

TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN - BOARD OF SELECTMEN

OPEN FORUM – MONDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2007

JUDGE WELSH HEARING ROOM

Chairman Mary-Jo Avellar convened the meeting at 6 PM noting the following Board of Selectmen attending: Mary-Jo Avellar, Michele Couture, Austin Knight, Pam Parmakian, Lynne Davies

Other attendees: Town Manager Sharon Lynn, Asst. Town Manager David Gardner

Recorder: David Gardner

The following are minutes in brief

The purpose of this meeting is to hear concerns of citizens and to engage in a dialogue with the Board of Selectmen

Candice Nagle – Advocate to dissolve the PPPC, which could save up to \$300,000. Harbormaster staff is the largest of any within the Cape and Islands. Board of Selectmen will hold a meeting with the float owners and the PPPC on January 28, 2008, would seek to add to that agenda to include the overall management of the Pier. Pier expenses appear to have risen dramatically since their inception and PPPC financial information is not readily available and their process is not transparent. Pier neglected to do any due diligence prior to placing trap sheds, which is an indication of their mismanagement.

PP: Perhaps we could look at making PPPC Board memberships elected positions.

AK: Would consider looking into the reorganizing the PPPC.

Alex Brown – Commercial Fisherman, annoyed by the barge purchase by the PPPC. No one at the Pier has the expertise to operate the barge or repair the pilons on the pier and thus may be opening ourselves to potential liability. Nervous about the Piers ability to meet their financial obligations due to increased expenses.

Candice Nagle – Opposed barge purchase. PPPC does not have the expertise or training to make repairs to the Pier and would open the town to liability. Pier did not do the due diligence prior to purchasing the barge.

Barbara Rushmore – Request that the Harbormaster patrol at all times to prevent future boats from sinking without being noticed. Prior to the breakwater, boats went out on both the east and west side. Since then, silt has formed on the east end prohibiting boats from departing the harbor from the east. Dredging should occur at both ends of the breakwater.

George Bryant – Pier has always been a problem for the town. Town acquired the pier in 1929 when the railroad closed and threatened to tear it down. Restrooms on the pier are not being maintained.

Rachel White – Harbormaster's office was cut in the past. Concerned about the pier ever being solvent.

Candice Nagle – Barge should be placed on the east end of the pier for recreational boaters and become income producing instead of a financial liability.

MC: We need to have more meetings and better communication with the PPPC.

Candice Nagle – Pavillion on the Pier will be underutilized. It should have been developed as a restaurant.

Marcene Marqoux – Debt service for the PPPC?

MC: This years debt service was \$92,000 and it was paid. There is a 5-year pro forma for the pier and the debt service is different each year. The town is not in arrears on its payments ad debt service. Next year will be approximately \$103,000.

Alex Brown – Fish House at the end of the pier which would include a restaurant and an observation deck. We should be capitalizing on what we have on the pier.

Candice Nagle – Wants the Board of Selectmen to inform the Pier staff to respond to inquiries for information on a timely basis.

Todd Wager – Charter Enforcement is seeking to fill its vacancies. Will request the Town Clerk to advertise all town board vacancies. Licensing Board will be publishing their procedures. Working with staff on acquiring some permit tracking software for licensing, which can be utilized by all departments. Would like it to be included in the 2009 Budget. PBG did not do the holiday light contest this past year, but rather will start a fund to do holiday lights and decorating in town in the future. Town's website needs to be updated. Town Board chair addresses should be listed. Information at town meeting should indicate who placed the information so that it will be clear the intent of the information. We should have a pre-town meeting to explain the issues that will appear at town meeting. More information should be published on the town articles, including both pro and con information on the articles. Business summit was not successful in moving the issues forward. Senior tax relief should be opened up to everyone.

Alex Brown – Repair west end boat ramp. Waterways Enterprise Funds could be utilized for this type of repair. Pay As You Throw Bags will make it harder and more expensive for people to dispose of their trash and will only encourage people to dump trash in open space areas. Concern over discussion of closing down the school system once again and how that discourages families from remaining here or from relocating here.

LD: Tax relief is needed for long time residents whose property taxes have risen along with their property values which is a burden on families with fixed incomes and forces them to consider selling their property and leaving Provincetown.

PP: We currently pay 3% of taxes to both the Land Band and the CPA. Rep Sarah Peake is looking into the Town's ability to withdraw from one of the programs.

Bonnie Campbell – Community needs sustainable housing and wages. Foreclosure rates are rising. Is there an ability for us to get a bio-fuels credit from the state?

George Bryant – Population is aging, what we need in Provincetown is a younger generation and children. Shank Painter development is an opportunity to allow for housing that can accommodate children.

PP: COA does have an utility assistance program for the elderly.

Ms. Bruce: Affordable housing has allowed people to stay in town. Those who are low income and have been in town for years can not keep up with raising taxes. Property assessment has risen greatly and there is no abatement available. There needs to be low income abatement programs locally not just for seniors.

PP: Housing Specialist is needed onboard to locate and go after funds for assistance.

Clarence Walker – PACC was established to get out the information to the community and to allow them to get involved. The wastewater treatment facility contract needs to be examined. Chair of the Board of Selectmen should provide a "State of the Town" address prior to Town Meeting.

Barbara Rushmore – Town should put its money in banks that have local investment. Town should not rely on overrides each year. Water Dept bills have increased substantially over the years – who approves Water Dept expenditures? We don't need these improvements. Water rates have a minimum regardless of usage. Examine the number of police on our year round police force. The Finance Committee does not encourage any citizen to submit money saving ideas to the Town. Town Warrant should be broken out so that we can vote on each item (especially the Budget) separately. Flex bus ridership is low during the winter and should be cancelled. The school system in Provincetown is wonderful and should not be closed.

MC: DEP mandates much of our Water Improvement Projects and we don't have control over much of that. Our

police department is understaffed and our officers are forced to work overtime often. The Flex bus may not be full during the off season, but it is an essential service and needs to be maintained.

Steve Desroches – Participated in the Gull’s Nest lottery and wanted to explain why that the lower priced units went easily, but the higher priced units couldn’t get enough people to qualify. Affordable housing is needed to provide stability within the community. Provincetown residents have moved down cape because they can no longer afford to live here and thus no longer qualify for the local preference policy.

George Bryant – The problem with the lower cape is there is no growth, which has resulted in lower bank deposits. Has a code enforcement complaint regarding property at Silverleaf Condominiums on Commercial Street and has not received word back from the town. Complaint states that there was an illegal unit built in the back without a permit. Code enforcement complaint against the Tasha property on Howland Street.

MJA: Building Commissioner needs to report to the Board of Selectmen regarding the complaint on Commercial and look into the complaint on Howland.

Marcene Marcoux: I think there is a new way of thinking for the town and a new way of dealing with the financial issues. Town Hall rehab should be limited to fixing the problems. Fire Station 2 could be developed with bathrooms on the ground floor and not necessarily develop the second floor.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 10:30 pm.