



Town of Camden
Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
September 2, 2014
6:30pm

PRESENT: Chairperson Martin Cates, John French, Jr., James Heard, Leonard Lookner, Donald White, Town Manager Finnigan, and Town Attorney William Kelly. Also present were members of the press and public.

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm.

B. Communications, Presentations, and Recognitions

1. PopTech 2014 – Leetha Filderman

Leetha Filderman, President of Pop-Tech, gave the Board an update on plans for this October's conference. She noted that it will be the 18th consecutive Pop-Tech conference to take place in Camden. Filderman spoke about the international reach of her organization and the year-round programs they run. She outlined challenges they face including distance from metropolitan centers, cost of lodging, and differentiating their event from other thought-leadership conferences. Filderman noted that the Fellows who participate in their program speak at the local high school every year. She explained this fall's conference theme and named the speakers who will be presenting.

Board members offered their support to Pop-Tech, saying that they want to make it possible for the conference to remain in Camden.

2. Ragged Mountain Redevelopment Update

Parks and Recreation Director Landon Fake updated the Board on progress at the Snow Bowl, giving details on construction of lift towers, trails, snowmaking, and the re-purposing of buildings. He also spoke about permitting processes and options for lighting. Fake said that seasons pass sales were a bit ahead of last year at this time. Fake also answered questions from the Board and members of the public.

C. Approval of Select Board Minutes

Don White made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2014 meeting as presented. James heard seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

D. Citizen Comments

The following citizens spoke about the Tannery property, focusing on the idea of making it into a park: Tom Resek, Eleanor Mason-Peters, Elizabeth Schumann, and Nancy Caudle-Johnson. Ralph Kelly spoke about doing a street lights inventory and expressed disappointment at the withdrawal of North East Mobile Health Services from its potential purchase of the Tannery site. Robert Williams spoke about recent decisions by the Select Board against placing some items on the ballot for public vote.

The Chair opened the floor to comments from the Board.

John French commented about low public participation in projects and community initiatives the Town is working on prior to the time when recommendations come before residents. He encouraged citizens to become involved and to attend Town Meetings.

E. Select Board Member Reports

There were no Select Board reports.

F. Town Manager Report

The Town Manager congratulated everyone involved with making the Windjammer Festival a success.

She noted that the Snow Bowl will be open on December 20th and that the timeline is on track. The early bird season's pass sales end soon, she said, but that another reduced rate on season's passes would be offered through October.

Finnigan added that we are fortunate to have organizations such as Pop-Tech in our community. She encouraged citizens to watch the conference via web stream if they are not able to attend in person.

G. New Business

1. Proposed amendment to Article VI, Section 2(2)(c)

The Select Board considered an order to place the proposed amendment to Article VI, Section 2(2)(c) as presented by Citizens Petition as a warrant article on the November ballot. Pat Finnigan said that the the petitioners had submitted 283 which was more than the minimum number of signatures required (279) to be on the ballot.

Bill Kelly told the Board that they could move this directly to the ballot, which would not require a public hearing. John Scholz, Planning Board member, spoke to the Board about the issue. The Board discussed the options.

Don White made a motion that the Select Board order the Town Clerk to place the proposed amendment to Article VI Section 2(2)(c), as presented by Citizens Petition dated August 27, 2014, as a warrant article for consideration on the November 4, 2014 secret ballot. James Heard seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

2. Award of bid: Parks and Recreation Tractor

Pat Finnigan said that they had received two bids for the tractor needed by Parks and Recreation. Staff members who were on hand answered questions from the Board. John French asked about current contracts for mowing services.

Don White made a motion to award the bid for a Kubota tractor to Hammond Tractor Company in the amount of \$47,624. Leonard Lookner seconded the motion. It was approved by a vote of 4-1-0 (French opposed).

3. Discussion of non-binding referendum question regarding the use of the Tannery site

Martin Cates opened the discussion about holding a non-binding referendum on the options for the Tannery property so the public could weigh in on what their preferences were for use of the site.

John Scholz spoke to the Board about permissions needed before any excavation took place, along with other requirements. Pat Finnigan noted that a new Phase 1 Brownfield assessment would be conducted through funds granted by the Mid-Coast Economic Development District.

Don White suggested that while the Brownfield study was being completed, and as the Town prepared for a straw vote, that a commercial real estate broker be hired who has expertise in Brownfield sites to help the Town develop strategies for moving forward. He also suggested that the Town prepare to market the property more aggressively than in the past.

John French noted that there are many parks in Camden and in that specific area, but that he does want to know what the public thinks should be done with the site. Martin Cates said he would support the site becoming job-producing, and that before more work goes toward this effort, the Board would need to know that the public's behind it.

Members discussed putting the question on the November ballot rather than June due to the higher turnout in the fall.

The Select Board discussed the wording of the referendum question. Several suggestions were made. Attorney Bill Kelly offered some phrasing for the question which John French supported by making a motion.

John French made a motion to hold a non-binding referendum to establish whether the citizens of the Town of Camden wish to continue to pursue a commercial/industrial use for the property on Washington Street owned by the Town known as the Tannery site, pursuant to the Guiding Principles as reflected in the June, 2008 warrant Article #10. (Yes/No). Don White seconded the motion.

The Board continued to discuss this question. Then the Chair opened the floor to comments from the public.

The following citizens spoke about the Tannery property: Ray Andreason, Anita Brosious Scott, Tom Resek, Robert Williams, Eleanor Mason-Peters, John Scholz, Elizabeth Schumann, and Nancy Caudle-Johnson.

Leonard Lookner amended the motion to be phrased as follows: to hold a non-binding referendum to establish whether the citizens of the Town of Camden wish to continue to pursue a commercial-industrial use for the property known as the Tannery site pursuant to the Guiding Principles as approved by the Town Meeting in June 2008, or would they rather use the property for future public uses. (Commercial use/Public use). John French seconded the amended motion. It was unanimously approved.

4. Set remaining Select Board meetings for September

John French made a motion to set the dates of September 9 and September 23, 2014 for upcoming Select Board meetings. James Heard seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

H. Select Board Closing Comments

There were no closing comments.

Adjourn

Don White made a motion to adjourn the meeting. John French seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously and the Board adjourned at 9:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Brace
Recording Secretary