

Selectmen's Meeting
January 18, 2011
4:00 pm

A meeting of the Board was held on the above date in the Fred B Morgan Jr. Meeting Room, Town Hall. Members present were Margaret E. Serpa, Chairman and Arthur Smadbeck. Also present was Ms. Pamela Dolby, Town Administrator.

At 4:00 p.m Ms. Serpa opened the meeting. She stated that before the hearing for Ron Minkin of MV Transport was to start that Ms. Christina Brown was present from the Martha's Vineyard Commission and, due to time constraints, she would like to say a word not related to the hearing before hand.

Ms. Brown stated that she and the MVC were aware that the Town had some issues with the MVC. She and the Chairman, Mr. Chris Murphy were present to offer more communication.

Ms. Serpa replied that the Board appreciated the offer and thanked them for coming. She then officially opened the advertised public hearing for the application of MV Transport for a street license to give ticketed tours through various streets in Edgartown using 15 passenger busses. She read the notice aloud and it is attached. She then recognized Mr. Minkin and asked him to provide for the Board a short description of what he was asking for.

Mr. Minkin stated that he has 14 passenger vans for hire as a charter business. People call him up and book private tours for groups. He would like to offer a ticketed tour so he can pick up various people at the boats and offer them a tour. He stated that he would respect the streets and not race through them. At this point Ms. Serpa asked Mr. Minkin to address the Board not the audience in attendance. Mr. Minkin turned to face the Board. He then stated that he had permission from five towns for a street license. He would like to have 4 vehicles give one hour tours and 2 vehicles give whole island tours. He did not elaborate on how many times a day or what days of the week or the exact route. He stated that he had a petition of support last year that was signed by 30 businesses, but did not provide a copy with this application. He then accused the other cab companies of conducting tours without the correct licenses.

Ms. Serpa asked him to clarify exactly what he wanted and asked him again to face the Board.

He repeated that he wants to do ticketed tours, that his vehicles are 14 passenger vans, and that he had permission from five other towns.

Ms. Serpa thanked Mr. Minkin and then opened the floor to public comment.

Ms. Joan Norton of North Water St. stated that her street is narrow and there are a lot of bikes that travel the wrong way. She was very worried about safety of having tours in addition to what already exists and relayed a story of a near miss with a wrong way bike. She stated that Fuller and Morse St. are also quite dangerous, being that traffic travels in both directions and they are quite narrow. She brought up the fatal accident in Vineyard Haven last year of the biker falling into traffic.

Mr. Joe Smith of Fuller St. stated that when North Water St. was redone, the sidewalks were widened and the street itself is narrow. He was also concerned about the safety and fences. He stated that safety should not be sacrificed for the profit of one person. He thought that buses had been banned from going downtown in the 1980s.

Ms. Dolby stated that tour buses and the VTA buses are only allowed down Main St. as far as Church Street. If they are chartered the town has no control over where they go.

Mr. Stuart Lollis of Plantingfield Way was opposed to the disturbances of tour buses. Such as amplified tour commentary and that Edgartown is a walking and biking town. The exhaust from the tours is not conducive to walkers or bikers.

Ms. Alice Maddison of North Water St. was opposed to tours. Tour buses would ruin peoples' fences on the narrow streets. She didn't want people's property and lives to suffer so one person could make more money.

Mr. Bailey Norton stated that there was no need for more traffic or congestion than is already downtown. He stated that there was no want or need for the service and he is 100% against it.

Mr. Minkin stated that he was not a bus he has vans. He thought that the only really dangerous spots would be North Waters St. to Simpson's Lane.

Ms. Serpa reminded Mr. Minkin to address the Board.

Mr. Minkin continued by stating that he would operate from 9:30am – 4pm. He stated that he would do less tours if the town stopped the taxis from doing tours. He promised that his drivers would drive slow and be respectful.

Ms. Serpa then closed the public comment of the hearing.

Mr. Smadbeck stated that there had been no need expressed. Summertime is very congested downtown. He thought that if Mr. Minkin would like to drop his customers off at the school or the park and ride that would be acceptable. He had no problem with approving Beach Rd. or West Tisbury Rd.

Ms. Serpa agreed and added that it is disruptive and dangerous to the public downtown. She stated that she would also be agreeable to granting Beach Rd, Upper Main St. as far into town as West Tisbury Rd., and West Tisbury Rd. if Mr. Minkin wanted to apply for just those.

Mr. Smadbeck moved to deny the application as written for the many reasons listed above. Safety, No Need expressed, Disruption, and already too crowded in downtown. Ms. Serpa seconded. Unanimous.

The Board then approved the following items:

A Lodging House License for Edgartown Commons.

An Innholders License for The Edgartown Inn.

A Second Hand Auto Dealer's License for Bertel Auto Brokers.

A one day liquor license for WVVY MV Community Radio for a fundraiser in the Whaling Church on January 23rd from 6:30pm-11:00pm.

Ms. Serpa then recognized Mr. Carl Watt Co-Chairman of the Library Building Committee (LBC). Mr. Watt just wanted to update the Board on the progress of the grant application. He stated that the LBC has met with the State Library Commission and it was very productive. He felt that they have hit a home run. It was a whole new attitude from their last meeting in December. With the new location, he felt that they had a better chance. The architect, LBC, and library staff are doing a great job shifting location and pulling together.

Mr. Smadbeck replied that it sounded like they received a much better reception this time.

Mr. Watt stated that it was much better. The Board of Trustees, School Board, and staff seemed really excited. The LBC is also working with the Town Departments for review.

The question was posed what would happen to the Carnegie Building.

Mr. Smadbeck stated that there are restrictions on the Carnegie. There are a lot of options.

Mr. Watt replied that it was up to the Board of Selectmen. The LBC is not involved in that.

Ms. Tyra asked for the LBC to be on the agenda next week.

The Board then granted a request from the Boys & Girls Club for their annual race on April 30th contingent upon approval from the Fire Chief and Police Chief.

Ms. Serpa then recognized Mr. Greg Blaine of Blaine's Welding. He wanted permission to block Main St. to remove the "Town Bell" from the Whaling Church. They had originally thought that they could work around the bell, but after further inspection there was a lot of rot in the tower. Mr. Smadbeck moved to approve. Ms. Serpa seconded. Unanimous.

Ms. Dolby then gave her update. The office had received complaints about the Town portion of Pennywise Path. She had thought the Board had already taken care of the issue. It seemed to be an ongoing problem and they need a final solution.

Mr Smadbeck stated that the Board should send a letter to Mr. Stuart Fuller, Highway Superintendent, stating that there is a need for a solid permanent solution and to let the Board know the plan. There also needs to be an immediate fix until the permanent plan can be enacted.

The Board then approved Soigne to close for maintenance from March 7, 2011 to April 10, 2011.

The Board then voted to authorize Ms. Dolby to sign the Muskeget Channel Tidal Energy Expanded Environmental Notification Form to send to MEPA.

Mr. Smadbeck moved to adjourn at 5:26pm. Ms. Serpa seconded. Unanimous.

Approved:

Margaret E. Serpa, Chairman

Arthur Smadbeck

Michael J. Donaroma
Board of Selectmen

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Rose
Assistant

January 18, 2011