

Board of Selectmen
Tuesday, April 30, 2013

A meeting of the Rockport Board of Selectmen was held in Conference Room A of Rockport Town Hall on Tuesday, April 30, 2013 at 6pm, five board members and the Town Administrator were present.

6:55 Meeting Called to Order

Executive Session – Collective Bargaining

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Executive Session – Collective Bargaining: Selectperson Fleming moved that the Board of Selectmen enter Executive Session under MGL Chapter 30A, §21(a) for Exception #3: to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining, Selectperson Wilkinson seconded, Vote: 5-0. Roll call vote: Chairperson Battistelli – aye, Selectperson Fleming – aye, Selectperson Murphy – aye, Selectperson Sheedy – aye, Selectperson Wilkinson – aye, Vote: 5-0.

The Chairperson stated “We are entering executive session because, by not doing so, it would be detrimental to the Town’s bargaining position. We will reconvene in Open Session.”

7:15 Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

Interview of Michael Hughes for Reappointment to the Finance Committee: Selectperson Murphy moved that the Selectmen reappoint Michael Hughes as a member of the Finance Committee for a three year term ending on May 1, 2016, Selectperson Fleming seconded, Vote: 5-0.

Interview of Michael Hughes for Reappointment to Finance Committee Motion Approved

M. Hughes has been on the Committee for six years. He stated that the Town Report is more insightful now, particularly how state aid affects the town. He stated that it’s been rewarding, he has enjoyed working with the Board of Selectmen. He believes he has made a positive contribution and would like to continue. He continued that the most difficult part is approving and not approving requests as there are finite resources to work with.

Approval of Minutes of April 16, 2013: Selectperson Sheedy moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the minutes of April 16, 2013, Selectperson Fleming seconded, Vote: 4-0. Selectman Murphy abstained as he was not present on April 16, 2013.

Approval of April 16, 2013 Minutes as amended Motion Approved

Amendments: Under the Selectmen Briefing, the Town Administrator said that she made the comment that the issues of flooding and ledge made underground utilities impossible.

Selectperson Wilkinson said she would like the minutes changed to state that she attended the recent Planning Board meeting on the Tool Company and the public

hearing on Granite Street. There is tentatively scheduled a DEP public hearing on the tool company.

7:20 Public Hearing on Parking Meters: Selectperson Fleming moved that the Board open a Public Hearing to hear and discuss Rockport parking meter rates, time limits and hours of enforcement, Selectperson Wilkinson seconded, Vote: 5-0.

Chairperson Battistelli said in 2003 parking rates were \$0.25/hour, with a 5 hour limit on the landside of downtown and a 2 hour limit on the seaside and the hours of enforcement were from 8am to 6pm up to 2013. There was one change in 2003 when the rate went from \$0.25 to \$0.50 per hour. Last summer the hourly rate was tentatively changed to \$1.00 and landside and seaside were both 5 hour limits and the hours were changed to 10am to 8pm for 3 months.

The Town Administrator stated that the Traffic & Parking Committee met this afternoon and that it might be helpful if the Chief starts with that update.

Chief McCarthy stated that what follows are their recommendations to the Board of Selectmen: Rates: \$0.50/hour for the majority of town except \$1.00 on T-Wharf through Mt. Pleasant, Dock Sq, both sides of Main Street, School St., Bearskin neck, and the cost would be \$2.00/hour for Beach Street from Main to Granite, not including Poole's Corner. Limits: Meter time limits would be 5 hours for the majority of town, with the exception of 2 hours from T-wharf, Main Street, Bearskin Neck and School Street. They're recommending a 4 hour limit on Beach Street. The hours of enforcement would be 8am to 6pm for the majority of the town, with the exception of Beach Street which would be 6am to 6pm enforcement.

Chairperson Battistelli stated it should be made clear that there is no plan on creating new metered spots.

Mike Kaplan, owns a shop at Poole's Corner on 79 Main Street, agrees with the 2 hour limit due to beach parking, he presented a petition that has 28 signatures of shop owners on Main Street and Dock Square pleading for a 2 hour maximum. He said he would like to see a prohibition on the feeding of meters. He stated that Danvers and Newburyport have one hour limits and you receive a ticket if you go over in order to free up spaces and move folks along for the businesses. The time limit is the biggest issue that affects our businesses. He recommends posting the free parking lot from all entrances to Rockport. He concluded that there's a lot of unmetered parking in town.

Kathleen Cahill, owner of Katie's Gift Shop, stated that she disagrees with Mike Kaplan. She stated that two hours isn't enough to eat a meal and do any other shopping. She stated that there is a 5 hour meter outside of her store and she is on the seaside. She requested a clarification on what is defined as seaside. She stated that the Parking Committee Meetings aren't at convenient times for her; she can't close her shop for two hours in the middle of the day. She questioned why Beach Street enforcement starts at 6am.

Motion to open Public
Hearing on Parking
Meters
Motion Approved

Chief McCarthy said the recommendation for the enforcement of the meters beginning at 6am was because of the divers that arrive early.

Kathleen Cahill questioned the doubling the meters for the Mt. Pleasant, Dock Square; she questioned if it could be \$0.25 for 20 minutes or some other option. She is against this. Doesn't think this is good for business, and tourism is one of the main industries.

The Chief of Police said that the new meters are programmable, but he doesn't know yet if this would be possible.

Steve Law, Granite Street, has a business at 73 Main Street, agrees with the petition. He commented that we don't want to discourage people from staying in Rockport. He stated that it's clear that lots of work and thought has been given to this. He questioned how this committee came up with this plan.

The Town Administrator stated that there have been lengthy discussions on the land and sea side and where the five hour limit came from. She stated that most of the businesses preferred a 2 hour turnover for shopping, etc. That doesn't work for some entertainment issues. She stated that beach goers were a big part of the discussion. Having a beach downtown is not typical; they talked about putting it back to 4 hours. Maybe four hours would be fine for Beach goers to go swimming. They talked about more signage and perhaps a map indicating all parking areas in town.

Chief McCarthy agreed that it is unusual that a beach is in a downtown location. He stated from a police enforcement perspective, it's difficult. We want to encourage people to visit the town and enjoy themselves. We don't like to tag people for overtime, it sends a bad message.

Don Blaskovich said his business is a gallery at 75 Main Street, he said that the season is very short in Rockport. It doesn't give us much time to maximize what we can earn. We have to pay taxes and other issues. The five hour meters will be for beach people. They'll pay the five hours and put more money in. He would like to see a 2 hour limit and everyone will have a fair chance to park.

Joe Muzio, 7 Normanstone Drive, has lived here for 5 years. He stated that he has been treated royally; Rockport is unique. He stated that he sent a letter to the Gloucester Times in April regarding parking. Meters are integral to the parking issue; when you have an overflow of volume, you have to make other arrangements. He doesn't believe it generates the revenue he's heard about. What about administrative, collection, court system, and the good will lost on a regular basis. He concluded that the signage is atrocious. He questioned if there is a survey of all available parking in Rockport. There needs to be a balance between merchants and to satisfy all the people that come here; he questioned kiosks. If you approve these meters, you're locking the town into the commitment.

Chairperson Battistelli said this is just another opportunity for more public input after the pilot study.

Toby Arsenian, 95 Granite Street. said this hearing and the proposals are improper, he commented on the \$55,000 for the meters courtesy of town meeting, and CIPC \$55,000 for the next years. All of this in the absence of a parking plan. All of these proposals should be put aside, reassess this for one year, and appoint a committee. The meters can be charged different rates for different people. He recommends raising the rates for non-residents, and not raising them for residents.

Peter Goodwin, 6 North Road, stated that he agrees with T. Arsenian. Urges not purchasing any meters and changing the enforcement to 10am to 6pm, so residents can get downtown in the morning (coffee shop, etc.) and maybe have it be noon on Sundays.

Hank Betts, 13 Penzance Road, stated that he spent a lot of time on the parking issue last year. He looked at every meter, every 2 hours on T-wharf. He said he got a general idea of what is going on during the weekend; lots of people want to come to Rockport. He said feeding meters is a problem; it needs to be solved. He believes smart meters are a good investment. He stated that there will no greater costs for meter personnel. He doesn't agree with 5-hour meters, but doesn't agree with 2 hour meters either. We're trying to change people's habits.

Close Hearing: Selectperson Wilkinson moved that the Board of Selectmen close the Public Hearing, Selectperson Fleming seconded, Roll Call Vote, Chairperson Battistelli – aye, Selectperson Fleming – aye, Selectperson Murphy – aye, Selectperson Sheedy – aye, Selectperson Wilkinson – aye, Vote: 5-0.

Mike Kaplan stated that recently, when the meters weren't there, all the spots were taken. Available spots appeared once the meters were there. Employees and shop owners find places to park.

Jan Goodwin, 6 North Road, agrees with trying to get some funds out of the divers. In terms of parking, she said that Ogunquit, Maine has put a lot of efforts into shuttles. They have reasonable fares and people can come and go and get around quickly. We need to find more ways to feed the town.

Selectperson Sheedy inquired if these new meters prohibit feeding meters.

Selectperson Fleming asked the chief about his comment that he doesn't like to ticket people.

Chief McCarthy said they previously tagged and towed all weekend. When he became Chief he decided they weren't going to do that anymore. The reputation was you're going to get tagged and towed. We treat the visitors in a respectful fashion.

Selectperson Fleming inquired about a 15 minute gratis period on the meters that the chief has mentioned when here previously.

Chief McCarthy said we can program a grace period into the meters.

Selectperson Fleming inquired if any changes can be made to the trolley for this year.

The Town Administrator stated that there may be a need for some involvement from the Finance Committee, looking for an estimate on what it would cost for the town to pay the \$1.00 and not charge the visitors the \$1.00.

Selectperson Sheedy stated that having the park and ride free and having more signage may not come together for this season. She continued that we need to have an overall plan with the parking unless we agree to do it in phases.

Selectperson Wilkinson questioned why the changes in the shuttle can't happen this year.

The Town Administrator stated that the immediacy of the funding is the issue. She continued that she thought we were doing this in bite-size chunks. We can change this next week if we'd like to; we're not stuck forever with whatever we come up with tonight.

Chairperson Battistelli stated that she likes the increase to \$1.00; and likes the 10am to 6pm. She stated that she has a sense of the items that she's supporting and has questions on some.

Selectperson Murphy questioned what would this look like if we choose to do nothing tonight and look at the whole parking situation.

Chairperson Battistelli stated that she wants to make a decision on some items tonight.

Selectperson Sheedy said maybe we could break it down into rates, hours, etc. She questioned when the meters are really enforced in the morning currently.

Chief McCarthy said new technologies are coming out all the time. This is in a 4-phase project, we were going to go slow and phase this in. In this plan there is nothing for High Street or Pleasant Street. Eventually those meters will need to be replaced and they could be replaced with the new smart meters if we decide to do something else later, like the kiosks in some areas. The chief said there are 159 resident spaces downtown.

Selectperson Fleming stated that the later hours are good; they're native-friendly for residents going out to breakfast, etc.

Hank Betts stated that beach goers start arriving at 8am; he doesn't see a big difference on Sunday activity.

Enforcement Times: Selectperson Wilkinson moved that we establish the parking times for this coming season to 10am to 6pm, 7 days/week except for Back Beach

Change in Enforcement
Times for Parking Meters
Motion Approved

past Main Street which would be 6am to 6pm, seconded by Selectperson Fleming.
Vote: 5-0.

Increase in Parking
Meter rate
Motion Approved

Meter Rates: Selectperson Wilkinson moved that the Selectmen increase parking meter rates for the T-wharf, Mount Pleasant through Dock Square, Main Street, top of Bearskin Neck and School Street to \$1.00 per hour and \$2.00 for the Front and Back Beach areas, seconded by Selectperson Fleming, Vote: 5-0.

Change in Parking Meter
time limits
Motion Approved

Parking Limits: Selectperson Fleming moved that the time limit for our meters should be four hours on the Front and Back Beach areas and three hours from T-Wharf through Dock Square, Main Street to Beach Street, Beach Street to Granite Street, School Street and at the top of Bearskin Neck; Selectperson Sheedy seconded, Vote: 5-0.

Selectperson Sheedy stated she hopes we can get this park and ride for free, with expanded hours and more signage.

Selectperson Murphy recommended putting a committee together for a parking plan, signage, etc.

Selectmen Updates and
Liaison Reports

Selectmen Updates and Liaison Reports: Selectperson Murphy suggested recognizing Lt. Schmink and Officer Mahoney for their assistance after the Boston Marathon bombing. Also, as the liaison to school department, Selectperson Murphy stated that the PTO auction raised \$60,000 and it was a fantastic evening.

Selectperson Fleming
spoke about her leaving
the Board

Selectperson Fleming commented on her leaving the board, she stated that she appreciated being on the Board of Selectmen and that they appreciated each other. She stated she is leaving the unfinished business in great hands.

Public Comment Period

Public Comment Period:

Property on Foxbury
Street purchased by
Conservation
Commission

T. Arsenian, 95 Granite Street commented on the Foxbury Street, (top of Pigeon Hill Street) purchase by the Conservation Commission. He requested that the Conservation Commission be invited to attend a Board of Selectmen meeting so there is a public announcement. He continued the there is a large sign on the metal building at the Tool Company, indicating there is industrial space for lease. He questioned if the building going to stay. He questioned if the new owner's plans have changed. It was recommended that T. Arsenian attend the Planning Board meeting this Thursday evening or the upcoming DEP public hearing.

Town Administrator's
Report

Town Administrator's Report: The issue of the Town Accountant's certification was discussed, how best to recognize the employee. The Town Administrator recommended putting together a press release. Selectperson Fleming said she is pleased that CATA is open to discussion. The Town Administrator spoke about bike racks with automatic rentals in town as part of a parking/traffic plan, there are some questions about implementation. She also spoke about perhaps purchasing one van as a shuttle to the inns all the time, etc. because even if CATA is as

flexible as they can be, they probably can't keep up with the inns and the frequency of tourists' comings and goings.

Write in candidates, Matt Wigton, Minister in the Baptist Church, is working on the Rockport Housing Authority, and Ed Hand from Landmark Lane is putting together something for the Planning Board. Next week's election has the beer and wine license on the ballot, it was suggested that the Board of Selectmen write a letter to the Gloucester Times for this Thursday or next Monday, as residents may think that this already passed. There has been some confusion around this being tied to the IGA property and it isn't. Selectperson Murphy stated that Rockport really needs a grocery store. The Town Administrator stated that an upscale grocery store has expressed an interest in Rockport.

8:05 Action List

Action List:

July 4th Events: Permission for Firemen's Association July 4th Events: Selectperson Sheedy moved that the Selectmen grant permission to the Rockport Firemen's Association to hold a Bake Sale on June 22, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Whistlestop Mall and Ace Hardware at Station Place and to hold their annual Fourth of July parade, concessions, and Back Beach activities on July 4th, or July 6th in the event of inclement weather, Selectperson Fleming seconded, Vote: 5-0.

Permission for July 4th Fireworks Display Motion Approved

Selectperson Murphy stated that this is the last year for George Ramsden in the parade, would like to invite him to an upcoming Board of Selectmen's meeting.

Permission for Baseball Sign: Selectperson Fleming moved that the Selectmen allow the Rockport High School baseball team to place a sign at the top of Great Hill publicizing the day and time of their games until the end of the school year in June, Selectperson Murphy seconded, Vote: 5-0. Selectperson Wilkinson stated that it is a free-standing sign.

Permission for Baseball Sign at top of Great Hill Motion Approved

Night Baseball Announcements at Evans Field: Selectperson Wilkinson moved that the Selectmen grant permission to the Rockport High School baseball team to make announcements with music at their Varsity night games at Evans Fields, Selectperson Murphy seconded, Vote: 5-0. Selectperson Wilkinson stated that they've had some complaints; the games are over by 9pm. She continued that it might be helpful if the Board of Selectmen approved the schedule so there was a record of it. Selectperson Murphy said if the music becomes a problem for the neighbors, we should revisit this. Selectperson Fleming amended the motion that announcements must end at 9pm and music must have adult supervision. Selectperson Wilkinson seconded, Vote: 5-0.

Permission for Night Baseball Announcements at Evans Field Motion Approved

73 Long Beach Lease: Selectperson Murphy moved that the Selectmen approve and sign a lease with Joseph May and Dennis May for 73 Long Beach to reflect the addition of Dennis May's name to the lease, Selectperson Fleming seconded, Vote: 5-0.

73 Long Beach Lease addition of name to lease Motion Approved

Request for Hiring
Approval for Accounting
Support Specialist
Motion Approved

Request for Hiring Approval for Accounting Support Specialist: Selectperson Sheedy moved that the Selectmen approve the hiring of an Accounting Support Specialist to fill the vacancy in that department. Selectperson Wilkinson seconded, Vote: 5-0.

Request for Remedial
Salary Adjustments
Motion Approved

Remedial Salary Adjustments: Selectperson Fleming moved that the Selectmen accept the recommendations of the Personnel Board and approve a salary increase of \$3,050 for the Treasurer/Collector, \$1,770 for the Assistant Treasurer/Collector, \$8,000 for the Assistant to the Town Administrator, \$2,791 for the Senior Administrative Assistant in the Selectmen's office, and to promote the Police Department Administrative Assistant to Senior Administrative Assistant, all effective July 1, 2013, Selectperson Murphy seconded, Vote: 5-0.

Selectperson Sheedy stated that she thought that we asked the department heads to limit their personnel budget to a 1-1/2% increase.

The Town Administrator stated that this is not in addition to anything in the budget. Various vacancies have left funds remaining in the line items. When those positions were filled, the salaries were offered at lower than what was available previously. The Town Administrator has been filling positions with a lower salary and allowing for a trial period so the new employee's performance can be assessed before receiving a higher salary. In the instance of the Assistant to the Town Administrator, it is to bring the salary up to market and in the instance of the Senior Administrative Assistant in the Selectmen's office, it is to bring the salary in line with other town positions.

Selectperson Wilkinson recommended changing the title to office manager for Deb Powers in the Selectmen's Office and Sherry Naugler in the Police Department as it is more fitting to what their roles are.

Other Business/Announcements: The Board of Selectmen said goodbye to Selectperson Fleming as this is her last meeting.

9:55 Meeting Adjourns Murphy moved, seconded by Selectperson Fleming, Vote 4-0, (Selectperson Wilkinson stepped out of the room for the vote).

Warrant signed:

Warrant signed for the Fiscal Year 2013 Payroll and Expenses for the week of 5/2/13 in the amounts of \$462,988.84 and \$130,958.81 respectively.

Street Performer's License Dora Tevan, Ethnic Arts Center
Common Victualler's License, Peggy Giannarakos, Bearskin Neck Bistro, Inc.
License to buy and sell antiques, AUD Froystein Antiques, 2 North Road
Lodging House License, The Seafarer Inn, Inc.
Long Beach Lease, Joseph and Dennis May, Lot #73
Transient Vendor License, Amanda Thurston, 28 Bearskin Neck