

Selectmen's Meeting
October 25, 2010
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, & Arthur Smadbeck. Also present was Pamela Dolby, Town Administrator.

At 4:00 p.m Ms. Serpa opened the posted public hearing for Nstar to install 9 new poles on Meetinghouse Way. Present from Nstar were: Karen Corriveau and John Gonber. Mr. Gonber explained that the poles would fill in a gap on Meetinghouse Way where there weren't any presently. NStar has plans to run a new "Main Line" to town to cut down on the brown outs in the summer and this would be the new circuit.

Mr. Smadbeck stated that typically the Board requests new lines to be buried.

Mr. Gonber replied that the problem with burying the lines would be that these are high voltage "Main Lines" that carried a lot of power and that proper installation would include very large ducts and manholes. It would also be very expensive.

Ms. Serpa then read into record a letter from Ralph and Karen Mosher who have a seasonal home at 145 Meetinghouse Way. To summarize they did not like the idea of having poles impede on their rural views and they were mainly worried about the proposed pole on their property that was very close to their well. The full letter is attached.

Ms. Corriveau stated that they had received a copy of the letter and that Nstar is willing to work with the Moshers on moving the pole near their well.

Mr. Gonber stated that they had no problem sending a planner to speak with the Moshers and work it out.

Ms. Serpa asked if NStar had talked to Mr. Stuart Fuller, Highway Superintendent, about the project.

Mr. Gonber stated that he had spoken with Mr. Fuller and that he was agreeable to the plan. They had also addressed adding streetlights to the new poles.

Mr. Smadbeck moved to approve the request to install 9 poles on the condition that NStar meet with the Moshers to relocate the pole near their well on the plan. Ms. Serpa seconded. Unanimous.

The Board then approved the following items:

The minutes from October 4th, October 12th, and October 18th.

For Alchemy to close for repairs and maintenance from January 3, 2011 – February 3, 2011.

For the Board of Trade to hang the banner for Christmas in Edgartown from 11/23-11/29 and 12/7 - 12/13.

Permission for the Red Stocking Foundation to serve chowder in the Mini-park at Christmas in Edgartown with approval of the Conservation Commission.

Permission for "CONNECT to end violence" to supply supportive information in the public restrooms in the Town Hall.

An Occupy the Sidewalk permit for the Christina Gallery for maintenance work from November 1st – November 15th in front of the Gallery on the corner of Winter St. and N. Water St.

At 4:15 pm Ms. Serpa addressed the next item on the agenda which was the auditor's advice that the billing for Town departments could not be generated and collected in the same office. Present for the discussion were: Mr. Joe Alosso, Waste Water Superintendent; Ms. Shelley Reed, Administrative Assistant at the Waste Water Department; The Water Commissioners, Mr. Bob Burnham, Mr. John Lovewell, and Mr. William Erickson; also from the Water Department, Mr. Fred Domont, Water Superintendent; Ms. Pia Webster, Administrative Assistant; Ms. Sheila Bendavid, Department Assistant; and Shane Bendavid,

Foreman. Also present were Ms. Melissa Kuehne, Town Collector and Ms. Marilyn Wortman, Personnel Assistant and Parks Assistant.

Mr. Burnham then opened a meeting of the Water Commissioners.

Ms. Serpa stated that the auditor had been urging the Town for some time now not to generate bills and collect them in the same offices. The Town Collector will eventually collect the payments for the Wastewater and Water bills. The departments will send them out.

Mr. Burnham asked if they were asking the Water Department to switch to Munis.

Ms. Dolby answered that that would be the next step. This was first. The billing cycles may have to adjust so they are not at peak tax times. Or they could be collected at a different frequency.

Mr. Burnham answered that they were a semi-annual system now. Fall for summer usage and spring for winter usage.

Ms. Kuehne stated that March and September would be the best times.

Mr. Domont then stated that he was “Shocked! Totally shocked!” He wanted to know who had the authority to make these changes and he didn’t believe it was true.

Ms. Dolby stated that she would get a copy for Mr. Domont from the auditor.

Mr. Smadbeck stated that this was not a surprise and that it had been a flagged item from the auditor for a number of years. This was just for Edgartown to run better by accounting standards. There was no implication that anyone was doing a bad job.

Ms. Kuehne pointed out to Mr. Domont that once he joined Munis he could easily print a report that would update him on collection as frequently as he wanted.

Mr. Alosso stated that the Wastewater Department was on board for the change. He uses Munis in Oak Bluffs and has no issue with it. He wants to bill properly. Their bills go out only once a year and there are about 1000 customers. He tends to have 75% collected within the first 7 weeks. They can’t shut off sewer service. Any unpaid bills are then liened onto the tax bills in the Collector’s Office. This would also make that process go smoother.

Ms. Serpa stated that they would work out a schedule for collection with the departments.

Mr. Burnham stated that the Water Department had been asking for a meeting with the auditor for a long time and had gotten no response.

Ms. Serpa replied that that was hard to believe because he was always prompt to respond to any request in her experience. The Board will arrange a meeting.

Mr. Smadbeck thanked everyone for their co-operation. The Board will support them any way they can. They should all meet with the auditor together.

Ms. Serpa pointed out that Munis will eventually be insisted upon.

To which Mr. Domont responded “Not while I’m around”.

Mr. Burnham was more diplomatic. He stated that the Commissioners felt that the program they use now is efficient and works well.

Mr. Alosso reiterated that he was on board with switching to Munis.

Mr. Domont stated that he thought that it had been resolved that the program they had was sufficient.

Ms. Serpa stated that the Board will address the issues that had been raised with the auditor and reminded the Water Department that the reason the last audit had been delayed was due to lack of information from their department.

Ms. Dolby reminded those present that Munis always evolves and they will facilitate needs.

Mr. Burnham closed the meeting of the Water Commissioners.

Ms. Dolby then thanked Mr. Domont for going around with consultant Ms. Liz Argo and Ms. Jane Varkonda to look at sites for the town solar project. There will be enough land not under Article 97 to use.

Mr. Smadbeck asked if using Article 97 land could be looked into.

Mr. Domont replied that he spoke with the DEP and they are not the only ones looking into it. Seems DEP will allow Zone 2 but not Zone 1.

Ms. Dolby then moved on to other business. There are some dogs that have been kicked out of Vineyard Haven for killing chickens now residing in Ocean Heights. She advised all persons in the area that they may want to secure any fowl. Town Counsel is looking into the matter.

She then stated that Comcast definitely wants to join NStar in getting service to Chappaquiddick. They have hired an engineer and seem to be working together.

She received a draft budget from the High School and it was up 7.4%. She is going to send a letter to all departments stating that this year to aim for level funding and to watch their bottom line.

Mr. Smadbeck stated that they should keep a close eye on the election and particularly Question #3. There could be some ramifications.

Ms. Dolby stated that the town is not in trouble because it has been careful.

Mr. Smadbeck moved to adjourn at 4:40. Ms. Serpa seconded. Unanimous.

.

Approved:

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Rose
Assistant

Margaret E. Serpa, Chairman

Arthur Smadbeck

Not Present

Michael J. Donaroma
Board of Selectmen

October 25, 2010