

**Camden Select Board
Minutes of Meeting
January 3, 2012**

PRESENT: Chairperson Martin Cates, Vice Chairperson Morgan Laidlaw, John French, Jr., James Heard, Donald White, and Town Manager Finnigan. Also present were members of the press and public.

Contents

1. Call to Order

Board Chair Cates called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone, and wished them a happy New Year. He announced that with the New Year, the Board was making a few changes including the meeting format. He invited people to take a copy of a brochure which detailed the new agenda format being used that night for the first time. He explained that the new format was developed to encourage citizen participation, improve communication, and ensure that meetings were conducted effectively. He also invited people to pick up a copy of the Select Board's 2012 goals which would be formally adopted that evening. Their purpose is to set a direction for the board's work to help Camden progress and thrive. Descriptions of the goals are available on the Town's website, and progress will be tracked quarterly through a report from the Town Manager.

2. Citizen Comments (for items not on the agenda)

Chairperson Cates invited anyone present to speak if they wished to on non-agenda items. He asked that those who wish to speak state their name and place of residence and that they come forward to speak at the podium. He said that first, however, the Town Manager would be making a statement.

Pat Finnigan said that people may have seen an article on websites pertaining to the Town's Development Director Brian Hodges. She said it was related to a personnel matter, that the matter is being reviewed, and that she was not at liberty to comment further at that time.

The Board Chair then asked if there were any public comments related to non-agenda items. There were none. Public comments were closed and the meeting was opened to comments from the Board.

Donald White noted that the ice skating rink had been installed in the amphitheatre and would be a center for activity at the Winterfest planned for January 28-29th.

Morgan Laidlaw thanked the Snow Bowl volunteers and employees who were present for the nice job they have done at the ski area so far this season.

John French offered a safety tip asking that those who choose to skate or ice fish on Hosmer Pond be mindful of the ice, as open water still appeared in spots along the shore.

3. Approval of Board Minutes

Chairperson Cates asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the December meetings of the Select Board.

John French moved that the minutes of the December 6, 2011 and December 20, 2011 meetings be accepted. James Heard seconded the motion.

Donald White requested that the Fireworks Ordinance presented at the Special Town Meeting on December 20th be included as part of the Special Town Meeting report that appears on the back of the December 20th Board of Selectmen meeting minutes.

John French amended his motion to include a request that the Fireworks Ordinance be made part of the Special Town Meeting section of the December 20, 2011 minutes. Morgan Laidlaw seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

4. Consent Agenda

The Chair read the contents of the Consent Agenda:

- a) Approval of a taxicab driver application for David Spear of Rockport
- b) Approval of the renewal of a victualer license for Old World Potato Company
- c) Approval of renewal of Lodging License to Ostrowski Inc. for the Blackberry Inn, 82 Elm St.

There was a motion (French) and a second (White) to approve items a., b., and c. of the Consent Agenda. The motion was unanimously approved.

5. Communications, Presentations, and Recognitions

a) Presentation by the Ragged Mountain Recreation Area Redevelopment Committee

Members of the Ragged Mountain Recreation Area Redevelopment Committee were on hand to update the Board on their progress. Rick Knowlton told the Board that the group's current efforts are focused on fundraising and that further design work is in a holding pattern, awaiting full funding. They have arrived at the halfway point of their campaign and have raised \$2.25 million to this point. He added that the new chairlift is on site ready for installation and that proposals for improvements remain the same as previously presented to the Board.

Bob Gordon outlined two elements of the redevelopment campaign, the first of which, where donors "Fund a Chair" for \$10,000, has the potential to raise \$1.5 million. The second is a \$500,000 campaign focused on the great room of the new lodge, to be named after Sara Montgomery who is the daughter of honorary campaign chairperson, Ann Montgomery. In addition the committee is holding Business Breakfasts and will be posting thermometer-shaped signs around town to indicate progress toward their goal. A "Snow Ball" will be held February 4th, and Ken Twaddel will be leading the community fundraising segment following the quiet phase of the campaign. They hope to break ground in 2013 and anticipate that the use of the facility for conferences, forums, weddings and events will positively impact economic development in our area.

Don Gross summarized the savings that will be generated by equipment improvements through increased electricity efficiency and through a decrease in the necessary manpower costs to run the lifts.

Robert Iserbyt of Rockport addressed the Snow Bowl Redevelopment Project, saying that funds should be set aside as “Plan B” to cover capital and repair costs should current equipment fail before new equipment is installed. Bob Gordon said there are some different funds that could cover these issues should the need arise.

b) Recognition of Leslie Bex’s service on the Snow Bowl’s Ski Patrol

Galen Todd, Director of the Ski Patrol at the Snow Bowl, and Jeff Kuller, Director of Camden Parks and Recreation presented a plaque to Les Bex for his exemplary service and dedication during his many years as a ski patrolman. Galen Todd said that in addition to patrolling at the Snow Bowl for nearly 18 years, Les had volunteered more than 100 hours per year training patrollers. Mr. Bex received a standing ovation.

c) Discussion of Dog Policy at Ragged Mountain Recreation Area

Jeff Kuller was asked to explain the rationale and background information regarding the new policy banning dogs from the Ragged Mountain Recreation Area during the winter while the ski area is in operation. Jeff explained that concerns included: 1) safety of the dogs themselves; 2) protection of Snow Bowl guests; 3) pet waste; and 4) tracks on the new Nordic Trails. He said that the staff had decided that the best way to manage these issues was to ask people not to bring their dogs to the Snow Bowl during the months that the ski area is open, December through March.

Linda Nash of Camden spoke of her experiences with her dog at the Snow Bowl and suggested that a trail or strip be set aside away from the Nordic Trails, where residents could hike up and down with their pets when the ski area is not operating.

Brandon Kimball of Camden asked about using the athletic field or pond area for dogs.

John Scholz of Camden supported the idea of a compromise to allow people to hike with their dogs up in the trail system around areas of the mountain unconnected to the ski area, the sports field or the pond. He cited that the Ragged Mountain Recreation Area had been established as a municipal, public facility for four-season use, and that there must be a way to compromise rather than a banning all pets from the entire Recreation Area.

Andrea Young of Camden said that understanding and tolerance are needed on both sides of this issue and that it could have been handled differently.

Barney Appleton of Camden supported the idea of a designated area for dogs and residents, such as the T-bar line, for use when the Snow Bowl is closed.

Peter Conover of Camden hoped that a compromise could be worked out using a trail such as the Hosmer Pond Loop Trail away from machinery, for pets and people to enjoy.

Jeff Foltz of Camden detailed the difficulties of grooming a modern cross-country ski trail and the dangers that can arise if a skier moving with some speed meets a dog

coming the other way. He explained that footprints get frozen into the snow and make a track difficult to re-set, suggesting that there are other trails in the area where people can hike in the winter with pets.

Brian Robinson of Camden, a ski patroller and member of the Parks and Recreation Committee, told the group that the policy had been reviewed at the committee meeting. He added that there are people who don't clean up after their pets.

Judy Goodman of Camden supported a compromise on the policy and asked whether the people attending that Toboggan Nationals had been notified that they cannot bring dogs.

Galen Todd of Camden, Ski Patrol Director and president of the Coastal Mountains Land Trust board, said that he supports having dogs under control at the Snow Bowl, citing instances last year where dogs or people could potentially have been injured. He added that if a discussion regarding a compromise were opened, they would need help formulating what that might look like. He reminded people that the policy for CMLT trails including the Hosmer Pond Loop Trail is that dogs must be on leashes.

This ended the public comment section of the meeting.

Donald White congratulated volunteers and employees of the Snow Bowl for their hard work 365 days of the year. He expressed his concern about the process regarding the dog policy issue, that there had been no public process and no involvement of the Select Board. He noted that the original Town dog policy had been approved by the Selectmen and asked whether the Snow Bowl policy is in this case a Town policy.

John French said that he supports Jeff Kuller and that he needs to make the call as far as safety is concerned. John said that the Snow Bowl must be operated as a business and that we have a responsibility to our guests to keep them safe.

Morgan Laidlaw said that he agreed with John.

Town Manager Finnigan explained that the dog policy of the Snow Bowl constitutes an administrative decision that staff can make, and that the rules of the ski area are not Town policy as in the case of the Town's dog ordinance.

James Heard offered that a compromise to the rule ought to be looked at.

John French asked that Jeff Kuller have an opportunity to respond. Jeff discussed the specific dangers posed by grooming machines, snowmaking equipment, snowmobiles and ATV's operating when the ski area is not in operation. He noted that the T-bar line is the primary artery to servicing the radio tower at the top of the mountain. He said that he hears the feedback regarding the process and will go back to his group of managers to develop a process whereby a compromise could be discussed.

Martin Cates said he would like to hear feedback from the meeting with the Snow Bowl managers and from Parks and Recreation. The group was informed that the next Parks and Recreation Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 11th at 5:15 at the Washington Street Conference Room.

6. Select Board Member Reports

Donald White told the group that the Planning Board would meet the following Thursday at 5pm; the Opera House Committee would meet on January 10th to review their Strategic Plan; and that the Historic Resources Committee would meet the on Tuesday at 4pm.

James Heard said that the Harbor Committee would be meeting that Thursday at 7:30 and that Parks and Recreation would meet on the 11th at 5:15. Martin Cates said that CEDAC meets on Monday.

7. Town Manager Report

Town Manager Finnigan noted that the holidays in Camden were wonderful and that the Police Department reports that things had been relatively quiet in terms of accidents even with the storms during the week. She said that Public Works employees had been very dedicated taking care of the roads over the holidays. She also reminded everyone to save the date of January 26th which is when the community meeting for the Downtown Master Plan will take place.

Morgan Laidlaw added his thanks to Public Works for their excellent cleanup efforts during the surprise storm on Christmas Day.

8. Old Business

The Board addressed the meeting calendar for the upcoming year. There was a date change during the month of November: there will not be a meeting on November 6th which is election day. Instead the November meetings will be held the 13th and 27th.

Donald White made a motion to approve the 2012 meeting calendar as presented. James Heard seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

9. New Business

a) Appointment of Judith McGuirk to the Historic Resources Committee for a term ending on June 30, 2012.

Sonia Spalding has recently resigned from the Historic Resources Committee and Judy McGuirk has been nominated to serve out the remainder of her term that expires in June 2012.

John French made a motion to appoint Judith McGuirk to the Historic Resources Committee for a term ending on June 30, 2012. Morgan Laidlaw seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

b) Request to enter into a five-year Revocable License agreement with Jesse McWilliams to operate a business on the Public Landing (Harbor Dogs)

Jesse McWilliams has entered into a purchase and sale agreement with the current owner of Harbor Dogs that would make the sale contingent upon the Select Board allowing the new owner to operate the business in its current location at the Public Landing for a period of five years. Pat Finnigan told the Board that Attorney Kelly is recommending that the new arrangement between the Town and Harbor Dogs should be structured as a revocable license rather than a lease. The following terms would be in place that are the same as the terms of the previous arrangement between Harbor Dogs and the Town:

- Either party can terminate the agreement before Feb. 1 of each year
- The base fee effective in 2011 was \$1,476.00, which is increased by 5% annually
- A loading parking space at the Public Landing is assigned

Jesse McWilliams spoke about his plans for the business, saying he would need to feel secure in the fact that he would be able to operate in the same location for upcoming years.

The parking space at the Public Landing was discussed. Current owner Morgan Laidlaw described the location of the trailer as being located on a separate triangle-shaped area of the landing as opposed to a parking space, explaining that the designated parking space is next to the trailer.

Martin Cates asked about the difference between the revocable license and the lease. Town Manager Finnigan responded that it is primarily a matter of terminology. Timing of the sale was discussed, and due to an upcoming financing deadline, Pat suggested that if the board moves forward they could simply agree on the concept and direct staff to work out the details with the authorization to sign.

John French made a motion to authorize the Town Attorney to draft a revocable license agreement to allow the Harbor Dogs business, under new ownership, to continue to be located at the Public Landing for a period of five years, with the same terms and conditions currently in effect with the current owner. Furthermore, that the Town Manager be granted the authority to sign on behalf of the Town. The motion was seconded by Donald White.

James Heard disclosed that he has a business arrangement with the buyer, Jesse McWilliams. The Board said that would not affect his ability to vote.

The motion passed on a vote of 4-0-1 (Laidlaw abstaining).

c) Adoption of 2012 Goals

Chairperson Cates presented the proposed Select Board goals that address the following areas:

- Strengthening Camden's Business Climate
- Development
- Quality of Life
- Transportation

- Town Government Effectiveness

Morgan Laidlaw commented that the quarterly report will help to lend increased structure to the Board's work. James Heard noted that the history of the Select Board has been more reactive than proactive, and that he is all in favor of instituting goals for this reason. Donald White agreed with this observation and asked Chairman Cates to read through the details of the goals for the television audience. Morgan Cates commented that the input from all Board members was greatly appreciated and that the Town Manager's input had been invaluable. John French said that through the years the Select Board had accomplished a great deal but that it is always easy to get sidetracked by issues that arise.

Martin Cates read through the individual goal descriptions.

There was a motion (White) and a second (Laidlaw) to adopt the Select Board's Goals for 2012-2014 as presented, and to direct the Town Manager to provide quarterly progress reports. The motion was unanimously approved.

10. Select Board Closing Comments

Board members expressed that they felt the meeting format had been effective and that all comments had followed the new format and had been respectful.

11. Adjourn

Donald White made a motion to adjourn. Morgan Laidlaw seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously. The Board adjourned at 8:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Brace
Recording Secretary