

**HAMPTON BEACH VILLAGE DISTRICT
PUBLIC HEARING
February 11, 2015**

Present

Chuck Rage, Chairman & Commissioner
Maureen Buckley, Commissioner
Robert Ladd, Commissioner
Stephen LaBranche, Treasurer
Sharon Somers, Counsel

Chairman Rage called the Public Hearing to order at 5:30 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Chairman Rage said this meeting is to discuss the purchase of property located at 164 166 168 and 170 Ashworth Avenue for the purpose of a public parking lot that will serve the recreational needs of the Village District.

Chairman Rage said the property in question is the Clews Furniture Store. It is estimated that this parking lot will provide approximately 75 spaces. The cost will be approximately \$1 million dollars which will include the demolition of the building. Gravel will be on the lot so as to not cause any drainage problems.

Chairman Rage said they propose taking a 20-year bond. Interest rates are very low now so it is a good time to consider this. The lot should be able to pay for itself from parking lot revenues. It is estimated that this lot will produce around \$100,000 per year in revenues. Chairman Rage said John Kane, Marketing Director, looked into various ways to fund this project.

Chairman Rage said this is not all about money. This is for service. Retailers, restaurant owners and the people who work at the beach need this.

Commissioner Ladd asked how the \$1 million figure came about. Chairman Rage said it is the assessed value of the land as of last December.

John Kane discussed the bond. He said he looked at two types. First was a principal debt which would start with a higher yearly payment of approximately \$93,000 and go down to approximately \$52,000 over the 20-year period. The second type of bond is a level debt which would start at approximately \$78,000 and go down to approximately \$74,500.

Mr. LaBranche asked if the interest rate was the same for both types of bonds. Mr. Kane said it is. Mr. LaBranche said he preferred the bond that begins with the smaller payment. He said he also believes that it is very important to be very transparent when talking about this proposed project. It is not just about the Village District building lots. It is to fill a need here at the Beach.

Mr. LaBranche said all revenue, other than taxes, goes to Culture & Recreation. People who do not own businesses and have an exemption pay for General Government only. Mr. LaBranche said Attorney Somers will need to look into this to see if it applies in this case.

Chairman Rage said this project will be in a warrant article and will need a two-thirds majority vote. If the article passes, it will be added to the budget at the Annual Meeting.

Richard Reniere, 29 Highland Ave., asked how the \$1 million would be spent. Chairman Rage said it would be \$960,000 for the land and \$40,000 for grading and the addition of gravel. Mr. Reniere then asked about legal expenses. Attorney Somers said work on this would be part of her normal hourly rate.

Attorney Somers said there is a tight schedule for this project. This meeting is being held to comply with the need for a public hearing and this will have to go to the Budget Committee and Planning Board.

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Selectman, said this project will be of great benefit to the Village District.

Eileen Daboul, Harris Avenue, said she wanted to commend the Commissioners for proposing this project. There is so much need for more parking. This is a wonderful idea. Ms. Daboul said she was very much in favor of this project.

Ute Pineo said she thinks this is a great idea. She asked how one would enter and exit the lot. Chairman Rage said entrances and exits will be off of Ashworth Avenue.

Michael Pierce, 68 Hedman Ave., said to his knowledge there was a parking study done that said there is already plenty of parking. Chairman Rage said that is not so and there is a big demand. Chairman Rage said he has seen a lot of these studies. Nevertheless, there are times when more parking is needed. This lot would alleviate a lot of these problems.

Brian Lapham, 27 High Street, asked what is being done to predict all that goes into the project. Chairman Rage said they are using estimates. There is an opportunity and it is now. If the voters reject this, it will not be done.

Charlie Preston said if the Clews family is offering this land for the assessed value, it is a very generous offer.

Tim Jones, 16 Dustin Ave., said there is an expectation that this is going to solve problems. However, he doesn't see it that way. People will continue to seek out free parking on the side streets. The distance is too far from the bathrooms. This will introduce a whole new set of problems. Mr. Jones said he was still wondering about the charter of the Village District. There is no provision in material he has received that says the Village District can

do a parking lot. Mr. Jones said he questioned the legal authority for the District to proceed with this project. Mr. Jones said the HBAC in an independent study determined that there is no parking problem.

Ms. Pineo said once this land is gone, it is gone. It would definitely be a missed opportunity not to do this.

Ms. Buckley said the premise that all park on the side streets because it is free is incorrect.

The Public Hearing was closed at 6:46 p.m.

**HAMPTON BEACH VILLAGE DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING
February 11, 2015**

Chairman Rage called the meeting to order at 6:47 p.m.

Moving Wall Article

Ute Pineo asked for support for the warrant articles (Town and Village District) to bring the Moving Wall to the beach. Ms. Pineo discussed the costs associated with this.

HBVD Issues

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Selectman, asked for support for Article 2 on the Town Warrant. She said it is extremely important that this article passes. This is necessary to continue to provide flood insurance to residents of the Town. Ms. Woolsey also spoke in support of Article 24 on the Town Warrant which addresses training for special Police officers.

Grist Mill Article

Candice Stellmach spoke in support of Article 38 on the Town Warrant to repair the Grist Mill Dam. Hampton is a tourist destination bar none and this dam is of historical significance.

Norm Hurley spoke in support of Article 38. He said there are only four remaining grist mills in the state.

Chad Riley spoke in support of this Article. He said attracting visitors and tourists goes beyond the beach. The grist mill is historical and there is a need to preserve this.

Flood Plain Issues

Jason Bachand, Town Planner, discussed Article 2. The zoning ordinance should become current with new flood maps. Mr. Bachand encouraged everyone to take a look at these maps. Mr. Bachand said they are starting work on the Community Rating System. Six prerequisites have already been met, but there are more.

Jay Diener, Conservation Committee Chairman, said there is a lot of documentation needed to get Hampton on the Community Rating System Program. Mr. Diener said if insurance is purchased before the maps are locked in, money can be saved. Mr. Diener talked about the Dune Project going on in Hampton. There is another project called Soak Up the Rain Hampton.

Old Business

There was no Old Business.

New Business

Commissioner Buckley said the coloring book is finished and Glen French, Entertainment Coordinator said it will go to press soon. Mr. French also said the Chamber of Commerce Visitors' Guide is out.

Commissioner Ladd said a comment was made at the Town Deliberative Session implying that the non-elected members of the Budget Committee get together and vote in unison. Commissioner Ladd said this is not true.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Commissioner Ladd, seconded by Chairman Rage, to approve the Minutes of January 14, 2015 (Regular Meeting).

Vote: 2 yes, 0 no, 1 abstention (Buckley). Motion passed.

Moved by Commissioner Ladd, seconded by Commissioner Buckley, to approve the Minutes of January 21, 2015 (Pubic Budget Meeting).

Vote: 3 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

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Public Comment

Richard Reniere, Moderator, reminded everyone of the HBVD Annual Meeting which will be held on March 27th at the Fire Station.

Closing Comments

Commissioner Ladd said the Department of Public Works deserves a great round of applause for the work they have done during the recent storms.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Rice
Secretary