

**Board of Selectmen
Minutes of Open Session
Cotter Room, Abington Town Hall
July 15, 2014**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 and led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance. In attendance: Chairman Ken Coyle, Andy Burbine, Tom Dion, Maureen Jansen, Town Manager Richard LaFond and Town Counsel Lauren Goldberg. Absent: Mike Franey.

Coyle stated that the reason for this special meeting was to discuss matter of the recently filed changes to the enabling legislation regarding Southfield (former Navy Air Base). He stated that in his opinion that there is a possibility that this will pass in some form and that Weymouth, and now Rockland, had reached mitigation agreements with the developer, Starwood. Coyle suggested that Abington officials also meet with Starwood.

Burbine agreed that although he is not happy with the lack of coordination between communities at this late date Abington should meet with Starwood too.

Dion stated that he was concerned with the water discussion in the Rockland MOA with Starwood and questioned both the availability of water resources and the ability of Rockland to contract any water rights in light of the existence of the Abington/Rockland Joint Water Works. He believes that the towns of Abington and Rockland would have been in a better negotiating position had Rockland not gone out on their own to negotiate an agreement.

Jansen stated that the plan being submitted likely has some positive points but that we need to do our best to secure Abington's interests and noted specifically the possibility of the locating of wastewater plant in the Abington piece as well as the question over the financing of the parkway. She noted that it is hard to be for or against a bill that we haven't had adequate time to review in its final form.

Coyle added that there are tax implications of Abington losing the golf course as well as permitting burdens on the town in the future and the impact on our public safety agencies – particularly access to the Abington piece and mutual aid requirements. He also pointed out that Abington's representation will be reduced proportionally as the new Authority would have nine members rather than five and Abington would only retain its one, current seat.

Burbine also pointed out other administrative burdens on Abington if indeed each town would be taking over all service requirements on the land within its border – such as assessing, taxation, collection, and, that Abington should not have bear that service burden either.

Advisory Board member Joe Shea stated that this deadline was forced by the developer with the intention of not providing suitable time for review and that he believes that this is not proper. He made several points:

1. This problem was caused by the developer failing to actually develop on the site;

2. There is a lack of detail as to what the future plan is if the current reuse plan is no longer valid;
3. The cost of water is only going to be passed along to the users –not absorbed by the developer;
4. What determines major versus minor zoning?

Shea agreed that the town at this point needs to meet with Starwood.

Chris Aiello, Abington's delegate to the existing Tri-Town Authority agreed with Shea's concerns and added his concern that the developer may just build the housing piece of the development and default on the commercial piece leaving the towns with an unsustainable service requirement. As a former member of the ARJWW he shared the concern that there was no additional water resource available to provide to the development, and that DEP approval is required. He concurred with Dion that Rockland alone does not control the water resource.

Motion by Burbine, Seconded by Dion - to designate the Chairman, with the support of the Town Manager and Town Counsel to meet with Starwood regarding the impact of the legislation and possible mitigation for Abington and to report back to the Board.

Unanimous Vote.

Coyle asked town counsel to review the legislation in preparation for the meeting and advised board members to provide him or the town manager with any additional concerns or input. He also advised that the Board should be prepared to meet next week if and when there was something to report.

Motion by Burbine, Seconded by Dion to adjourn at 7:25 p.m.