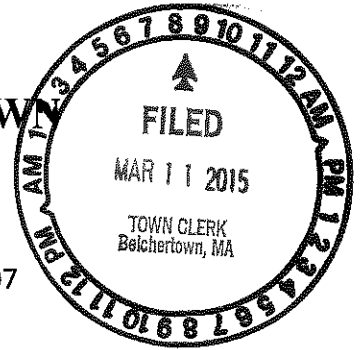




TOWN OF BELCHERTOWN

Finance Committee

Lawrence Memorial Hall
2 Jabish Street, P.O. Box 670
Belchertown, Massachusetts 01007



Kate DeCou, Chairman
Lynne Raymer, Vice-Chairman
Melissa Hurst, Clerk
Edward Boscher
Steven Rose

Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, January 20, 2015
Time: 7:00pm
Location: Lawrence Memorial Hall
Present: Edward Boscher, Kate DeCou, Melissa Hurst, Lynne Raymer, Steven Rose
Guest(s): Gary Brougham, Lakes Committee (Kathy Smith, Bonnie Strickland, Jennica Gallagher, Leeanne Connelly, Kathy LeBlond), Sean Gallagher

- Meeting called to order at 7:01pm.
- Mail reviewed and distributed.
- Ms. Hurst distributed the minutes from the November 18, 2014 and December 1, 2014 meetings.
- Mr. Rose moved to accept the minutes of the November 18, 2014 meeting. Ms. Raymer seconded. Minutes were accepted 5-0-0.
- Ms. Raymer moved to accept the minutes of the December 1, 2014 meeting. Mr. Boscher seconded. Minutes were accepted 4-0-1.

Old Business

- None noted.

New Business – Finance Committee 2014 Final Report

- Reviewed final budget letter. Paragraph regarding the Family Center was removed, but no further changes.
- Mr. Rose moved to approve the Committee's 2014 Final Report. Mr. Boscher seconded. Report was approved 4-0-0.

New Business – Lakes Committee Presentation

- Lakes Committee has been in place since 2011. The Lakes Committee is charged with the protection of the waterbodies in Belchertown – Lake Arcadia, Lake Metacomet, and Holland Pond.
- Discussion of the weed infestations on lakes Metacomet and Arcadia and the Lakes Committee requested funding and guidance regarding the continuing progress of the weed control.
- Ms. DeCou asked how much the Lakes Committee is seeking. Ms. Connelly indicated that they are seeking \$14,920. Proposal to the Finance Committee provided by the Lakes Committee requests \$14,920 (\$10,500 for water quality monitoring of all three lakes from May to October, \$1,970 for plant inspections, and \$2,750 for a tri-lakes management report. The proposal states that an additional \$13,350 would be needed for weed control, dependent on the results of the plant inspections. Further, the proposal includes recommendations for one-time costs in 2015 - \$2,350 for a Holland Lake plant survey and \$5,500 for development of a State of the Tri-Lakes report. Mr. Rose questioned the need for monitoring rather than just the use of chemicals. Lakes Committee indicated that monitoring is better as it allows for earlier intervention rather than having it cost \$60,000-\$70,000 to remedy. Mr. Rose questioned need for reports and testing if a company can come out and indicate what is needed. Ms. Connelly indicated that there are constantly changing hookups to the town sewers and that the town's brooks, streams, etc. all flow into the lakes, making early intervention cost-effective. Ms. Raymer questioned if the treatment costs would be annual. Ms. Connelly indicated that the answer is long-term maintenance.
- Discussion of the company doing the treatments for the lakes and the requested monitoring. Ms. DeCou asked if the Lakes Committee has discussed the work to be done with the company previously used. Ms. Connelly indicated that it has been discussed, that some evaluation would be free, but that all know that there is a bidding process. She indicated that the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission sent the previous contract out to bid and that company was hired. There is an application for \$20,000 from the Massachusetts Environmental Trust for nuisance vegetation management. Ms. DeCou asked if the \$14,920 requested from the Town would be what was needed and if any additional funds would be provided through fundraisers. Ms. Connelly indicated that they would. Mr. Brougham indicated that there is a second company doing similar work for similar pricing. Ms. Connelly stated that the first company bought out the second.
- Mr. Boscher asked how the lakes were cared for previously. Ms. Connelly indicated that the Tri-Lakes Association began caring for the lakes around 1988. She described the flow issues created by the introduction of invasive species (Metacomet has boat ramp, UMass sailing utilizes lakes). Ms. Connelly explained that the local residents went to the Board of Selectmen, indicating that the scope of maintenance was too great and ultimately a harvester was purchased.
- Discussion of the infestation at Holland Pond – primarily that it was never treated. Mr. Brougham explained the flow pattern between the lakes (Holland Pond with native species to Lake Arcadia with native species and minimal powerboating, then to Lake Metacomet which is vulnerable because of the introduction of other species). Also indicated that for years there were

substandard septic systems around the lakes, which worsened when the areas changed from seasonal occupation to year-round residences, though sewers have been installed in the area and gradually the properties are being attached. Mr. Brougham indicated that he thinks the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) may require creation of a stormwater authority.

- Mr. Rose questioned where the Town will find the funds for the Lakes Committee. Mr. Brougham indicated that it previously came from general revenue. Mr. Rose asked if the Town could get by with treatment and licensing from the Department of Environmental Protection. Ms. Gallagher stated that they need to study what the problem areas are in which lakes. Ms. Connelly indicated that they will try to keep the costs down, indicating that community volunteers have gotten samples and taken them to the labs themselves.
- Ms. Connelly indicated that the Lakes Committee has received grants previously -- one for \$10,000, another for \$40,000 two years ago, and are now working on one for \$20,000. Ms. Raymer indicated that the funds requested from the Town seem reasonable and the next step would be how to get those funds into the budget.
- Discussion of the manner of treatment of the lakes. Mr. Brougham indicated that it has been done though mechanical harvesting (previously done by Tri-Lakes) and chemicals and that those chemicals are the same used in drinking water. Ms. Strickland indicated that there are new chemicals that may be more effective and that there are new species in Lake Arcadia. Ms. Smith indicated that the other option is harvesting by hand, which would be very expensive. Ms. Connelly indicated that they have worked cooperatively with other town departments and that the Department of Public Works previously had hauled the harvested biomass away.
- Lakes Committee left. Follow-up discussion of lakes and sewers. Mr. Brougham explained that previously the residents around Holland Pond did not want to treat the pond with chemicals. Ms. DeCou asked about the sewers and about upgrading the systems of the properties in the area. Mr. Brougham explained that those in the area are required to link-in for all new construction and no repairs to existing systems are permitted. The sewer has been in the area for six years. Ms. DeCou asked if the sewer is a major issue at this time. Mr. Brougham stated that it was an issue when there was minimal infrastructure. Ms. Hurst inquired about the cleaning of the boats prior to entering the lakes to minimize the invasive species. Mr. Brougham stated that Tri-Lakes has done well raising awareness of the issue and mapping the lakes. Ms. Hurst inquired about the impacts of the treating chemicals on fish/wildlife and Mr. Brougham reiterated that the chemical is the same used in drinking water at three times the concentration.

New Business – Budget Planning Process/Calendar

- Mr. Brougham indicated that the Town has not received updates from Governor Baker or revenue numbers, though there is a \$765 million state deficit.
- Mr. Brougham stated that department heads are being asked for a level service budget and he will be meeting with the new Superintendent of Schools, Karol Coffin. Ms. DeCou suggested meeting as a team with the School Department and Board of Selectman as in previous years.
- Committee scheduled to meet on February 24, 2015, March 10, 2015, and March 19, 2015.

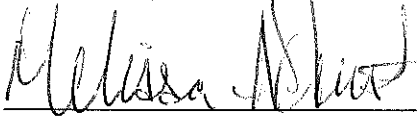
Other Business

- Mr. Brougham indicated that the net metering for the Town should save \$70,000 per year for 20 years and that there is 20% for solar credits.
- Mr. Brougham stated that there is just over \$2 million in the Stabilization Fund and \$346,990 in Free Cash.
- Discussion of the snow removal budget. Mr. Brougham stated that there is approximately \$58,000 left in the budget and that a "good storm" costs \$20,000-\$25,000.

Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 8:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,

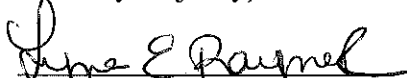


Melissa Hurst, Clerk

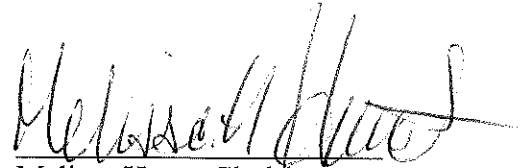
FINCOM Town of Belchertown (Endorsed by majority)



Kate DeCou, Chair




Lynne Raymer, Vice Chair



Melissa Hurst, Clerk



Steven Rose


Edward Boscher