain a force to act on additional issues. There was no formal adjournment. It seemed like the members just got up and left and mingled with the crowd, when Mr. Gunn felt there was still items to discuss on the agenda. There was nothing tabled, it just fell apart. It was a disservice to this committee, not to see that meeting through to a formal end. Mr. Horacek agreed. Mr. Gunn went on to say that he encourages the members, regardless of what happens out in the audience, that we still maintain our objectives of having a full and complete meeting.

Mrs. Fox stated that she thought the meeting was over and the committee agreed to adjourn. Mr. Horacek stated that he might have faced only one side of the committee, stating to adjourn instead of to the whole committee. Where the other side of the table didn't hear him motion to adjourn. One of the members got up and left right after. Mr. Horacek stated that the committee needs to pay attention to that in the future.

Public comments:

Michelle Pratt of 152 Berkshire Avenue stood up to be heard. She wanted to congratulate Southwick, that the town made history last week. She went on to add that she was shocked that the CPC didn't bring the bonding issue up and denied the people the chance to vote on the opportunity. Mrs. Pratt added it may have been the price tag. But this is a forever project and recreational use for this town. The members should seriously consider why you are on this committee. Mrs. Pratt also added that Mr. Horacek should seriously consider resigning.

Mr. Horacek asked if there was any other comments. There wasn't any. He wanted to thank everyone for coming.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Gunn and seconded by Mrs. Fox to adjourn.

(Vote was unanimous)

Next meeting June 19, 2019 at 7:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy DeMay
Secretary - CPC

Bob Horacek, Chairman

Chris Pratt, Vice Chairman

John Whalley III

David Gunn

David Sutton

Karen DeMaio

Joanne Horacek

Susan Fox

Maria Seddon